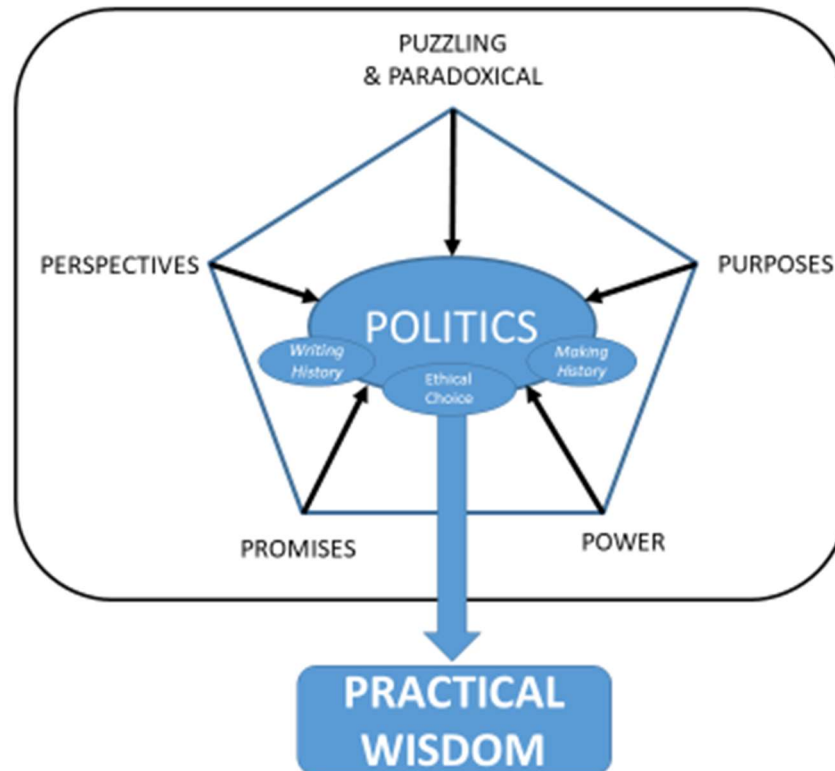


The 8Ps of the Mindful Manager



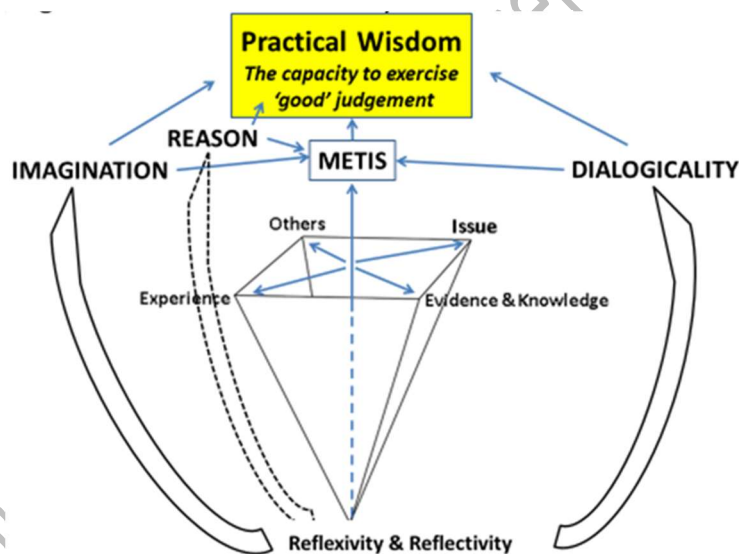
The figure above attempts to bring together all the dimensions of the **Wicked World** in which the Mindful Manager has to make her/his judgements. This complex of interacting dimensions, and the necessarily **history writing & history making** character of the managerial endeavour, makes the practice intrinsically **political** and one of **ethical choice**.

- It is world where divergent **purposes** [interests] & clashing **perspectives** [viewpoints] must be melded in pursuit of fruitful collective action.
- Collective action in this world is built of **promises**. Managing/leading is a practice of shaping and sustaining **promises**. Organisational endeavour is founded on trust; and it requires trusting in a world of 'collaboration'.
- **Power** effects suffuse and mould this world. From the fundamental, and often visible, effects of authority & fear to the largely invisible effects of 'what we take as being known & by whom' and the limits of our languages.
- It is a world that is **puzzling** – where the puzzle that faces us is often to identify what the puzzle is! We are confused not ignorant. We are confounded by the *equivocality, equifinality, irreversibility, interdependency and inter-connectedness* of the circumstances that we face when we must make our choices as to *beginnings, ends and means*. A complex context in which our choices must often deal with the seemingly **paradoxical**.

The world we face is confusing & unpredictable, and it can change at great **pace**



It is a world of **p**olitical action in which we are embedded, and must act. Managing/leading is a **p**olitical endeavour that requires **p**ractical wisdom for its successful navigation, and the Mindful Manager relentlessly pursues its constituent dispositions and capabilities.



We face **p**aradox in all zones of our managerial endeavour – strategically & commercially, organizationally and managerially. For instance: strategic pursuit of one end, at first sight, seems to preclude the pursuit of another – where we really want the best of both worlds – e.g. margin vs. market share; organisationally deployment of a certain means seems to have contradictory/oppositional effects – our functional specialisation generates efficiencies, and lowers our costs, but in the process our effectiveness in serving our customers is degraded – we want ‘both-and’ not ‘either-or’; we want to delegate to, and empower our people, but we do not want to be too distant from the detail because we know the devil & the diamonds are there.

We face many paradoxes - strategic tensions, organizational dilemmas and managerial conundrums that we must accept cannot be resolved - where we must judge where and how we should choose to position ourselves between certain polarities – choosing how we should ‘trade them off’. But this

judgement is not one that we really want to make. What we really want are 'innovative reconciliations' of the seeming contradictions that face us.

Some possible examples of these paradoxical challenges are listed in the table appended.

It is **creativity** we require if we are to contend productively with our paradoxical circumstances, beat the trade-off trap, and generate innovative reconciliations that give us the 'both-and's' we want/need not 'either-ors'.

"We weren't going to win if it was an 'or'. Everybody can do an 'or....'...trade things off and you are not going to be the best....you are not going to win if you are in the trade-off game" [Alan Lafley – Chairman, president & CEO P&G]

Acquiring & deploying the nexus of dispositions & capabilities that constitutes practical wisdom is the path to good judgement, but it is also the route to **creativity – productive imaginings**.

- **Reflexivity** is the foundation of practical wisdom, and is the first step to creativity, as we strive to shake loose the shackles on our minds acquired in our lived experience, and look at the world with the eyes of the child.
- It is the friction of clashing perspectives that often sparks the fire of creative conversation, and the mindful manager seeks to engage **others** of diverse 'somewheres' in this pursuit.
- We must strive to ensure our **experience** is a resource and not a trap – we must have vu jade not déjà vu when we engage with the seemingly familiar.
- If we are to unleash our creative potential we must be relentlessly questioning of **knowledge & evidence** - we must have a learned ignorance.
- Powerful creative engagement with **problems & issues** requires us to be comfortable in doubt, to engage the tortoise mind, dwell, and speak softly to the world letting it reveal itself in all its particularities & possibilities. We must seek a 'negative capability'.
- The exercise of productive imagination demands quality **reasoning** in the interrogation of the problems, opportunities and issues that face us, and in the surfacing of the assumptions that underpin them.
- **Dialogue** is a cauldron of creativity, where we suspend judgement, let go of our constraining certainties, let the sparks of clashing perspectives fly, make ourselves vulnerable and take risks of embarrassment.
- To let our **imagination** work to its fullest potential we must let it off its leash, and give it space to play – this requires all the above capabilities & dispositions

STRATEGIC TENSIONS

- Long run vs. short run
- Global vs. local
- Exploitation vs. exploration
 - current markets/products vs. new markets/products
 - current customers vs. new customers
- Price vs. volume
- Market share vs. margin
- Lead/innovate vs. follow & copy
- Cost Leadership vs. differentiation
- Mass vs. niche
- Compete vs. collaborate

ORGANISATIONAL DILEMMAS

- Global vs. local
- Centralised vs. de-centralised
- Efficiency vs. effectiveness
 - Functional specialisation vs. Integrated activity
- Make or buy; in-house vs. outsource
- Direct sales/distribution vs. through channels
- Employed vs. contracted employees
- Reliability vs. responsiveness
- Targets vs. instructions

MANAGERIAL CONUNDRUMS

- Self-interest vs. collective interest
- Empowerment/trust vs. control/supervision
- Incentives vs. instructions
 - Carrots vs. sticks
- Detailed involvement vs. delegating
- Involvement vs. interference
- Empathy vs. tough mindedness
- Collaboration vs. competition
 - Collaboratition
- Confident but doubting
- Learning opportunities vs. risk of failure