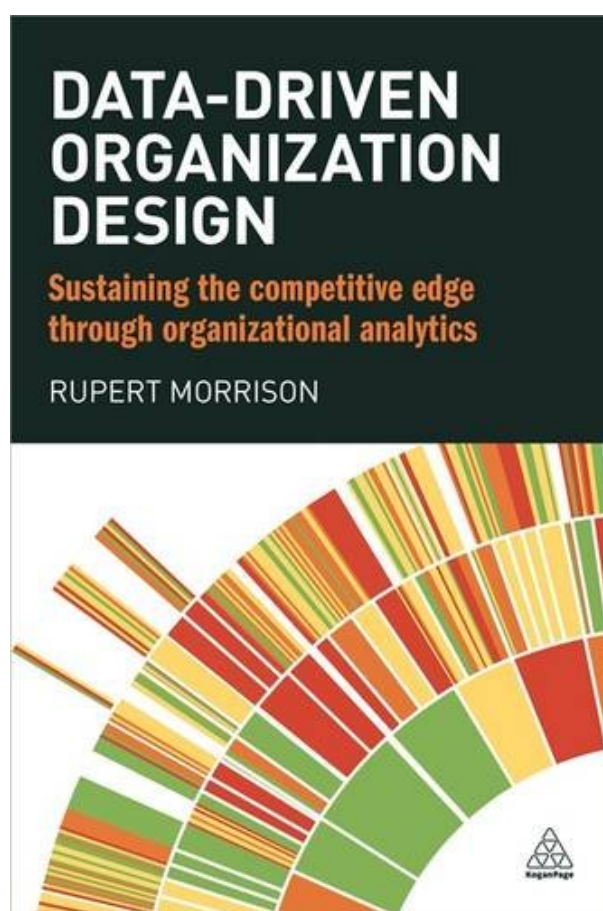


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SUSTAINING THE COMPETITIVE EDGE  
THROUGH ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYTICS  
BY RUPERT MORRISON**



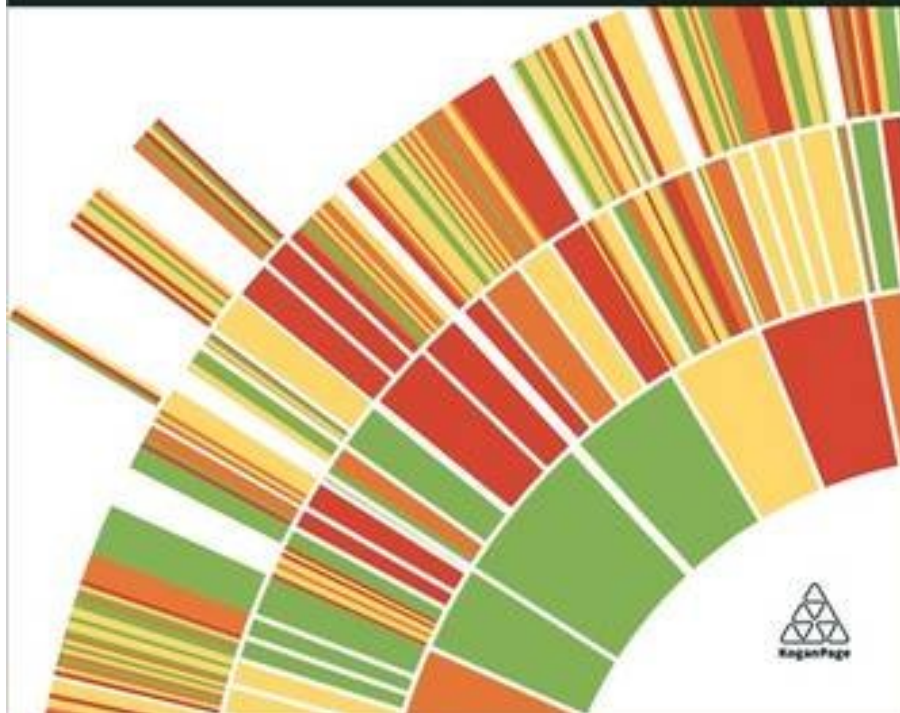
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# DATA-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION DESIGN

*Sustaining the competitive edge  
through organizational analytics*

RUPERT MORRISON



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"The book felt quite positive and jaunty, despite being a clearly specialist, focussed read. It is worthy of significant consideration!"

(Darren Ingram Autamme.com)

"Morrison's dashing and enthusiastic style persuasively makes the case for using good data analytics as the basis for successful organization design. He confidently leads the reader through the process bringing his own experiences as supporting examples of the value of data. It's not all numbers. He doesn't forget the politics and culture stuff at play contending that data helps in working with these aspects of complex organizational design. It's a book now on my 'recommend' list." (Naomi Stanford, PhD. Organisation Design Consultant)

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"Rupert Morrison has produced an important contribution to the field of organization design and organization effectiveness. ...Data-Driven Organization Design approaches the subject from the vantage point of Stratum IV, that level of managerial work often called general management where strategy is translated into practical operations, where various functional work processes like sales and manufacturing and customer service need to be balanced and integrated. This is the great strength of the book. Starting with the foundations that the organization is a system, that organizational data are hierarchical, and that organization data are messy, he shows how use of data and analytics can build persuasive business cases for improvement. He links strategy with structural options and shows practical ways of aligning objectives with performance, designing for fixed processes and for dynamic processes like projects. ...I recommend Data-Driven Organization Design to those seriously interested in the field." (Donald V. Fowke FCMC Chairman, Global Organization Design Society)

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#### About the Author

Rupert Morrison is a management consultant turned entrepreneur; he is the co-founder of Concentra, which was named the most innovative technology firm by The Sunday Times. He also created OrgVue, an integrated software platform for organization design, HR analytics, and strategic workforce planning.

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Organizational design practitioners face challenges gathering data to help focus and implement design, understanding the complex nature of organizations, and communicating and sustaining change over a long period of time. Data-driven Organization Design seeks to overcome these challenges, showing how to collect meaningful data and link it to business performance data. Through the use of case studies, practical tips, and sample exercises, the book explains how to:

- Map an organization by creating and connecting hierarchies and taxonomies
- Link ad-hoc organizational processes to ongoing workforce planning
- Apply new analytical approaches to project planning and management, risk management, and competencies

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

A Contribution to the Field of Organization Design

By Donald V. Fowke

Rupert Morrison has produced an important contribution to the field of organization design and organization effectiveness. This book focuses on practical implementation of design with an emphasis on data and analytics. Morrison, who is Managing Director at Concentra, which boasts, "We transform how organisations manage and use data to get the edge" previously had a 15 year stint with A. T Kearney. He comes at the subject with a feel for both sides of the desk, both advisor and manager.

I look at this book from the point of view of someone steeped in levels of work and levels of capability, the aspect of organization design known as Requisite Organization or Stratified Systems Theory. Morrison addresses the ideas of levels of capability favourably in a chapter on talent management, succession development and succession planning. It is clear to me that the other side of the coin, levels of work, would have strengthened many other parts of this useful and comprehensive book. But I don't fault Morrison for this, because he has only recently become exposed to this stratified thinking. I can relate to his experience, as

I was involved deeply in organization design and effectiveness consulting for thirty years before I was exposed to the pioneering work of Elliott Jaques. It has since revolutionized my own work, and I am sure will have the same effect on Morrison in the future.

Data Driven Organization Design approaches the subject from the vantage point of Stratum IV, that level of managerial work often called general management where strategy is translated into practical operations, where various functional work processes like sales and manufacturing and customer service need to be balanced and integrated. This is the great strength of the book.

Starting with the foundations that the organization is a system, that organizational data are hierarchical, and that organization data are messy, he shows how use of data and analytics can build persuasive business cases for improvement. He links strategy with structural options and shows practical ways of aligning objectives with performance, designing for fixed processes and for dynamic processes like projects. With these linkages he is illustrating how Stratum III functional processes can be articulated, scoped and agreed by various stakeholders. Morrison has a keen sense of people and the need to make use of data and analytics in ways to help rational decision-making where emotions run high.

Morrison holds out hope that HR data can be strengthened with improved competency management. A much more disciplined approach to competency is called for, he asserts, because so much of what is done in this area is ineffectual, an assessment with which I agree. Morrison provides a very useful insight into “rightsizing”, based on ratio analysis, activity analysis driver analysis, and for the really challenging situations, mathematical modeling.

I found the final section of the book, “Making it Real”, the strongest. It reflects the author’s depth of experience in making things work in practice implementing changes. I liked his workforce planning and talent management ideas. His sense of practicality, along with a creative flair for graphically visualizing data mark a very important contribution to the field of organization design, effectiveness and change.

I am delighted that he has discovered the concepts of levels of work. If he can apply this new insight more broadly it would both simplify and strengthen what he knows and presents so ably. It would not take much to align his concept of transactional, operational and strategic onto the distinctions between Stratum I, II, III and IV, and this framework would serve as a structure for so much of what has presented in this fine book. I would hope he would find other RO insights also helpful in simplifying and integrating his work. For example, the idea that it is a manager who is accountable for the work of the employee would greatly strengthen his work on accountability.

I recommend Data Driven Organization Design to those seriously interested in the field.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

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By Jan-Åke Karlsson

Data Driven Organization Design:

Sustaining the competitive edge through organizational analytics

By Rupert Morrison

Review by Jan-Åke Karlsson, Senior Partner at Enhancer Consulting.

“Data Driven Organization Design” by Rupert Morrison is an interesting new entry to the line of management literature dealing with organization effectiveness. The book links organization development both from what the author calls macro level and the more detailed micro level, all the while, underlining the



importance of seeing the organization as one holistic system.

The major portion of this book deals with short and long term (HR) process structure build up as the platform for “Data Driven Organization Design”. The author provides approaches, methodologies and tools across the line for planning, implementing and follow up similar to Six Sigma and the like, a vast tool box presented in an easy to read way. Approaches for cascading the strategic focus areas, like Objective Management, MECE, and getting it right with individuals, the Flow Model (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi) provide additional support for clarity in roles.

Given the focus of the book the author still suggests a sound relationship towards data -- “Data collection must be backed by deep understanding of multiple connections between people, roles, skills and activities”. In particular I think this is true in all those organizational change projects that are taking place in big corporations, with extremely tight time schedules, in their constant adaption to changing market conditions.

The book offers corporate HR specialists a number of useful perspectives and extensive practical advice. The author builds on extensive experience dealing with real situations in companies, discussing needs for tradeoffs and balancing acts that all executives experience as a way to handle complexity in interdependencies of all kinds. Particularly this is true at the end of the book (Making it Real) when the author presents approaches regarding challenges in getting support for suggested changes among employees, and their need for clear understanding of their role in the perspective of the total.

I read the book from the perspective of my experiences as a company executive and 10 years as a senior consultant working primarily at the macro level for international companies using Elliot Jaques’s science-based Stratified Systems Theory. It’s my view that this work would benefit from a closer linkage with Dr Jaques’s work, referenced under the heading Talent Management (Time Span Handbook) where the author also presents “stratum levels”.

In my view, using the RO/SST would provide a tighter and more relevant link between strategy and organizational structure as well as for clarify in roles and staffing. Requisite Organization/Stratified Systems Theory has the benefit of clarifying what defines the different levels of complexity (strata role/individual) of work, and the importance of the relationship (role/individual) between manager and subordinate as the core of any organizational structure, using time to define complexity for what has to be achieved for the company as a whole as well as for each role/individual aligned in a systemic approach to become effective. Using the levels of work complexity approach would avoid some of the unnecessary hurdles in organizational design in the current book and diminish or resolve others.

Who should read this book? I think HR managers and professionals, managers and analysts in planning and process development functions as well as executives who would like to know more about how the HR function could be developed would benefit from reading this book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Integrating and IT Enabling Organization Design

By Fred Cheyunski

Since I have been interested in organizational modeling for some time, it was edifying to get ahold of Morrison’s book where he ties together all the elements of a data driven approach to organization design.

Many of us have been conducting the different aspects of organization design manually, aided by MS Excel, PowerPoint and/or with business process modeling tools, but Morrison shows how these parts can be integrated with new platforms such as graph data bases.

Some of my favorite parts of book include, Foundations and Core Concepts (Part 1) particularly such as those pertaining to “Creating Hierarchical Data Structures” (pg. 37), “Connecting the System” (pg. 40), and “Visualizing to Analyze” (pg. 46) and other segments that emphasize these aspects (e.g. pgs. 118, 146).

While particular strengths of the book come into play around the detailed baselining and micro design (Part

3), Morrison has chapters that address a typical sequence involving macro design (Part 2) and implementation and ongoing operational considerations (Part 4).

Other books may be more complete in their respective areas such as:

Kaplan and Norton's "Strategy Maps: Converting Intangible Assets into Tangible Outcomes"  
[https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R17YZPW5HWITDQ?ref\\_=glimp\\_1rv\\_cl](https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R17YZPW5HWITDQ?ref_=glimp_1rv_cl)

Galbraith and Kates' "Designing Your Organization: Using the STAR Model to Solve 5 Critical Design Challenges" [https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R3G45CFM5PHG2F?ref\\_=glimp\\_1rv\\_cl](https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R3G45CFM5PHG2F?ref_=glimp_1rv_cl)

Malone's "Organizing Business Knowledge: The MIT Process Handbook"  
[https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R1NI5ZMQB7Z8QB?ref\\_=glimp\\_1rv\\_cl](https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R1NI5ZMQB7Z8QB?ref_=glimp_1rv_cl)

or Moore's "Escape Velocity: Free Your Company's Future from the Pull of the Past"  
[https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R3JHFGFF101RJD?ref\\_=glimp\\_1rv\\_cl](https://www.amazon.com/gp/review/R3JHFGFF101RJD?ref_=glimp_1rv_cl) .

However, this book covers the organization design "waterfront" and provides the type of framework required to bring all the various aspects together so they can be used in a concerted fashion. This kind of capability provides the basis for what some have called a "built to change" organization.

Along the way Morrison includes such aspects as competency management and rightsizing, then deals extensively with the practicalities of "how it will work in practice." Emphasizing throughout that organization design is a continuing journey, he deals with workforce planning, talent management, and additional matters involved with getting things done and sustaining over time.

For strong case support, many visual and "how to" examples, read Morrison's book for help in making progress in integrating and IT enabling organization design.

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