Facilitating with Technology

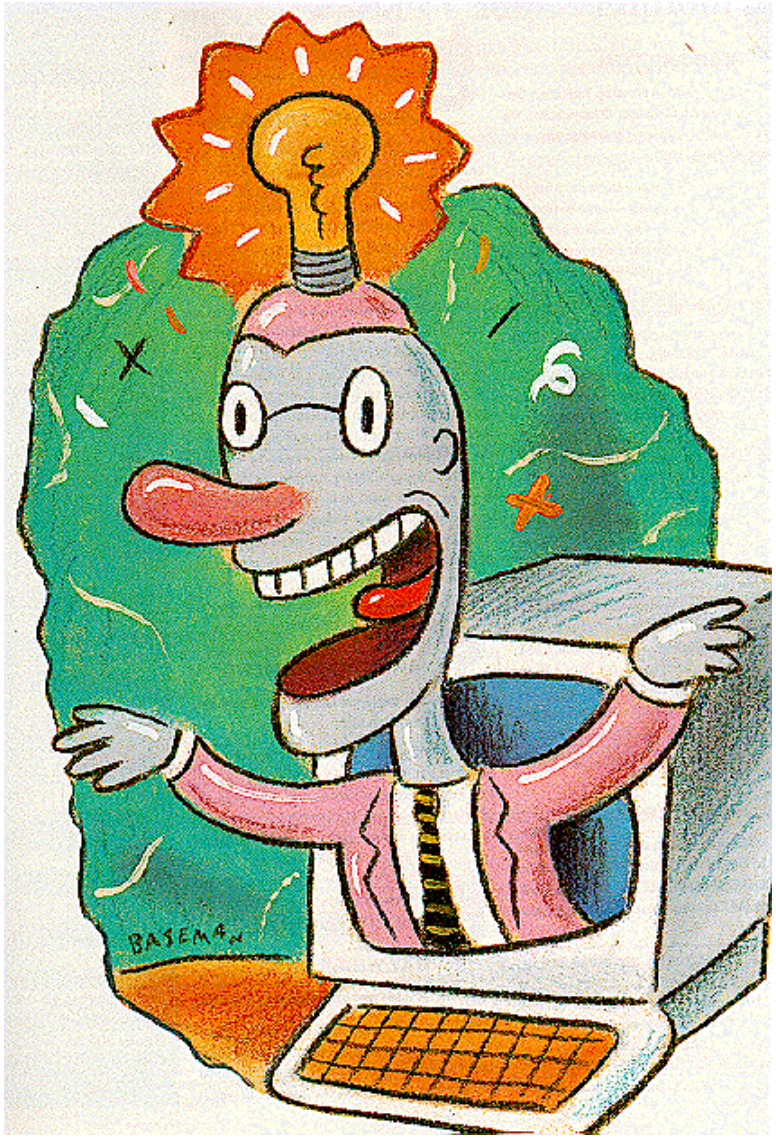
Busting the Myths
Unveiling the Mysteries
Understanding the Means

Robert O. Briggs, Ph.D.

GroupSystems.com

Center for the Management of Information, UofAZ

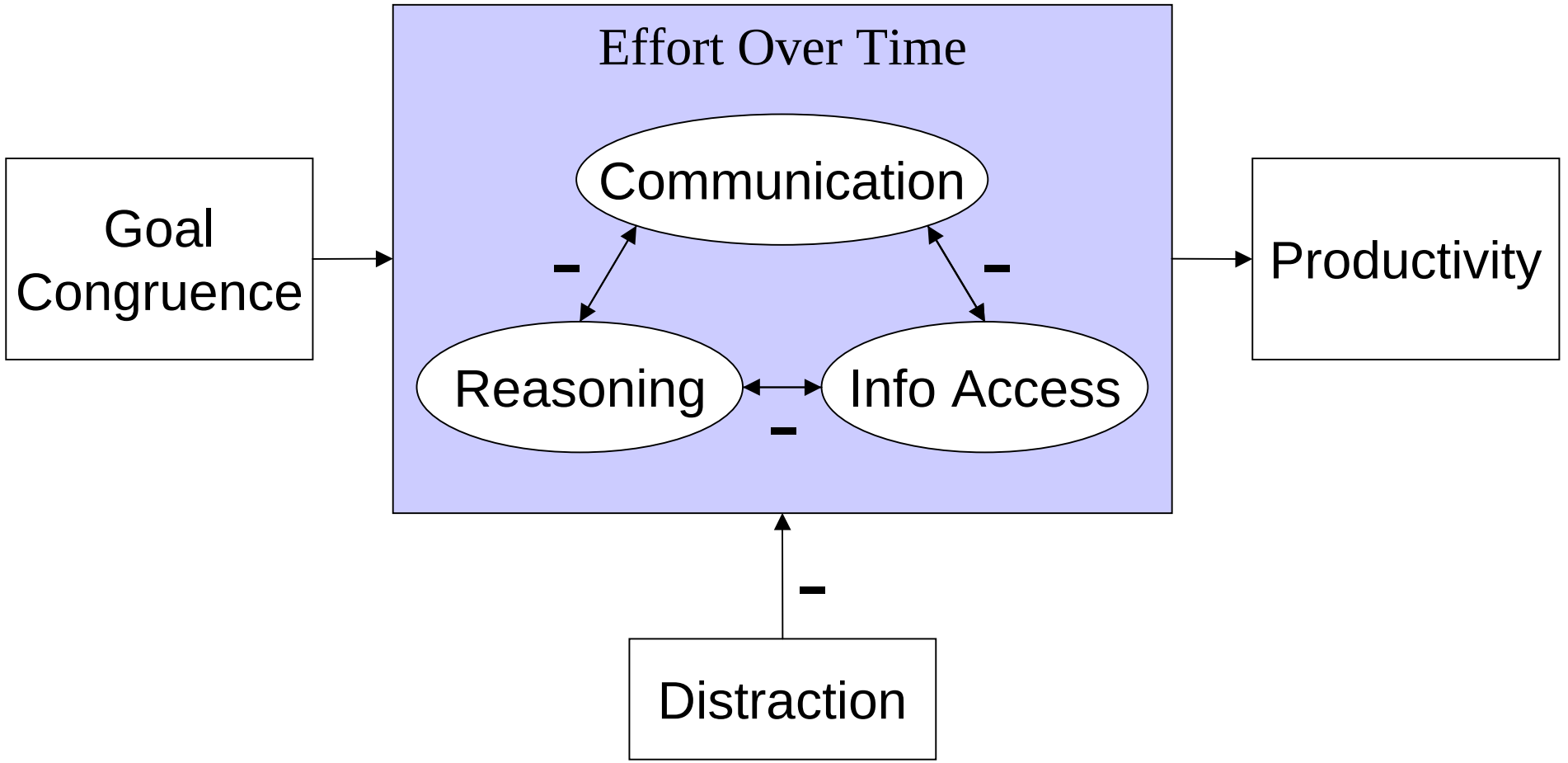
You'd have to have to be brain-dead to use computers in a meeting!



Topics of Discussion

- **Why facilitate with technology?**
  - **The roots of group productivity**
  - **The role of the facilitator**
  - **The role of technology**
  - **Client trends**
- **Myths**
- **Mysteries**
- **Understanding the means**
- **The facilitator's highest calling**

The Roots of Productivity



The Role of the Facilitator

- **Design a process**
- **Based on predictable group dynamics**
- **Monitor and intervene to enhance**
  - **Communication**
  - **Reasoning**
  - **Information access**
  - **Goal congruence**
- **To assure the group achieves it's goal**

Design a Process…

<u>Goal Attainment Process</u>
Understand the Problem - Develop alternatives
Evaluate Alternatives - Make a choice
Make a plan

…Based on Predictable Group Dynamics

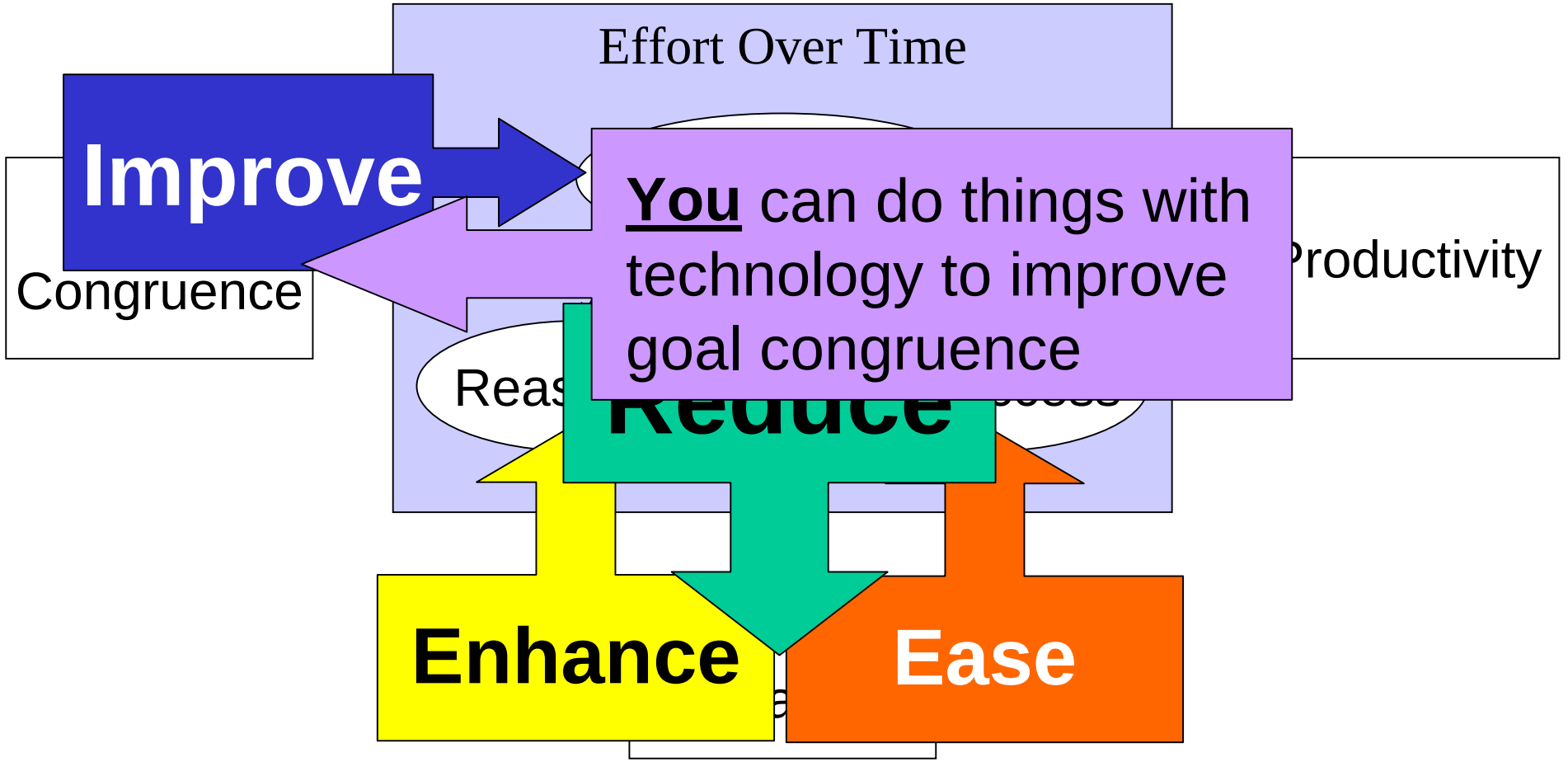
Goal Attainment Process

Understand the Problem - Develop alternatives
Evaluate Alternatives - Make a choice
Make a plan

Group Dynamics

Diverge – Converge
Organize – Elaborate
Agree

The Role of Technology in Facilitation



Group Dynamics Techniques

- **A combination of technology and talk**
- **Creates a pattern of group interaction**
  - **Repeatablely**
  - **Reliably**
  - **Predictably**

Hands-on with GroupSystems

- Electronic Brain-writing Divergence
- FastFocus Convergence
- Crowbar Consensus
- Popcorn Sort Converge/Organize
- Bucket Walk Consensus
- Point-Counterpoint Impasse Breaker

Busting the Myths

- **The tyranny of the technical**
- **Technology indicates illness**
- **Instant information overload**
- **Too, too, too hard**
- **You can be replaced by a button**

Myth # 1

The Tyranny of the Technical

Technology is cold

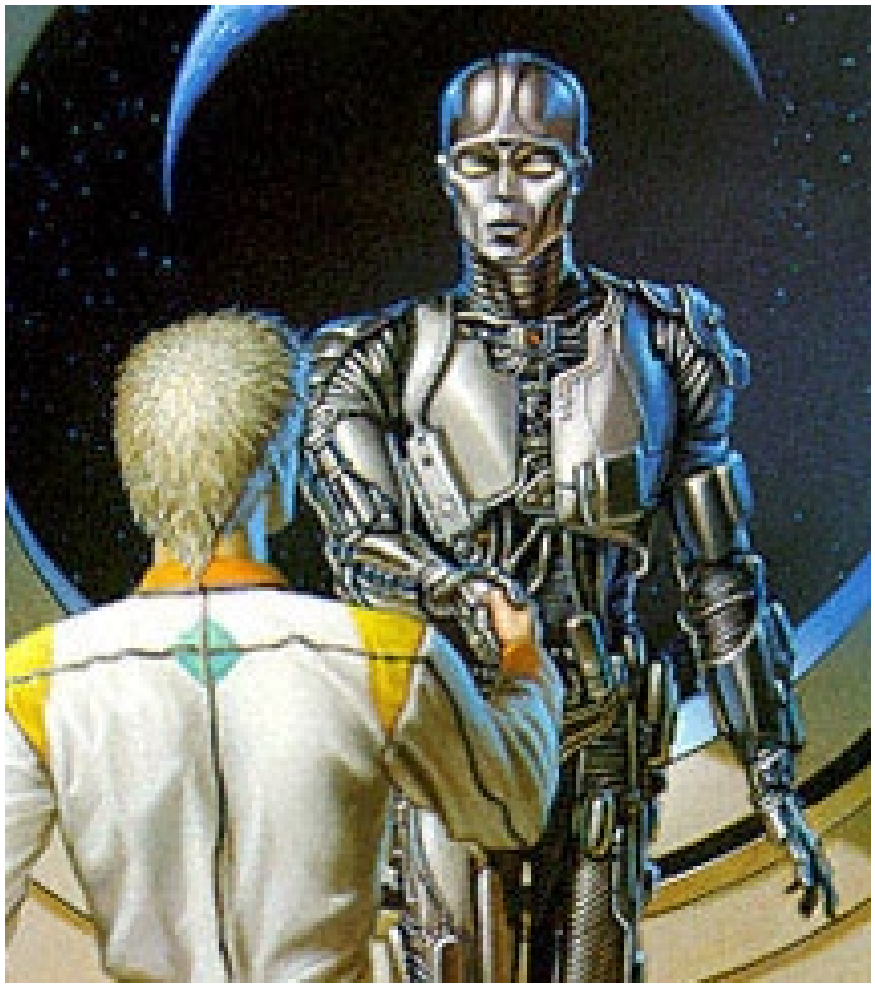
Technology makes people feel distant from each other

Technology is unresponsive to individual needs and shifting group dynamics

It creates barriers between people

People engage the computers instead of each other

Technology is artificial and low-touch



Technology dominates the environment

Technology removes the human element

Fact #1

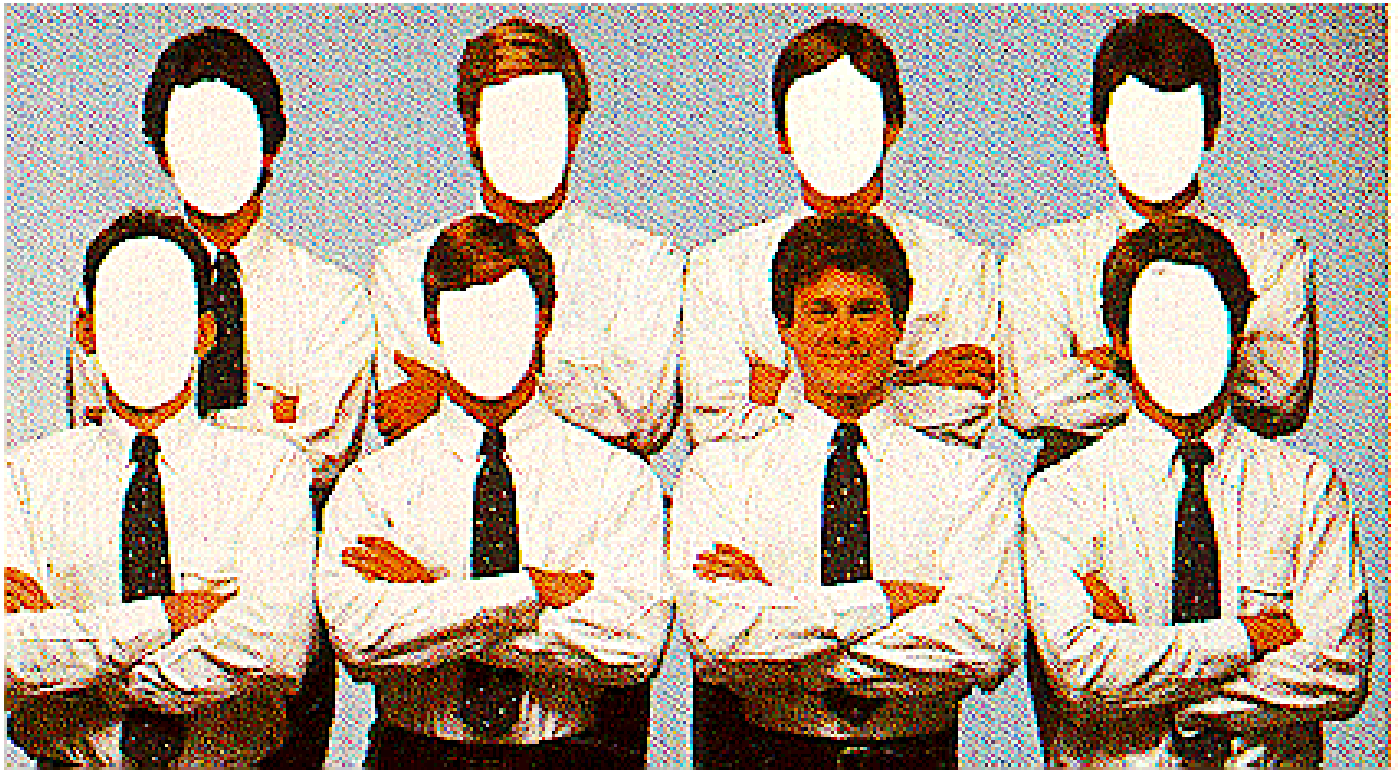
<u>You</u> design processes so that people engage *one another* through the computers.

Myth # 2

Technology Indicates Illness

We don't need anonymity. We are all open and honest.

I don’t trust anybody who can't tell it to my face

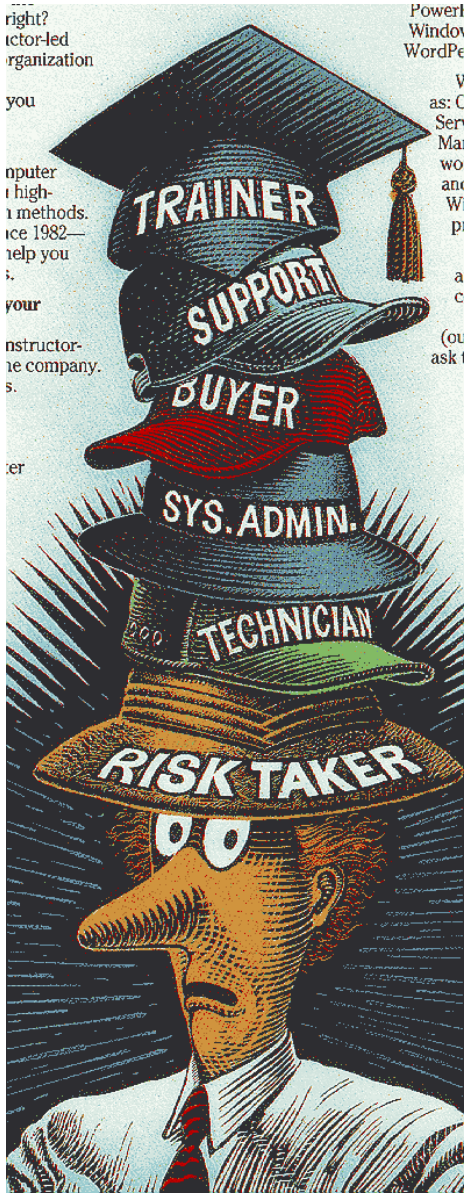


I didn't get to be an executive by being anonymous

We don’t vote here, we arrive at a natural consensus

We don't need participation.
I already know what my people think

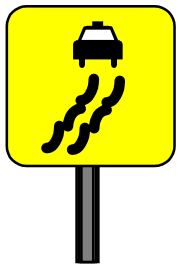
I am paid to make decisions!

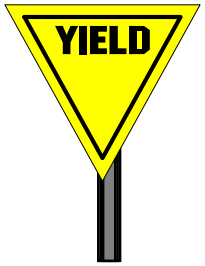


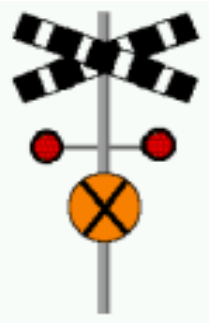
Why would I want to involve others in the process?

Technology Indicates Illness

Structure is unnatural and constraining!







Fact #2

- **People with robust, functional relationships gain cognitive, social, political, and economic benefit by using facilitation technology**

Myth # 3

You Can Be Replaced by a Button

- **You’re trying to substitute computers for thinking**
- **If you have technology you don’t need a facilitator**

Fact #3

- **Technology is no substitute for facilitation**

Myth # 4
Too, Too, Too Hard

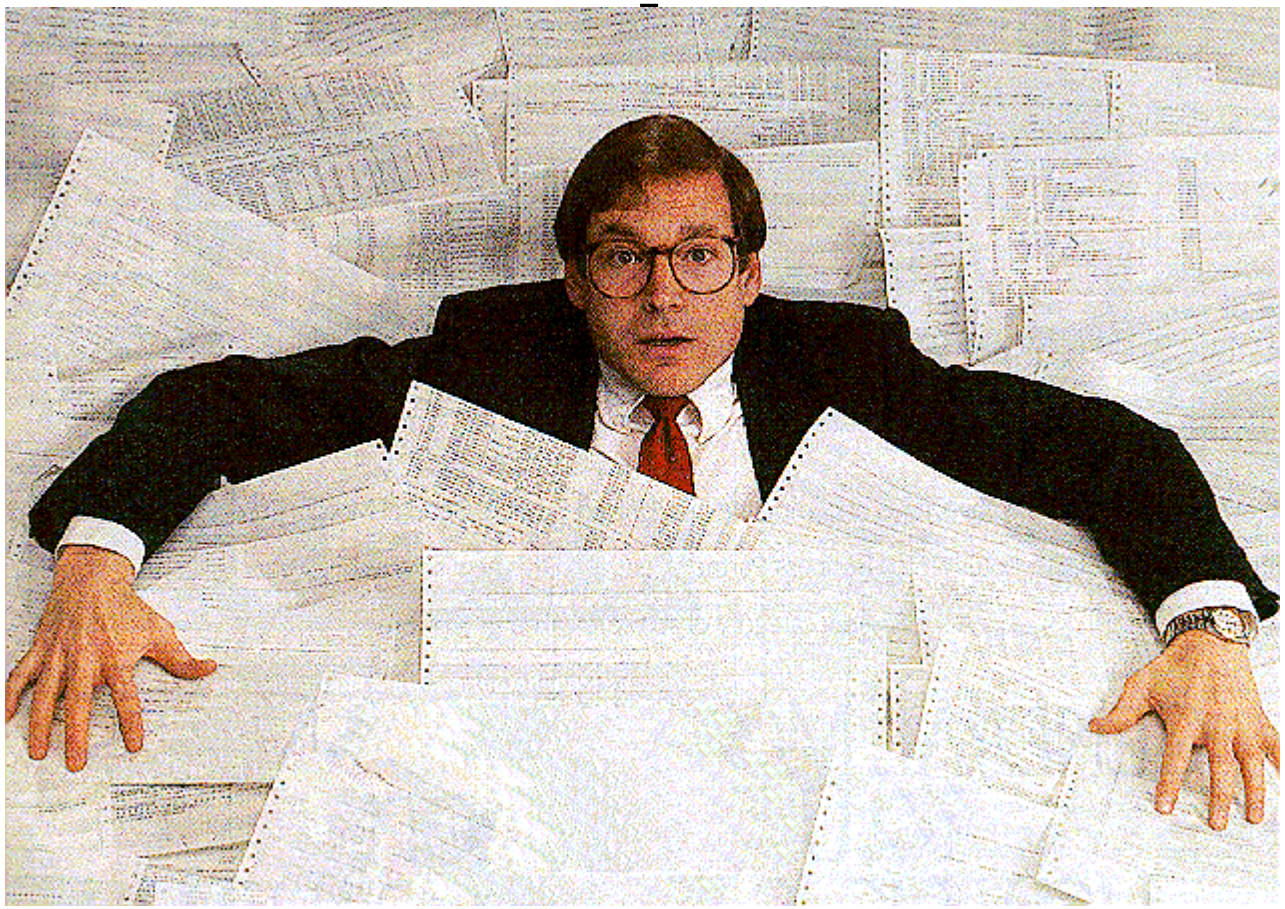
Real Executives won’t use keyboards

Fact # 4

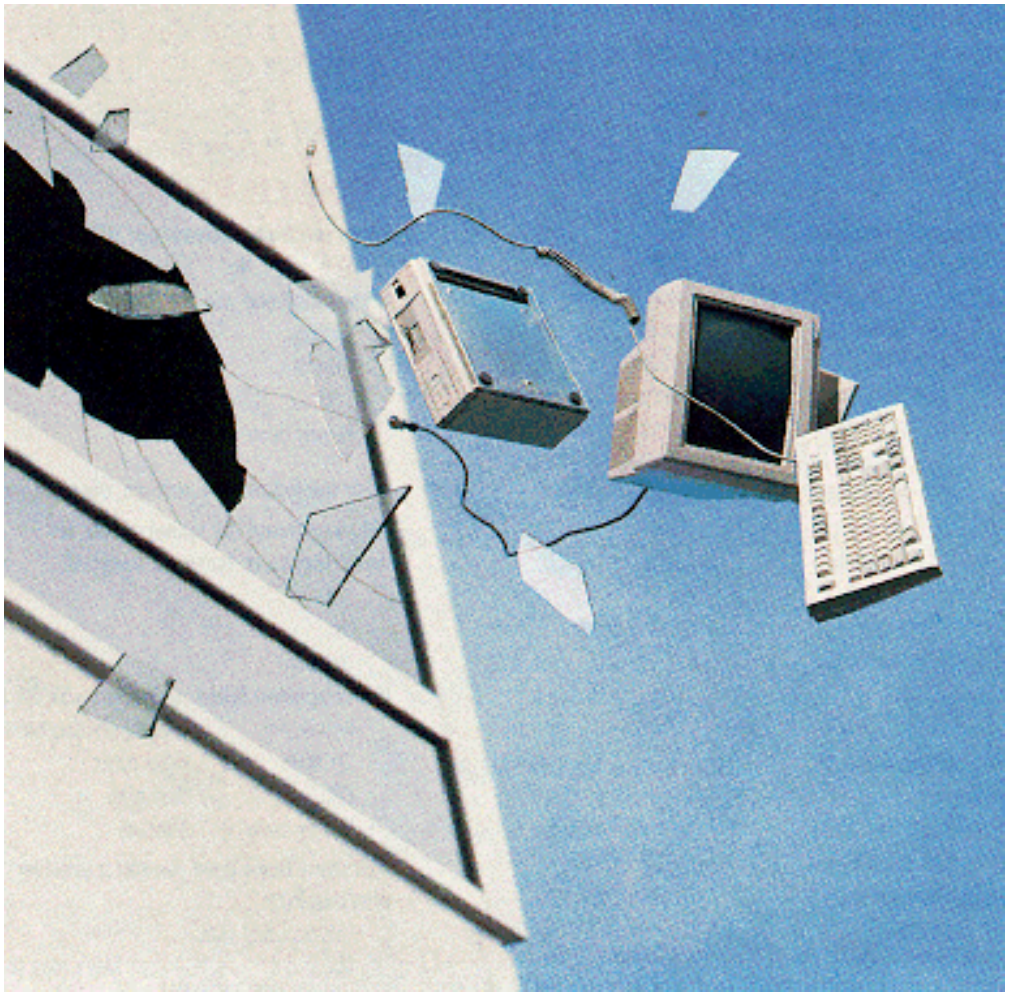
- **Fifth-graders do it**
- **Retired Admirals do it**
- **Non-typists do it**
- **Factory workers do it**
- **CEOs do it**
- **Grammar school teachers do it.**
- **IT’S EASY! (except…)**

Myth # 5

Instant Information Overload



Can't take time to write, read, and evaluate all those ideas

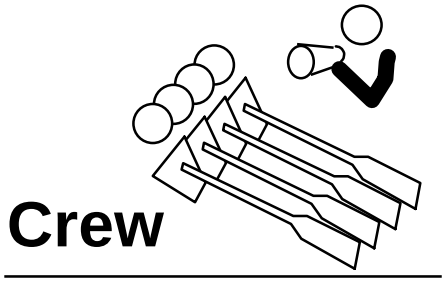


I don't have time to play with computers

I don’t have time to stop for gas, I’ve got to push this car down to the railroad station to pick up my mother

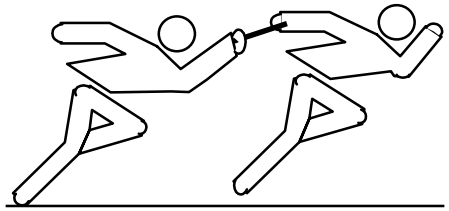
Understanding the Means

Three Levels of Collaborative Effort



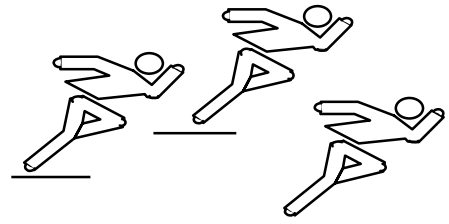
Crew

Concerted Effort:
All must contribute simultaneously



Relay

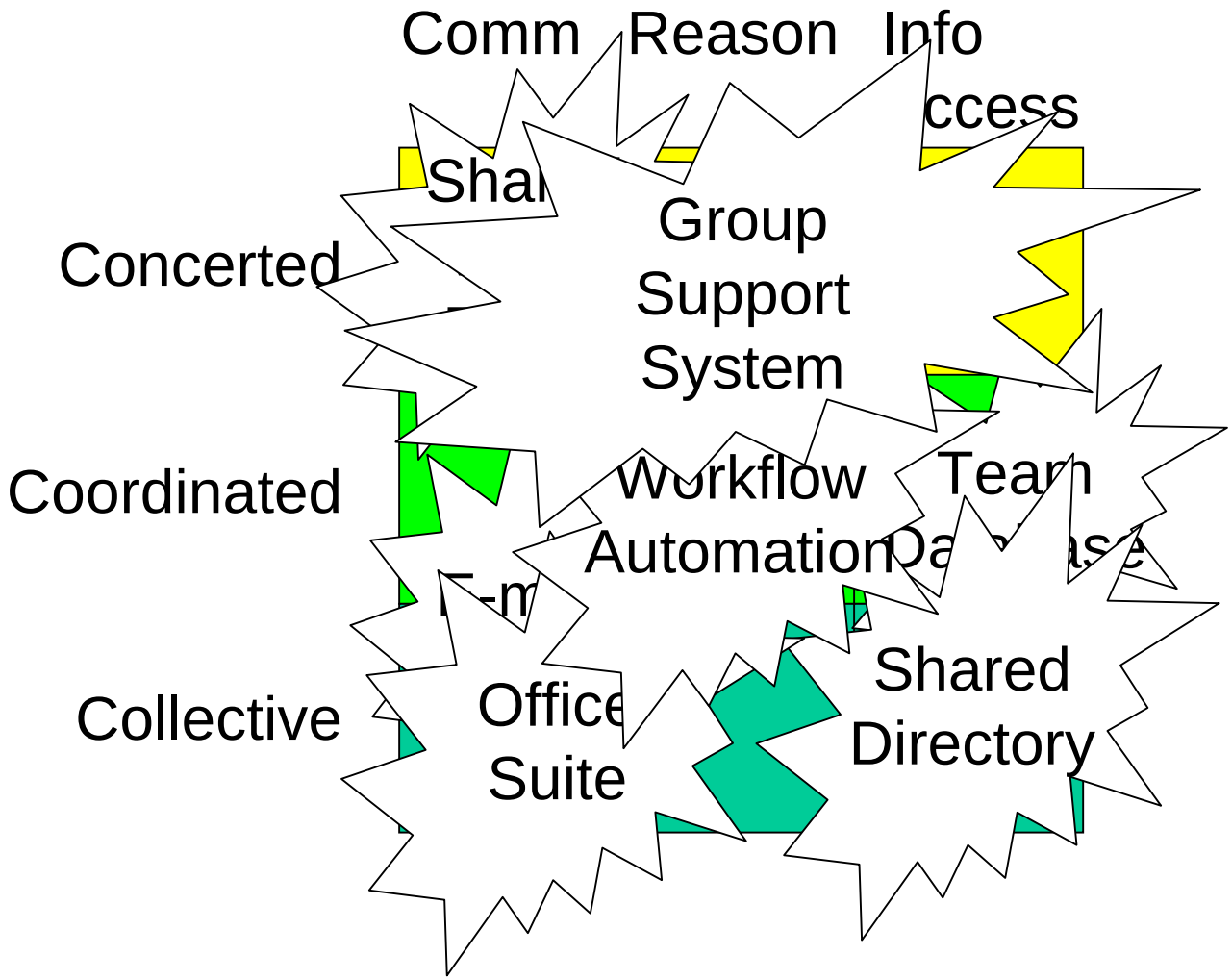
Coordinated Effort:
Independent effort, critical hand-offs

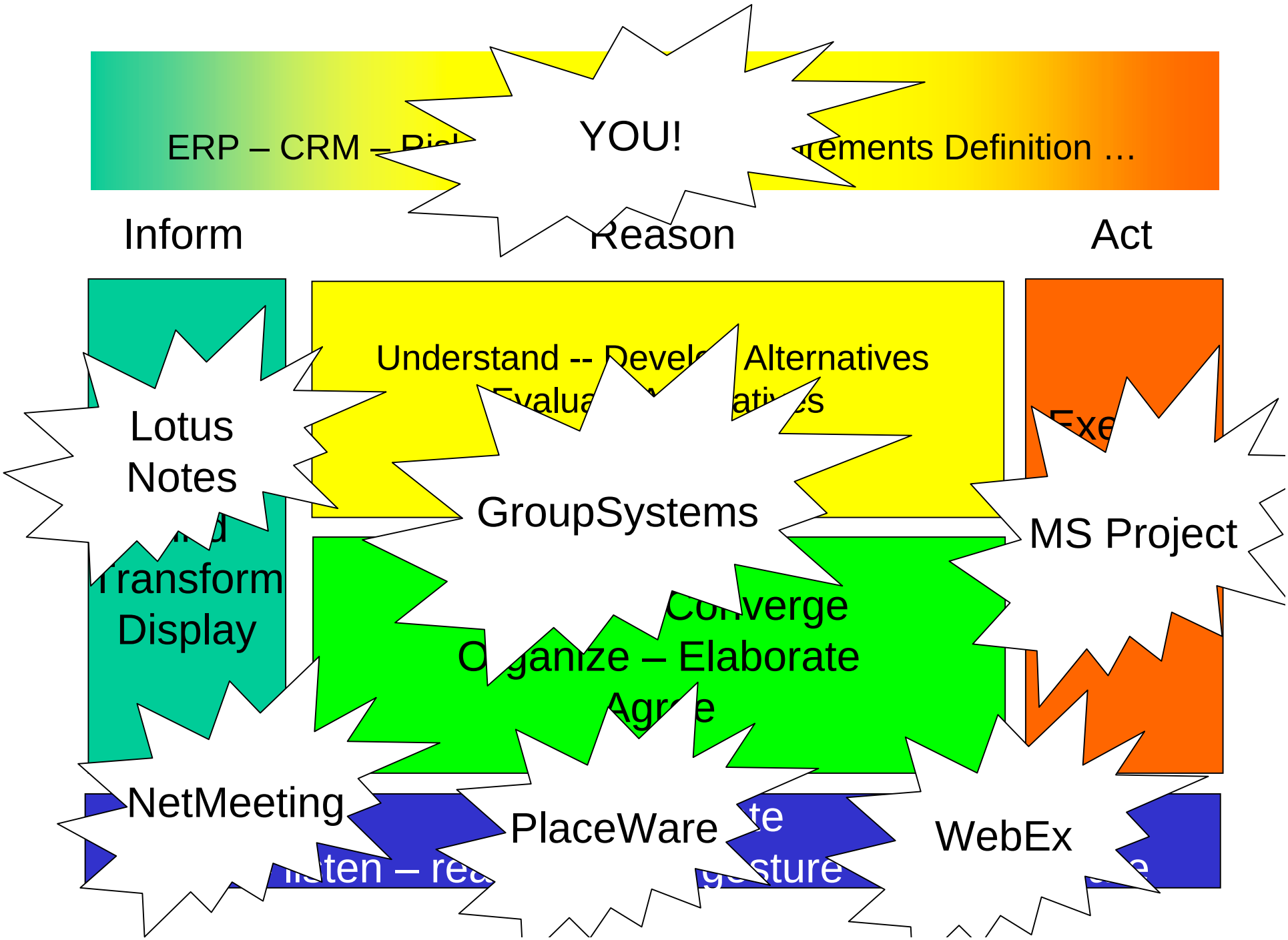


Sprinters

Collective Effort:
Uncoordinated Individual Effort

The GroupWare Grid




ERP – CRM – Risk
YOU!
rements Definition …
Inform
Reason
Act
Lotus Notes
Understand -- Develo Alternatives
Evalua ati s
Exe
GroupSystems
MS Project
nd
ransform
Display
Converge
Organize – Elaborate
Agr e
NetMeeting
PlaceWare
te
WebEx
listen – rea
gesture

Results

- **50% reduction of client labor hours**
- **75 - 90% reduction of client calendar days**
- **10 X detail in**
  - **Requirements**
  - **Designs**
  - **Plans**
- **Client $$$ saved**

One Opportunity

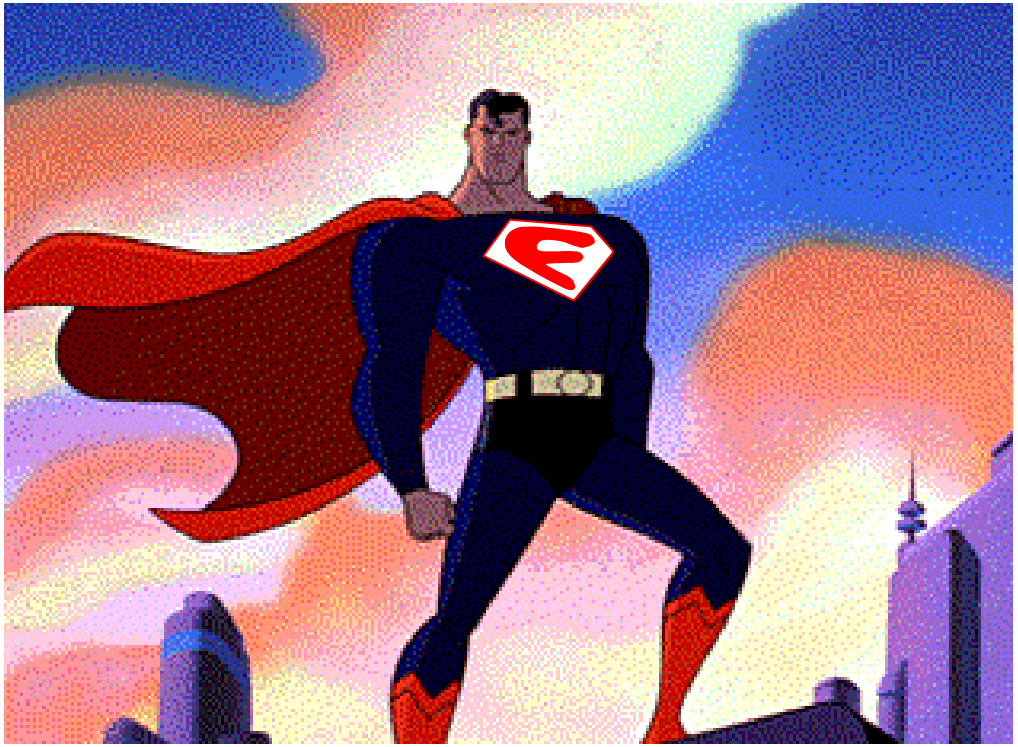
- **E-business will be $2 trillion by 2002**
- **The biggest barrier to e-business implementation is…**
  - **Lack of standard methods and processes**
- **Facilitator/consultants (YOU!) hold the key**

Your Prices Are About to Go Up

- **Your customer is going on line without you**
- **Your customer doesn’t know how to productively collaborate online**

Consider This…

- **Facilitator/consultants can be the superheroes of cyberspace**



The Facilitator's Highest Calling

- **The Leave-behind process**
  - **Teach a man to fish…**
  - **Make money in your sleep**

What to Check When You Buy

- **Time-metered service (so you can make money in your sleep)**
- **Database Integrity**
- **Chronological Integrity**
- **Information Hiding – Drill down**
- **Drag-and-drop organizing**
- **Variety of Group Dynamics**

Take Home Messages

- **Technology can be a powerful tool in the hands of a good facilitator**
- **Your clients are going on line, and they need you**
- **Earn money while you're not working – the leave behind process**

Questions?

- **bbriggs@groupsystems.com**
- **www.groupsystems.com**

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