In a world where change is constant, how can we protect our system designs from degrading? A special learning event which tackled the question of migration patterns and immigration issues provides a process for determining when design changes are beneficial rather than serving to undermine intended outcomes.

Anticipate Design Corruption

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System design principles are evident throughout our world as was made clear during a recent learning experience. The principle at hand was the corruption of original system design—either inherent in the design itself (unintended consequences) or through post-operational actions (be they haphazard or purposeful in nature). The corruption of the original design became obvious and ranged from societal systems design to project design and all the way to individual life planning. More importantly, the need to anticipate system corruption became apparent.

A gathering of primarily European quality and performance professionals has explored challenging issues since 1999 during experiential learning events known as summer camps. This year, we took time to examine global human migration. We met in the city of Marseille, France, a historical migration point into Europe.

Summer camp participants are challenged to move beyond objective learning and into the "picture" associated with the event's focus. In this case, not only were the facts and realities of world migration considered, but the empathetic learnings about

human migration and individual transformative change were also explored. Three layers of exploration were made available—societal, project/organizational, and individual, and the corruption of original designs was evident in each of these layers.

Societal Considerations

Human migration has many causes, but a simplified view focuses on two primary groups of people—those moving for a better life (voluntary displacement, including work, social environment, family reasons) and those forced to relocate (involuntary displacement, including war and asylum-seeking reasons). Global data and trends indicate that movement within the country of birth comprises most migration. Fewer people cross country boundaries, and of these, most remain within the same region. The World Migration Report for 2018 estimated that there are 244 million migrants globally. This number represents 3.3 percent of the world's population, and this level has remained fairly steady for the past 50 years.[1]

Certainly human migration is an extensive and important matter. The laws and procedures that govern legal and illegal movement differ by country. A dynamic world is challenging the original designs of these systems. The question is the adaptability of country systems to handle the pressures of migration. Organizations, such as The International Organization for Migration, work to ensure both respect for human dignity and orderly processes. The cries from the United States and Europe, the two principal recipients of out-of-country migrants, express frustrations related to broken systems. The agility to meet the challenges of today's migrants seem to be in question.

There appear to be several pertinent system-wide inquiries needed. What are these democracies doing in terms of legislating fixes for the original designs or moving forward with redesigns? Have the different political environments caused common-sense reforms to be set aside? Why are there not more generative conversations concerning immigration instead of fault-finding discussions? Given the complexity of the migration issues, why are overly simplistic answers being pushed? Finally, what are the payoffs for suspending the search for system-level remedies and living with the current dysfunctional approaches? These questions generate an immediate response that the original designs have been corrupted and are no longer useful.

Project/Organization Considerations

The setting for summer camp is an important factor in the learning process. Marseille has been a migration gateway from northern Africa to Europe and is France's second largest city, making it an ideal location for this event. The city has undergone many changes through the years, but from its Greek origin until today, it always has served as a center of trade and industry.

Also, the space in which the event participants gather has importance to our experience. We stayed and met in the small Hotel Le Corbusier, which is housed in the 300-plus-unit apartment complex named Cité radieuse. Cité radieuse is a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Heritage Site built between 1947–1952. The architect was the Swiss-French born Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (1887–1965), known as Le Corbusier. After World War II, a time of great migration and reconstruction occurred within Europe, Le Corbusier was commissioned to design an apartment building which included interior shops, a children's nursery school, recreational facilities, and restaurants.[2] A great deal has been written about his unique and innovative design of this building, which added context to its selection as the event site.

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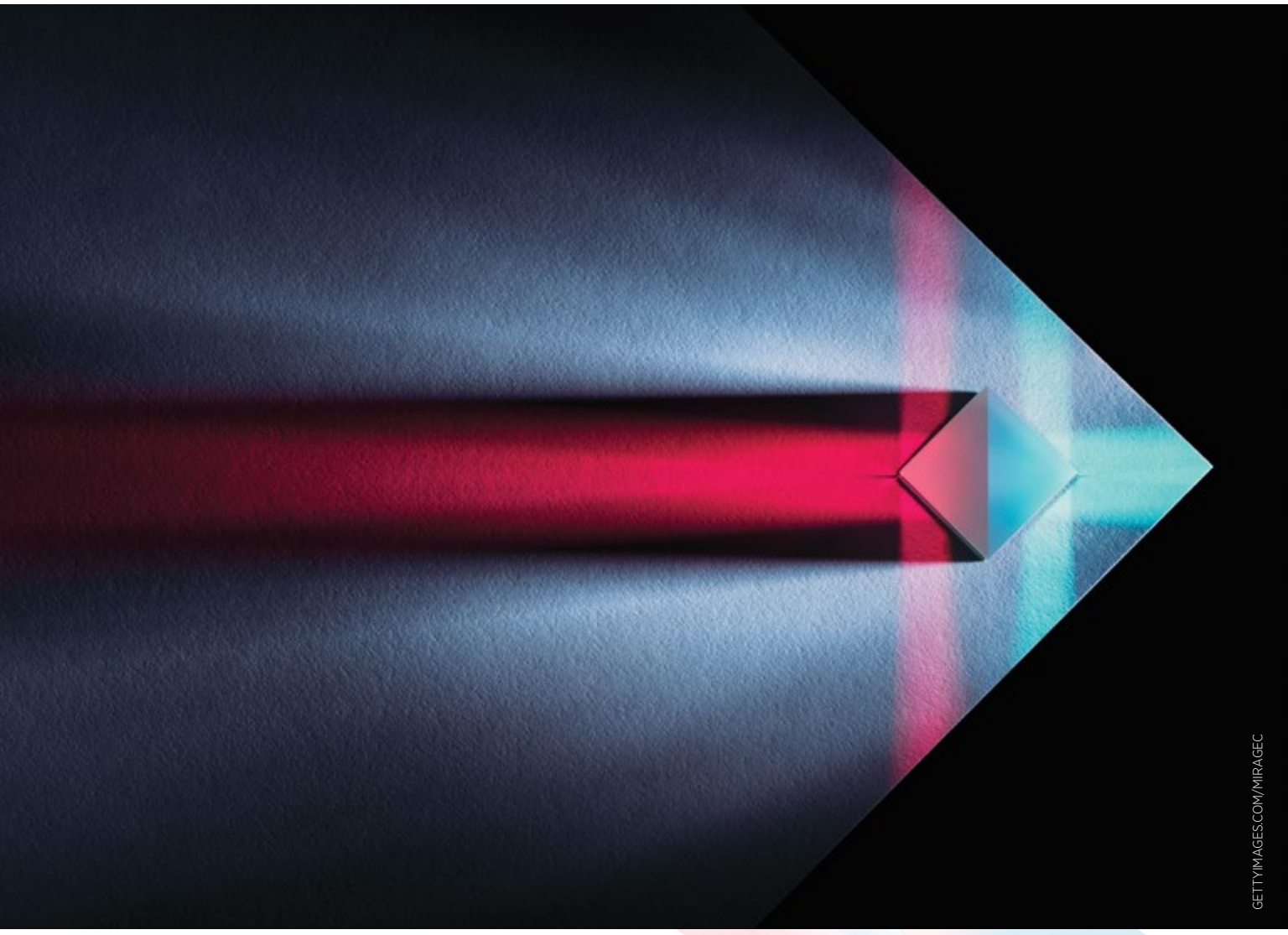
A key aspect of Le Corbusier's design, as it is with architecture in general, was lighting. The vast hallways in Cité radieuse were intended to represent streets in a village. As such, the lighting was designed to be subdued with individual lighting of doors that would be painted in different primary colors. This combination creates a specific optical effect when looking down the darkened hall. Each residential door appears to be lit in full with vibrant colors emanating down the hallway.

The current reality, however, showed that the original design has been corrupted in two ways. First, the addition of brightly lighted exit signs and other electronic lighting has created a different effect than the originally intended design. Although these modifications were required for safety reasons and changing building codes, the impact on the original design is now apparent. Furthermore, maintenance throughout the many decades has corrupted the original design with the installation of lights of different intensities and types, as well having some burned out lights. These deviations from the original design appear to be unintentional and haphazard in nature.

Questions obviously arise regarding the severity of the architect's design corruption. If the building occupants and Marseille avow the importance of Le Corbusier's design, then why has the lighting drifted? Have the lighting changes been significant enough to cause a substantial impact? Should there be a process to evaluate future lighting design changes in order



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to avoid continuing corruption? Although design corruption is to be expected, evaluations and performance checks seem to be in order to prevent excessive gaps from the original design intentions from occurring.

Individual Considerations

It may seem strange to some people that a life can have a design plan, but similar to other systems, human effectiveness is enhanced when there is a plan. It should not be a surprise that a leader with a personal purpose, vision, and values is more proficient in leading others.[3] Leading self involves a plan—a design for a meaningful life. Drifting through life is an option but not one that is likely to succeed.

When summer camp participants gathered in Marseille, time was incorporated into the process for individuals to update and share their life journeys. The calm and rough seas of life certainly were exciting aspects of the participants' stories, but the need to have substantial rudders and centerboards were the critical common features that emerged. Resiliency and perseverance born out of a strong sense of being were clearly heard. Of course, life does happen with unintended and haphazard corruptive forces occurring in abundance and disrupting the originally intended plan. Having a life design, however, allows for corruptive influences to be identified and appropriate corrective actions implemented to restore the original course or to adapt to a new path by choice, rather than be at the mercy of external forces.

Questions concerning corruption of a life plan involve ascertaining if life is turning out as envisioned. Age and maturity typically have an impact on a person's original life design,

changing the associated wants and needs. Has the original life design evolved with increased understanding of self? Do some childhood/young adult desires continue to drive action? Is there learning from others that might help in updating the life plan and then aid in keeping the person on track? Are learning and guidance available from another source that provide a platform for faithfully adopting a new design?

Implications

Deviations from original system design are to be expected. When addressing a large societal system, conducting an ongoing review of system performance compared to the original design is prudent. Having the political will and wisdom to alter the design is a necessity given the dynamic nature of society, as demonstrated by the summer camp's learning experience related to migration systems. In discrete projects, such as architectural projects, there is much to learn when investigating intentional versus haphazard drifts from original designs. Certainly, these learnings can be applied to future system designs to increase effectiveness. In both large systems and individual projects, harvesting such learnings requires time, effort, patience, observation, and non-judgmental inquiry, which all seem to be in short supply when many issues are discussed and changes proposed.

On the personal level, an original life direction (as anchored with a life plan) is certainly open to corruption. As a personal vision is enacted, external forces impact its manifestation. Recognizing these forces is important, followed by an evaluation of both the desired design and a decision whether to take corrective actions, and, if so, what actions should be initiated. The performance criteria for "living a life of meaning" can shift with time. What was fun, important, and consequential to a person in his or her 20s can be very different at age 60.

Recommendations

Being prepared for the corruption of the original design is a wise move for large systems, projects, and individual plans in a changing world that can lead to corrupted designs incidentally or intentionally. A review of the original design criteria against current reality allows for rejection, adaptation, or acceptance of the corruptive design alterations. Performance against expectations should guide the decision-making process that determines actions to take.

Here are four suggested approaches that emerged from the thinking of summer camp participants, which can be applied to systems that are experiencing corruptive design changes.

- Watch for the drift or abrupt change in practice versus the intended design. Observation skills are needed to detect design corruption. Too often a judgmental stance interferes with real learnings. "Good" or "bad" are not appropriate evaluative descriptors of these occurrences and neither are the evaluation terms "more or less effective." Instead, we must seek to discover the specific deviations from the original design.
- Be prepared to leverage the change, if possible, amending the original design. Some changes actually may enhance, rather than detract, from the original design. If this is the case, incorporate the design deviation into the new design or life plan.
- Understand whether the change is intentional or unintentional. This distinction allows for the determination of appropriate countermeasures. In the case of Le Corbusier, maintenance systems would need to be evaluated against the original lighting design by the original architect or an equivalently competent substitute. An intentional addition of safety lights and different lighting sources might warrant a design revision.
- Do not be a victim of design corruption. Modifying, eliminating, or adapting the changes into the existing design may be possibilities for improvement. The framework for ensuring the best decision on how to move forward is specific performance criteria. In other words, the outcomes that were originally sought by the architect should be the standard for comparison.

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