

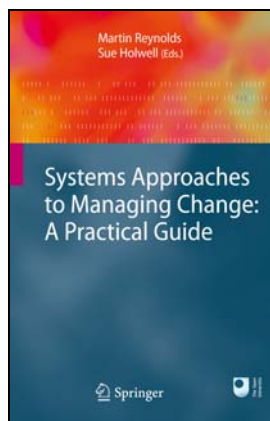
Magnus Ramage, Karen Shipp, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK

Systems Thinkers

Systems Thinkers presents a biographical history of the field of systems thinking, by examining the life and work of thirty of its major thinkers. It discusses each thinker's key contributions, the way this contribution was expressed in practice and the relationship between their life and ideas. This discussion is supported by an extract from the thinker's own writing, to give a flavour of their work and to give readers a sense of which thinkers are most relevant to their own interests.

Systems thinking is necessarily interdisciplinary, so that the thinkers selected come from a wide range of areas – biology, management, physiology, anthropology, chemistry, public policy, sociology and environmental studies among others. A significant aim of the book is to broaden and deepen the reader's interest in systems writers, providing an appetising 'taster' for each of the 30 thinkers, so that the reader is encouraged to go on to study the published works of the thinkers themselves.

2009. X, 316 p. 8 illus. Softcover. ISBN: [978-1-84882-524-6](#) ► €69.95 | £ 39.99 Available



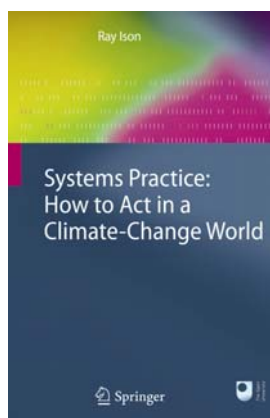
Martin Reynolds, Sue Holwell, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK (Eds)

Systems Approaches to Managing Change: A Practical Guide

In a world of increasing complexity, instant information availability and constant flux, systems approaches provide the opportunity of a tangible anchor of purpose and iterative learning. The five approaches outlined in the book offer a range of interchangeable tools with rigorous frameworks of application tried and tested in the 'real world'. The frameworks of each approach form a powerful toolkit to explore the dynamics of how societies emerge, how organisations create viability, how to facilitate chains of argument through causal mapping, how to embrace a multiplicity of perspectives identifying purposeful activity and how to look for the bigger picture across multiple disciplines.

Systems Approaches offers an excellent first introduction for those seeking to understand what 'systems thinking' is all about as well as why the tools discussed herein should be applied to management and professional practice. This book provides a practical guide, and the chapters stand alone in explaining and developing each approach.

2010. XIV, 342 p. 129 illus. Softcover. ISBN [978-1-84882-808-7](#) ► €69.95 | £ 39.99



Ray Ison, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK

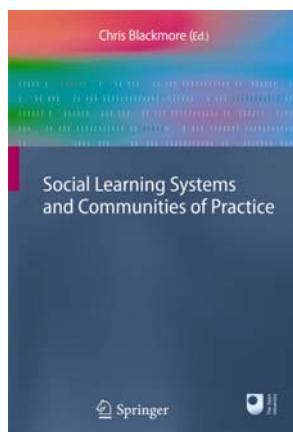
Systems Practice: How to Act in a Climate Change World

It is now accepted that humans are changing the climate of the Earth and this is the most compelling amongst a long litany of reasons as to why, collectively, we have to change our ways of thinking and acting. Most people now recognise that we have to be capable of adapting quickly as new and uncertain circumstances emerge: this capability will need to exist at personal, group, community, regional, national and international levels, all at the same time.

Systems Practice is structured into four parts. Part I introduces the societal need to move towards a more systemic and adaptive governance against the backdrop of human-induced climate change. Part II unpacks what is involved in systems practice by means of a juggler metaphor; examining situations where systems thinking offers useful understanding and opportunities for change. Part III identifies the main factors that constrain the uptake of systems practice and makes the case for innovation in practice by means of systemic inquiry, systemic action research and systemic intervention. The book concludes with Part IV, which critically examines how systems practice is, or might be, utilised at different levels from the personal to the societal.

The development of our capabilities to think and act systemically is an urgent priority and Systems Practice aims to show how to do systems thinking and translate that thinking into praxis (theory informed practical action) which will be welcomed by those managing in situations of complexity and uncertainty across all domains of professional and personal concern.

2010. X, 324 p. 44 illus. Softcover. ISBN [978-1-84996-124-0](#) ► €69.95 | £ 39.99



Chris Blackmore, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK (Ed.)

Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice

Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice is a collection of classical and contemporary writing associated with learning and systemic change in contexts ranging from cities, to rural development to education to nursing to water management to public policy. It is likely to be of interest to anyone trying to understand how to think systemically and to act and interact effectively in situations experienced as complex, messy and changing. While mainly concerned with professional praxis, where theory and practice inform each other, there is much here that can apply at a personal level.

This book offers conceptual tools and suggestions for new ways of being and acting in the world in relation to each other, that arise from both old and new understandings of communities, learning and systems. Starting with twentieth century insights into social learning, learning systems and appreciative systems from Donald Schön and Sir Geoffrey Vickers, the book goes on to consider the contemporary traditions of critical social learning systems and communities of practice, pioneered by Richard Bawden and Etienne Wenger and their colleagues. A synthesis of the ideas raised, written by the editor, concludes this reader. The theory and practice of social learning systems and communities of practice appear to have much to offer in influencing and managing systemic change for a better world.

2010. XII, 247 p. 18 illus. Softcover. ISBN: [978-1-84996-132-5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-84996-132-5) ▶ €69.95 | £ 39.99

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