



Impact of Organisational Culture on Digitisation

It's a question of Mindset

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Organisational
culture:
The Science

A real-world
study of Built
Environment
organisations:
The Results

Is your
organisation, or
that of your
clients, BIM-
ready?

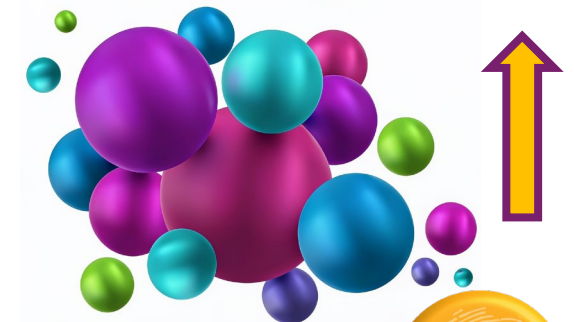
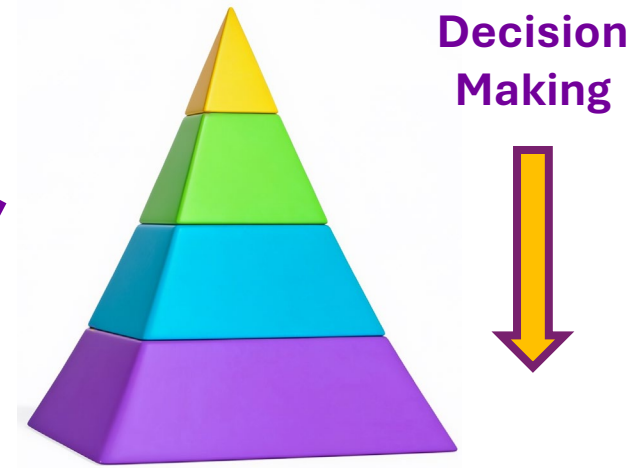
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Organisational Structures and Cultures

- Traditional hierarchical & centralised organisational structures: **formal chains of command + top-down decision-making**. Their cultures are often not participatory.
- Modern decentralised structures, *e.g. matrix / modern or holacracy models*, are flatter structures: **decisions are made in groups** where empowered employees participate in decision making (Safont, 2020; Indeed, 2022).
- The *Teal model* is more decentralised: **humanistic with an organisational democracy culture** – empowering employees to achieve self-actualisation and meaningful work. (Lee & Edmondson, 2017; Laloux, 2014).
- Decision-making follows a **bottom-up approach**, emphasising consensus among employees in teams. (Safont, 2020).



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Organisational Structures: Culture, Cognitive Barriers & Inertia

Theoretical background: Bounded Rationality Theory (Simon, 1982). A theory on cognitive frameworks/mindsets.

Mindsets shape organisational culture, including managerial decision-making and employees' approaches to problem-solving.

Mindset opposed to change



Encumbered by cognitive barriers that overlook emerging possibilities (including innovation, digital transformation & BIM)

versus

Mindset open to change



Agile mindset, learning mindset, the need to explore alternatives (including innovation, digital transformation & BIM)

Successful digital initiatives need a culture with a mindset **open to change** (Volberda *et al.*, 2021).

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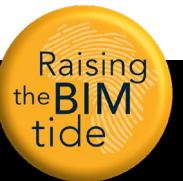
Organisational Structures: Culture, Cognitive Barriers & Inertia



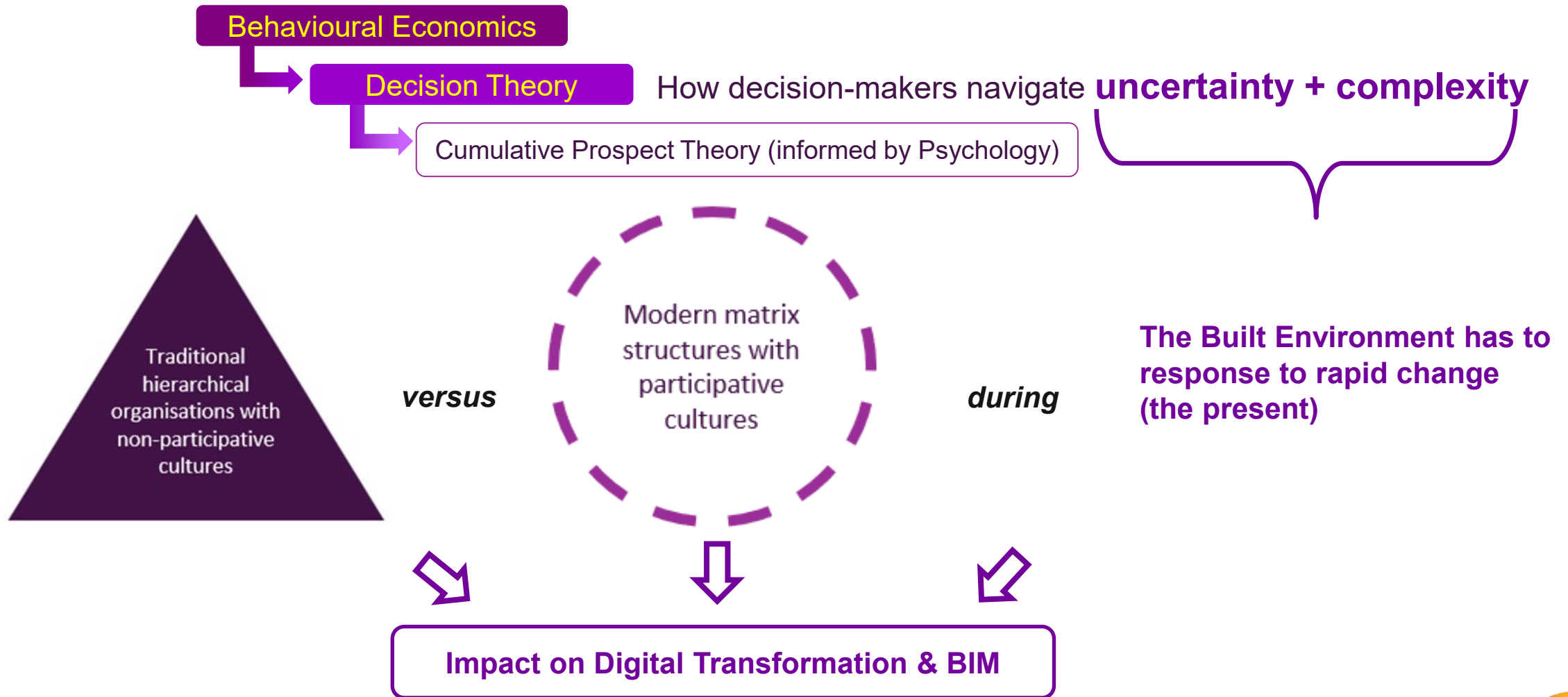
i.e. the present

- During periods of rapid change, organisational founders or senior executives may struggle to adapt their mindsets.
- Organisational inertia is defined as “the organisation’s ability to make internal changes in the face of significant external changes”.
- When inertia gradually occurs in the organisation’s actions, the organisation automatically reacts based on past experiences and strongly resists **changing**” (Moradi *et al.*, 2021:172).

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Behavioural Economics, Decision Theory and Cognitive Barriers



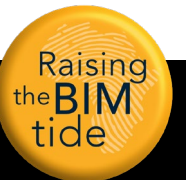
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Study conducted in 2022-2023

See BIM Book 2024 (pp. 16 – 21) for all the scientific details, including:

- Theory,
- Literature, and
- Methodology

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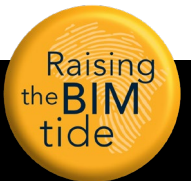


Results: Traditional hierarchical structures



1. **Executives' resistance to change:** Decision-makers often encountered cognitive barriers, clinging to past successes and traditional methods.
 - Proposals for digital initiatives (like BIM) were met with disapproval, perpetuating inertia.
2. **Cumbersome processes:** Bureaucratic, multiple layers of approval, committee discussions (loss of momentum + frustration).
 - Rigid structures impeded innovation.
3. **Undervalued employee input:** Employees felt disengaged and disillusioned.
 - Developed a culture of apathy.
4. **Changes in Senior Management:** Organisational transformation followed **after** changes in senior management. 🎉
 - New leadership prioritised digital initiatives and embraced a more collaborative approach.
 - Greater success in implementing digital literacy and digital solutions, especially BIM.

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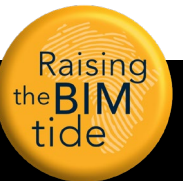
Results: Modern/matrix structures with participative cultures

1. **Expedited the digitalisation process:** Motivated digital literacy, gained access to data (necessary for BIM implementation), and enabled data-driven insights.
 - Decision-makers with a flexible and growth mindset.
2. **Leaders were more adaptable:** Open to change and innovation.
3. **Leaders actively sought input from employees:** Decision-making became a collaborative process, driven by a shared vision and a commitment to embracing new technologies, especially BIM.
4. **Emphasis on employee well-being:** Recognised the value of a motivated and engaged workforce.
5. **Treated employees with respect:** Fostered a sense of ownership and commitment among employees, driving innovation and accelerating the implementation of BIM.



Results confirm the vital role of leadership in organisational culture.

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Conclusion:

- Confirmed that traditional **hierarchical structures** with **non-participative cultures** often caused **delays in digitalisation**, especially BIM implementation.
- This **hinders the collection of sufficient data** for **data-driven insights and decisions** about property/buildings/precincts.

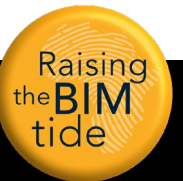
Recommendations:

- Transitioning to modern / matrix / holacracy structures with participative cultures will assist in expediting digitalisation, implementing BIM and gaining data-driven insights for decision-making.



**Where
does this
leave you?**

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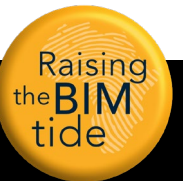


Before attempting to implement BIM:

- **Look at the organisational mindset:** Is it a growth mindset, i.e. flexible, open to change and innovation?
- **Do they have a Shared Vision:** Do they embrace digital transformation and commitment to new technologies, especially BIM as a process, and as a team?

This is your career/product – is this organisation compatible?
If the culture and structure do not fit the BIM-ready organisation,
it will be an uphill battle. Not impossible, but difficult.

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How to spot the BIM-compatible Firm:

The Indicator	The Traditional Firm	The BIM-Compatible Firm
The Interview Question	<i>"What software do your teams use to compile project handovers?"</i>	<i>"How do your professional teams, and property management teams share live data?"</i>
What to look for	They treat BIM as a localised CAD/Tech department responsibility.	They mention Common Data Environments (CDEs) or workflows aligned with ISO 19650 standards.
Organisational Chart	Rigidly siloed. E.g. the Quantity Surveyor works in isolation from the Architect until a cost estimation discrepancy arises.	Cross-functional or matrix. Teams are structured around project delivery models, employing collaborative procurement methods.
Attitude to Risk	Blame-heavy. Mistakes in documentation resulting in on-site variations lead to finger-pointing.	Solution-focused. They value early clash-detection and trial-and-error in a safe virtual environment before on-site deployment.

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The good news: This year, radical transformation is easier
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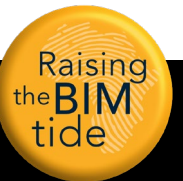


The good news: This year, radical transformation is easier

In East Asian metaphysics, 2026 is the **Year of the Double Fire Horse** (*Hinoe Uma*). This incredibly rare alignment occurs only once every 60 years (the last being in 1966). It happens because the Horse itself is inherently bound to the Fire element, and in 2026, the governing celestial element of the year is also Fire—creating an amplifying, double-dose of pure energy.

- 1. The Collapse of Stagnation & Exponential Disruptions:** Fire Horse years are historically known for dismantling outdated frameworks. In a modern context, this translates to sudden, exponential shifts rather than gradual, linear evolution.
- 2. Breaking Comfort Zones:** The energy of 2026 exposes areas where individuals have grown too passive or comfortable, replacing hesitation with immediate, decisive action.
- 3. Systemic Burnout vs. Intentional Momentum:** The ultimate impact of the year rewards those who practice intentional velocity. Instead of racing ahead blindly, the goal is to harness the year's intense energy to fuel strategic, focused growth.

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Keep an
Open
Mindset

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