Efficiency Assessment™

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Abstract

Efficiency Assessment™ juxtaposes internal elements of 'action proposals' (e.g. plans, policies, strategies) to figure out their effectiveness (Z–Z′), fulfilment of outcome (Y–Z′), and overall efficiency (Z–X–Z′), which facilitates their comprehension and application.

1 Professional value

Efficiency, whether in its down-to-earth meaning of 'well, fast, and cheap' or its ethereal meaning of 'simplicity, elegance, and goodness' — as well as its 'performance' variant, relating to 'success' — require *references* for their assessment. As all references for comparisons and subsequent value judgements, these can be either *subjective* (i.e. belong to the judge's experience or preferences) or *objective* (i.e. common for all to see). It is assumed that the latter kind is generally preferred.

Efficiency Assessment™ refers to efficiency (or performance) in contexts where action is sought — for instance, in planning and management circumstances — and uses as references the elements of the planning problem (ZYZ) as well as their relations (e.g. fulfilment of purpose, intelligence of conception). Efficiency Maps™ accompany the flow of the planning problem, and efficiency is appreciated for what it manages to achieve in the various parts of problem-solving.
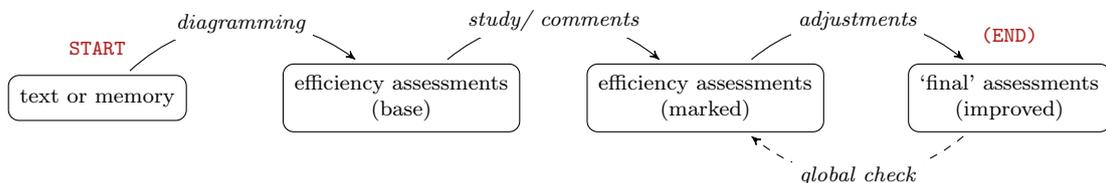
2 Workflow

FIGURE 1   The work to be carried out over four (4) hours; a number of 'loop' iterations may be necessary to achieve a satisfactory efficiency assessments

3   Programme

Introduction (1.5h)

- The problem in an 'XYZ' form (Figure 4)
- Efficiency assessments (Figure 5)
- Benchmarks/ criteria and cut-off points

Work Session (4h)

- Work in groups (2–4 people)
- Interactive assistance

Presentation, Discussion, and Conclusion (2h)

- Shared experiences
- Applicability issues

4   Technical notes

Audience

- *Project managers* — project (process)
- *Administrators* — enterprise (system); operation (process)
- *Scientists* — protocol (process); object (system)
- *Artists* — argument/ process

Competences

- Identify and get to know the elements of a problem
- Identify these in formal documents (e.g. plans, strategies, policies)
- Identify and get to know causal relationships between these elements
- Think clearly and explain how selected elements relate to the others
- Distinguish between 'physical' and 'logical' causality
- Think of the limits or boundaries/ scope of the problem
- Think of efficiency in the planning process
- Idem for effectiveness of the planning process
- Think of the fulfilment of the purpose of the planning operation

Techniques[a]

- Text mark-up — $TMU_{[T]}$
- Reverse blueprints — $RBP_{[T]}$ (Figure 2)
- Concise process diagrams — $CPD_{[T]}$ (Figure 3)
- Descriptive causal diagrams — $DCD_{[T]}$ (Figure 4)

Methods[b]

- XYZ problem definition — $XPD_{[M]}$ (Figure 4)
- Efficiency assessment — $EFI_{[M]}$ (Figure 5)

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[a]v. Perdicoúlis, 2014a
[b]v. Perdicoúlis, 2014b
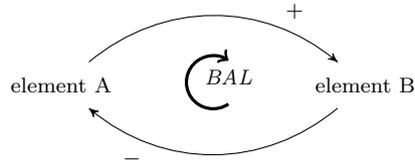
5 Protocols

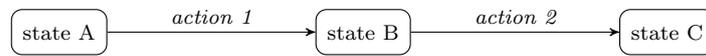FIGURE 2 Generic Reverse Blueprint (RBP) representing a *balancing* feedback loop

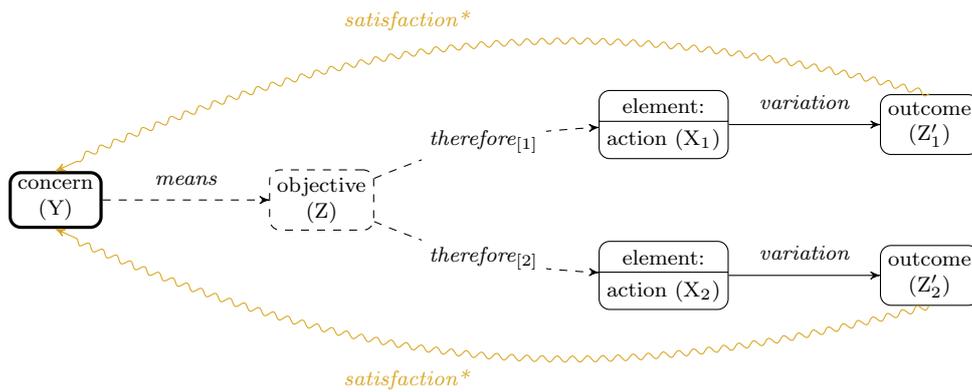FIGURE 3 Generic Concise Process Diagram (CPD)

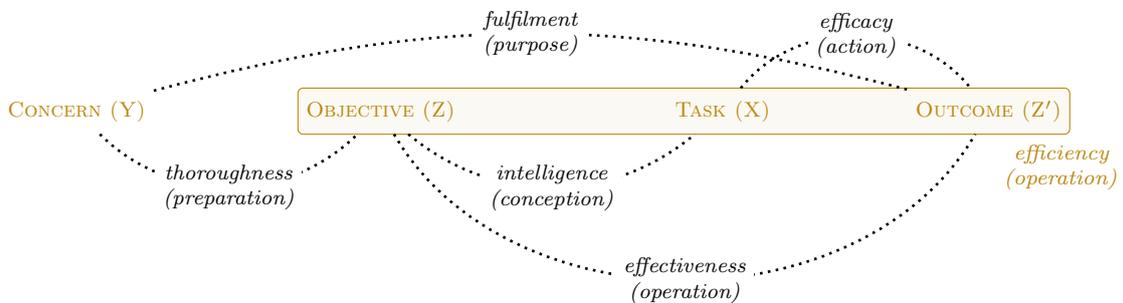FIGURE 4 Generic Descriptive Causal Diagram (DCD); XYZ problem definition (XPD)

FIGURE 5 Efficiency Assessment (EFI) map

6   Materials and preparation

CASE-STUDY/ WORK MATERIAL   Participants are welcome to bring their own support material (e.g. stories, accounts) in (human) memory or documentation (e.g. digital or printed media).

SOFTWARE   Diagramming can be carried out manually, with pencil and paper. Optionally, participants are welcome to use their own diagramming software, such as *Graphviz*, *LibreOffice Draw*, *OmniGraffle*, or *Visio*.

STENCILS

Perdicoulis, A. (2011d) *OmniGraffle* stencil for CPD [`.graffle`]
Perdicoulis, A. (2011c) *OmniGraffle* stencil for DCD [`.graffle`]
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References

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