

CASE 12: THE RIGHT TIME FOR CHOICE

The Story

“Well, folks, we are gathered here today to hear three presentations from competing firms for our new computer system. This system will tie together all our agents and allow us to communicate much more effectively with each other.” Chet Greeley was proud that his Company, Greeley Realities, was at the stage where they could afford the latest technology for linking his people together. While it had come as some surprise to them, some 28 people were now seated in the air conditioned comfort of a hotel banquet room sipping coffee, munching on croissants, getting set for the presentations and wondering how their work would be affected.

The first two went very smoothly. The presenters were masters of their trade and used audio-visu­als to demonstrate the power and versatility of their product. One of them even had a system all hooked up and he used one of the agents as a model to show how easy it was to communicate with his product.

When it came time for the third presentation, the audience was ready for quality, since the presenter’s Company was known for its innovative methods.

John Hanson’s presentation was simple. He flashed up a slide with the words: “You’re not ready”, and sat down. You could have heard a pin drop. People glanced over at Chet, who was staring blankly at the screen. A full thirty seconds later, Chet got to his feet and, looking squarely at John, began to applaud. One after another, the rest of the group stood up and joined in.

The other two presenters looked at each other, picked up their equipment, and left.

The Intervention

John Hanson has truly intervened in Chet’s company. Honestly and transparently, albeit with some amount of drama, John had made the call that a number of steps were necessary prior to proceeding to the purchase of a system. Chet now needs to:

- Involve his people in a needs analysis to find out how their work could be improved, and how those improvements might align with a new computer system;
- Assuming a need is confirmed, set up the criteria for what is required and look for options that match up to the criteria;
- Choose the most appropriate option, communicate the choice to his people and establish a roll-out plan involving user training and monitoring.