Semiotics as Strategy

Graeme CM Smith

gcmsmith@live.co.uk
graeme.smith@solent.co.uk

Semiotics as Strategy by Graeme CM Smith is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License.
Managing the message

- **Message**
- **Encode**
- **Channel**
- **Decode**
- **Learning**
- **Understanding**
- **Internalisation and Application**

Change behaviour

Negative feedback

No feedback

Smith and Blackman - Bled, Slovenia; Nov 2001
Semiotics of Strategy Conversation
Case Study - Large IT (CRM) Project

- Lack of attention to codes
- Strategy conversation implicit rather than explicit state
- Large number of actors ‘taking a position
- This plurivocal paradigm quickly morphed into new
- This new story became the new univocal voice
- As a consequence, cynicism and doubting was on a totemic scale
Case study signs

SCHRÖDINGER’S CAT IS

A LEAVE
This failure immediately led to a new strategy discourse

New semiotics were developed by staff to codify processes

New signifier’s helped staff to signify better their activities

Allowing staff to develop new codes and conventions helped to maintain a univocal voice

Symbols were more believable
Case study signs
Case Study - Balanced Scorecard

- Univocal paradigm to moderate a stramash of plurivocal voices
- New signs and a new narrative to facilitate participation
- Introduce a more holistic franchise
- Conversation was deconstructed and a new one formed
- Deconstruction opened the door to the plurivocal
- New univocal voice began to coalesce
- Caucus grew as understanding of new signs gained a growing convention of syntax
Case study signs

Finance

Knowledge

Vision/Mission

Customer

Process

KPQ

KPI

KPQ

KPI

KPQ

KPI

KPQ

KPI

BUSINESS

PLANNING

teamwork
people
results
hands-on
people
leadership

Southampton
University