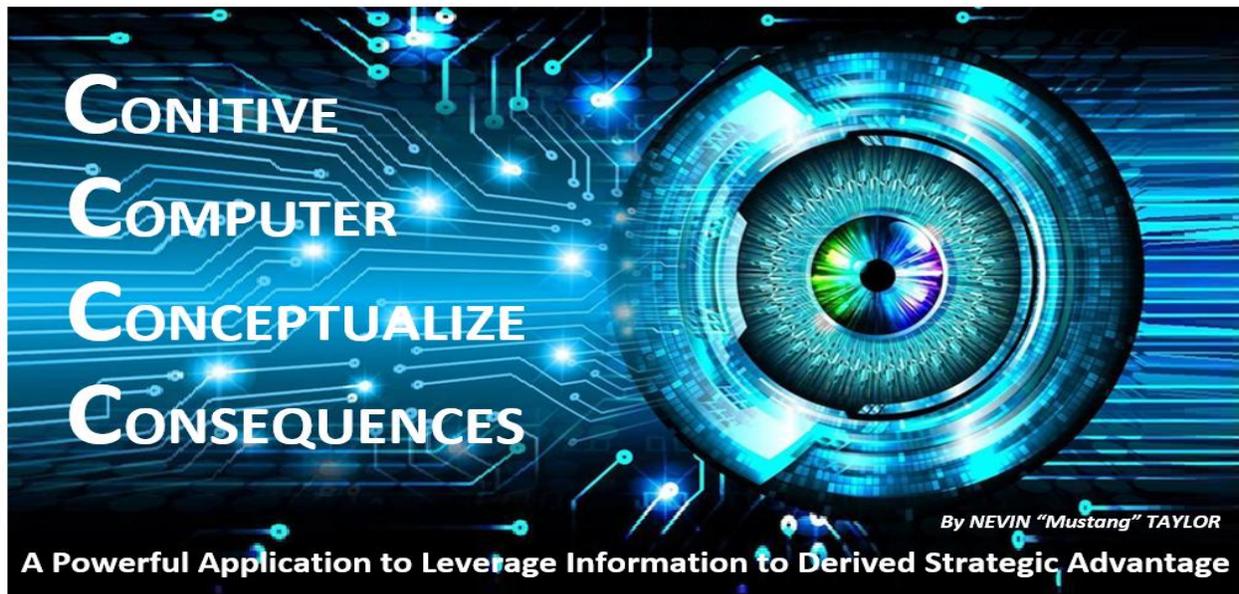


## COGNITIVE COMPUTERS CONCEPTUALIZE CONSEQUENCES



### **Putting the Pieces Together to Make Informed Decisions**

*By: Nevin "Mustang" Taylor*

With the ever-increasing need for efficiency in our more-for-less world, the ability to leverage and maximize capabilities is a necessary mission imperative. Now more than ever, this demands a formative ability to understand the consequences of potential decisions through assessments that model and ascertain potential outcomes before they are enacted. By modeling activities to determine operational effectiveness and managerial efficiency, the ability to formulate adaptive planning and a prioritized program is imperative to actualize the strategic objectives.

The Cognitive Computer to Conceptualize Consequences is a long way from the days of peanut butter spreading, minor budget cuts, and waiting for the impacts to become clear. The tool enables a responsible, prioritized reduction in capabilities, with enlightened awareness of the operational picture, and facilitates proactive decision-making by highlighting potential trade-offs; the result is improved expectation management. This ability to adapt to a changing economic climate supports an emphasis on Information as a vital strategic asset, applying past actions (prescriptive modeling) to present performance (predictive modeling) to ascertain future propensity (potential modeling) and explore options to capitalize on opportunities.

In the past, emphasis was placed on applying resources to maximize efficiencies at the expense of effectiveness. Resources are leveraged to provide fast, good or cheap capabilities; when any two are optimized, the third becomes the tradeoff. In other words, to get a quality product quickly, you should expect a high cost. By depicting the operational implications of outcomes (effects) and processes (operations), we can prioritize against organizational goals to fulfill the objectives that support them (*strategy*). These relationships can be visualized to illustrate the implications of the time element and to integrate it into the computational formula.

The necessity to assess prioritized planning along with efficient programming in full consideration of past conditions, present circumstances, and future conditions allows preparing and, in some cases, creating the future we seek. C4 collates data in a manner that quickly validates its veracity and illuminates relationships that were previously “unknown unknowns”. But asking the right question can often be far more beneficial than answers without context; even valid data may not improve understanding of how your actions will affect the environment unless they are seen in relation to the whole.

The tool’s most valuable role is in raising the user’s awareness from the micro to the macro perspective, allowing decision makers to understand the larger impact of tactical financial decisions on meeting strategic objectives. Ultimately, it allows us to understand not just what to do, but why we should do it. By providing enhanced transparency, the ability to increase clarity of management expectations as it identifies those influences that have practical consequences in the future. Through a pictorial assessment that informs available strategic trade space, a decision is made proactively rather than in reaction to current conditions.

To remain relevant in a dynamic world, we must focus on the objective and not become distracted by obsolete requirements. This top-down, holistic perspective ensures focus on organizational goals rather than a myopic distraction from bottom-up requirements. Exposing the cause-and-effect relationship between a decision and its outcomes before enacting it enables optimizing effectiveness and efficiently leveraging resources to maximize productivity. With excellent visibility offered by C4, the power to evolve and transform is fully informed by potential causality and the resulting consequence of a relational data analysis. Ultimately, this capability improves our understanding of the environment and turns limitations into opportunities through the creative application of the cognitive capacity it enables. In the words of Winston Churchill . . .

**“Now that we are out of money, we must begin to think.”**

