BOOK REVIEW

When management hinders security: an alternative in support of resilient systems

Quando a gestão impede a segurança: alternativa em favor de sistemas resilientes

Cuando la gestión frena la seguridad: una alternativa en apoyo a sistemas resilientes

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Sydney Dekker. (2023). ***O anarquista da segurança:*** *apoiando-se na perícia e na inovação humanas, reduzindo burocracia e compliance* (Tradução de Flora Maria Gomide Vezzá). Blucher.
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Sydney Dekker is a professor and director at the Safety Science Innovation Laboratory at Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia. His work contributes to the formulation of new paradigms in Systems Security. Alongside Eric Hollnagel, the author of "Safety-I and Safety-II" (Hollnagel, 2014), Dekker promotes an innovative and de-bureaucratizing perspective on security services. This perspective emphasizes that occupational safety relies less on controlling and standardizing production activities. The author stresses that the services supporting execution activities "help select effective solutions and suppress and self-correct what doesn't work" (Dekker, 2023, p. 26). Thus, safety is achieved through worker participation and their interactions with specialists while carrying out daily activities

The text prompts management professionals to reflect beyond the field of security. The author raises questions about the proliferation of regulations and rules that can infantilize workers. Additionally, he emphasizes the necessity for and appreciation of horizontal coordination encapsulated in the concept of vernacular security. This concept is rooted in the workers' experiences and expertise, enabling them to adapt rules and procedures to local circumstances (Dekker, 2023, p. 215). The text works as supplementary material in undergraduate administration programs and is essential reading for graduate programs.

The advocacy for the practice of security anarchism does not rely on the political connotations of anarchy. Instead, the author suggests adopting horizontal coordination to supplant vertical hierarchical relationships. In the Brazilian context, Dekker's proposal aligns with the concept of 'collectivist work management' (Faria, 2017). His contribution centers on appreciating

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horizontal coordination, the power of diversity, and the experiences of workers and teams. The book aims to present a concrete framework for new safety practices. These practices include eliminating targets and bonuses, reevaluating safety performance management, replacing exhortations with posters and slogans, and fostering an environment conducive to novelty, diversity, and intrinsic motivation.

The author's criticism is directed at the prevalent approach to managing occupational safety within organizations, specialized companies, and insurance firms. In the case of Australia, there has been a substantial increase in safety expenditure. However, this surge in spending has not translated into a reduction in accidents and work-related injuries, rendering this security model ineffective. The author points to a 13% increase in projected funding for security regulation from 1990 to 1993 (Dekker, 2023, p. 51), a 5.9% rise in 1996 and a 9.6% increase in 2014 in the workforce dedicated to compliance. He argues that in 2010, around 6% of Australia's GDP was allocated to measures to comply with government regulations" (Dekker, 2023, p. 51). This reveals the relevance of reevaluating these approaches.

Dekker criticizes the occupational safety system, which tends to generate an increasing number of procedures often disconnected from the actual operational reality. His critique also extends to the operational style of management in safety. Safety management frequently borrows references and practices from management sciences to oversee and steer the safety aspect of production systems. This approach, detached from the core operational functions of organizations, creates indicators, procedures, and documents, essentially forming a bureaucratic apparatus.

The book is divided into ten chapters, in addition to the preface, where the author shares his personal experience with workplace safety. The first chapter delves into the issue of excessive rules, illustrated through the example of a mining company's dormitory. This chapter also provides a historical overview of the field of occupational safety.

In Chapter two, titled "We Know What's Best for You," the author explores the formalized rules that workers must follow. Subsequently, in the following chapter, the author explores the theme of modern authoritarianism concealed within these rules. Dekker classifies security management models and their underlying values, drawing from the insights of Scott (2012) and an analysis of the three principles of authoritarian high modernism: standardization, central control, and synoptic readability.

The author situates standardization as an expectation to which everyone (at least to those who apply) must conform. For example, he cites the acceptable starting age for the individual to play their role in the workforce.

Central control is justified by the necessity to compel individuals to conform to specific standards of behavior.

Finally, synoptic readability is the possible monitoring of a group's compliance with standards. The example given is school indicators to measure the achievement of literacy goals.

Chapter four, titled "The Safety Bureaucracy," introduces the dominant model of occupational safety. It sheds light on routines that intensify what the author refers to as "stupid" work, often at the expense of practical measures, which are overshadowed by the bureaucratic nature of management. In this context, "bureaucracy" is a synonym for excessive regulation. The text issues a caution regarding the inefficiency of an excess of rules and its paradoxical outcomes, including a false sense of security, which may diminish the necessary attention to safety in various activities.

Every form of management involves the implementation of measures, indicators, and goals that define the actions required to control and operate systems. Dekker demonstrates that in the management of dominant or hegemonic security, a contrary approach is often observed, where the focus shifts away from action-oriented measures. When goals are established for specific indicators, the emphasis on achieving these goals can overshadow the importance of accurately measuring what is happening. As the author succinctly puts it, "What gets measured gets manipulated." Furthermore, when records are linked to punitive measures, workers may be disinclined to report incidents or minor accidents, compromising the quality of the available indicators.

In Chapter five, the book explores the manipulation of statistics to conceal the achievement of predefined goals. The following chapter focuses on the infantilization of workers. It also explores the adoption of behavioral security programs, which establish stringent standards and implement a program to measure and manage deviations (Dekker, 2023, p. 167). In this context, the underlying premise is that workers are the root of the problem, and their behavior requires control. Dekker argues that subjecting workers to behavioral surveillance systems, often with a low-cost investment, proves the company's commitment

and is primarily driven by legal protection. Consequently, an excess of rules is created, making them challenging to remember but easily used to hold workers accountable for accidents.

Dekker establishes a parallel between bureaucratic job security and religion in chapter seven. Moving on to Chapter eight, titled “A Non-deterministic World,” he highlights the endeavors of occupational safety teams to convert random events into reportable incidents that can be measured, documented, and subjected to standardized safety procedures. Within this chapter, the author emphasizes the disparity between the work delineated in safety manuals and the work that is actually carried out.

In the ninth chapter, Dekker differentiates anarchy from anarchism, using concepts related to anarchism and the process of self-management. This involves giving workers control and awareness of their production process.

The final chapter offers alternatives to the bureaucratic security system after critiquing hegemonic security, which is the bureaucratic job security system. Inspired by experiences with reducing regulations, Dekker proposes the concept of “living streets” implemented in Drachten, Netherlands. His aim is to adapt traffic safety systems to work safety systems. He also cites the example of an Australian supermarket chain within the Woolworths group.

Throughout the text, there is a recurring emphasis on the ineffectiveness of excessive regulations and the potential benefits of sharing risk management with those who perform the work. The author strongly criticizes administrative sciences behind the security management model. This work convincingly demonstrates that this model can paradoxically lead to disasters, contradicting its primary objective of ensuring safety.

Dekker’s critical examination of the hegemonic safety system illustrates that an expansion of rules, the definition of metrics, and the adoption of behavior control systems do not prevent accidents. Instead, they may even create a false sense of security and divert attention from the warning signs that precede such accidents. This issue becomes evident in catastrophic events like the British Petroleum (BP) oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and the Freedom Industries chemical accident in the Elk River, USA, among others.

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Gustavo Henrique Petean: Conceptualization (Lead); Investigation (Lead); Methodology (Lead); Visualization (Lead); Writing- original draft (Lead); Writing-review & editing (Lead).

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