

1 Peter Senge Introduction to Systems Thinking
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“Viewer-friendly” Transcript

<u>Time</u>	<u>Content</u>
00:00	<i>Video Credits: Peter Senge, Senior Lecturer MIT, Founding Chair Society for Organizational Learning</i>
00:07	Well the term “systems-thinking” is really a mixed bag and I use it very, very cautiously.
00:11	First, both words are problematic, but the word “system” is the most problematic because if you say the word “system” the picture image that pops up into most people's head is computer system. Like, you know, we need a system’s expert here because our systems not working.
00:25	The second most common association is management control system, as “it's not my fault, it's the stupid system.” Right?
00:35	So these are the two associations that come first to people and neither of them is what we're trying to help people understand.
00:43	So whenever I'm trying to help people understand what this word “system” mean I usually start off by saying “are you part of a family?” Everybody is part of a family. Have you ever seen, in a family, people producing consequences in the family - how people act, how people feel - that aren’t what anybody intends? Yep.
01:04	How does that happen? Well, you know, then people can tell their stories and think about it, but that then ground grounds people in, in not the jargon - you know “system or systems thinking” - but the reality that we live in webs of interdependence.
01:21	A family is fairly close-knit one, you can kind of see most all the key players. But still, even though we can identify maybe on a list of 10 or 15 names, here's all the key people in my immediate family. Still, the complexity of interactions amongst all those people is obviously such that consistently families produce outcomes that nobody wants, which is the other, can you not say, fundamental rationale for all of this.
01:48	It's not to quote “understand” systems, that's an abstraction. It's to understand how it is that the problems that are the most vexing and difficult and intransigent that we all deal with come about and, obviously, to get a perspective on those problems that gives us some leverage and some insight as to what we might do differently.
02:16	<i>Video Credits/Disclaimer: Leadership Lessons for a Small Planet/IBM Academic views expressed in this video are not meant to constitute any literal or implied endorsement of specific products or services</i>