

# **iTeam - “Telepathic” Means for Internal Communication**

*White Paper by Dr Ilia Bider of IbisSoft ([www.ibissoft.se](http://www.ibissoft.se))*

**Abstract.** In our predominantly “white-collar” society, office workers need to spend a lot of time communicating with each other. At least some part of such communication (reporting the state of a task to a lot of people) is considered as boring, and it is, usually, kept to the bare minimum. On the other side, not having enough internal communication may lead to undesirable consequences, like things “falling through the cracks”, reinvention of solutions multiple time, having some workers overloaded, while others are underloaded. Is it possible to ensure proper internal communication without putting an extra burden on the office workers? To answer positive on these question, we created a special product iTeam that uses almost “telepathic” means to inform all concerned as soon as there is anything important to inform about. The text below overviews only what problems iTeam can help you to solve, but not how it does it. As far as “how” is concerned, following the Russian saying “It’s better once to see than hundred times to hear”, we invite you to a demonstration of iTeam so that you can see “how” for yourself.

## **Motivation**

All work done by an office worker in a modern company or organization, could be roughly divided into to groups:

- Doing some actual work (which might include communication with the external world, customers, supplies, etc.).
- Communicating with colleagues and management (internal communication).

The latter includes:

- Reporting on the work that has been done to managers or colleagues who should know the results (e.g., accounting department).
- Getting new assignments from managers (formal) or colleagues (informal).
- Giving assignments to others (formally as well as informally, like please, let’s discuss the matter tomorrow).
- Searching/giving information on experience that could help in completing current tasks.

While, doing the job is considered important, the workers tend to pay less attention to the internal communication and try to keep it to bare minimum, e.g., informing only managers. Insufficient internal communication may leads to the following undesirable effects:

- The information on the status of the task is known only to a person who completes the task, or may be his/her direct manager. Any questions on this status (e.g. from a customer) cannot be answered if the person (and his manager) is out of site.

- Information on a completed task or a new assignment does not reach the next in the chain in time (or does not reach him at all), i.e. the things fall “through the cracks”.
- It takes too much time to find information on past experience (e.g., the person who had it is out of reach when needed). A solution is reinvented repeatedly (and may be not in an optimal way).
- Managers do not know how much work is on the table of each worker. As a result, the overloaded workers may get more assignments, while underloaded workers have nothing to do.

Is it possible to make internal communication work without increasing time each person spends conducting it?

### **How to make internal communication effective**

It may seem that the obvious solution to make the internal communication more effective in the electronic epoch is to use electronic means instead of papers, email being the most straightforward alternative for this end. However, business practice shows that switching from paper to electronic channels does not solve all problems of internal communication. For example, mailboxes can be easily clogged due to mixing external and internal communication, cc-ing messages to everybody, etc.

The more radical solution for making internal communication more effective is to try to “eliminate” it altogether. Consider, for example, a task of preparing a meeting. It consists of two parts. First, we need to decide what is the topic (agenda), who is to participate, what material should be prepared before the meeting, and by whom, etc. The second part is to communicate the information on the meeting to all concerned: what is the meeting for, who should participate, who should prepare the materials, who should read them, etc. What is worse, as time passes, changes are made in any of the issues listed above (participants, documents, time of the meeting) etc., which will require a new round of communication each time there are changes.

Suppose we can change the meeting handling in such a way that only the decision part of preparation is required (who, why, what documents, etc.). The second part is done automatically by giving full access for all concerned to your decisions say through a telepathic means. Then we will:

- achieve significant reduction of time spent for internal communication, and
  - liberate the workers from (at least part of) boring routine job
- while keeping everybody concerned well-updated.

### **iTeam solution**

Telepathic means are not readily available, at least not for the moment, but the same effect can be achieved by using a process-oriented way of working supported by a proper computer system. IbisSoft, based on its own research, has developed a special state-oriented approach to business process orientation that can help to solve the problems of internal communication. In cooperation with our partners and customers, we have developed a light version of a system that supports a “telepathic” communication for any administrating process (meeting, decision-making, reviewing or writing documents, etc). The system is called *iTeam*, and it provides

- Friendly, pleasant and efficient means for internal communication *for everybody*.
- In addition, *for middle management*, it provides operative information on the state of affairs (and history) in all activities under his/her control, and on distribution of resources between these activities (who is overloaded, and who has nothing to do). The information can be used for operative planning, resource redistribution, conflict solving etc.
- In addition, *for high management*, it provides reliable information for statistical analysis, which can help in strategic planning/decision making.

The introduction of *iTeam* does not require any significant investment, and it can be used almost at once after installation.

---

For more information on *iTeam* and our other products and services, please contact IbisSoft at [info@ibissoft.se](mailto:info@ibissoft.se).

**Short information about the company:** IbisSoft ([www.ibissoft.se](http://www.ibissoft.se)) is a consulting company based in Stockholm, Sweden. It specializes in the borderland between Management and IT, the main focus being on organization of operative work in non-manufacturing business processes.

**Short bio of the author:** Dr. Ilija Bider ([ilia@ibissoft.se](mailto:ilia@ibissoft.se)) is a cofounder and Director



R&D of IbisSoft. He has MS in Electronic Engineering and PhD in Computer and System Sciences, and combined experience of 30 years of research (in the fields of business modeling, computational linguistics, databases), and practical work (business analysis, and software design, coding, sales, and marketing) in five countries (Norway, Russia, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States). Dr. Bider has published over 25 research papers as well as a number of articles for practitioners. His main specialty is finding research topics in his business practice, and testing research results in the

business practice. Dr. Bider is an inventor of the state-oriented approach to business process modeling that is based on the application of the conceptual ideas of the Mathematical system theory to the realm of business processes. This approach has been successfully tested in business analysis and application development practice of IbisSoft and its partners. Dr. Bider puts a lot of effort in bridging the gap between the academics and practitioners. He co-founded a series of international workshops on business process modeling where both academics and practitioners meet for fruitful discussions. He holds tutorials at international conferences to highlight the needs of practitioners for academic public. He sits on the editorial board of the Business Process Management Journal as a representative for practitioners.