Acknowledgment

The ideas presented in this book have evolved through processes that involved many people. Giving them due credit, I am fully aware that my mind is responsible for the final product here presented.

As I have been trying to disentangle the world of my ideas in association with sources of inspiration, I came to realize that the task could be completed just tentatively. Obviously, the many authors I cited in this book do chart evolution of my ideas. This recorded, diverse academic discourse constitutes an intellectual world that has inspired my ideas. Giving a credit to it is self-evident in the book.

However, my mind lives also in a social world that involves informal communication with colleagues, formal communication with clients to my teaching and research, and observing amorphous others when they step in the domain of my professional interest. I want to acknowledge contributions of this anonymous social world as well. Sometimes, a brief utterance by a peer (agreeable or confrontational) or even a naïve question of a student or others triggered a metamorphosis of ideas or the fruition of a long brewing idea. As recalling individual contributors is impossible, I can only point to their loci and ways of influencing the Informing View of Organization (IVO) presented in this book.

I can trace seeds of IVO back to my education at the University of Belgrade in Yugoslavia and to practitioner knowledge I acquired as journalist, editor, corporate communicator, and software entrepreneur. My incipient ideas about the human side of informing and information were broadened and decisively shaped during my Master’s study of communication at SUNY-Albany in the USA. I learned from communication scholars and sociologists of the organization, and my ideas coalesced around contemporary systems for computer-mediated communication and the organizational context. Exposure to scholars from various disciplines followed in the course of my Doctoral study at Syracuse University’s School of Information Studies. That dynamic, innovative environment facilitated advent of some of my core ideas about information systems and organizational design in general and new organizational designs in particular. In retrospect, these solidified foundations of IVO.

While working in the Indiana University’s new program in information science, my ideas evolved through interaction with a number of fine scholars and bright students. I was occupied with relating information systems to organizational design and change, group support systems, system design issues, and grounding work in social informatics. The IVO foundations were completed. Summer teaching at the University of Texas’ School of Information helped me to polish IVO ideas through collegial discussion and teaching tests.
Moving to The University of Manitoba’s Asper School of Business brought me close to management scholars. My analytical focus on business organization had sharpened, and I moved my empirical research to Canada where companies were more open to researchers. On the global scene, I engaged in leadership of the informing science community. Working with scholars from many countries and fields catered to the inter-disciplinary character of IVO ideas and advanced the IVO vocabulary. I developed most of the IVO framework and case research as part of that community by combining empirical and conceptual research.

Visits to a number of universities advanced IVO ideas through presentations, discussions, teaching, and research. Most prominently, my visit to the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia precipitated maturing of the process segment in IVO. Visits to the University of Agder (Norway) and to Concordia University (Canada) presented opportunities for probing some developed parts of IVO.

As I am trying to give credit to anonymous contributors to this book, arguing that the world of my mind has fed on social and intellectual worlds, I have to cite one more world of influence. It is created through my interaction with information technologies. I can ponder the expanse of the mind-technology coupling only when the latter member is missing. Mind and technology co-evolve unnoticeably. While working on IVO, I kept revisiting a seminal book on system theory. When I did not read it, I used the book for purporting a laptop on my desk, indeed several generations of laptops. It angled my laptop just right for comfortable typing. During its life process, the book has got Internet-based extensions in discussion forums, professional communities interested in similar ideas, and in cognate electronic publications. Internet search systems delivered close support to reading, and software for graphical expression and for simulation mingled into my analytical processes. My mind gained continuous, nutritious nourishment. Eventually, my indispensable book morphed into digital format and migrated to my tablet device. Coupling of technology and mind overcame spatial limitations (although I realized that implications were incompatible with activities associated with tropical beaches).

My final nod, therefore, is to creators of technologies that can complement mind. Still, we must remain critical in order to prevent supplanting or controlling mind by technology. And we should retain awareness that the ways in which we adopt technologists’ creations is beyond mere compliance with material design. The end-effects are with the client rather than the author. The same applies to the messages of this book.

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