

TRADITIONAL CHINESE KNOWLEDGE MEETS WESTERN MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

This article takes you on a very special journey to consider a new paradigm for decision-making process. This new paradigm unifies a many-centuries-old Chinese philosophical system and the well-known PDCA Deming cycle.

Prof. Dr. Gabriel Felley Yintelligence™

Abstract

The Western culture and its established paradigms lead the world economy and structure the global market. The backbone of this culture roots in a technocratic vision of the world, based on the principle of causality. This understanding of the economic and societal reality has shown great success with continuous achievements. Nevertheless, today our society is facing big problems. More specifically, the globalization of markets has substantially complicated the process of making the right decisions. A different approach to problem solving may help design a better solution. This approach has to overstep the too obvious true-false logic and offer a holistic frame for a new way of analyzing the economic and social realms.

Looking back at the ancient Chinese philosophers, they had developed an astonishing methodology called the Yi Jing, which was used to support government officials in making the right decisions. This article attempts to link the PDCA Deming cycle to some special elements of this framework.

The importance of intuition

Business transformations must rely on well thought out enterprise strategies. To be successful, these strategies do not have to be based strictly on rational facts. Rationality by itself may be an excellent fast computing machine but it will never produce novelties that are suitable for the market. The added value that a strategy may deliver resides in the creative potential it encompasses. This potential is largely controlled by the manager's ability to incite, to accept his or her proper intuition, and to translate this "less-structured" information into a convincing business language.

Cultures Meeting across Time

In order to guide process transformation, Western business people have conceptualized various methods, among others the PDCA Deming cycle, which has become very popular being highly pragmatic and universal. The PDCA cycle is made up of four phases, which include planning for new business initiatives, putting them into action, smartly managing resources and monitoring risks, and checking to what extent the planned goals are achieved to reduce the identified gap or to become better. The PDCA cycle enables companies to be more competitive through inventing and designing the right business transformation. The obvious necessity of change as an inherent characteristic of all kinds of processes has also been observed and recognized by the ancient Chinese scholars. They analyzed and collected a large amount of facts concerning the dynamic of change. This 3000-year-old knowledge was compiled into a book entitled the "Book of Changes" or I Ching or in modern wording, Yi Jing.

The Yi Jing, with its 64 geometrical figures and corresponding texts, which had been accumulated and consolidated since the 10th century BC of ancient Chinese culture, is one of the oldest written documents of the ancient Chinese philosophy. In the imperial period, it was used as the basic principle to manage the daily as well as the strategic governmental business. By establishing astonishing links between the mentioned PDCA cycle and the 64 hexagrams, this article proposes not to scrutinize the validity of this statement, but to illustrate how sophisticated its underlying logic is. There is a significant amount of literature on the Yi Jing, and its practice is gaining more and

more importance in the Asian countries. Especially in China and Vietnam, where serious attempts are made to develop a new lecture and an understanding of this ancient management method to make it a suitable tool for supporting decision-making processes. This article illustrates how the PDCA concepts are surprisingly close to the ones that were developed about 3000 years ago by the ancient Chinese philosophers

A Brief Introduction to the Yi Jing

The genesis of the Yi Jing is rather complex and subject to different interpretations, which are not further considered here¹. Within this article, we consider the Yi Jing as a set of 64 elements, called hexagrams. A hexagram is a geometrical figure composed of six lines (broken and unbroken, see below).



Figure 1 The hexagram 64 "Before Completion"

The unbroken lines are Yang lines and the broken ones Yin lines. The six lines of a hexagram deliver a "Yin-Yang snapshot" of the considered situation. Yin and Yang being the two basic principles of the old Chinese philosophy, their endless transformation in each other displays the universal Yin-Yang polarity orchestrating the changes in the world.

Moreover, each hexagram and each line of a hexagram has a text or commentary, and each has a specific meaning (see glossary). A hexagram is derived from the combinations of three out of four basic elements: old and young Yin and old and young Yang².



Figure 2 The four bigrams (changes start always at the bottom)

There are 64 (= 4 x 4 x 4) possible combinations of picking three of these bigrams out of four, allowing repetition, hence 64 hexagrams.

For each decision that needs to be taken, there is a hexagram focusing on a specific "Yin-Yang" situation. Usually, the hexagram that is selected, which is called the situation hexagram, has changing lines; this means Yin-lines become Yang-lines and vice versa, leading to a second hexagram, the perspective hexagram. This helps to better understand the change depicted by the situation hexagram. The comments added to the pictures of these two hexagrams describe in a holistic manner the situation to be analyzed and contribute to deepening the understanding of the different dimensions and their interdependencies, thus enabling a better decision.

To better understand the Yi Jing, an analogy can be made between the structure of the Yi Jing and the DNA. DNA codons are composed of a combination of three out of four nucleobases, which can be Thymine, Guanine, Adenine, and Cytosine³. It is tempting to map the four bigrams to the four nucleobases and to establish a symbolic correspondence between the 64 hexagrams of the Yi Jing and the 64 DNA-codons. These DNA-codons deliver enough diversity to create all that lives on earth. The 64 hexagrams may also be combined in such sophisticated ways to display all the observed and hidden changes.

¹ (Javary, 1997, 2003; Schilling, 2009; Schlumberger, 2009; Smith, 2012).

² (Felley, 2013).

³ (Schönberger, 1992).

The opposite and reversed hexagrams

Between the 64 hexagrams, there are different relations that interconnect them. Four of these relations will be discussed. The first one is called the opposite hexagram. Two hexagrams are opposite when the Yin-lines are replaced by Yang-lines



Figure 3 Two opposite hexagrams “After Completion” and “Before Completion”

The second connection is called the reversed hexagram. Here, two hexagrams are called reversed when they are placed relatively upside down.



Figure 4 Two reversed hexagrams “Retreat” and “The Power of Great”

The simple rules describing the procedures for creating opposite or reversed hexagrams also correspond to a shift in the meaning of the corresponding hexagrams. The operation of “opposition” as well as that of “reversing” concern attributes which are complementary and not strictly contrary. When two hexagrams X and Y are opposite, then the attributes X owns are complementary to the ones Y has. The two slopes of a mountain, southern and northern slopes may exemplify the relations between two reversed hexagrams. They are closely related and illustrate two distinct aspects of the same reality.

The nuclear families

There is a category of families, the so-called nuclear families, which are formed with hexagrams having identical 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th lines.

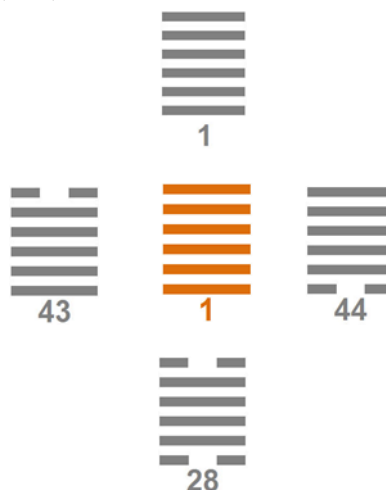


Figure 5 The Qian-nuclear family. The four hexagrams differ only in the 1st and 6th lines. Hexagram 1 is the nuclear hexagram.

Each family has a kind of representative, the so-called nuclear hexagram. Its lines, numbered from one to six, correspond to the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 3rd, 4th and 5th lines of each hexagram belonging to the same family. A line-based algorithm explains the construction of the nuclear hexagrams

and their families⁴. The four hexagrams, which belong to the same family, share certain characteristics made more explicit in the corresponding nuclear hexagram. In this example, there are four hexagrams, in a clockwise direction: The Creative, Coming to Meet, The Preponderance of the Great and Resoluteness. Each of these presents in its own specificity strategies that deal with the handling of situations characterized by a high Yang energy dimension. All these strategies are condensed in the spirit of the hexagram 1 and each differs from the others by the specifications illustrated by the 1st and 6th lines⁵. Thus, there are four different but correlated interpretations emerging from the generic meaning of this strong all-Yang hexagram.

The pre-heaven hexagrams' families

Then there are the pre-heaven hexagrams' families⁶. To understand how these families are structured, it is necessary to consider the upper and lower trigrams of a hexagram. A trigram is a figure made up of three Yin or Yang lines. The lower trigram corresponds to the lines 1-2-3 the upper trigram corresponds to the lines 4-5-6 of a given hexagram. It is important to note that the lines are counted from bottom to top.

The pre-heaven families follow a trigram-based algorithm.

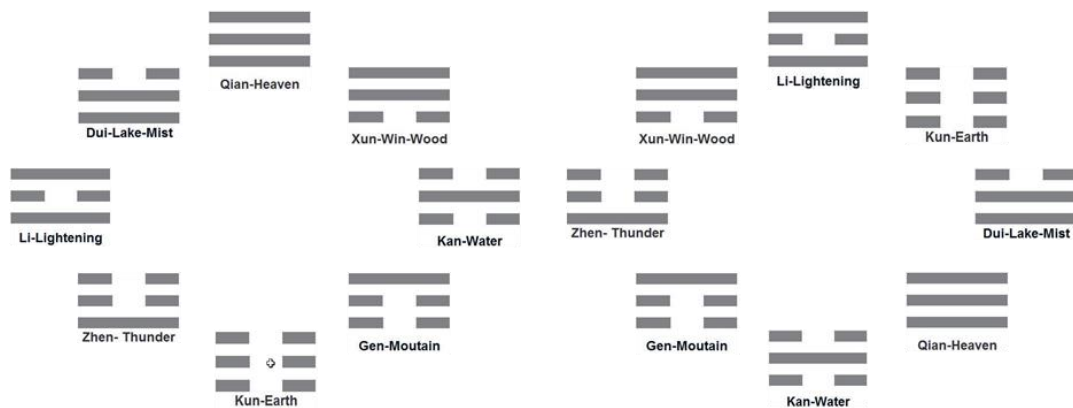


Figure 6 : The Pre-heaven (left) and Wen (right) arrangements of the trigrams

Each trigram in the right circle corresponds to the left-circle trigram in the same location, for example, the Qian (Heaven) trigram corresponds to the Gen (Mountain) trigram and the Kan (Water) to the Kun (Earth) trigram. To give a specific example of how the pre-heaven hexagram is built, you take the lower trigram of a hexagram such as the Li (Light/upper and lower trigram of hexagram 30) from the right, and match it to the corresponding trigram on the left. Thus, the new lower trigram would be the Qian (Heaven). The same happens with the upper trigram. Therefore, the new Pre-heaven hexagram of the Hexagram 30, The Clinging, Fire, is hexagram 1, The Creative. In addition, the pre-heaven hexagram of The Creative is hexagram 52, Stabilization, Keeping Still, expressing, that before real creativity deploys its power, it necessitates a state of quietness and inner concentration. The hexagram 52 is built by doubling the trigram "Mountain" to illustrate the kind of tranquility anticipating the moment of great creativity.

⁴ There are 16 distinct nuclear hexagrams and families. The four inner lines of a nuclear hexagram are identical for the four members of the family. Each of these four lines can be a Yin or a Yang line, therefore there are 16 different nuclear families.

⁵ The 1st and 6th lines build the so-called envelope of the hexagram. There are four envelopes, like the four bigrams Figure 2.

⁶ Felley, G. (2013). Yintelligence: The mapping of the pre-heaven or FuXi hexagrams to the post-heaven or King Wen hexagrams. [online] Olten: Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz. Institut für Wirtschaftsinformatik IWI. Available at: <http://www.fhnw.ch/ppt/content/pub/fuxi-kingwen/pdf-des-arbeitsberichts-nr.-29> [Accessed 16.03.2015].

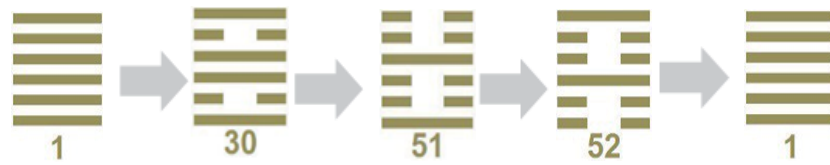


Figure 7 An example of a Pre-heaven family

The four members of a pre-heaven family are arranged in a well-defined cyclic sequence and each has a predecessor and a successor. The successor inherits some prerequisites from its predecessor. In a business language, the predecessor’s situation may “represent” the critical success factors that the successor must have in order to be able to cope with the problems its condition implies. Figure 7 illustrates an example of a family whereby hexagram 1 “The Creative” symbolizes the creative power and the pure Yang-force. Subsequently, this energy flows into hexagram 30, “The Clinging, the Fire”, which produces inspiration and awareness. This awareness acts as the Thunder, the name of hexagram 51, and is like a rude awakening. The generated shock has to be absorbed by the solid quietness of hexagram 52 “The Mountain”, which keeps still and enables the creativity of hexagram 1.

There are 16 pre-heaven families, and each of these owns its specific internal logic. This article aims to show the sophistication of the Yi Jing’s logical system. Especially how close it fits to the PDCA cycle through the algorithms used iteratively to generate the Pre-heaven and nuclear families. It will demonstrate how meaningful the derived hexagram series are, although the applied way to structure these series may seem arbitrary. The results are so convincing that one has to accept the idea of a subtle logic beyond.

Calendar Hexagrams

Among the 64 hexagrams, there are 12 special ones called calendar hexagrams.

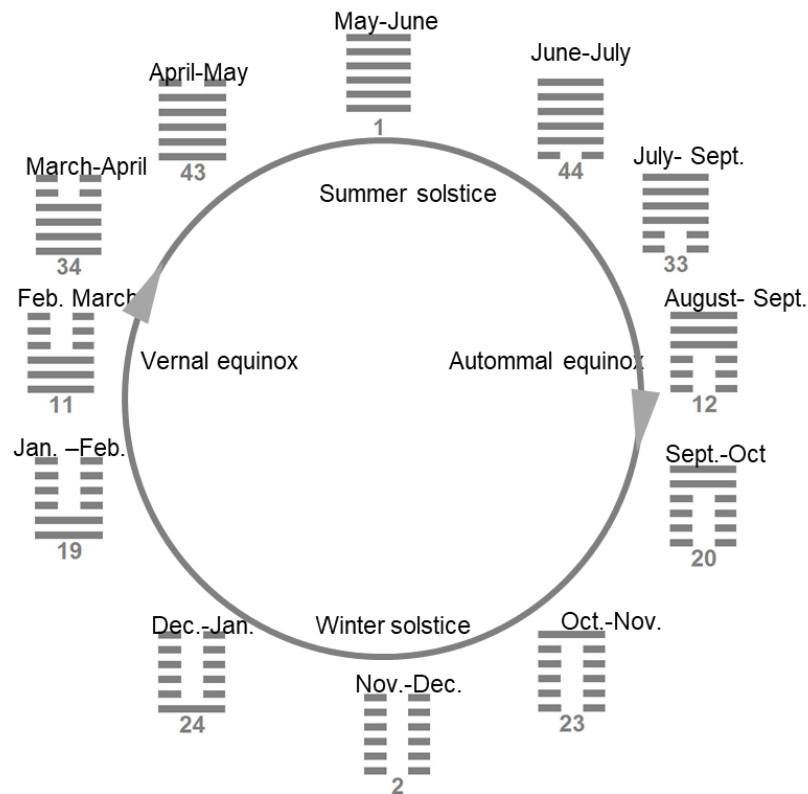


Figure 8 The 12 calendar hexagrams

They differ from each other in the structure of their Yin and Yang lines forming blocks. This

means that there is never a Yin or a Yang line between two Yang or Yin lines. There are 12 such hexagrams. According to the ancient Chinese tradition, hexagram 2, “The Receptive”, is associated to the north and winter, hexagram 11, “Peace” or “Prosperity”, corresponds to the east or spring; hexagram 1, “The Creative”, corresponds to the south or summer; hexagram 12, “The Stagnation”, corresponds to the west or autumn. The eight remaining calendar hexagrams organize themselves between these four “cardinal” hexagrams according to their Yin/Yang ratio.

These 12 hexagrams describe a repetitive cycle, conveying values and corresponding activities along an imaginary time axis. Within this special case, the pragmatic image of the four seasons is coupled with the cardinal directions. Combining these calendar hexagrams with the four steps of the PDCA cycle delivers an insight into the sophisticated Yi Jing’s logical system using the concepts of nuclear and Pre-heaven families. The established correspondences are strong enough to seriously consider the system of 64 hexagrams as a rationally coherent system, composed of single elements (the hexagrams) and rules connecting them (rules for building nuclear and pre-heaven hexagrams), giving an identified added value to the set of hexagrams.

Refreshing the PDCA Deming Cycle

The PDCA cycle (plan–do–check–act or plan–do–check–adjust) represents an iterative four-step management method, which is used in business for the control and continuous improvement of processes.

Plan: Defining the expected results and the corresponding methodologies to manage the allocated resources and identified risks.

Do: Implementing, running, and monitoring the designed processes.

Check: Analyzing the measured outcomes and comparing them with the fixed targets.

Act: Defining actions to improve the achieved results.

Plan: Re-examining the strategy by adjusting new goals.

Originally, the four phases are treated equally because there is a sequence of activities, which has to be executed according to a given order. However, in real time, for a productive business process, the four phases are deployed on a time axis, the order remains the same but the size of the allocated time slot may be phase-specific. This is called the real-time or productive PDCA (PPDCA) cycle. Figure 9 shows a possible time configuration of these phases.

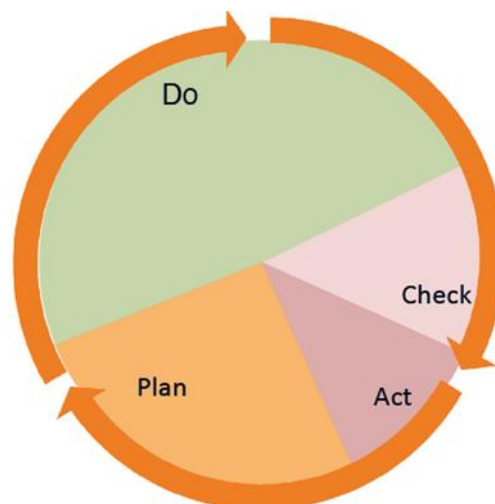


Figure 9 The productive PDCA cycle as iterations

The time slot (Plan) needed for planning and designing, a process should be shorter than the time required to execute it. The time used to record (Check) the critical measurements and the time to define the corresponding improvements (Act) are both also less than the time the process was

productive. According to the new expected performances, a revised Plan has to be defined, and the cycle begins anew.

Mapping the 12 Calendar Hexagrams to the PPDCA

The next step connects the 12 calendar hexagrams with the time configuration associated with the four phases of the PPDCA (see Figure 10).

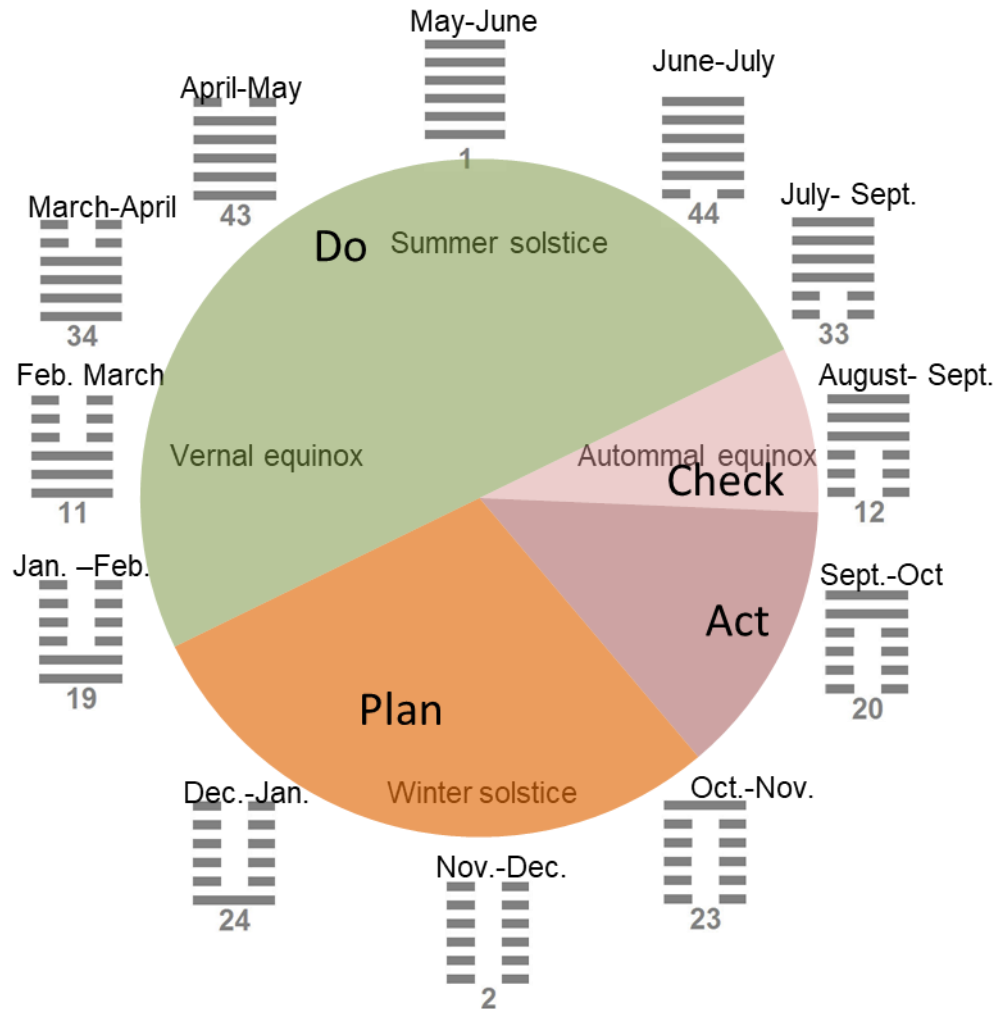


Figure 10 The 12 calendar hexagrams deployed together with the PPDCA

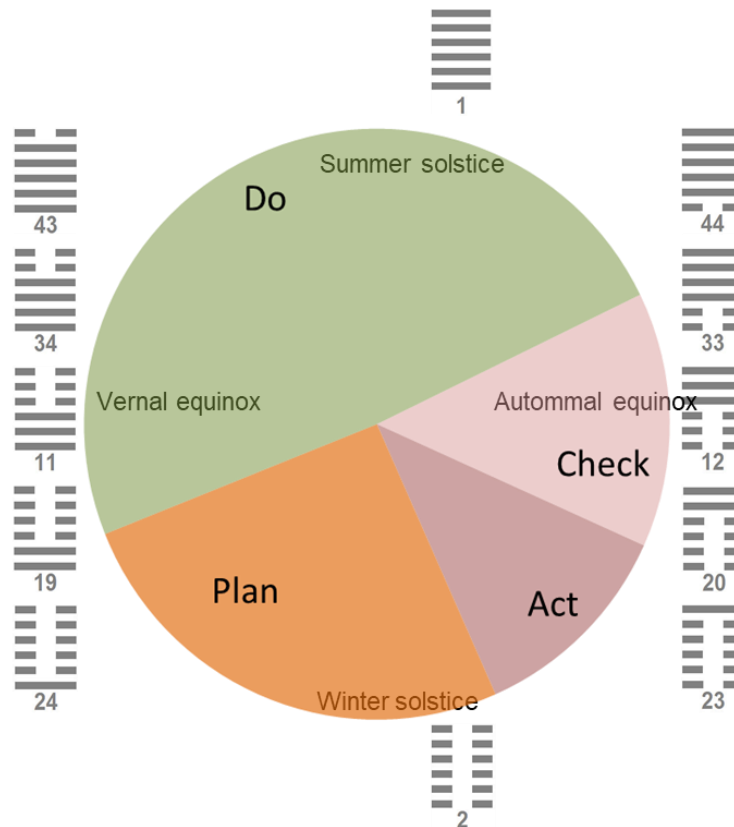
The Plan's phase belongs to the north and winter. This is the time when activities slow down, a time to organize and think about what has and will be done. In winter, the tree roots continue to grow, preparing for the next season. This corresponds well to the meaning of the hexagram 2 (The Receptive) and 24 (Return, Turning Point, see box 2). Following the planning, the scheduled activities are launched and followed up with hexagram 19 (The Approach). These activities open a period of wealthy growth (hexagram 11, Peace and Prosperity). Hexagram 34 (Power of the Great) and hexagram 43 (The Resoluteness) direct the production process and give it maximum power, until the climax is reached, which is represented by hexagram 1 (The Creative). After the full deployment of power, hexagram 44 (Coming to meet) and hexagram 33 (Retreat) manage to slow down the production process correctly. This leads to the closing of the production process and to the validation of the delivered process outcomes (initializing the Check Phase: hexagram 12, The Stagnation and hexagram 20, Contemplation). Following the analysis of the results, hexagram 23 (The Exhaustion) and hexagram 2 (The Receptive) decide on the necessary measures required to optimize the obtained results. Once again, the cycle begins with new goals and process guidelines.

The logic behind the calendar hexagrams and their corresponding pre-heaven, nuclear hexagrams

This section will link the 12 calendar hexagrams to the corresponding pre-heaven and nuclear hexagrams. To do this, the rules for generating the pre-heaven and nuclear hexagrams are used. These two procedures, explained above, lead to surprising symmetries, which reveal how sophisticated the Yi Jing logic may be. While this article is too short to explore which detailed business implications could be derived from this astonishing mapping between the calendar hexagrams and the PPDCA cycle, it encourages further investigations.

First, we rearrange the distribution of the calendar hexagrams, as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11 The calendar hexagram in a new arrangement



Then, we apply the rules described earlier to construct the pre-heaven (green) and nuclear (orange) hexagrams, as illustrated in Figure 12 below.

On the left of hexagram 1 and 2, where the “summer solstice” and the “winter solstice” lines are, there are two consecutive pre-heaven hexagrams, which are followed by two nuclear hexagrams⁷. The left side has three columns, with the hexagrams 43-34-11-19-24 in the first column, the corresponding pre-heaven hexagrams in the second and the nuclear hexagrams in the third.

Next, the right side of Figure 12 has four columns. The first illustrates the calendar hexagrams 44-33-12-20-23, the second and third show their two consecutive pre-heaven hexagrams and the fourth displays the nuclear hexagrams, corresponding to the third column.

It is, no doubt, remarkable, that the last column left side is predominantly led by the hexagram 64, Before Completion, and initializing a new order, and correspondingly the last column right side by hexagram 63, After Completion, which symbolizes the finalization of something. With hexagram 63, the established order is over and with hexagram 64 the playing cards undergo a new shuffle.

⁷ Hexagram 39 is the nuclear hexagram of hexagram 51 and hexagram 64 is the nuclear of hexagram 39.

Figure 12 shows interesting symmetries.

1. Bottom line with Hexagrams 2-57-58-37-64

It is winter time (hex 2). The new goals are not yet conspicuous (hex 57) but they are in a “friendly” phase of elaboration (hex 58). They have to be defined in a well-organized strategy to develop successfully (hex 37), before a new cycle (hex 64) can be started. The top line shows the hexagrams 1-52-51, which are the opposite of the respective hexagrams 2-57-58. The process inverses its dynamic in this phase. Hexagrams 37 and 39 have both hexagram 64 as nucleus but they have different envelopes. Hexagram 37 has a “summer-like” envelope, indicating activities and hexagram 39 a “winter-like” which symbolizes quietness. The two envelopes indicate also a kind of opposition, but rather subtly.

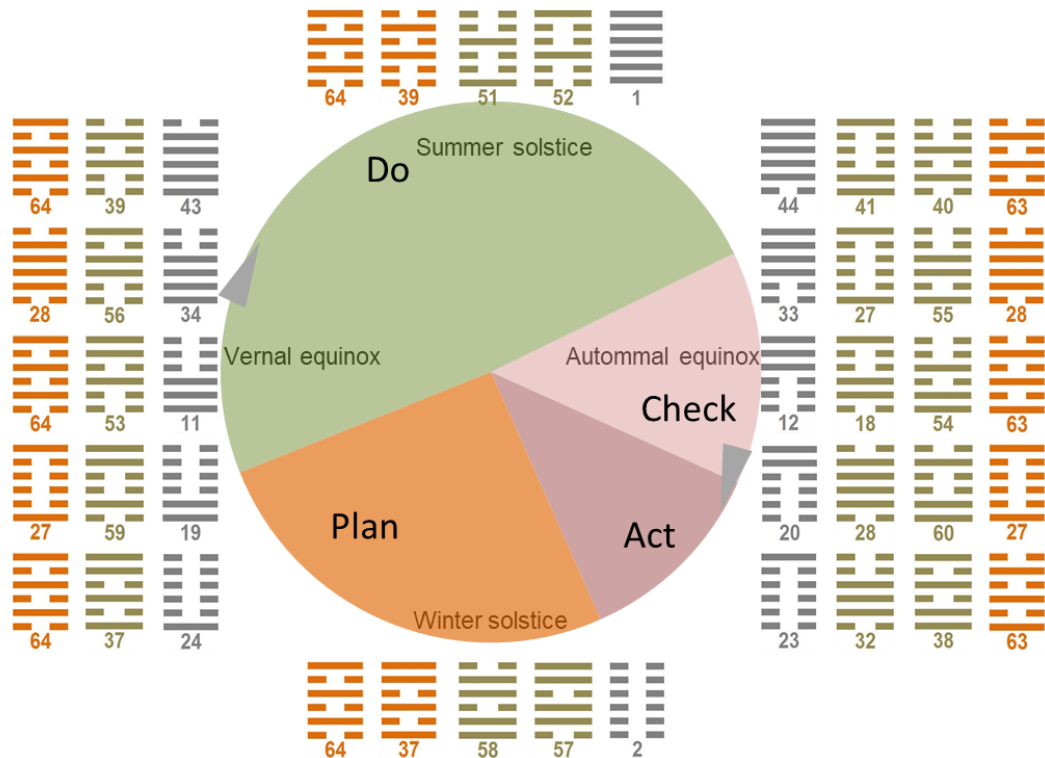


Figure 12 The calendar hexagrams together with their corresponding nuclear and pre-heaven hexagrams (grey:calendar hexagrams; green corresponding pre-heaven hexagrams; orange related nuclear hexagram)

2. The first column on the left side with hexagrams 64-27-64-28-64

Concerning the phases of the PPDCA (Plan – Do), this side corresponds to the time where something new is starting to develop and become mature. Hexagram 64, Before Completion, accompanies this process of reconstruction meaningfully. The hexagram 27, Nourishment, delivers the necessary and correct resources required to achieve the process. Hexagram 28 warns not to overheat.

Hexagram 28 warns not to overheat.

The second column starts with hexagram 37, The Clan, but with a different role to play than in the bottom line. Here it is the pre-heaven hexagram of hexagram 24, Return or Turning Point. It specifies which inner qualities hexagram 24 must have, in order to be able to deploy a new long-term project. Hexagram 59, Dispersion, initializes a time when new energies are set free. Hexagram 53, Gradual Progress, signifies the need for continuous efforts to reach the goal and support the prosperous tendency of hexagram 11, Prospering. Hexagram 56, The Wanderer, Traveling, recommends a cautious, responsible behavior to temper the possible pigheadedness of the hexagram 34, The Power of Great.

Finally, hexagram 39, The Obstacle, applies adequately the brakes to the hexagram 43 and its high-power resolution.

3. Top line with hexagrams 1-52-51-39-64

Here, the climax is reached. The process has attained its maximal limit and the opposition to the bottom line is expressed through the opposite hexagrams 1-2; 57-51; 58-52, and also through the opposite envelope of hexagrams 37-39.

4. The first column on the right side with hexagrams 63-27-63-28-63

Similar to the left side of Figure 12, which is predominantly led by hexagram 64 as the nuclear hexagram for the hexagrams 37-53-39, the right side is led by hexagram 63 as the nuclear hexagram for the hexagrams 38-54-40. Left and right side are connected by the properties of hexagram 63 and 64 to be jointly the opposite, the reversed and the nuclear. This fantastic entanglement supports the cyclic dynamic of the process. Hexagram 63, as symbol for the perfect order, initializes the dismantlement of the situation⁸. Hexagram 44 gives the first signal of the coming-up of new elements, it is supported by hexagram 41, Decrease, which recommends a densification of the resources, and hexagram 40, Liberation, which removes unessential items. With hexagram 33, Retreat, the adequateness of a withdrawal becomes more obvious, the pre-heaven hexagram 27, makes sure that the right resources are available, and hexagram 55, Abundance, helps to achieve no exaggerations, hexagram 28, Power of the Great, could become harmful. Hexagram 12, Stagnation, amplifies the feeling of discordance, the pre-heaven hexagram 18, Decay, gives some hints how to repair past mistakes or misunderstandings, and hexagram 54 signifies that there are a set of uncontrollable parameters, which are supporting the decaying process of hexagram 63. Next, hexagram 20, Contemplating, analyzes thoroughly and objectively the situation, and hexagram 28 proposes to relax the identified stress elements and to find with hexagram 60, The Limitation, a new arrangement where the existing resources could be better optimized and used through hexagram 27. Finally, hexagram 23, Deterioration, summarizes all that has been done and indicates new guidelines to prepare a new cycle, which requests the ability to endure, hexagram 32, Duration. This ability to maintain constancy requires the art of dissolving discrepancies, the role of hexagram 38, The Opposition. The process has reached the bottom, indicating the launch of a new cycle soon.

It is worth to mention further symmetries. The hexagrams in the middle column on the left side have their corresponding reversed hexagrams in the third column on the right side, and their opposite hexagrams in that column: hexagram 39-38; 56-60, 53-54; 59-55; 37-40. One may conclude, that these subtle correspondences between reversed and opposite hexagrams represent the driving trigger for the cyclic character of the process. Two reversed hexagrams express the same reality under different configurations and two opposite hexagrams tend to unify their specific, complementary attributes. They strive endlessly to melt together and this generates the cyclicity.

Conclusion

This article has shown that applying the classical building procedures for the nuclear and pre-heaven hexagrams leads to results that reflect a coherent logic and a sophisticated intelligence focused on the dynamic deployment of a cyclic process. The considered PPDCA represents only a special case, which combines with an established management tool. To map the different phases of the process to specific interrelated hexagrams offers a deeper insight into the mechanisms of changes occurring along a full cycle and gives useful information about how to follow and anticipate the different process phases.

⁸ Because everything has to change, the only way to change for something being perfect is to worsen.

The key function of the pre-heaven hexagrams is enlightenment; they best demonstrate the astonishing elaboration of the underlying logical Yi Jing's framework. The pre-heaven hexagrams build a set of 16 cyclic families, which would deserve a greater attention and deeper integration in the practical applications of the Yi Jing. A new lecture is currently being developed about this extremely valuable methodology in order to make it available for supporting or enabling optimal solutions to the problems that a management team has to face and solve in today's business world. It is like the old story about a man searching for his lost keys under the light of a streetlight; a random passerby asked him why he would think to find his lost keys in this small area? Whereupon he replied that, this was the only enlightened region! The Yi Jing's method massively enlarges the region where to look for new solutions; it enables the discovery of new domains impermeable to considerations based on strict rationality. It also facilitates the generation of creative solutions that exceed the narrow limits of normal causality.



Prof. Dr. Gabriel Felley studied theoretical physics at the Swiss Institute of Technology, with a focus in systems theory. For many years, he has worked as an SAP consultant, since 2005, he has been lecturer for IT Management and Security at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW). For the past 40 years, he has been exploring and discovering the Yi Jing philosophy and methodology. He gave seminars in Vietnam (Hanoi School of Business) and China (Zhengzhou University, Jinan University, Qingdao University). He is currently building a network between European and Asian universities to develop a modern reading of the Yi Jing and to promote it as a high-value tool to support the managerial decision making processes.

gabriel.felley@yintelligence.ch

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Glossary

Hexagram Nr.	Short Explanation
1	The Creative. Symbolizes the pure Yang principle. Impulse to action, upward striving, beginning of growth.
2	The Receptive. Symbolizes the pure Yin principle. Long lasting achievement. The blueprint is turned into a tangible product, implementing plans.
11	Prospering, Peace. Establishing solid bases for future growth, the work comes to fruition, the field of action is gradually opening up.
12	Stagnation, Stillstand. The natural order that fosters all things is disunited, lines of communication are down. Be aware to avoid the coming up confusion and hold to your inner confidence.
19	Approach, Advance. Carefully guiding a growth process. Excellent conditions to follow up on new projects and ideas.
20	Contemplating, Panoramic View. Analyzing what was done, taking in the whole picture, clarifying key reference point.
23	Deterioration, Splitting Apart. Reflecting the lessons learned to accept, to withdraw, and to start over later under new conditions.
24	Returning, Turning Point or Transition. The beginning of a new cycle or phase of work after a period of rest.
27	Nourishment. Considering the interdependent structures of the different cycles in the world. What are the correct resources used for specific tasks, which quality and quantity. Material resources as well as intellectual (skills, know-how)
28	Preponderance of the Great, Critical Mass. Time of high pressure. Important decisions have to be taken, the ponderous affairs are pushing into the foreground. The situation is excessive and may reach critical mass soon.
29	The Deep Waters, Danger. An attitude of apprehension has to be overcome. Taking the plunge, not procrastinating, will bring success even in difficult projects.
30	The Clinging, Synergy. A time of ideas: inspiration needs awareness and discipline to avoid euphoria.
32	Duration, Continuing. The ability to sustain regularity and constancy even in a stormy environment to achieve long-standing objectives.
33	Retreat, Strategically Withdraw. Initializes an ordered retreat to escape from momentary threats to a position of safety.

- 34 **The Power of Great.** Deliberately using present advantages to achieve things. Be sure to avoid pigheadedness and keep agile.
- 37 **The Clan.** The way to transform an idea into a long-lasting realization by sharing the same visions with others acting in the same organization. Every collaborator knows their respective place and is satisfied within that framework of responsibility (RACI table).
- 38 **The Opposition.** Different opinions seem to diverge. Use the existing polarity to develop a farsighted, comprehensive, new understanding of the given situation, creating added value.
- 39 **Obstacles.** Meeting obstacles, which have to be overcome. A clear understanding of their real nature is mandatory in order to find the right way to go ahead.
- 40 **Liberation.** Eliminate the non-essentials to focus with more energy on the real goals you have fixed.
- 41 **Decline, Decrease.** Concentration on the fundamental resources, avoiding ornaments.
- 43 **Breakthrough, Determination.** Ability to manage and control the growth. Malpractices are not tolerated, there is no resting on one's laurels, completing the changes resolutely towards perfection.
- 44 **Coming to Meet, Temptation.** The necessity to consider and to accept the coming up of new elements, forms of power.
- 51 **The Arousing, Shock, Thunder.** Awakening like a thunderbolt. New insights about the real nature of things lead to a deeper understanding of the processes. A heightened experience of the forces acting on your business, will lead to a better sharpening the strategy.
- 52 **Stabilization, Keeping Still.** Quietness, relaxation before action. Consolidating and realigning the planned activities.
- 53 **Gradually Developing.** Suggests the development of the business in a slow, organic unfolding of events concerning the goals derived from the strategy. There are no shortcuts in the journey ahead.
- 54 **Subordinate.** Facing wholly inequitable forces, the business success depends on reasons you cannot directly influence or control.
- 55 **Abundance.** Success and prosperity are imminent in business matters because potentials are fulfilled, goals are realized and objectives reached. In order to continue growing the business, it is necessary to select among the diversity and if necessary to reform or eradicate some obsolete or excessive elements.
- 56 **Traveling.** The conventional references no longer hold. To discover new environments, demands one to be cautious and to accept the established local rules.
- 57 **Penetrating Influence.** To influence the environment sustainably, the goals are to be clearly maintained over a long period. The efforts to maintain these should be as inconspicuous as possible.

- 58 **Encouraging.** Business goals can come to fruition in an atmosphere of gentleness and goodwill toward the other stakeholders.
- 59 **Dispersion, Reuniting.** It is time to break up the division because isolation brings discord and blocks creative energy. Develop a “process-based” business model to be able to use synergies.
- 60 **Limitations.** Optimizing the use of the enterprise’s resources. Defining rules ensures that they are not too robust.
- 63 **After Completion.** Everything has been completed. The perfect order has been reached. Because everything has to permanently change, this state of perfection has to decay. Hexagram 63 controls this process of disintegration.
- 64 **Before Completion.** The last Hexagram in the book. A cycle has been terminated and Hexagram 64 launches a new one. The counter has been reset. Everything has to be reshaped. Order is arising out of the chaos.

