

**Management system that uses awful search engines.**

**How often have you tried to find something and given up?** I do it all the time and I'm pretty good at searching. Mostly, **you need to know what you are looking for to be able to find it**, and if I'm looking for it, it is usually because I bewitched or bewildered... and trying to find something is a sure way to also be bothered.

**When we can't find essential information and don't have the time to locate it, we make it up or do without.**

**This is a sure way to encourage failure.**

**We need the right tool (information) for the job.**

## **Get What You Want: Good Search Tools**

This is another techie chapter, **but I'll keep it short**. The main purpose is to **provide an example of how one can rethink what you pay for**...to bring it closer in line with what you really want. There are **usually answers out there already**...if you dig a bit and recognize them by really **looking at what you want...not how it has always been done**.

Remember that the way search engines are evaluated is one of the reasons search engines return so many documents? It's because the fundamental measures are based on getting as many "relevant" documents as possible. **From that bad foundation, there is nothing to be done. You are certain to get a bunch of garbage.**

Decades ago, a fellow named Cooper suggested a different way to measure search tools. **His paper won awards, yet the ideas were never used**. They offer a simple solution.

Cooper suggested that instead of using relevancy, precision, and recall (oh my), **why not ask the USER if what was found was useful?!** Then, after they looked at each thing that was found,

ask them if they had enough information, or if they wanted to look at the next one. **Gee...ask the user if it was useful? Then ask if that was enough?** What

would that mean to the evaluation of search tools? Well...

- the NUMBER of things returned wouldn't matter. **More would NOT be better.**
- the **usefulness would be decided by the people using the tool**, not somebody or thing that decides if an object is “relevant”
- **testing the search tools could happen in real life situations**, not in canned experiments, so we could actually make search tools that worked for people doing what they would be doing when they used the damn things.

**So, we'd have search tools that were tailored for groups that looked for the same kind of objects. Those search tools would tend to return a few objects that were useful for those people *in the situations where they used the search tools!***

*Sounds good to me!*

**See what you can get if you actually look at what you want to pay for instead of assuming you should pay for what everyone else does?**