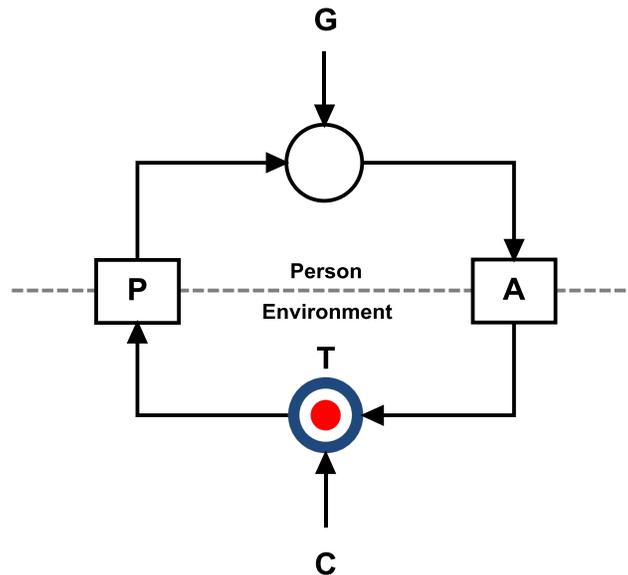


Tools for Knowledge Workers

PCT 101: A Primer



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If the model shown above could speak, here is what it might say:

“We human beings select or *Target* certain variables in our environment (T). We set *Goals* (G) defining the state we want those variables to be in and we compare our *Perceptions* (P) of the actual or current state of those variables with the goal state we have set. If these two states are not acceptably aligned we engage in *Actions* (A) aimed at reducing or eliminating any gap between the two. For the most part we are successful. We are ‘living control systems’ and we do a pretty good job of controlling things. However, there are other *Conditions* (C), other actors and factors that influence the same variables we want to control. For the most part, these other actors and factors pose minor disturbances to our control and we can compensate for them. But on occasion they can overwhelm our best efforts. Our control is far from perfect.”

The Target Model shown above is based on Perceptual Control Theory (PCT) as developed and articulated by engineer/psychologist William T. Powers (1926-2013). You can access a short paper titled “PCT 101” by clicking [here](#). You can access a lengthier explanation of the Target Model including examples by clicking [here](#).

