

Systems Leverage Points  
Places to Intervene in a System.



<https://pixabay.com/en/gears-mechanical-metal-machine-179861/>

*"The idea of leverage points is not unique to systems analysis..the silver bullet; the miracle cure...we want to know where they are and how to get our hands on them. Leverage points are points of power". Donella H Meadows, Author.*

*"Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world." - Archimedes*

Tags: Whole system - Whole System Design

Challenge:

How to change the structure of a system to produce more of what we want and less of what we don't? Oftentimes people involved in systems know intuitively where to find leverage points but end up pushing in the wrong direction. The most pressing example is the obsession with economic growth as a solution to global inequality and un-sustainability.

Solution:

Donella Meadows proposed a list of suggestions to consider as likely areas for systems change. Her list is not, by her own admission, a definitive one and should be viewed as a guide. By considering the possible leverage points we can more easily consider carefully where we might intervene. Caution must be exercised as complex systems are often counter-intuitive in their reactions.

References

Donella Meadows Institute, *Leverage Points-places to intervene in a system*

<http://www.donellameadows.org/archives/leverage-points-places-to-intervene-in-a-system/>

Dettmer, William H *Systems and Constraints:The concept of leverage*, Retrieved March 2015

<https://goalsys.com/systemstinking/documents/Part-6-SystemsandConstraints.pdf>

Video on systems and leverage points (12 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZX1G5JMMDA>

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