

## JACKSON ON JACKSON

Report on Infotech Course SG6: Structured Program Design  
: DP Management Assessment

Date of Course 28th-29th October 1976

### 1. Introduction

This report is in three parts. The first is an account of the course, the second is a summary of the Michael Jackson technique, and the third is my conclusion on the method, and my recommendations for LOLA.

### 2. The Course

#### 2.1 The lecturer - Michael Slavin

Mr. Slavin's name may be familiar - he was a councillor for the borough of Greenwich back in the 60's, and had an interest in the old LEO III at John Humphreys House. He still follows the progress of the old consortium, and wondered why the SE system had collapsed whilst LOLA was successful. I explained the different paths taken by LOLA.

Mr. Slavin has had a fairly wide range of jobs within the computing field, and in fact worked with Michael Jackson for Hoskyns Systems Research from 1966-1970, before rejoining him in 1975.

He tried to project the image of cool efficiency - "..... the time is now 10.15 and 32 seconds - we will break for coffee and be back by 10.30 and 32 seconds exactly". This largely fell flat on his audience of hardened professionals. I felt his manner was rather misplaced for the audience. He tended to lecture down rather than to.

#### 2.2 The Audience

Of the 24 people on the course, 11 had come from Europe. We all had to introduce ourselves and say why we were on the course. The majority of people were managers, and only about a quarter were directly involved with programming. The others were project managers and computer managers. Most people were IBM users and COBOL and PL/1 were the most frequently used languages. The main reason for coming on the course was to gain a feel for the Jackson technique and to compare it with other IPT methods.

#### 2.3 Session 1

After the introductions, the lecturer told us the history of computers from Babbage to the present day. From this he went on to discuss the roles of analysts and programmers. He emphasised that systems analysts were really business analysts or systems designers. Program design is better left to the programmers - ".....analysts must not wear two hats".