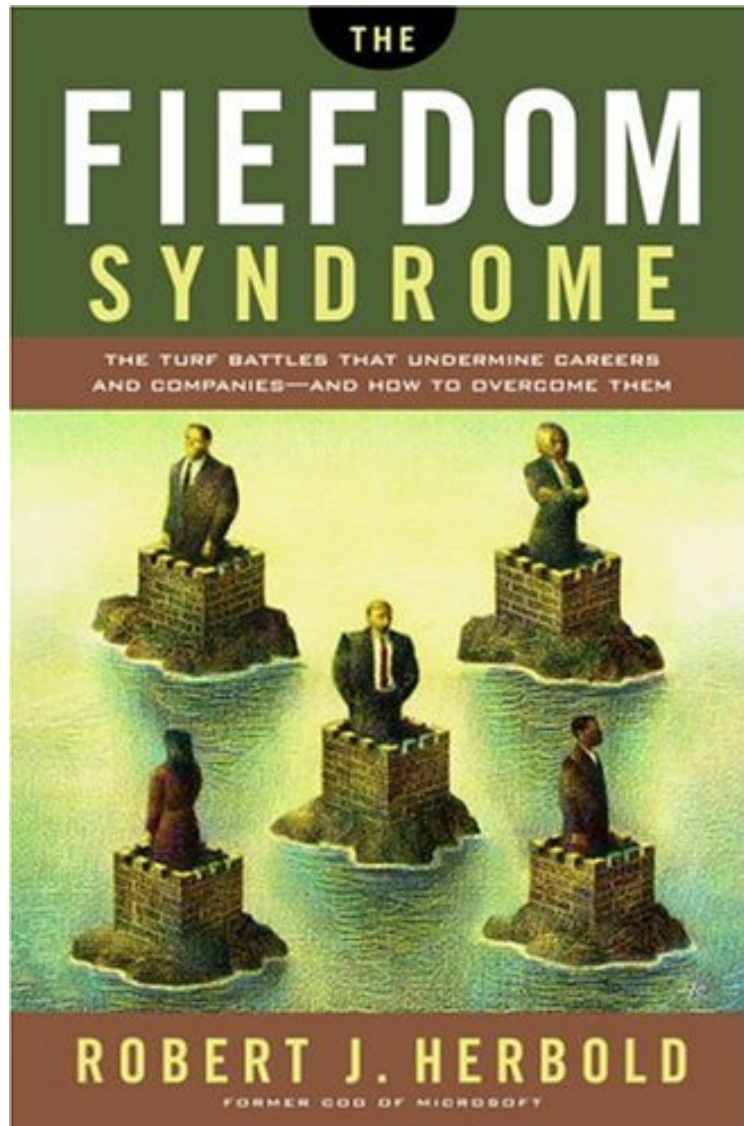


(Get free) The Fiefdom Syndrome: The Turf Battles That Undermine Careers and Companies - And How to Overcome Them

## The Fiefdom Syndrome: The Turf Battles That Undermine Careers and Companies - And How to Overcome Them

*Robert Herbold*

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**Robert Herbold : The Fiefdom Syndrome: The Turf Battles That Undermine Careers and Companies - And How to Overcome Them** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fiefdom Syndrome: The Turf Battles That Undermine Careers and Companies - And How to Overcome Them:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Confronting corporate turf battlesBy Erik GfesserThe chosen

subtitle for this work indicates that Herbold's goal was to discuss "the turf battles that undermine careers and companies, and how to overcome them", but the author actually concentrates on how the "fiefdom syndrome" undermines corporate entities rather than individuals. What Herbold deems a "fiefdom" is typically a unit of a company often controlled by a small group of people who has decided that it will act as a separate entity, frequently to the detriment of the rest of the firm. The book offers numerous examples of such fiefdoms, some of which consist of single individuals. Providing examples can have a positive effect when trying to explain a concept, but in my opinion the number of examples is a bit excessive here. However, Herbold's numerous examples have the positive effect of showing readers that they are not alone in this arena in much the same way that Edward Yourdon's "Death March" (see my review for that book) brings to light experiences of professionals that are often common within the technology services industry. Because Herbold was the former COO of Microsoft, his discussion on more than several occasions reverts back to his experiences at Microsoft, but he also delves into his experiences at other firms. Interestingly enough, Herbold defends fiefdom behavior to some extent within the first part of the book, not by condoning it but by recognizing that in some sense it is part of human nature to act in such a manner. The second and third parts of the book discuss what the author views as effective corporate disciplines to help avert the behavior that stifles the creativity especially vital to such areas as marketing, sales, and RD. The fourth and last part of the book focuses on how fiefdoms can negatively affect firms at a corporate rather than departmental level, such as during mergers and acquisitions. Unfortunately, the benefits to individuals of conquering fiefdoms is limited to the last four pages of the book. My recommendation to the author is that his next book concentrate on an elaboration of these pages.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. its ok bookBy DIYer/IT Expertthe book has so any stories that makes it boring to go thru it. it would make sense to come from a business guy directly what fiefdom is and how to solve. Rather the writer narrated multiple boring stories that ended up killing the taste of the book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good if you need itBy PeteI found myself in a world of fiefdoms, and this book helped me create a few compelling arguments for improving things. Like so many 'management books', it is about twice a long as it should be. I guess the publishers have a minimum page limit regardless of whether the author has that much to say or not. Nevertheless, this is worth buying if you are trying to fight a fiefdom syndrome of your own.

The turf battles and territorial "fiefdoms" that undermine so many companies—and how to break through them, by long-term Microsoft COO Robert J. Herbold—There is a potentially infectious condition inside virtually all organizations that can cause more damage than economic downturns, management upheavals, and global business shifts. Until now it has had no name. But it has impacted some of the world's leading companies, including Procter Gamble, IBM, Coca-Cola, and Microsoft. Robert J. Herbold, the COO who brought corporate discipline to a young Microsoft organization and helped to transform it into a mature global giant, calls it the Fiefdom Syndrome. And it happens at organizations large and small, profit and nonprofit, at the individual level as well as the group and divisional level. It can undercut a company's effectiveness, and in extreme cases it has shaken entire industries and taken down major corporations. The problem begins when individuals, groups, or divisions—out of fear—seek to make themselves vital to their organizations and, unconsciously or sometimes deliberately, try to protect their turf and others' perceptions of them. It is a natural human tendency, dating back to the origins of our species, but if it isn't managed properly, the damage caused by these "fiefdoms" can spell the death knell of what should have been a strong and vital organization. People who create fiefdoms can become dangerously insular, losing perspective on what is happening in the world outside their own control. They hoard resources. They are determined to do things in their own way, often duplicating or complicating what should be streamlined throughout the company, leading to runaway costs, increased bureaucracy, and a loss of agility and speed. In *The Fiefdom Syndrome*, Bob Herbold exposes the myriad ways such fiefdoms can compromise a company's effectiveness—as well as show what managers, companies, and individuals can do to break up fiefdoms and conquer the turf wars. Illustrated with countless examples from Microsoft, Procter Gamble, IBM, and other corporations, *The Fiefdom Syndrome* is an essential tool in every manager's toolkit.

.com Is your company threatened by turf battles, shut out of key data sources by territorial "lords," or ravaged by hundreds of "micro-companies?" If so, your organization may be suffering from a potentially crippling case of "Fiefdom Syndrome." Robert Herbold, former COO of Microsoft, presents a wealth of case studies from the usual (and always interesting) suspects--IBM, Procter and Gamble, Microsoft, and Wal-Mart--to illustrate an affliction that affects for-profit and non-profit organizations alike. Herbold identifies why fiefdoms are a problem, where they typically arise in companies--finance, HR, marketing, IT, virtually in most teams and departments--and offers solutions for preventing fiefdoms from cropping up and how to dissolve existing turf control. In an approachable manner, he demonstrates how discipline, creativity, and enforcement are keys to preventing the spread of fiefdoms: "The basic human tendency to want to control one's destiny or turf runs counter to discipline in an organization. If the CEO or the manager of a unit lets people act on their own, the company will soon fall into disarray." Like headaches, fiefdoms can become a persistent problem and if left untreated, can send organizations into an endless loop of

deteriorating health and repeated investigations into the cause. Prudent companies will take Herbold's advice and learn how to prevent and treat their little fiefdom problem. --E. Brooke Gilbert  
From Publishers Weekly  
Herbold, a corporate consultant and former COO for Microsoft, finds "fiefdoms"—individuals or groups who control the flow of information out of their offices as a way of gaining agency or power—one of the most dangerous problems a company can face, and he sees them everywhere. Even the collapse of Enron, he argues, can be attributed to the actions of a small cabal in the finance department. The insight isn't quite as groundbreaking as he makes it out to be, however, and the proposed solutions will likely strike readers with even a minimum of substantial work experience as equally obvious. Much of the advice is the sort of boilerplate ("continually strengthen the talent pool") that can be found in nearly all business books, though Herbold's enthusiasm for standardized reporting and evaluation practices is possibly more zealous than his peers'. Illustrative anecdotes drawn from his corporate background do liven things up somewhat, but they also create an emphasis on industries involving product sales. Tantalizing hints about the problems fiefdoms create in other fields, such as NGOs and government bureaucracies, are left largely unexplored, diminishing the potential for generating broader interest. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.  
From Booklist  
Herbold has had an impressive 36-year career working with some of the world's leading corporations, including Microsoft, Procter Gamble, IBM, and Coca-Cola. His own observations of people problems has led him to define an "infectious condition" that exists in virtually all organizations, which he calls the "fiefdom syndrome," and it is equivalent to the turf wars that were rampant during the Middle Ages. It manifests itself when individuals or groups seek to make themselves vital to the organization and protect their territory by any means possible, to the detriment of the organization as a whole. This is classic bureaucracy at its worst, and if left unchecked, it can stifle creativity, shake entire industries, and take down major corporations. Herbold gives numerous examples of scathing behavior at major corporations, often disguising identities to avoid embarrassing the individuals or companies involved. He introduces seven disciplines of a well-run corporation and provides ways to identify and overcome the fiefdom syndrome and break down the barriers to major change. David Siegfried  
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