

# The Uselessness of Philosophy

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*Paper Discussion Workshop, 10am – 12 am. Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012  
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## Abstract

Within this session we will discuss ‘The Uselessness of Philosophy’ (Kaulingfreks, 2007), as well as a whole host of issues and questions that arise from it, with its author. An excerpt of the paper (p. 40-1) is cited below:

Much of what follows has to do with the usefulness or uselessness of philosophy. I will argue that philosophy is of no use for managers and that it should be considered as a useless activity. By use I mean a means to an end. As I will explain later, usefulness points towards an economy of means: something is useful when it helps to reach a certain goal that lies outside the thing itself, and in this case usefulness is synonymous with efficiency. The goal is given and the means help us to realize it...When stating that philosophy may be useless I mean that philosophy is not a means to an end outside the philosophical activity itself. Management may not have any use for philosophy because it remains to be seen that philosophy is of any assistance to the managerial logic. On the contrary, philosophical doubt could weaken management in the sense that it postpones decision making. It may inject doubt in the managing process and therefore lead to indecision...

Participants must have read the paper in full in order to participate, the paradoxically utilitarian logic of discussion group coordination notwithstanding.

## Reference

Kaulingfreks, Ruud (2007) ‘The Uselessness of Philosophy’ in Campbell Jones and Rene ten bos (eds.) *Philosophy and Organization*. London and New York: Routledge.