

## Assignment

# Spider and the Starfish

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In this assignment, you will learn about the conceptual impact of decentralized technologies on organizations. By understanding how decentralization has impacted past organizations, you should gain insight on how the Internet, a decentralized technology, is impacting modern organizations.

In this reading, you will be exposed to instances where decentralized technologies, such as the Internet, have impacted existing organization. You will also learn about how decentralized technologies have lead to the creation of new types of organizations.

For this assignment, you will read both the Introduction and Chapter One "MGM's Mistake and the Apache Mystery" from the Spider and the Starfish. You can find this online at:

<http://www.starfishandspider.com/preview/index.html>

After you have completed the reading, briefly, and completely, answer the following questions. Place your answers into a file (text, doc, or html format) and bring the file, and a hard copy, with you to our next class. (In that class we will upload your file to your online portfolio.)

1. In the seventeenth century, why were the Spaniards unable to defeat the Apaches? What implications does this have concerning current, or future organizational competition?  
*The Apaches were decentralized, and had a widely distributed political power.*
2. Briefly compare and contrast centralized and decentralized organizations.  
*Centralized Organizations have a clear leader, clear decision maker, and clear hierarchy, while with a decentralized organization, it is more unclear on who is in total control. No hierarchy, no headquarters.*
3. List a few of the traits of a decentralized organization.  
*No Hierarchy, no clear leader, spread out leadership system.*
4. From a technical perspective, what is the primary difference between Napster and Kazza?  
*Napster had a central server distributing music, whereas Kazza did not, and relied on multiple servers.*
5. Is this reading relevant to the current competition between new organizations such as Uber and Lyft and existing taxi companies? Why or why not?  
*Yes, as Uber and Lyft are examples of decentralized organizations, as the drivers are more independent, not reporting to a single boss each day like Taxi Drivers.*