

# Purposeful (glossary)

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purposeful

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*A purposeful system is free to determine its own goals needed to achieve an outcome.* (Ackoff 1971)

## Sources

Ackoff, R.L. 1971. "Towards a System of Systems Concepts", *Management Science*, 17(11) USA.

## Discussion

This is the theoretical system science definition. A goal is a specific task achievable in a set time, while an objective is a desired outcome which need to be achieved (or partially achieved) within a time limit. Purposful systems can be given a problem to solve. Humans, and sufficiently complex machines, are purposeful.

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