IMAGE

AN ACTION RESEARCH JOURNAL
ON
PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

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ISSUE NINE . OCTOBER 1990

"VISION"

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JOURNAL OVERVIEW

Stanley Davis, in his book <u>Future Perfect</u>, points out that this way of thinking is part of a new paradigm that is transforming the way business creates its future. In his chapter called *Any Time*, he uses the example of how Michelangelo approached sculpture. The ordinary artist invents the figure in the stone, just as companies envision a future that is not yet there. But Michelangelo approached it from the perspective of **Discovery**, beginning with the assumption that the figure was already <u>in</u> the stone and his job was to uncover the hidden reality. What would it mean for companies to not only invent their future, but discover it, using the power of Vision. We will explore this idea using an excerpt from Davis' chapter as part of this issue.

Vision, Mission and Strategy

How does Vision relate to the mission and strategy of an organisation? Vision is the repository of the values you hold most dear in a compelling picture that describes them in "full bloom". Many can share the same Vision and still have radically different senses of Mission. For instance, many share the Vision of health in society, but some see their own Mission as healing, others as educational and still others as mobilising the world to eliminate hunger. Mission is "what we intend to accomplish", our uniqueness, or role in the Vision. It can be said that strategy is the way to accomplish the Mission and is the "pathway" to the Vision. It flows out of where you see the contradictions are and where you see a distinctive advantage.

An authentic Vision is a description of reality that acts as a transparency for the deepest yearnings of the future to shine through. It's as if the unfolding of the future is filled with a deep meaning, often deeper than you can understand. As long as you remain faithful to the Vision, it will continue to sustain and direct you. In this sense, the Vision is "alive". When it no longer acts as a transparency for the future, it "dies" and is no longer a source of inspiration and energy. Therefore it is important to interact with the Vision in the midst of the Mission and strategies. This interaction is essentially in the realm of myth (story) and symbol. For only these can mediate between the profound level of "being" that is the Vision and the daily acting out we do through our assigned tasks. They are the means of transparency. The more profound the Vision, the more rites, rituals and symbols play a role in keeping the Vision alive.

Vision. Probably the word most used when talking about what enables effectivity and motivation for individuals and organisations. Yet, it remains an elusive instrument for most of us. How do you get it, keep or sustain it, renew it, spread it and use it to mobilise a group, whether it becomes alive within one's self, organisation or even a nation? In this issue we want to explore these various aspects of Vision. We will examine this subject from both an individual perspective as well as from an organisation's viewpoint.

An authentic Vision can be the most powerful factor in transforming a situation or group into a highly charged environment. Indeed, it is the stuff that seems to accomplish miracles. People will even die for a Vision. It is a source of incredible energy and power. It can be for "good", such as in Martin Luther King's powerful image of "I have a dream", or it can cause incredible destruction and death as in Hitler's vision for Germany and the supremacy of the Aryan race. In either case, the Vision was projected in ways that touched the deeper parts of the human psyche and gave meaning, justification and significance to individual actions.

The key to understanding both Vision and the role it plays in transformation is to see it as a description of a desired reality that is so powerful that it illuminates and colours all of one's life. When it is functioning in the life of a person or group of persons it literally is both present, here and now, and at the same time describing a future. That is, a person feels like what he is doing now is not just moving toward the Vision, it is the Vision, being acted out now. Time is no longer linear, where one is progressing toward some desired goal, rather the goal is already accomplished in imagination and this action is but a part of it.

Vision is Not

Perhaps it is just as important to know what a Vision is _not_ as it is to know what it is. There are two aspects that we will explore in this issue. First is that one cannot have profit as the goal of a Vision. It just won't work. Yet "profit-making" organisations use this objective as perhaps the central part of the Vision for their organisation. Charles Hampden-Turner in his recently published book, Charting the Corporate Mind, devotes a chapter to this truth called, "The Search for the Unicorn". The "bottom-line" approach to Vision substitutes a consequence for an end.

The second aspect of what a Vision is _not_ is covered in our article **Vision and Intuition.** A Vision is not "rational". Not that it isn't real and can be understood to have definitive aspects to it. But its origin and power are from the artistic side of our brains, located in the right hemisphere. It therefore needs those things that "speak" to the right side, such as poetry, ritual, symbol and rites to be communicated. That is why certain songs can communicate a Vision where written prose does not. It is why the symbols of "membership" of those sharing a Vision become so important. Whether that be in uniforms, certain code words or as in the Apple group that brought the revolutionary Macintosh computer to fruition, a pirate flag flying over their divisional office at Apple Computer; these symbols carry the meaning of the Vision and make it clear to one that you are or are not a part of it.

Creating a meaningful symbol system for organisations is not widely appreciated. We continue to rely on symbols of status and success for our employees. We don't know how to consciously and continuously use those tools and methods that "activate" Vision for our people. In our methods section we will share some of the ways the ICA has developed for creating, communicating and sustaining a collective Vision.

People of Vision seem to be a different breed than most of us. In the book Strategy of a Dolphin, Dudley Lynch and Paul Kordis characterise this breed as having the mind of a dolphin. In organisations there are basically three types of people. "Sharks" and "Carps" are using their old "hard-wired" brains that result in behavior choices for responding to situations characterised in the terms "fight", "flight" or "freeze". "Dolphins" have developed a new kind of mind that approaches situations entirely differently. Dolphins enjoy, exploit, explore and experience to the fullest of their faculties the ability of the integrated, highly social, fully involved human brain to second guess itself and other brains in advance. The result is often an

ocean of ideas, a maelstrom of possibilities and an awakening of potential. Vision is a critical aspect of the Dolphin's success. We are including an excerpt from the chapter, "Vision Building: Steering Through the Brain's Time Window".

Most people believe that for a company, the CEO or other top executives are responsible for the Vision of their organisation. It is they that create it and, because they are principally responsible for the long range view, are most in touch with the future and therefore are more Vision-driven. In their book, Lynch and Kordis call this Vision factor the "X" factor, and relate it to the degree of a person's willingness to tolerate ambiguity. It is their contention that this "X" factor only becomes significant or active in one's thinking and action when the operating time frame becomes long enough to encompass tremendous ambiguity. For them, this is about ten years into the future and therefore only those people who are able to relate and think out of these longer time frames will have this "X" factor.

We wouldn't disagree with this analysis, but it doesn't answer the question of how "ordinary" people within an organisation, whose duties don't regularly require them to interact with long range issues or strategies, can have equal or equivalent access to this factor "X". We think that not only is this possible and desirable, but that there is a second factor, which we will call factor "Y", that has to do with "space", that is as powerful and necessary as "time" in the motivation of individuals through a Vision. We explore these two interrelated factors in the article **Enlivening the Vision.** One way to use these techniques is described in our Methods section, **The Think Tank.**

Personal Vision

Whatever else Vision is, it has to be mine. I can share it with others, but it must speak to me if it is to be my Vision. It is important to make your Vision a continual process of development. As the external environment changes and what you do changes the internal environment, the Vision is continually clarified and changed. It is an interactive process, not a "stuck" or frozen one. It doesn't mean you give up your Vision because it doesn't seem possible, but it grows in response to societal needs.

We are including a quote on Vision that seems to capture the essence of what a Vision means for an individual. Alongside, you will find a series of quotes from Thomas Berry's book, Dream of the Earth, and a personal Vision he has for a new curriculum for caring for the Earth. We think it is an example of how dreams contribute to Vision.

VISION BUILDING

Everyone has a vision. This is a basic assumption and belief behind the LENS process and all the work the ICA has done in the last 20 years. A vision may be latent, unconscious, uncultivated. It may be unavailable to the conscious mind. Or it may be crusted over with cynicism. Irrational behaviour may flow from unconscious beliefs about "how things ought to be". When the world does not meet our unconscious standards we may find ourselves struck with blinding anger. It can be a most self-revealing process to look behind our anger and cynicism to find out what is the deep belief or vision currently being violated to which we are violently reacting. Many of our "ought to be's" exist at this infrequently accessible level of consciousness. Our public description of a vision therefore may not match our real one.

A vision is built from a similar set of images, beliefs, hopes, dreams, imaginings and judgments of what is possible, or at least desired.

What will it take to build a shared vision to which each member of a group in an organisation can be aligned, willing to commit to and live out of with its potential of overcoming natural personal and cultural variance? How can small problems and irritations be kept minimised as a larger shared perspective sets the context for on-going cooperation?

In a 1988 book, <u>Strategy of the Dolphin,</u> <u>Scoring a Win in a Chaotic World,</u> authors Dudley Lynch and Paul L. Kordis describe dolphins which think powerfully rather than only positively, go not so much for a monopoly of the pool as for breakthrough in order to make the pool larger and different through simple elegant outcomes. The authors build a case for being dolphins over carps who never really expect to win, or over sharks who are addicted to taking or keeping away from others. Their description of "pseudo-enlightened carp", who do not understand limits preventing them from finally taking responsibility for their actions and the practical realisation of a worthwhile vision, is a particularly incisive metaphor for idealists.

Dolphins swim all over the pool creating and recreating vision which gives power to their action and momentum to their approaches. Dolphins believe the obvious: that the most sensible outcome for the group is also the most sensible outcome for each individual. Not that dolphins are not individualistic.... since in the most profound sense, no one is more individualistic - that is, insistent on the widest variety of personal choice and on defending individual integrity and self-esteem, than a dolphin. On the other hand, if there is anything a dolphin feels strongly about it is that nothing is more central to coping with rapid-change times than cooperation. Far better than competition or the independent quest for private advantage, cooperation is the route to take if things are going to change.
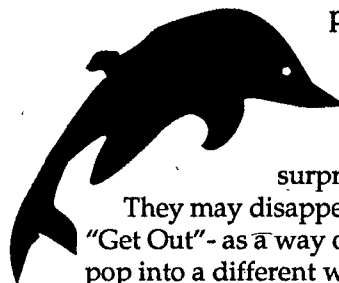
The following is taken from their chapters, *"Being on purpose"* and *"Vision Building: Steering through the Brain's Time Window"*.

Role of Purpose in Vision

Being on purpose and being in sync with one's values as that purpose is pursued represents power, promise and progress. Thus dolphins know that one of the most empowering actions they can contribute to is to help others get "on purpose" and to align themselves, if only temporarily, with the purposes of others. Looking at "the pool" through the values prism, dolphins see a world of simultaneity and spontaneity that requires mental agility and responsiveness.

Dolphins use their knowledge of purpose-making and values to achieve one of two ends:

<u>One is to help people change.</u> Shake up the system, create stress. Inject puzzlement and mystery. Issue challenges and place people on their own resources. Every great reformer traffics in surprise and the unexpected. They may disappear (strategically)- play "Get Out"- as a way of encouraging people to pop into a different worldview or at least take steps in that direction.

They may perturbate the troops. When done well and timed well, laying down the law is a move that can help people pop.

They may lead from the balcony. The right catalytic insight, placed in the right context, symbols, and perspective at the right time can help people see the light and move in its direction.

They may toss something new in the salad. It's not only what you toss, but when and how. Doing the very thing that people never thought you would do. Asking for something people never thought you would ask for. Embracing something people never thought you would embrace. To be thorough about it, you are likely to perturbate the members of an organisation any time you change its 1) leadership, 2) membership, 3) task, 4) organisational climate and structure, or 5) environment.

These are dolphin techniques for shaking up the brain. They can help people pop from a sense

of direction that is ill serving them to one better suited for their times and needs.

Another is to create harmony or "functional resonance." A disconsonant orchestra is an orchestra whose instruments - and musicians - are working against each other. A maestro worth his pay brings depth and power to the sound by creating functional resonance with the pieces making the music. Dolphins often choose to view the brains making up an organisation orchestrally. The goal is "functional resonance," the creation of richness as well as power for achieving a common purpose. Even though people may be at different places on the scale of human sense-making, they can work in common rather than work in discord if they are in skilled hands. Here's how a dolphin would seek to create this harmony:
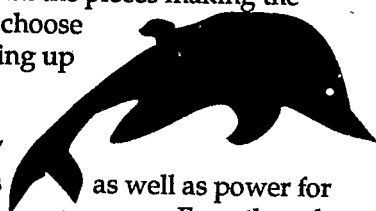
First, put people in touch with their values, a way to help everyone in the organisation understand more clearly their central underlying worldview. From that beachhead, dolphins then guide the people they lead or manage into exploring and expanding their insights into how this worldview supports a common purpose and shapes what they want of themselves and others.

Second, put people in touch with purpose. If both the organisation's purpose and the individual's are clear, the individual has the greatest opportunity to choose - that is, to get out, to change "me", to change the organisation.

Third, celebrate diversity. Every worldview has its blindspots. A true team of people will help each other compensate. And every worldview has its unique contribution to make, acting out of a unique heritage of human endurance, exploration and sense-making. Dolphins will hire smart and lead smart, acting on their knowledge of where people are coming from, purpose-wise and value-wise.

Fourth, be discriminating in issuing assignments, anticipating results, and creating payoffs. If an individual is placed in a position that throws one off purpose, only harm and disappointing outcomes are to be anticipated. Knowing what is important to the other person by knowing when he or she is "on purpose" helps the dolphin as maestro bring resonance - power, synchrony or harmony, depth, endurance - to the mutual outcome.

Fifth, understand that being on-purpose and in touch with your values are not enough. Being on purpose and having an appreciation for each other's values help people to like and appreciate each other. Purpose has the most power when as

many shareholders as possible have been involved in its creation. This allows for a greater alignment of intent among the organisation's members. Still, you must know where you are starting from, how you got there, where you want to go and how you intend to get there. If a team has not built itself a shared vision for achieving its purpose, it isn't likely to get anywhere very fast or very satisfactorily.

Many organisations will define their purpose clearly, but without a shared vision people will go about realising that purpose in a variety of ways, and may even cancel each other's efforts in the long run because of their individualised visions.

Recognising what it is like to be on purpose depends for the most part on tapping the brain's ability to sense when in the past the future was most successful in tugging its user forward toward important purposes. Competent vision building must depend on the brain's ability to lock in on what, in the future, is most likely to create success in the present. Here the key is the extent to which the brain can see itself and its user operating in front of the times rather than moving through them.

Vision and Time

Constant course correction is a function of vision building. A good vision - a concrete, specific, detailed articulation of your purpose - can result only when you can develop a reasonably clear understanding of what you want. And there lies the difficulty. The tendency is to get a list of negatives. Rather than describing what is wanted, the tendency is to reply in surprising detail with what to avoid. Two things happen, 1) It tends to create precisely what you don't want to happen and 2) it creates an effect similar to driving a car through a rearview mirror. The result is a lack of grounding, of understanding where one is now and truly what is going wrong.

Evidence grows that the farther into the future a brain can see itself functioning, the more competent that brain is at handling complexity, juggling multiple responsibilities and tasks. A person's time horizon, the maximum temporal period in which a person can plan and execute specific, ongoing, goal-directed activities- is a strong indication of a person's openness to information from the future. Dolphins are the best examples of what happens when the brain's time

envelope is stretched farther and wider. Envision an unknown substance, let's call it "Factor X", suspended in the air, held by a pliable plastic bag. This bag is confined by all sides and on top and bottom by steel forms that allow it to expand only so far. From time to time the forms are moved back so the bag can increase its volume. When this happens, the air inside expands and the unknown substance grows a bit closer to materialising, to activating its fuller powers, to being recognised for what it is. Eliott Jaques's work indicates:
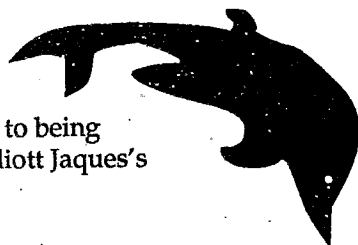
When a person's time horizon is:

*   three months or less, none of Factor X is detectable. Brains with this time horizon are rule-anchored.
*   one year, a tiny measure of Factor X is discern-ible. Brains with this time horizon seek judgment and action within the rules.
*   two years, a touch of Factor X is in the air; but rather than benefit from it, this individual seeks to isolate it and avoid its consequences. Brains with this time horizon extrapolate from a given rule.
*   five years, the presence of Factor X is palpable although not yet fully activated. Brains with this time horizon search for, then maintain, an underly-ing rule structure.
*   ten years, Factor X suddenly, commandingly materialises. Therefore, this brain listens to the rules and then begins to think beyond them - to establish its own criteria. Rather than seek order, this brain may deliberately induce disorder in its search for new patterns. Alternatives are readily and easily generated, and for the first time, impor-tance is given to what isn't known and what hasn't happened and what hasn't been said as potentially important sources of information. Because brains with this time horizon make the rules, they also feel free to ignore them if they don't fit current circumstances.

What is Factor X? The willingness to tolerate ambiguity.

With the time horizon widened and expanded to this extent, qualities such as the following are now increasingly autocatalytic (self-triggering):

*   the viewing of uncertainty as a resource
*   thinking outside the rules
*   willingness to generate theories
*   the use of contradictory information
*   openness to all sources
*   paying attention to what's left unsaid
*   looking for more than one answer

The kind of time we keep and the size of the time horizon we enforce for ourselves are central to the kind of world we are capable of knowing.

What are the principle assumptions dolphins work with in building visions? Most of the time people are reluctant to build a genuine vision for themselves. When a team assembles... participants are caught up in a mostly unconscious battle over who is going to take and who is going to be able to avoid responsibility...Dolphins understand that in most circumstances a person:

*   Can be in control of his or her own destiny.
*   Should want to be in control.
*   Will enjoy superior benefits from being in control.
*   Will measurably improve success of teams, groups and organisations he or she is affiliated with when he or she is willing to be in control.

Carps and sharks bring grievous pain on them-selves because they give the locus of control away... What is responsible for loss of locus of control? When the brain's time horizon is too narrow and too shallow to allow room for the frontal lobes to interact freely and realistically with ambiguity and the unknown, the locus of control is external.

In helping teams and organisations build a vision for their future, dolphins seek to help carps and sharks compensate for narrow, shallow time horizons by providing the ambiguity they can't provide for themselves... It comes through the wider embrace of personal and group responsibility.

To encourage others to view taking responsi-bility permissibly and to admit uncertainty for the moment into their awareness, a good question to elicit ideas is, "IF YOU COULD HAVE IT ANY-WAY YOU WANT IT, HOW WOULD YOU HAVE IT?"

Vision should be stated in clear, understandable language which is:
*   Clear
*·   Specific
*   Comprehensive
*   Detailed
*   Stated in future perfect (This is how we will have achieved....)
*   Stated pro-actively (take the focus away from fixing what is wrong and place it on envisioning what is possible).
*   Powerful enough and compelling enough to elicit commitment of everyone involved.

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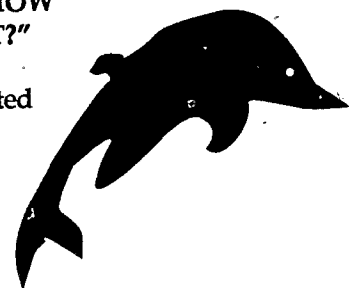
It should not be assumed that persons holding senior positions are always operating from longer time horizons. Some of the reasons people may rise in the bureaucratic pecking order other than ability (or the nature of their time horizon) include:

* They have outstanding technical skills.
* They work harder than their peers.
*. They're loyal employees who have "good attitudes".
* They're good followers.
* They know how to play politics with company higher-ups.
* They have advanced degrees.
*. They form their own companies.
* They're related to the big boss.

Positive things can be made to happen by temporarily coaching and coaxing people into the next time horizon. In leading teams in vision-building, a dolphin remains alert to the brain-within-the-brain that always is lurking behind the current veil of reality. There is always the possibility that an individual will shift from one time horizon to the next during a vision-building exercise. If so, it may be a moment of ecstasy for the group. Suddenly, through the eyes of one of their members, they may get a glimpse of a wider future than they had reason to anticipate. If it happens, dolphins act quickly to nurture the experience and build on it. A more likely development is the sudden relaxation of the limits created by the team's current time horizon, permitting access to the ideas and meanings implicit at that level but not likely to be articulated except during special moments. It can be fun and it can be productive to take a walk in the future by deliberately stepping into the next time horizon.

If your people are operating principally from a time horizon of:

* three months, ask them to come up with a list of ideas for improving their work.
* one year, ask them to brainstorm what the work load might be a year from now and how they might have to change things to deal with it.
* two years, ask them to think about what might happen if they decided to do just the opposite of what their vision calls for.
* five years, ask them to think about what would happen to them if someone started changing the principal rules they work under. What are the rules? Which ones are most likely to be changed in the next five to ten years?
* ten years, ask them what they would do if they were suddenly required to transform all their competitors into friends, if suddenly they had to get markedly better results with fewer resources, and if suddenly they had to create highly competent contacts in numerous fields and industries abroad.

To encourage your participants to take a more forward-looking view at any point in your vision-building activities, find ways to get them to move their perspectives from:

the old	to the new
one answer	to many answers
the familiar	to the unfamiliar
externally defined meanings	to internally defined meanings
external control	to internal control
what they know	to what they suspect
the little picture	to the big picture
the concrete	to the abstract
certainty	to uncertainty
many limits	to fewer limits
the past	to the future
what they don't want	to what they do want
the simple	to the more complex
the fragmented	to the integrative
less stress	to more stress
slow information	to fast information
less information	to more information
certainty	to doubt

Without encouraging tension between time horizons in our vision-building efforts, we risk deriving a new vision just as rigid and unproductive as the old. Without a vision, the danger is that most of us will continue to perform at a set level, one we feel unconsciously is correct for us. If we exceed that level of performance, we usually will sabotage ourselves later on to maintain our average. If we visualise ourselves performing at a much higher level, our unconscious minds will interpret that as the new level of expected performance and will cause us to correct positively toward the vision without harmful repercussions.

ENLIVENING THE VISION

Our Vision defines our relationship to space and time. That is, at any given moment our awareness of the present moment is judged by our internal screen of how we see our world. Part of that screen involves a Vision of who we are, where we are headed, what relationships are important to our future, and what values we hold. The more "lively" the Vision, the more "alive" the present moment becomes. For those who have a compelling Vision, each and every moment can pulsate through that Vision.

Each organisation and each individual needs to discover its own Vision. The content cannot be imposed, it must come out of the deepest parts of our individual and collective psyches. But <u>enlivening</u> the vision is something we can do for each other. We can share our dreams, and we can ask others to share theirs with us. We can expand the horizons of our own and others actions by linking them to bigger pictures of reality. Then it's possible to see how they are simultaneously a part of our Vision and participating in larger vision systems. We can consciously "inject" into ours and others' daily lives two critical factors that keep Visions alive - Freedom and Responsibility.

Sharing our Dreams

Ask yourself this, "Who, besides myself, knows what my deepest longings and hopes are for myself, those I care about, the organisation I am a part of, and for the world as a whole?" Indeed, when is the last time you have asked yourself that question? The following set of questions can help give shape to your dreams. It is important to answer the questions in the order given. Starting with the largest context possible will enable a coherent field within which your personal dream can operate.

1. List 10 or more current events, people or trends that give you hope. Why? Where do you see people, or organisations blocked because their Vision is too small or narrow? Where are you anticipating a breakthrough in a new Vision for our world?

2. Try to imagine you are to give a talk on the Vision of your organisation. What was the genesis of the organisation; who, where, how and why? What is its "high purpose"? Why is it important to society that your organisation exist? What is it becoming? What do you hope it will become?

3. Think over your life experiences. When have you felt most "alive"? What was it about those experiences that made them enlivening? If you could spend your life focused on one thing, what would that be? Where do you see in your present employment an opportunity to fulfill your Vision for yourself?

4. What can you do to bring into greater harmony your Vision for the world, your organisation and yourself? Who (besides your spouse) would you like to share your dreams with? Who could help you in expanding on, or acting on your Vision?

After completing the questions for yourself, imagine how you could get people within the organisation to share their dreams. This can be done informally, one on one, or in small discussions. Or it might be part of the agenda for a workshop or discussion on the Vision for your organisation. Invent your own questions, but if you start with the largest context, and then bring that into the present moment, you will find the Vision enlivened.

Expanding the Horizons

Nobody's Vision, personal or organisational, is so large that it encompasses all. In fact, most Visions get their motivating power by being clear, crisp, sharp and focused. But the enlivening of the Vision comes at both ends, that is, at the action end, or present moment, and the "horizon" end, or future. Vitality comes when our actions are "linked" with the Vision.

The old illustration of two bricklayers' relationship to their task is a classic example. Two workmen doing the same thing, but one does it as 'just a job', the other as 'building a Temple'. NASA, the American space agency, had the lowest turnover of personnel of any organisation during the decade of the Apollo moon landing project because everyone saw his job vital to this incredible Vision.

At the horizon end, our focused Vision is enlivened when we can see it in relationship to other vital interests. Today, NASA is plagued by huge turnover and the loss of key people. Why? It is not from the loss of motivating projects. NASA has great Visions for the exploration of space. But the focused Vision no longer is enlivened with the vitality of the related Vision of a "renaissance" Vision for America that was breaking loose in America at the time of the sixties which included the establishment of the Peace Corps and widespread focus on civil rights.

Find time to work at both ends of your Vision. When complementing people's effort, try to link their achievement to the largest picture possible. In addition, be mindful of how other Visions operating in the world, be they commercial or social, complement and are complemented by your own.

Freedom and Responsibility

Lynch and Kordis, in their book Strategy of the Dolphin, indicate that the key releasing factor for the power of a Vision is the willingness to tolerate ambiguity. They call this factor the "X" Factor and relate it to a person's "Time Horizon". Ambiguity becomes a potent factor at around the ten year point as one looks at the future, where the uncertainty releases you to a creative participation. But you can discover that every moment is truly filled with "ambiguity" and that right now you can tap this enlivening factor. This realisation is the discovery of Freedom, the awareness that creativity is always available to enliven all our actions.

To inject this factor into the "mundane" routine of any operation, have people regularly reflect on their experiences on the job. For example, holding weekly reflections on what has happened during the week can provide an opportunity for the X Factor. Some suggested questions: What happened this week? Where were you surprised? What happened that was unexpected, that called forth some creative action by you? How has what we have done this week changed or enhanced our future? What new challenges have arisen that you are looking forward to?

The second factor, which we will call Factor "Y", is our relationship to Space. Here the enlivening power comes as our operating context for our actions is expanded. Those who are bounded by only their own context will have no Y factor. Those who operate in the context of, for instance, a department, have a little; those who have the context of the company as a whole have some. But the power comes most forcefully when the context expands beyond the company and encompasses a relationship to as much of the Earth as one can imagine. It is when we see our responsibility is unbounded and affects literally the whole world that we are enlivened.

To introduce this factor, get people to talk about how their actions are "on behalf of" something greater. Get people to see how service to others really is what defines their actions. Work on getting everyone to see how the customer is affected by what they do. Even "support" personel can see those who they serve in the organisation as their "customer".

Encourage "proactive" behaviour in your employees. Anticipate needs of others and go the extra distance in providing more than the minimum. Satisfying customers' needs has been shown to be the greatest factor in motivating employees. Those organisations that have a strong "service" component to their Vision have the lowest turnover.

In summary, we can build an equation that is: X (freedom of creative response) + Y (sense of responsibility through service) = A Motivating Vision.

THE THINK TANK

The ICA in India needed a way to learn about a company with which it had just established contact for the purpose of deciding if working with this company would be fruitful. Company top management needed some assurance that ICA programmes would make a difference to the company, to be useful in the long term. The THINK TANK was created to fill this need. Only now are we able to see the incredible analysis and learning tool it has become.

This article describes the Think Tank process, its impact on company top management groups, its role in alignment and attunement and finally how it contributes to the visioning process.

ICA THINK TANK ASSUMPTIONS

1. The ICA assumes that every organisation with which it works desires to move into a "transformational mode". That is, its management knows its current mode of operations is barely adequate for the present and requires radical shifts to thrive in the future.

2. Top management no longer launches into a major change process without participation of an expanded group in the decisions concerning the process.

3. An assessment of where a company has been, where it is now and its potential is a necessary contextual starting point.

4. A decision to move into a "transformational mode" is taken only when top management sees the necessity in the light of anticipated events. People know a lot about what to expect.

5. The discovery process is key. No one wants someone else to tell them what they already intuitively know.

PROCESS OF THE ONE DAY THINK TANK

Context: After an initial context by the senior management person indicating the need and the purpose of the day, an introductory conversation provides opportunity for every person to declare his presence and uniqueness to the whole group. Introductions are intended to put participants into a receptive frame of mind, regarding each other, the environment and the future. An aura of easy informality is created. Totaling the number of years individuals in the group cumulatively have been associated with the company provides context that the group itself are the experts, that ICA are process facilitators. Another number totaling the years the group cumulatively will associate themselves with the company indicates the seriousness of the work. The group has a lot to gain or lose depending on the results of the programme.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

At this point, we are out to build from the group's collective experience of events a common picture of the past, present and anticipated future. A matrix of significant events in the world, nation and industry is created from the input of all participants. This helps demonstrate how transformation depends on listening to others, while encouraging each to add his wisdom to the whole. This is carrried out rapidly and intuitively through the past (usually from the time of founding), present and the future through the year 2000, as a symbolic time in most people's consciousness.

The group moves to a reflection process on this mass of data by asking, "What trends are suggested by this flow of events?" An example is the trend of moving from a buyer's market to a seller's market. Then ask, "Which trends will have most impact on the company?"

This exercise is highly energising as participants literally recreate a view of past history and anticipated future from their own experience and decide its relevance and significance for their own future.

COMPANY JOURNEY

This exercise is helpful to align long-time members of the company and new people. It taps into the spirit of the organisation as revealed through stories of success and failures, turning points and all events and facts unique to this particular company. It draws particularly on the memory of older members, although usually everyone has heard stories which they may not have personally experienced.

Information and stories about beginnings, people, products, turning points, facilities, disasters, successes are all recorded by picture and phrase on a long horizontal chart. Everyone joins in. The group is asked for their judgment regarding the most significant events and major turning points. These are used to delineate eras which are then named. A sense of power flows from the naming process, each person beginning to realise that he is re-interpreting history from the vantage point of the current moment.

A separate brainstorm focuses on the current standing point of the company, which includes any observation members of the group want to make. Some answers are objective descriptions of the company, some subjective, some hopeful and optimistic, others are cynical, critical or pessimistic. All are accepted. Much of the value of this exercise is to hear what your colleagues think. Usually the level of seriousness and honesty is very high. One response may trigger another in line with or opposed to the

contribution of the first.

Questions about competitors, the market, technology, management style, skills, environment, etc. take the group through an objective - reflective - interpretive - decisional process which deepens their thinking. Tremendous insight and sharing of perceptions can come at this point.

It is helpful to ask which items point to greatest strengths and weaknesses. The depth of the group's participatory analysis is revealed as valuable preparation for articulating a "trial vision".

THE TRIAL VISION

Beginning with a visualisation, the group is taken on a guided journey into the future, looking at the company as it appears five years hence in their minds' eyes. Each member is then asked to list what he or she saw. (During the journey, a number of image triggers are given to help release a comprehensive vision of the company in the future.) In pairs or triads their visions are shared. Following this, a long list is recorded representing contributions from all, some being similar or related.

Amazingly, it is possible in a relative few minutes to select from the list five to seven items representing substantial consensus among members of the group. Of these, three highest priority items are designated, and one placed centrally in an overarching image to which the group is in agreement. Part of the "magic" here is the discovery that consensus is possible in a short time on such a complex dynamic. Also, the importance of articulating a vision is dramatised before focusing on obstacles and problems, the next task.

ISSUES WORKSHOP

With the Vision before the group, the question is, "What obstacles, concerns, issues, blocks will prevent you from achieving the vision?" The situations in which you get irritated or angry suggest where your vision is currently being thwarted.

A few examples stated in objective terms are useful in getting people on a creative track, then the individual brainstorming, and a group list. The whole group selects which issues are the most critical to the future of the company requiring change for the Vision to become real. It is helpful to ask people to select items that someone else initially listed, as their own perspective has already been made known to the group.

Conversation is usually insightful here but can be difficult to manage. Strong feelings are welcomed, even though differences may not be resolved. The group is asked to prioritise the obstacles, especially the top three in order to indicate

the most critical issues currently before the company.

It may help to form these issues into a "Focus Question" which points up the task before the company, "What can this company do to ......?"

IMPLICATIONS AND DESIGN CONVERSATION

At this point, the question is something like, "Where do we go from here?" In most companies for which this process is facilitated, there is already an understanding of the necessity of moving into a transformational mode. The question is "How?" A discussion of process is undertaken to decide the programme type, participation and dates. For others, insights gained are taken into further consideration among top management before a decision about process is taken. Managers find the Think Tank process refreshing and informative, often using parts of it in meetings with staff.

In the process, the Vision becomes increasingly clarified. A degree of resolve takes place. Members of the group hear over and over again the thoughts of their colleagues, they expand their brainstorms and focus through selection. They discover where consensus is and is not. While discussing the implications of the work of the Think Tank, participants want to know how to develop consensus where it is now discovered to be necessary.

Questions often asked are "How do we get to the action stage?". "How do we extend this process to others?" "How do we redirect the company's goals and purposes in line with what the group now sees is required?" In some cases, the question is "How do we get ourselves trained to think, work and facilitate with this kind of process?" These creative, leading questions take the company towards a decision on a transformational approach.

Personally, participants find their contributions honoured, discover the power of a creative group, and most helpfully, begin to see how their own personal vision may be aligned with or related to the goals and purposes of the company.
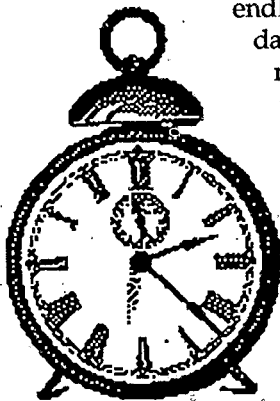
"ANY TIME"   By Stanley M. Davis

We critically need new management theory to explain and to further the transformations that we are witnessing yet only dimly understand because we are too much in their midst. In the industrial economy, our models helped us to manage aftermath, the consequences of events that had already happened. In this new economy, however, we must learn to manage the beforemath; that is, the consequences of events that have not yet occurred. This is managing in the future perfect tense. By 2001, when the new economy probably will have matured, we will observe our holistic approach to management and wonder how it ever could have been otherwise.

> **THE TROUBLE WITH OUR TIME IS THAT THE FUTURE IS NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE**

In business, time is measured on a very narrow portion of the total spectrum. Few major corporations can be counted by centuries, careers are measured by decades, and products by years. Accounts are generally payable monthly, people often work nine to five, coffee breaks are fifteen minutes, push-button phones save you seven seconds dialing time, and lasers work in nanoseconds (one billionth of a second).

In other words, time is a way to measure, and hence define, existence. And these definitions are culturally imposed. The calendar is an arbitrary system for recording the beginning, length and divisions of a year. The things we choose to measure and the way we measure them tell us lots about what we value and how we see the world.

In the industrial model of time, a worker doing endless drudgery, where one day is just like the next and nothing will ever change, takes the point of view that time is cyclical, an endless repetition of events. The clockwatcher who celebrates "Thank God it's Friday", and the harassed manager who only has two hours to get the report out, see themselves as stationary "in" time with the future moving toward them rather than vice versa.   Managers who prepare for next week's conference, who launch next season's product line, and who chart their career development take the approach that time is a one-way street that we move along; we advance toward the future, not it toward us.

The business model of time in the industrial world was very much from the corporation's perspective. The focus was on internal reorientations and actions. Even 9-5 time, defining as it does a regularly recurring event, is from the industrial perspective of the producer rather than the post-industrial perspective of the consumer. When the corporation focuses externally, on the customer, it transforms its sense of time.

A "new economy" manager once said, "Customers use our time up until their decision to buy, after that we are using their time. Therefore, we must deliver immediately." The key, then, is the shortening of the elapsed interval between the customer's identified need and his, her or its fulfillment.

There are thousands of services, such as making a pair of eyeglasses or developing a roll of film, whose customer waiting time can and has been cut from days to minutes. Every business can chart the elapsed time for every step from conception to consumption and work to reduce it. Marginal reductions (10-20%) generally can be accomplished by improving efficiencies; reductions in multiples (50-100+ percent) generally require re-conceptualising the production, distribution and/or delivery processes themselves.

The transformative quality lies in the elimination of any waiting at all - "zero-based time." Whenever the customer needs the product or service offered, it should be immediately available.

Speaking practically, whatever your business, think about how you can create products and services in real-time that you can deliver instantly. Even in the slowest moving company, this contextual shift will speed things up. What is needed is a shift in the context, to view time as a resource in the new economy, not a constraint. The larger rules operating here are:

* Consumers need products and services ANY-TIME (i.e. in their time frame, not the providers').
* Producers who deliver their products and services in REAL-TIME, relative to their competitors, will have a decided advantage.
* Operating in real-time means no LAG-TIME between identification and fulfillment of the need.

To move from conception to consumption instantly is a hypothetical extreme. But one gains competitive advantage simply by being able to move from identifying to satisfying market needs faster than one's competitors - faster than the industry leader and/or the industry average. Not

all moves to instantaneity will be equally valued by all market segments, and time should join the ranks of price, quality and service in determining market niches.

Just how fast you can move depends on what business you are in, what function within the business you are talking about, what economy that business operates within and also what unit of time you are measuring. Managers should assess the time occupied at each point in the value-added chain (e.g. research > development > manufacture > distribution > sales) and focus attention on shortening the time it takes to perform those functions at the point where the value-added is the greatest in their particular business. There is competitive advantage in providing the same product or service, at the same price, in 20% less time. In the industrial economy, inspection on the assembly line was largely performed on a random sampling basis, because of cost and lost time. In the new economy, machine vision permits inspection of every part in real-time, as it is being produced - and the machines don't tire, lose concentration, get bored or apply subjective standards.

The ultimate logic is to shorten the elapsed interval to zero. In the no lag-time world, ideas are acts. The new technologies allow instant resetting of specifications with virtually no machine downtime. Nothing demonstrates this advance so clearly as the fact that, in computer software, manufacturing disappears completely. The functions leap from design and development straight to consumption. Experimental CAT systems were introduced in courtrooms which produced an unedited transcript of proceedings largely in readable English on computer screens in front of the judge and both lawyers virtually as testimony is being given. Shorthand taken by the court stenographer is expanded by a computer into English, flashed on the screens and printed into a transcript all in real-time.

Unwanted time lags between inputs and outcomes are especially evident in the relationship between business and organisation, particularly in the element of business that has to do with strategy. Strategy is a way of using time in a new context, as a resource. This allows you to see your business and organisation in the future, interpolate your way backward into the present reality, and then manage your implementation more powerfully.

Strategy is the plan for future survival. Organisation is the current arrangement for day-to-day application. In principle, the relation between the two is that a team, company, army or nation should be organised in the manner that will best implement the strategy. A good strategy with poor organisation is a thoroughbred without a rider, trainer, stable or track. In principle, strategy precedes organisation and the two are closely related; in practice, often they are not.

In the industrial context, organisation always lags behind strategy. Because of the assumption that you have to know what it is you want to do before you can know how to do it, all organisations based on the industrial model are created for businesses that either no longer exist or are in the process of going out of existence! The inherent weakness of this model, which developed in the industrial economy, is that no organisation can ever be in sync with time, or totally appropriate for carrying out its mission or purpose. The mission, objectives and strategy of the business in a mature industrial context will always come first; they will always be ahead of the organisation. The time lag between formulating a plan and implementing it may be thought of as the distance between a strategy and its appropriate form of organisation.

Organisations can do no better than catch up with the present, and there is even a Catch-22 to catching up; when you get there, "there" isn't there any more. Strategy is always focused on the future, but it is rooted in the present, or even in the past, if management is inefficient.

The name of the game, managerially and organisationally, is to catch up as quickly as possible. The shorter the time lag between strategy and organisation, the more efficient is the business. Reduce the time lag by which organisation follows strategy and all else being equal, you will increase your success by whatever measurements you choose.

How can an organisation implement its strategic plan with actions that are appropriate to the present-future rather than ones that are catching up with the past-present? The sense of time that executives employ with the industrial model is to use the present organisation as the vehicle for getting to the future, to the objective.

At first glance this is logical. In the context of the new economy, leaders operate from a different sense - from a different place in time. The only way an organisation's leaders can get there (the objectives of the strategy) from here (the current or-

ganisation) is to lead from a place in time that assumes you are already there, and that is determined even though it hasn't happened yet. The manager visualises the completed strategy before visualising the component actions that will bring about the completion.

The actor projects this action as if it were already over and done with and lying in the past. Strangely enough, therefore, because it is pictured as completed, the planned act bears the temporal character of pastness. The fact that it is thus pictured as if it were simultaneously past and future can be taken care of by saying that it is thought of in the future-perfect tense.

Using this time perspective, the present is the past of the future, and organisation can be used to push the strategy toward its realisation rather than be pulled along by it.

I see the "action before strategy" approach with most of today's entrepreneurs. They have a vision, often not articulated in anything so explicit as what we now call strategy. Their intuition is generally ahead of their conceptual framework, and they evolve a coherent and post-facto rationale for the details of what they are already doing.

Managers see the causality flowing from strategy to action, while entrepreneurs see the flow in reverse. For managers, believing that their actions should come out of their strategy, the result is bureaucracy.

For those whose strategy flows from their action, rather than vice versa, strategy is the codification of what has already taken place; it is the writing of future history. This orientation places strategy in time past rather than in the future, where the formal industrial models would have it.

The lesson is that if strategy is the codification of what has already taken place, then it is the enemy of innovation. Organisations that foster innovation are not to be wedded to strategy as formal planning, but to strategy as intuition.

Planning the future organisaton should be accomplished the same way that the strategy for the future is determined - interpolatively. Each element of organisation that will be appropriate for the future should be spelled out in detail, for example, "Given the kind of business we intend to be, what are the appropriate structures, systems, people and corporate values for that business? How do they differ from the current ones? What steps are necessary to move them from here to there?"

What keeps this from happening in real life? It is because people have a vested interest in continuing to see time as a restraint, rather than a resource. By doing so, they have created a role for themselves. People who identify problems identify themselves as problem solvers, yet the irony is that they then have a stake in the problem staying identified but unsolved. They adopt the posture that the problem is so large the best they can do is to whittle away at it. If you are beginning to penetrate, you
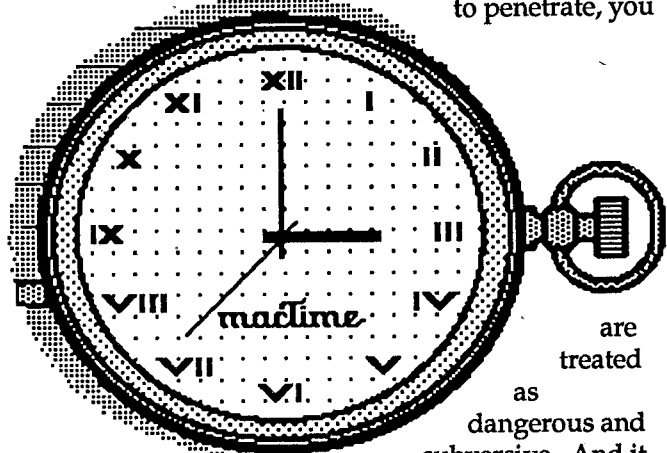
are treated as dangerous and subversive. And it is subversive. It subverts the context on which the problem solver has built a career; on which the professionals have built their organisations, and on which the society has built its institutions. If the problem is actually eliminated totally, then the need for the services of the problem solver is also eliminated.

What would the personnel function look like if those who occupy the role transformed the context, including the reward system? What would a reward system built on "what is" look like? It would begin in the future, with the mission, objectives and strategy of the corporation, related to each business unit. Every organisation member - not just the leadership - would be very clear about how his or her job implements that future.

One thing is certain, it would reduce an emphasis on hierarchy. Each job is of equal importance, both to the organisation and all individuals in it. Put another way, the most important job is the one that is not being done. Doing the job is the reward in such a system. The more this is so, the more powerful is that organisation. That is a system whose reward is wisdom. Few reward systems are premised on this real-time context.

By definition, there is no organisation whose culture, structure, systems and people are completely appropriate for its strategy. If all these components of the organisation were completely appropriate, the strategy would be realised; that is to say, it would be operational and no longer strategic. Successful strategy self-destructs. An objective, once accomplished, is no longer an objective. The realisation of strategy is always futuristic. Because organisation is the mechanism

for implementing strategy, for realising the future, time must be an intrinsic dimension to it.

When time is extrinsic, it becomes a constraint to realising the organisation's objectives. Treated this way, organisations exist only in the current, inadequate and unresponsive framework. The question then becomes how to cure what is wrong with it, how to make it better, how to get it to somewhere that it is not now. Those who focus on organisation in this case have a sense of what it should be, and when they look at the current organisation, their conclusion is, "This is not it."

From this viewpoint, the organisation retards the implementation of strategy. The valence is always negative, it is only a question of how much. Reduce the negatives, remove the impediments, improve the organisation, and the best you will do is reduce the lag between the formulation of strategy and its realisation. It is not possible to create real-time organisations while treating time for implementation as a constraint.

This is comparable to the distinction between invention and discovery; unlike invention, the object of the discovery exists before anyone knows it. People discover their humanity, they don't invent it. Would you, for example, rather work for a boss who discovers you or invents you?

Michelangelo's approach to sculpture was similar to the act of discovery, whereas the ordinary artist invents, by carving a figure into the stone. In other words, the ordinary artist, believing that the figure did not exist before he created it, approaches the stone from the context of inventing the figure that is not there. Michelangelo, however, began with the assumption that the figure was in the stone before he touched it. His job was to uncover the figure that was already there.

The effective organisation, particularly its leadership, understands that it has already succeeded. The only problem is that not everybody in the current organisation knows this.

If we start from the context, "The way we behave is appropriate to the strategy," then the membership in the organisation will know that their goals are being accomplished each moment, in real-time. Each meeting, each decision, each activity is confirmation that the new organisation "is." It already exists.

Executives who lead from an orientation that what they want for the organisation lies "out there" can be only as powerful as the never-realised future. Time is their constraint, not their resource; they are less powerful than they might be. By contrast, those who lead an organisation from this context are powerful because they already have what they want.

In only a few years it will probably become fashionable for corporations to issue long-range plans for the year 2000, and these kinds of plans should address the new economic context we have been discussing. Managers will have implemented a long-range plan when every action taken is both discovery and implementation of the content. This is management as source, not as outcome. Managing this way takes place with a mental orientation in the future perfect tense.

Like leadership, structure is another element of organisation needed to treat time as a resource rather than as a constraint. Why are structures always lagging behind? Why can't they exist in real-time? And what would real-time structures look like?

Texas Instruments is the only company I know of that attempted to include time as a true dimension in its organisation structure. But it did this only in the planning function, imaging its business at varying points in future time, generally measured yearly. Different product/market mixes could be identified as they were intended to evolve, and appropriate structures could be designed for each time period. The notion here is that management can more readily ease the organisation into real-time structures when it envisions the appropriate forms as part of its planning process and makes change in modest, but almost continual, increments. Time as an intrinsic dimension of organisation means creating real-time structures, structures that change continually in tiny increments, not in large static quantum jumps. Each change is so minute that the overall effect is one of a structure in constant, seamless motion. By contrast, industrial structures are like still photographs.

Today, we are learning to assemble a series of these still photographs, and put them on a penny arcade pinwheel, making them begin to move through time. We are not yet able to extend the metaphor, however, to view structures as "movies." This would require a contextual shift.
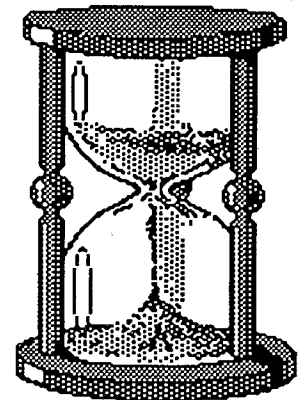
HUNT FOR THE UNICORN

from Charting the Corporate Mind by Charles Hampden-Turner.

The lessons of this book include the notion that any one value or criterion of excellence, pursued in isolation, is almost bound to steer you into trouble, even catastrophe. There are always two opposed ways of wrecking the ship. You can sacrifice it to something hard, unambiguous, precise, detailed and definite; or to something soft, vague, general, pervasive and indefinite. In the corner of your mind there will lurk a few absolutes and ultimates, criteria so important that these are exceptions. One of these reservations is likely to be profitability. When all other values have been finely balanced, virtuously cycled, and transformed into larger meanings, profit will remain "the bottom line" the ultimate arbiter of the effectiveness of overall strategy. I fear this simply is not so. "From being a necessary condition for long-term survival, it is often extolled to the point of being a sufficient condition, nay the be-all and end-all of economic activity itself, the pure essence to which all other measures dance attendance and to which all other concerns can be distilled."

There are major objections to the "Unicorn" of Pure Profit.

I. PROFIT COMES TOO LATE TO STEER BY

The evidence that a company is profitable can come too late for the organisation to be steered by those numbers. Complex businesses may have current profits which are consequences of investments made up to thirty years earlier, yet it is hard not to take credit for something initiated before you heard of the company. If you use present profitability as feedback on the success of current operations, the implications could propel you backwards into the future. You could have doomed yourself by a decision taken last month and not know it for another ten years or longer. Present profitability may be the consequence of several hundred decisions taken over past decades. Knowing which of these decisions contributed more or less to current surpluses is a hopelessly complex calculation. Steering by profit is as difficult as steering a boat by the shape of its wake left three miles astern. Because profits are historical they are realised up to the very second you are holed and start to sink.

2. MOTIVATIONALLY THE DESIRE FOR PROFIT IS TOO NARROW TO LEARN FROM

There are good reasons to suppose that a single-minded emphasis on profit and personal gain could reduce social learning. Anyone familiar with a nursery knows that clamorous self-concern does not need to be learned. What has to be taught and developed is how to resolve one's own needs with those of others. The crucial capacity is to cross those ever-increasing distances between departments, technologies, suppliers, customers, etc. In the world race to achieve such competencies, personal obsessions with what we can gain or grab are very likely to impede our understanding. What needs to be emphasised is not gaining, but contribution in order to gain. Profit like happiness, popularity and self-fulfillment, is best gained by indirection. If you are all out to close a sale you are likely to run into resistance. Customers realise that you are much less interested in them than in extracting their money. If your customers' satisfactions and those of your employees are simply a means to an end to your own profitability, then sooner or later they will grasp this and repay you in kind. Nor should you expect even a fraction of the loyalty, commitment and concern from those you regard as mere instruments of your purpose. Why should they confide in you, risk revealing genuine needs, or trust you with their most creative concepts? In short, you will learn less from them than if you reconciled their welfare with your own need to gain and realised that fulfillment of creative employees and satisfaction of customers were strategic priorities for those seeking to profit therefrom.

Example: The "sales push" of American companies, the single loop of "getting them to want it" is likely to be in tension with the eventual quality of the delivered product. If Americans push too hard, harder than the quality of the product or service justifies, or push instead on improving the product, then this is likely to reduce the credibility of the communicator and the corporation being represented, so that "sales push" and "corporate credibility" become dilemmas instead of being reconciled.

3. PROFITABILITY CONFLICTS WITH VALUES WHICH ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT YET OF HIGHER PRIORITY

The problem with giving profit some special status, or supreme place in a hierarchy of values, is that it conflicts in the short term with other crucial values. Profit is a fruitful lover, not a sacred goddess and, like a human being, she lives in a state of alternate tension and reconciliation with other people. However important profitability may be to the fate of the corporation, it is not usually as effective to put profits before growth, before investment in human resources and before the en-

largement of market share, as it is to put this afterward. This is because taking profits out of an organisation will usually slow its growth. If you want to grow very fast, doubling and redoubling the market for VCRs or FAX machines, then what most Western companies pay out in dividends would be better spent on reinvesting in the company. Rapid growth will increase profitability in the longer run. Investing in human resources can make employees more productive, and an increased market share may cause competitors to withdraw and can usually be turned to profitability in the longer run. Long term strategies, begun years earlier, come to fruition today and tomorrow. The long term includes many short-term concerns, but the reverse is not true. Managing short term can mean the loss of longer-term objectives.

4. PUTTING PROFITABILITY FIRST MAKES BUSINESS STRATEGIES TOO PREDICTABLE AND TOO EASY TO DEFEAT

If you know what your opponent will do next, it is not too difficult to defeat him. The overriding concern of many corporations for short-term profits greatly limits their likely moves. You can easily defeat a profit maximiser... by taking profit out of a particular product for several years and outwaiting the opposition. This situation is particularly serious when a competitor has several reasons for making a product and we are looking only at the profitability of that particular unit. Those in retreat become preoccupied and anxious about the very profits they are losing by being too narrow in the first place. Profit is neither good nor bad in itself. Rather it is strategically ineffective unless woven into a larger configuration of reconciled values. It is not profits or people, but both, not merit or participation but both, not competition or cooperation, but both. '

5. PROFITING IS A TEXT NEEDING THE SUPPORT OF A CONTEXT

Text and context interweave. Profit-making figures against a ground which is in contrast with it, standing out from that background. Profit then is a text within a context. It follows then that any profit orientation needs a contrasting orientation to make it work effectively. Societies have sectors which are for profit and not for profit, but ideally the latter will support the former. For example, a good health service shores up employees in their work, allowing them to take greater risks because a major source of avoidable insecurity has been taken care of.

For example the service department of an appliance company could not become a profit centre, lest it start profiting from the correctable faults in products made by the rest of the company. It was there to support the profit-making activity of others, and this is true of many parts of the corporation. Top Management act as coaches, mentors, scorekeepers and cheerleaders for the profit-making activities of their companies, but their own roles are largely nurturant and supportive, giving aid, advice, encouragement, and rewards to their front line troops. They do not think first or foremost how they can use their high status to win from the rest of the company. They cooperate so that others may better compete, think so that others may better act, reflect so that others may better practice. The danger with profit orientation is that noone may be willing to play the more supportive roles, or symbolise the learning which makes profiting possible. Profiting gets its resilience from support by other values. It is too brittle to go it alone.

6. PROFITABILITY IS AN ORGANIC, NOT A MECHANICAL ATTRIBUTE

The case for profitability as a supreme arbiter is based on a mistaken metaphor. The corporation is conceived as a machine in something akin to a demolition derby with competing machines. Losers are junked and their unusable parts cannibalised by other, more successful competitors. In this way machines and drivers improve with losers feeding resources to winners. The assumption is that these losing bits and pieces can be reassembled quickly and easily into winning combinations by better managers. The assumption is that although this produces some waste and destruction in the demolition process, there would be far more waste if the less able were not pushed off the track. Profitability is the sum of each contestant's strength, speed and skill. But if we conceive of companies as social organisms which have grown over 10-20 years (or more), destruction takes on aspects of trauma and death. Their parts may be less valuable than the living creature from which they were stripped. Years of growth and learning may be irreversibly lost by one bad decision. Unprofitability may have been temporary, a growing pain, but disintegration is forever. In the organic metaphor, profitability is but one important sign of healthy growth, but is its temporary absence sufficient to condemn the company? Not if we wish to expand rapidly after the recessions are over, not if the complex learning of networks is to be preserved, not if we want resilient corporations.

7. PROFITING MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL UNITS WITHIN A STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Profit maximisation may not be applicable to all products and services in a particular collaborating network. What about an investment bank which makes little or no profit yet lends money to a key national industry which, enhanced by its low cost of capital, becomes a world-class competitor, eliminating several rivals? The bank did not maximise profits, yet the organisation, taken as a whole strategic alliance, won valuable markets.
It might be worth forgoing profits on stages one, two or three, if the consequence was to outrun and outlearn competitors, so that all subsequent stages belonged to that company.

An unprofitable product may give birth to new generation products which allow you to outlast and outlearn your competitors. The question is less whether one particular generation is profitable, taken as a single range of products, but what making them contributes to the next generation and the next. The problem with the profitability criterion is that we are never sure to what units it should be applied, or how wide is the strategic alliance which, taken as a whole, needs to be profitable in the long run.

8. WHEN IMITATED BY FACTIONS OR PERSONS WITHIN THE CORPORATION THE PROFIT ORIENTATION BECOMES SUBOPTIMAL

The eighth objection to profit maximisation as a strategy and the self interest which is its rationale, is that an organisation's employees are likely to model behaviour on that idealised by their firm. If the corporation is all out for itself, why should not each employee, each department, each function, each faction, and each union place its own perceived interests above those of other groups, including customers, shareholders, and the community? In such a value system people will work together only when they can directly gain by doing so, but will scurry down the rigging at the first sign that the ship may not be seaworthy, or if a more attractive craft comes along.

Why should a corporation invest in its human resources and in the future learning of its employees if each individual promptly takes that training to the highest bidder? Self-interest, which is qualified neither by gratitude nor loyalty to the firm, is clearly suboptimal. Yet, firms themselves extol the value that undoes them. For accelerated corporate learning of the kind that can win the Learning Race has to be much more than the knowledge carried around within single heads. Knowledge has become so complex that only stable human networks can encompass it.

The more subtle and difficult the communication, the closer human relationships need to be and the more damaging to the larger system does narrow self-interest become. Employees will not wait for their profits because they will be long gone from the corporation and care only about gains which can be made during a brief occupancy. Profit maximisation as an ethic atomizes the organisation into adversarial pieces.

9. PROFIT MOTIVES CANNOT DEAL WITH SOCIETAL AND ENVIRONMENT ADDICTIONS

In practice the free market is severely limited in key areas. We do not encourage trade in addictive nonmedical drugs, or in babies, or in certain kinds of porn. Just as the human body can crave more and more of a drug that is actually poisoning it, so a society may crave lethal weapons, cadavers, or human organs which, if freely traded, would inflict social damage. In some cases the market fails to work. The personal short term gain experienced by microcosms combine to create a catastrophic, longer-term surfeit for the macrocosm. We will make profits in the future, by taking a broader view of creating wealth and value in the present, by seeing that the ultimate customer is the environment itself, and that in evolutionary survival, the unit which survives is people plus their environment. Any country that targets pollution technologies today will likely enjoy a handsome stream of profits into the next century. The limitation of profit as currently conceived is that it strips the profiting person away from his or her environment and allows the first to gain notionally at the expense of the second.

10. THE PLACE OF PROFITABILITY IN A CONFIGURATION OF VALUES

Profitability is one crucial ingredient in a strategic synthesis of values designed to create wealth as broadly defined. It is similar to yeast in its capacity to make a combination of ingredients rise.

If the real race is to learn, and if the competition will be won by those who create the most valuable configurations of knowledge in the shortest time, then profits are needed to pay the "school fees," to sponsor the next generation of learners and the next. We are like jugglers with more and more balls in the air, who will drop them all if we get fixated on one.

INTUITION IN THE VISIONING PROCESS

A great vision is not an extrapolation of today, not better or more, not simply becoming better than someone else. Rather it is taking the stuff of the present, an anticipated future, the resources you have and moulding it all into an exciting bundle of possibilities which attract others to commit themselves, take on a role, a piece of the vision so that all see themselves responsible for the whole. Rational or left-brain process can never be left out of any visioning process, but brilliance comes out of a more creative focusing of imagination which intuits the future and your role in it in such a way that it becomes a" living, breathing likelihood", producing commitment and an embodying of the vision in itself.

I want to describe four arenas useful in educating and training intuition. First is understanding how things work (or ought to work). Second is giving your unconscious a chance to develop. Third is to stimulate creativity. Fourth is to look in new places for perspective shifts.

UNDERSTANDING HOW THINGS WORK

Each of us is a process, unique and unrepeatable. We have our limitations, but we also have wisdom, points of view and understandings not available to others. Intuition does not come from copying others or waiting for insights to be handed down or handed over. It comes from trusting, interpreting, pushing and forcing our own experience to yield up its treasure of wisdom.

Analysis of the current situation has great gifts. Bring your experience to bear on the activity of reading or watching the news. It may be that apparently insignificant items may suggest a shift in thinking or focus which could put you ahead of others in your interpretation and anticipation of the times. There are always signs of the times which inform the intuitive. For example, the first companies in India to break through with a truly participative work-culture in which everyone feels real ownership in the vision of the organisation are reaping tremendous benefits. Up until now, these are mostly small companies, the principals of which have come together on an equal basis. Their vision is focused on meeting a market niche for which they have a particular advantage.

A grasp of patterns and processes which influence us can bring one to new wisdom. For example, in the Tao of Leadership, the authors quote from the ancient Chinese regarding the necessity of facilitating another's process. "If you do not trust another's process, that person will not trust you." This is incredible wisdom for team building that is thousands of years old, but requiring application in present operational modes.

A new generation never knows for sure what will work without experimentation. Experience can provide a backdrop of what has worked in the past, but the situation we have at this moment has never happened before in the history of the world. Sometimes it is the person or group who does not know it can be done who creates a new approach or methodology. The Japanese Kaizen approach in which you continue to improve everything is a systemised approach to experimentation which gives permission to everyone in the organisation to contribute to the vision.

GIVING THE UNCONSCIOUS
A CHANCE TO WORK

How difficult it is to suspend judgment long enough for the thinking of another to break through! It is so much easier to push through on our own point of view, to overrun the thinking of others, to propel oneself into the foreground. The unconscious has an insatiable urge to learn. When you are talking, you are not learning, unless you are graced with the ability to hear yourself talking at the same time as hearing what you are saying through the person of the listener, perhaps even answering oneself back from the assumed point of view of the listener. I call this tuning your unconscious to that of another. To make it work, interchange is best kept non-defensive which enables learning on both sides.

What do you do when you find someone with a completely different frame of mind than your own? The easiest course is to dismiss them as irrelevant. For the sake of a "learning unconscious", why not draw the other person into deeper discussion for the purpose of discerning the frame of reference which makes them think as they do? In most cases basic differences in opinion have to do with values and judgment. Judgment must always be one's own. We are talking here about educating the unconscious which contributes largely to our prioritisation of values and therefore contributes to judgment. After listening to another's frame of reference, it may be rejected or subordinated to another, but perspective is broadened and available for a more creative approach.

Where do emotions fit into this process? What if you decided your emotions could be fully trusted? So you ask, trusted to do what? Trusted to tell you what you deep-down think is important. Irritation and anger are tremendous clues to the

value system out of which your unconscious directs your emotions. Emotions can be a great source of wisdom if interpreted carefully. We often, in contradictional analysis, ask participants to indicate the happenings in their organisation which irritate or anger them as clues for the things which have to change. Anger can be an indicator of unconscious decisions individuals have made regarding the needs of the company.

Everyone knows the unconscious reveals itself in dreams, a most personal and sometimes overlooked source of wisdom. If it is true that the majority of one's wisdom is locked up in the unconscious, and that dreams are a way your unconscious is struggling to communicate with you, then it may be revealing to find a way to interpret dreams in some fashion. In my understanding, this is a very personal process. Symbols in a dream are as personal as your own body. What is meaningful to you may not be to me. A useful approach I have found, is to wake up early in the morning, reflect on the remembered dream (it is proven that if you decide to remember dreams, it helps you actually do so), and search for associations which are useful in making decisions. For me, knowing the unconscious can be trusted and believing it to be a valuable resource encourages me to take this approach.

TRY CREATIVITY

Change your platform of assumptions. This is the famous "what if...." methodology when the "what if" is a radically new assumption. What if .... we did have a breakthrough in fusion and energy was essentially freely dispersed and available? What if.... there were no regulations to doing anything your company wanted to do? What if... you were free to live anywhere in the world and move freely at any time? Exercises of this sort usually reveal that one has more freedom under present circumstances than supposed, that what prevents exercise of this freedom is a limited perspective which screens out alternatives.

Someone has coined the phrase of "naive listening" to describe the process of active listening, not only suspending judgment but actually trying to effect a new place to stand. Each idea is allowed to enter uninhibited by past value judgments or future viability.

In our own not-for-profit organisation in India, during a time of intense financial struggle, a group of us went into a what if... brainstorm with the topic, "What would we do if we had an assured 2 lakhs of income per month?" We got out some 60 items. Of the 60, we found that 43 could be done even in the tough financial situation we were in at the time. Needless to say, we found it releasing.

Throw away your notes. After a few times through a presentation, a pitch or description of a situation, one finds he is getting stale, losing the aliveness, or I want to say the intuitive wisdom of the message. At such times, throwing away the notes allows the retention of the important message which can then be couched in refreshing new images. Students all over the world would be glad if their professors believed in this. One's unconscious is bursting with added wisdom unavailable unless "asked" for its insights.

If you were starting over again, what would you keep? Where would you go? Our organisation used to limit assignments to 2-3 years, sometimes with major geographical moves and functional reassignments. I myself, having come from a rural area in which people lived their whole lives often on a single farm, found the idea of moving so often too "urban" for my liking. But, after 20 years of this, I see the need we all have for change. For example, a famous pioneer efficiency expert from the U.S. discovered as a result of a two-year study, that aging is directly proportional to the degree of safety one has in one's life. Change cuts short the safety we associate with sameness, imagining that tomorrow will be just like today. More and more managers are asking for rotational assignments in their companies, partly to prepare themselves for higher responsibility, but also to keep them alert and learning. Our own organisation used a "two-suitcases" image for many years, suggesting that not only could you move on short notice, but that all you really needed could be put in two suitcases.

Your life is unique and unrepeatable. We have found in the charting of eventfulness of one's life, one's journey of consciousness is revealed. As consciousness shifts, so does capacity for vision. At the end of high school, I could imagine only three likely occupations, and all of those in agriculture. In agricultural university, my horizons were considerably expanded, but nothing really prepared me for what I am now doing. For all of us, the occupations we may find ourselves in several years from now may not yet have been invented. After charting one's life, it is useful to imagine how much longer you expect to live and build your vision out farther than you really can imagine at the moment. In making assumptions about what your life may be, it is impossible not to make assumptions about how the universe may change. Charting one's life is a most thought-provoking exercise and one which opens you to your intuitive thoughts regarding a possible vision.

GIVE UP!

Most of us depend heavily on our own resources. Of course, one must make his own decisions finally. But there are times when it is useful just to <u>ask others</u>. Assume for a time that others know something which you do not. Put everything you have imagined important up for redecision. Allow all the perturbations of others to invade your consciousness forcing your unconscious to increase its selection intensity. Then listen for the results. Gandhi himself, when an aide said to him, "Why are you not saying the same thing you said last week," replied, "I learned something last week!" I suppose this could be taken too far, but most of us find it so difficult to listen to others that asking others could put us into a major new paradigm.

Why don't you <u>quit making decisions</u>? Countless top managers have asked me how to keep people from bucking decisions up to them. In one very large organisation, which has come through some difficult times over the last several years, a General Manager said to me, "Presumably, every division is autonomous, but approvals go a lot quicker with a note from the Chairman." In another company, an Executive Vice President who, seeing what was happening, just quit making decisions he felt should be made by those below. Of course, he had to learn how to ask questions in such a way that his subordinates were able to discover that they already knew or had the resources to know what to do; and further

that they were able to handle the responsibility which went with deciding. Not making decisions does not mean that you give up visioning or that you do not support the decisions of your subordinates; just the opposite happens, in fact.

Take on <u>youthful mentors</u>. A large order, perhaps. Everyone we meet can teach us something. The farther up the organisation we go, the farther we often are from the reality of how things really work. Paradigm shifts occur which may escape us as we carry on assuming a poorly educated unconscious, which screens out these changes, which it is not equipped to take in. Generational image shifts may be more on the order of five years than twenty-five years. Generational thinking has more to do with paradigm than biological facts. Tremendous things happen when one decides that someone younger may have something to teach you about how the world really works.

<u>Meditate</u>! The ultimate in letting go! A willed invitation to your unconscious to speak to you, to re-perspectise and to broaden the platform for understanding. There is something about admitting how little one really is in charge of that which he is supposed to be in charge of. Admitting it can be a most useful exercise. Everyone you ever knew, read, heard about is in your being. All these presences are available to you, but you cannot evoke them directly. When they come, you can decide who you will listen to and who you will not, but they first have to be evoked. Again a matter of trusting your unconscious to provide the symbolic characters needed at a particular time.

VISION

When you have found your VISION you do not ask yourself whether you have one. You inform the world about it. If you're wondering whether you have a vision, then you haven't got one.

When you've discovered your VISION you abound with inspiration. Your eyes sparkle. You can see it in the atmosphere. It is pulsing with life.

When you have a VISION everything you plan and do stems from it. Its all-consuming nature makes all previous attitudes and ideas seem like a training ground for the ultimate vision.

When you feel part of an overall VISION you don't think of rest and reward. Total absorption removes all sense of personal effort. You cannot help but pursue the vision.

When you have a VISION that is all you want to talk about. Everything people say or do is a readout of that vision. The world becomes a theater for your visionary script.

When the VISION is present in you everyone around gets included or ignored, depending on whether or not they feel associated with it. In other words, people become actors in your production, or else they remain off stage.

When you find your VISION nothing will be permitted to stand in its way. Obstacles must be overcome or else life won't be worth living for you.

Kevin Kingsland, The Whole Personality (1985)

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DREAM OF THE EARTH by Thomas Berry

"The deepest crises experienced by any society are those moments of change when the story becomes inadequate for meeting the survival demands of a present situation. Such... is the situation we must deal with in this late 20th century."

"Our story not only interprets the past, it also guides and inspires our shaping of the future."

"Events require a new historical vision to guide and inspire a new creative period not only in the human community, but also in the functioning of the earth itself."

"...a new age and...historical vision do exist... a period of mutually enhancing human-earth relationships is being established. Already re-newal of the earth is in process."

"...we must now understand that our own well-being can be achieved only through the well-being of the entire natural world around us."

"Great need of the commercial-industrial-financial world is to escape from the inflationary processes it has imposed on the planet by wanton exploitation of renewable and non-renewable resources beyond what the earth can reasonably bring forth on a sustainable basis. Business has a great mission to fulfill in establishing a viable economy for the human community by integrating the human economy within the renewable cycle of earth economy."

"Because we are moving into a new mythic age, it is little wonder that a kind of mutation is taking place in the entire earth-human order. A new paradigm of what it is to be human emerges...exciting yet painful and disrupting."

"One aspect of this change involves the shift in earth-human relations, for we now in large measure determine the earth process that once determined us. In a more integral way we could say the earth that controlled itself in the former period now to an extensive degree controls itself through us."

A Vision for the New Learning

Berry is very clear about the new relationship required between human beings who have lived as exploit-ers of the earth now having to become co-creators with the earth. His proposed core university courses "enable the student to understand the immense story of the universe and the role of the student in creating the next phase of the story".

First Course: A sequence of evolutionary phases, formation of galaxies, shaping of elements out of which future developments took place, the formation of the earth, emergence of life on earth, rise of conscious-ness and human cultural development.

Second Course: Various phases of human cultural development...see continuity of one's own personal development in prior development of universe, earth and human history.

Third Course: Deal with the period of great classical cultures of the past several thousand years.

Fourth Course: Study of scientific-technical phase of human development culminating in awakening of human consciousness to time sequence in the story of the universe, earth, life and human community... especially concerned with power that has come under human control in and through technological inven-tions of recent centuries.... age of dominance of human over the natural... also the period when numinous presence pervading the universe was diminished in human awareness in favour of a dominant preoccupa-tion with human reason, human power and a sense of the machine as the dominant metaphor for under-standing reality.

Fifth Course: Emerging ecological age, age of growing intercommunion among all living and non-living systems of plants, integral functioning of biosphere, the fostering of a renewable economic order.

Sixth Course: Origin and identification of values as indicated by reality as we experience it.
Three phases are:
* Differentiation: Each articulation of the universe as a unique expression of total earth presence.
* Subjectivity: Archetypal realisation that enables each articulation of the real to resonate with numinous mystery which permeates the world.
* Communion: Every reality of the universe is intimately present to every other reality of the universe and finds its fulfillment in this mutual presence.

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