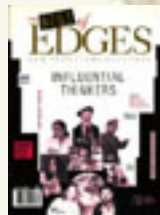


EDGES

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1992





What if?

The (R)evolution of the Coffee Industry

PHOTOGRAPHS: MERCHANTS OF GREEN COFFEE AND TRANSFAIR CANADA

MICHAEL LEWKOWITZ



"What if?" is a remarkably powerful question. It can open minds. It can seed the ground for transformation. It even managed to get me to sit down and write - a task I come to with great reluctance. If this question can do that, could it also turn the world's second largest commodity industry on its head, restoring power and prosperity to those that actually produce the product?

For those that have never been exposed to the story behind the coffee industry, it is big business. Coffee is the 2nd most popular drink in the world, next to water, translating in economic terms to roughly a \$75 billion global market. In 2001, three companies controlled 45% of that market. By contrast, it takes approximately 20 million people in 70 countries working 11 million hectares, to produce six million tons of coffee beans per year. Not surprisingly the industry now sees 80% of the profit go to 8% of the participants, leaving those who actually produce the coffee so little, that they often get less than their costs to grow it. In summary, it is a global social disaster.

On the environmental front this imbalance of power has not played out any



PATIO DRYING, MONTES DE ORO COOPERATIVE

better. Coffee has gained notoriety as the 2nd largest cause of rainforest destruction, the primary cause of water contamination in producing countries, and the 2nd most pesticide-sprayed crop, with nearly half a pound of pesticides per pound of coffee. Not surprisingly, along with those side effects comes quality degradation for the end product.

How the industry got here is a question of much debate. What's clear however, is that somewhere along the way of trying to make a better product at a better price, the industry ended up reducing quality, depressing yields, and creating an unwieldy structure where

coffee can change hands as many as 40 times before it reaches the consumer.

This inefficient and destructive reality has also created an opportunity for a new approach - sustainable coffee. Sustainable coffee includes the certifications of fair trade, organic, shade grown crops, and even solar drying. Momentum has been growing with the North American sustainable coffee market. As a result of an enormous effort by countless people, this market now represents over \$152 million a year, with growth of nearly 30% per year.

Despite these inroads, the coffee industry remains fundamentally the same,

highlighting the systemic nature of problems in the industry. There seems to be no quick fix.

Now... what if? What if rather than change the industry, we create a new one from scratch?

Perhaps the problem with the industry as it is structured today is that there is an incredibly narrow perspective that the industry serves. Today's perspective is that of the few companies who control the major share of the market. What if that power model was turned on its head? What if the producers were united into the world's largest coffee company and the rest of the industry responded to serve their needs? Would the client and supplier relationships be reversed through the entire industry? Would roasters be selling their services to retailers, or would they now be selling their services to producers? Would 80% of the profits still go to only 8% of the participants? Would the producers still allow their industry to be the #1 contaminator of water in their native countries?

Clearly, the industry would look and act differently than it does today.

How about this? Fair Trade coffee producers unite to create a single organization owned by the producers themselves - let's call it "GoodGoods". GoodGoods might then implement an electronic trading and tracking system capable of tracking complete information on the product (certifications, attributes, origin, location, etc.). It could also complete trades with other participants in the system. GoodGoods would now be involved in the transaction of all Fair Trade coffee in the marketplace. From there, GoodGoods could partner with finance and insurance groups to ensure their availability to all producers on fair terms. Similarly, logistics and processing firms could be contracted by this organization to finish product and deliver it to customers, from the local coffee shop to the national hotel or to grocers. Furthermore they could, with critical mass, actually move to acquire these intermediaries and provide the services directly - today's retailers have already done so to their benefit.

Suddenly, GoodGoods' members are in a position to control the industry and the terms on which they serve the marketplace. Following the example of other global industries, GoodGoods would then continue to integrate along

the value chain by acquiring market outlets such as chains of coffee shops, hospitality service companies, etc. And if GoodGoods opened participation to producers of other products, perhaps it could go so far as to start acquiring grocery chains much like some coffee retailers now owning or controlling their sources of production. While this would complete a major restructuring of the industry, large buyers would still maintain significant power. The industry would just be much better balanced.

Interestingly, this idea of a united group of producers need not be a futuristic vision. Already, the network of grow-

ers associated with fair trade is enormous. If members of that network were simply to band together and begin to negotiate universal rights on behalf of the whole network, change would begin to happen immediately.

Certainly there are an untold number of questions and complications. I'm curious though ... what if we asked that simplest of questions in a room full of those with the power to restart the industry? What if? ♦

Michael Lewkowicz is an entrepreneur and venture advisor involved in renewable energy and sustainable businesses. He can be reached at michael@igniter.com or 416.607.5643.



NICARAGUAN FARMERS, TRANSFAIR CANADA



SOLAR-POWERED COFFEE DRYERS, MONTES DE ORO COOPERATIVE, COSTA RICA

ICA International (ICA:I) has been located in Belgium since its origins in 1976. It was established there as a networking office for the ICAs around the world. The Belgian office has been focused on generating funds for some international projects, maintaining our relations with the United Nations and other international bodies, and helping to sustain the information flow between ICAs. Given the way it was set up, it has been able to do these activities in a maintenance fashion.

Four years ago at the General Assembly of ICA:I (held every 4 years), a decision was taken during the visioning/ strategic planning session. The group decided to up the ante and move in new directions that would position ICA:I to impact global policy, and to more strongly support the capacity-building of member ICAs. Over this past 4 years, a group of volunteers has worked to move in that direction.

One of the results of this work is a decision to relocate the ICA:I office to Montreal. Why Montreal? Montreal holds 3rd place among world cities in hosting the most international conferences. The City of Montreal is actively pursuing international organizations to locate there. Such a move places ICA:I within easy reach of both the UN agencies in New York, and international organizations in Europe.

The move will happen in the last 6 months of this year. Bank accounts are being established and business plans created. New funding is being sought to support the move and develop the capacity to impact policy. Some of the work we have expected of ICA:I in the past has stopped so that this focus can happen more quickly.

As a result of this decision, the General Assembly of ICA:I is being held in Toronto this June 4-9. Representatives from many of the global ICAs will be present in the city. We will be deliberating on the new focus and building strategies to take the organization to the next step. This is the beginning of a new era for ICA:I and its member organizations.

We will be hosting a wine and cheese reception for the attendees on June 5th at our offices. You are welcome to join us and meet the delegates. ❖

Contexts that Release Participation

JOHN MILLER CPF

“Context is everything,” say experienced facilitators. Sometimes an imperfect exercise works just fine because it addresses the real questions a group has. Participants might have the conversation they need to have in spite of poor meeting preparation. But sometimes the best exercises go awry because they are not launched properly. In reflecting on any facilitated event, there is always something to be learned about how the context was set at the very beginning. Thankfully there is lots of experience to learn from.

What is a “good” context? A good context is one that releases the participation of the group. It launches an event or meeting in a way that inspires participants to dig into the topic and produce good results.

There are two distinct things facilitators need for their events to succeed: clear contexts, and stimulating creativity. A lot has been written about stimulating creativity but providing a clear, complete overview is surprisingly straightforward, and often poorly done. So let’s look at providing a clear context.

Giving a clear and complete overview

Whenever facilitators start an exercise/event, they let participants know what is going on. The clearer you can be, the easier it is for the group members to monitor their own participation. The more they monitor their own participation, the better they work. The following guideline is true for those situations you are able to plan, and it will make you look like an expert in situations requiring thinking on your feet. There are really only two steps: make this list, and then speak *from* it in order. Trust that you will find the right words.

Step one. Write these words down and leave space beside each for your written response:

- Topic:
- Importance:
- Process:.....

- Product:.....
- Use:.....
- Roles:
- Values:.....
- Time:

Step two. Start talking and listen to what comes out of your mouth.

“The *topic* of today’s meeting is ...”
“It is *important* to deal with this topic now because ...”

“The *process* we will follow is ...”
“The *product* we will produce by the end of it all will be like ...”
“These results will be *used* by [who] on [when] to [do what]”

“To help us work well together today I will be acting in the *role* of ‘facilitator’ and everyone else is a ‘participant’, in order to ensure lots of participation without usual perceptions of ‘rank’” ...

“In order to help me stay in my role as a facilitator I hold the following *values*. If everyone uses them, we will surely have a good meeting. I believe...

- ...everyone has wisdom
- ...we need everyone’s wisdom for the wisest results
- ...there are no ‘wrong’ answers
- ...everyone will ‘hear’ each other and ‘be heard’ by others
- ...and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

“We only have ... hours to complete this task and create decisions that will last ... years” (*time*)

“How does that fit with your expectations?”

“Let’s get going.”

Step three (optional, if you are not thinking on your feet). Write the script for yourself.

If you have done your homework and already prepared an appropriate exercise, then the words you speak will probably be 95% of what needs to be said. You and your group are ready to get to work. ❖

John Miller is a highly experienced Certified Professional Facilitator working with ICA Associates Inc. in Toronto. You can contact John at jmiller@ica-associates.ca

Capacity Building - Who Holds the Blueprints?

CARA NAIMAN



When you read or hear the phrase “capacity building”, what first comes to mind? Is it a list of grass-roots activities? An image of empowered youth? A cluster of phrases from brochures, posters, or grant applications that have passed through your hands? Or is it simply a giant “aarrggh” of exasperation?

I find myself asking what is implied by capacity building, and if it is different from previous approaches to development. Even further I wonder what the implications are of building capacity for both the developers and the developed.

My primary responsibility at ICA Canada is the Youth as Facilitative Leaders (YFL) program. It's an exciting job, which brings a multiplicity of tasks with opportunities for learning, and occasionally prompts me to sit back and reflect on the larger picture. How are we having an impact on youth and the community? In what ways are we building capacity?

Let me be perfectly clear. I deeply believe that the ToP™ facilitation methods we are imparting are valuable tools—tools that can be an integral part in creating a major shift in our society toward inclusive participation.

But in order to reach that goal of participatory collaboration, we need to examine the role of the Capacity Builder.

In the YFL program, the Capacity Builders are a team of volunteers, staff, and partner organizations who are providing training, coaching, mentorship and opportunities for youth to practice and grow in the ICA's methods. The aim is to foster a new generation of collaborative facilitators and trainers.

The intentions are noble and good. The outcomes are potentially very powerful. What is missing is a real examination of roles.

To build capacity in others, ICA puts itself in a position of power, and we must acknowledge that position. We have the methods and we want to share them. They are used in communities throughout the globe, so it seems natural to want to transfer them to our own youth.

But in order to effectively do this, some release of power is needed. For YFL that might mean having youth train other youth without an ICA authority in the room. It might also mean accepting new forms and uses of the methods as the next generation plays with them and adapts them to suit their unique needs.

In the end, it might mean accepting a completely different approach to YFL, ToP™ methods or even ICA's philosophy. At the very least, it means giving up some space to make room for new capacity. The best we can do is to give what we have, hold our breath and trust that what evolves is what is required.

All this involves a major leap of faith. Faith in our youth that they will keep what's worth keeping, make sound decisions and continue to build the capacity of others with openness and generosity of spirit.

I'm interested in what you have to say. What are some of your thoughts on capacity building? How might your idea of capacity building relate to YFL?

You can contact me at cnaiman@ica-can.ca or call 416-691-2316. ♦

Cara Naiman is the Director of the Youth as Facilitative Leaders Program at ICA Canada.

ICA CANADA BOARD MEMBER PROFILE:

Mike Coxon

Mike Coxon has been a member of ICA's Board of Directors since the early 1990's, and now co-chairs the Board. As is the case with many Board members, he got connected with ICA via participation in courses.

Mike is both a working voluntary sector leader and an active volunteer. He is currently the Executive Director of Camphill Communities of Ontario. Previously, Mike was the Executive Director of Community Living Kawartha Lakes, a position he held from 1993 through 2004. He also teaches in the Developmental Services Worker (DSW) program at Georgian College in Orillia. Mike started Third Sector Consulting in 1990. Third Sector works with voluntary organizations on board development, strategic planning and organizational change projects.

In addition to his connection to ICA, Mike is a community volunteer through his church, and has been a volunteer soccer and basketball coach for community and school based teams at various levels of play. He lives in Penetanguishene with his wife Karen, who is an Anglican minister, two of their three children (their eldest daughter lives in Ottawa) and a growing menagerie of pets.

The May 2006 Annual Meeting will signal Mike's exit (at least for a breather!) from the ICA Board. He reflects that the time has been enjoyable, challenging and always a stimulus to learning. He leaves echoing a now famous quote from Margaret Mead, “Don't think that a small group can't change the world. In fact, that's the only way it has ever happened”. ♦

FUNDRAISING ROLE

*Welcome to
Elizabeth (Liz) Donnery*

A role has been established which will be responsible for fundraising to meet two needs:

- Funds to support six local ICA's in Africa who are working to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This is a collaborative project working with ICA US and other ICA connected people,
- Funds to enable ICA Canada to strengthen its organizational capacity in order to be able to undertake a wider range of programs.

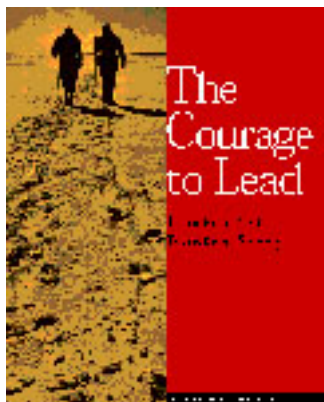
The cost of funding this role will be

shared between John Patterson and ICA Canada.

We are delighted to announce that Elizabeth (Liz) Donnery is filling this role. She started work with us this month and will be on contract with ICA Canada until she goes to OISE in the fall to take her Masters degree.

Liz is being supported by a talented team of people, including Jim Patterson who is lending his professional fundraising guidance to this initiative.

Please join us welcoming Liz to our team.



***The Courage to Lead* studies gain a new stride**

DUNCAN HOLMES

During the fall, two studies of the book *The Courage to Lead* by Brian Stanfield were held. One was at CAMH (Centre for Addictions and Mental Health) in Toronto, and the other with a group from the Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada in Waterloo. Both studies looked at 2 chapters a week. With an orientation and evaluation session added in, we found we had a very effective study requiring 7 or 8 weeks, at 2 1/2 hours a week. This seemed to be a manageable commitment for participants.

One new aspect of these studies is that they were both organized by outside groups. These groups also each provided the facilities and a facilitator who was familiar with the book. Fred Simons and I provided the additional facilitation-guide dynamic to the study.

One participant commented "I attended an 8-month University Business School program on leadership for which I paid thousands of dollars. I learned more in this 8 weeks than I did in that 8 months."

Starting in April, the University Health Network is sponsoring an 8-week study. It was fully subscribed (24 people) in one day, with a wait list of 35 by the next day. There appears to be a great interest within organizations for this type of study. If you are interested in doing this in your organization, please let us know. We will be pleased to help you set it up. ❖

Duncan Holmes is the President of ICA Associates and a board member of ICA Canada.

Continuing our WorldViews Research Project The WorldViews Research Team

Recall the AGM last year?

Remember when we tweaked your interest in our new research endeavour?

We examined maps, maps of our city and of the world. We drew arbitrary demarcation lines in an attempt to differentiate one region from its neighbour. We discussed criteria that we used to identify how one area differed from the next; because of its people, their habits, the ambience, even the climate? We listened and tried to understand; we redrew and attempted to make sense of how the world is put together.

Since that time, the research team has received numerous stories, fascinating stories describing a WorldView. All were worthy of discussion: we realize that the opportunity to dialogue with the story teller not only for clarification but also to offer alternative interpretations would be invaluable. We have been pondering how we could accomplish this. We have also been thinking about how we should categorize the stories, share them and preserve anonymity. We have been working with a superb web master who is assisting us in a complex system of organization that will lead to accomplishing our goals of identifying prevailing WorldViews with the assistance of many, many participants.

We will be ready to present our plans to you during the upcoming AGM and engage you all once more in moving forward with global interest. ❖

Daphne Field
Research Team Member

CHINESE TRANSLATION OF BOOKS

The Art of Focused Conversation and *The Workshop Book* have both been published in Chinese by WINTOP corporation in Shanghai. WINTOP published two other ToP™ methods books. Information on the books is available through calling the office.

ICA INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 30 national ICAs who are members of ICA International will be gathering in Toronto from June 4-9, 2006. This meeting is the every 4-year meeting of all the members to plan the future of the organization. The major focus this year is on the move of the ICA:I offices to Montreal and approving the Business Plan for the next 5 years.

A reception for the delegates will be held at ICA Canada's offices on June 5th.

Please see the insert for more details.

EXPLORING OUR CYNICISM and the Worldview it reveals

Annual Research Day and Annual General Meeting

MAY 27, 2006 9:30am - 4:00pm

It is time for another thought-provoking research day to explore our worldviews. This year we will be exploring 2 dynamics. One is what our various areas of cynicism reveal about our worldview. The second will be to explore our experiences of running into (and being surprised by) another worldview.

As well there will be an exciting AGM to report on the incredible year ICA Canada has had and how it has positioned us for a new leap in activity in the coming year.

COME HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE.

RSVP to Virginia Varley at vvarley@sympatico.ca

The Edges Book Nook

These fine books and others can be purchased from ICA Associates either on line through the web site bookstore at <http://ica-associates.ca> or through the ICA offices. Contact information is below. All prices are in Canadian funds. U.S. funds are happily accepted.



The Workshop Book: From Individual Creativity to Group Action

R. Brian Stanfield

Learn one of ICA's key methods. The Technology of Participation ToP™ method has been used for over 40 years in many different countries. The book describes the consensus workshop method; the steps in the process; its many uses and its development. It also delves into workshop design and preparation, the style of the leader as well as ways of dealing with difficult situations. If you have been using the method, the book will provide you with new and greater insights. If you are new to workshoping, the book provides the steps, the reasons behind the steps and hints to make the workshop flow smoothly. We have included the most current information on workshoping available anywhere. The methods are based upon the practices of highly experienced facilitators throughout the world.

\$19.95 + \$1.40 GST = \$22.75 - New Low Price



The Courage to Lead

R. Brian Stanfield of ICA Canada

People need to be aware of their own ability to act. From time to time we wake up to our freedom to make choices and take charge of life's meaning. We experience an overwhelming drive to do something, try something, but are paralyzed. This book challenges us to take charge of our own internal quest for meaning in life. It encourages us to move out of paralysis by acting powerfully wherever we are.

What can this book do for you?

- Intensify your faith in the limits and possibilities of life.
- Develop your reflective powers and the sense of your own potential.
- Stretch your context of belonging and your grasp of the big picture
- Help you make a difference in society
- Develop your capacity for authentic, innovative leadership

\$19.95 + \$1.40 GST = \$22.75 - New Low Price



The Courage to Lead: Daily Journal

R. Brian Stanfield of ICA Canada

- 365 delicious quotes from all over the world related to the twelve stances in the book.
 - Each page contains the date, the stance, the quote and a space for your personal reflections
- Free with any book

The Courage To Lead Study Guide

R. Brian Stanfield of ICA Canada

This is a great companion to *The Courage To Lead* that is meant for those who are leading study groups based upon the book. The guide is highly detailed and can be used by anyone.

95 pages

\$25.00 + \$1.75GST = \$26.75

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TITLE	QUANTITY	DISCOUNT	PRICE PER BOOK
<i>The Courage To Lead</i>	10	10%	\$17.95
<i>The Workshop Book</i>	15	15%	\$16.95
	20+	20%	\$15.95

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