

## **2001: ON BECOMING A LEADER – 7 CYBER-SPIRITUAL STEPS**

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**Management, Technology and the Spirit meet: a manager whose seven centers of energy (chakras) are open will have the qualities (e.g. knowledge, trust) of each of the center. He will become a leader.**

**The method is based on successful management practices, Sahaja Yoga, Cyber-Technology and Neuro Linguistic Programming.**

### **Abstract**

We shall briefly review the main business trends through the buzz words like knowledge, learning, flexibility, change, globalisation, trust, community, customization, Internet-Web, guru, vision, emotional intelligence, human factor and Wow. In order to become a successful leader, you must understand and utilize different models. We will present one based on the spiritual world - Sahaja Yoga - where each of the seven Centers have some qualities that can be awakened:

1st Center: Innocence, Modesty, Intelligence, Purity

2nd Center: Pure knowledge, Pure Attention, Creativity

3rd Center: Master principle, Contentment

4th Center: Faith, Fearless, Responsibility

5th Center: Self-respect, Communication, Collective, Respect toward others

6th Center: Perception, Forgiveness

7th Center: Union

We review some possible implementation obstacles and then give some first solutions based on management practices, long term practices, cognitive styles and cyber-technology.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper links fields that are usually very distant. We are talking about management, cyber-technology and the spiritual world. Surprisingly or not, the same concepts are being used but not always with the same words: knowledge, trust, here and now, etc . . . .

We shall review some of the main business trends and we will go through the seven steps of human development in order to become an enlightened leader and/or . . . a Wow Company.

## REVIEW OF THE MAIN TRENDS IN MANAGEMENT

One way to review the main trends is to gather some of the buzzwords of these past years:

### **Knowledge & Learning**

People talk about knowledge workers, knowledge database, the transfer from data to information and then to knowledge. To make it short and simple, one can say that the wealth of a company, its competitive advantage, relies on its knowledge and its core competencies that come from the employees and on their facility to learn. We will see in the following second step, how you can deal with "false knowledge" such as defensive routines.

### **Flexibility**

Let us recall that about half of the 500 Fortune Companies that existed 20 years ago no longer around. The need to be flexible is not only required in the structure of a company but also internally, in the minds of every worker, manager and leader. This means, for instance, that managers can no longer rely on a five year strategy plan: they have to be aware of the present situation and to be able to make changes very quickly.

### **Change**

If there is one buzz word that will stay, then this is the one!  
In his new book "Management Challenges for the 21st Century," management thinker Drucker says that "being a change leader requires the willingness and ability to change what is already being done just as much as the ability to do new and different things."  
So what is the first change policy you need to adopt? "Organized abandonment" -- the art of letting go. More on that later.

### **Globalisation**

The earth is like a small village and everything is connected as we will see in several of the steps.

### **Trust**

There are many articles that emphasize the importance of this "soft" criterion which is usually difficult to deal with. Trust means something different in each of the seven steps.

### **Community**

Companies can no longer be considered as classical pyramids and conventional practices no longer work.

Don Tapscott says that today's state-of-the-art virtual corporation is really just a transitional structure that is nearly obsolete. What will replace it? E-business communities, which he defines as "networks of suppliers, distributors, commerce providers and customers that carry out a lot of communications and transactions through the Internet and other electronic media." (Computerworld 28 Sep 98) We will address this in the 5th step.

### **Complexity**

Organizations are complex open systems and the environment is changing very rapidly. This is the reason why there is a growing interest in the chaos theory. A practical consequence, as an example, is that a small event can have a tremendous influence.

### **Customization or 1 to 1 for everyone**

Without question, the trend is to develop fully customized products according to the preferences of the client or user.

### **Internet-Web**

There is a growing use of the Internet. Both for its positive aspects such as access to a tremendous resource of information, publishing possibilities and communication accessibility wherever you are and the negative aspects including its propensity for anarchy, the spread of viruses, the chaos, the difficulty to make business transactions because of the hackers, etc . . . . Gerry McGovern, Digital Age's philosopher wrote: " This is the information age, we are knowledge workers, the Internet is a well of information, a knowledge fountain."

### **Guru**

This term translates as "Master". However, it is widely used in business magazines to refer to various specialists from technology, future, management, etc . . . . We will explore what it means in the 4th step.

### **Vision**

Within all this turmoil, the leader needs to see clearly. This clarity of sight must also be propagated. In the 6th and 7th step, this vision will be further addressed.

### **Emotional intelligence**

IQ is not the only criterion. Emotional intelligence is key for leadership. Among the many models, we can mention leadership seminar speaker Paul Wieand. "Real leaders" he observed "were serious and playful, self-confident and self-critical, strong and vulnerable, intuitive and logical."

We will get back to these qualities in a different format.

### **Human factor**

The importance of the human factor can be felt more and more in the business arena. Hence, the success of the magazine "Fast Company" as explained by its editors, is based on the sense that "business is changing and people are getting involved in business in a much more personal way." Long term commitment for a company is giving place to the personal development of the individual where career is only one facet and should not hurt or destroy the other aspects and aspirations of the person.

## **Wow**

This term was introduced by Tom Peters in his last book. Its meaning is "close to enlightenment", precisely what this paper is all about.

## **SOLUTIONS**

Along all these buzzwords, there is an emphasis on the human side, the personal development. The 'New Age' is knocking on the door of the companies and has already entered in some instances.

This paper deals with the qualities required by a company and/or an individual in order to become a leader, and a way to reach them. Our solutions are multidisciplinary and based on:

- Successful management practices
- Sahaja Yoga, movement funded by HH Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi for the development and the enlightenment of every human being through self realization.
- Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) and mainly the cognitive styles
- Cyber-technology: an effective and creative use of the Internet and of Information Technology (IT).
- Common sense ☺

We are going through 7 steps using the model of the 7 chakras (centers of energy) that can be found in Indian antique scriptures as well as other spiritual sources such as the cabala.

A person whose chakras are open and clean will have the qualities of each of the chakra.

There are obstacles to the well functioning of the chakras and some solutions to these problems.

For each center, we'll list its qualities, some potential obstacles and some possible solutions.

The point of using this model is that we very much answer the issues and follow the trends that were cited above.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Center**

#### **Qualities**

The qualities of this first center which is the basis are the following:

- Innocence: you need to see the world with new eyes as much as the eyes of a child in order to consider the situation at hand, design a new product etc.
- Modesty: there is no need to impress people around you. If you do bring something good then people will know about it and will spread it quickly through the Internet.
- Intelligence: according to Sufi poet Rumi, "this second knowledge is a fountainhead from within you moving out." You do not need to acquire this knowledge from the books.
- Purity: this is a quality that can and should exist in the business arena

#### **Obstacles and Solutions**

Survivors will do anything in order to reach their goal including lying, being aggressive, hurting and even killing. This type is mostly based on fears and lack of trust.

In terms of management practices, it is good to ask yourself the questions based on the Transaction Cost Theory (Williamson, Ciborra, Scheimann):

- Who are you dealing with? How much do you trust the second party? (behavioral uncertainty)

- What is the level of the complexity of the work that needs to be done? (natural uncertainty)

In terms of behavior, it is good to be close to the nature and even put a picture of nature on your desktop. You can make sure that your work environment does not include posters of violence scenes, pornography. You can also set up some filters in the corporate information system so that workers cannot access specific sites.

The business terminology has been very much using words from the military world. Words have an effect on the people and even if these are only metaphors, stress is being created and spread through them. One should refrain from using such words and introducing some new titles as we can see the trend in companies.

In order to increase the trust and decrease the fear for potential clients toward a company and its web site, there is a need to establish a presence, a need to be personal, to give an address, a phone number etc.

## **2nd Center**

### **Qualities**

The qualities of this center are the following:

- Pure knowledge: usually, the information is inside the company or inside you. In other words, if there is a problem, it may be useful to introspect instead of accusing directly your counterpart.
- Pure Attention: the ability to be here and now without being distracted.
- Creativity: this comes without any effort like a flow as illustrated by artists such as Mozart and many more.

### **Obstacles and solutions**

False theories can be a big issue and hide the knowledge required. Defensive routines as defined by C.Argyris go against the pure knowledge. However, some knowledge (e.g. 'war stories') from the past may be very important for the present and the future.

If you can create an environment where you can "discuss the undiscussable" as Argyris writes, then some learning will happen. It could be interesting to try through the Rumors Bulletin Boards where the messages posted are anonymous.

The huge volume of information through email, phone calls and other ways disturb the managers: a new survey from Pitney Bowes shows that the increasing amount of technology in use in the workplace is hindering productivity. The report found that the majority of workers are interrupted by communications technology every ten minutes.

There is a need to set up some filters, some organizational rules such as the possibility to be 'off' for an hour or more from every medium.

One should also know what is one's best medium: for instance, do you prefer email or voice mail?

Exercises based on Neuro Linguistic Programming can help people understand what their cognitive styles are, their best way to receive information, communicate with others and thus bring all of their attention to a specific situation.

Too much thinking and planning are obstacles to creativity. Inflexible information systems and software programs may prevent the spontaneity required for creativity.

There is a need to develop the right systems and environment that fit the cognitive styles of each and everyone.

### **3rd Center**

#### **Qualities**

The qualities of this center are the following:

- Master principle: in a sense, you are your own master, your own guru! In terms of spirituality, one discovers that your body talks through vibrations: Mohammed said in the Koran "Your hands will talk".
- Contentment: the ability to be satisfied with the present situation.

#### **Obstacles and solutions**

Rigid hierarchies, conditioning and conventional ways to work are indeed an obstacle to be your own master.

Learning to listen to yourself, introspect and trust yourself are the first steps to be done. This can be done at a personal level or at the level of a company or a department.

Some people tend to be over-perfectionist which does not go well with contentment. It is clear that perfectionists do play an important part but they need to be advised as to limit their enthusiasm for utopian perfection.

While the bottom line is a very important issue, focusing only on short terms returns and for more \$ can be very negative in the long run. There is the importance to be happy, satisfied at work: the paycheck is not the only criterion.

### **4th Center**

#### **Qualities**

The qualities of this center (heart) are the following:

- Faith: if a person does have faith in himself, one can feel the spirit of it, the compassion.
- Fearless: fears disappear and instead actions are made out of love.
- Responsibility: the leader trusts that others will do their work so he does not take too much responsibility and on the other hand the leader is ready to take any responsibility.

#### **Obstacles and solutions**

Instead of compassion and faith, there is a tendency to scepticism, lack of trust toward oneself, toward people and yet this is where the heart resides, where the spirit is. Companies based on fears are still very common. There should hopefully be fewer and fewer companies like this.

In terms of responsibilities, the power of the Internet and the information era have brought on our screens the sad reality of a violent and frightening world. On the other hand, we can easily react, constitute communities, publish some letters, set up a web site etc.

When there is a lack of responsibility, one can start taking care of plants or ... even "Mopyfish", this virtual fish that needs to be fed in order to live.

### **5th Center**

#### **Qualities**

The qualities of this center are the following:

- Self-respect: the ability to see oneself in the true light and to love oneself
- Communication: the ability to communicate with the others in a positive and effective way
- Collective: you are part of the collective and the world is in yourself
- Respect toward others: the ability to consider each and everyone at the same level.

### **Obstacles and solutions**

There is a tendency for people to feel guilty for any 'bad' actions that happened in the past. The concepts of single loop and double loop learning of C.Argyris should be helpful to make sure that you do not make the same mistake again. Also, it helps if a company has a positive attitudes towards making a mistake: this can be a very good way to learn.

The set up of a community is a complex process but this model can be a good indicator as to where the effort needs to be made.

Irony and sarcasm are phenomenons that are bad for this center. Changing such an atmosphere can bring tremendous changes.

The various methods for personal development and communication can help reduce misunderstandings between people. For instance, using the concepts of NLP in order to understand if you are visual, auditive or kinesthetic and what your colleagues are may help you in your daily communication with your peers.

### **6th Center**

#### **Qualities**

The qualities of this center are the following:

- Perception: one talks about the vision of the leader, the ability to perceive the world
- Forgiveness: the ability to forgive oneself as well as the others

### **Obstacles and solutions**

A main problem here is the importance of the ego and the conditionings (superego) If a manager has a big ego, this will compromise his ability to perceive the situation. This is also the situation for a manager who is too much in the past, too much connected to various conditionings, things that might have worked in the past but no longer work etc. Reducing the ego and the conditioning are possible as long as the person starts forgiving himself and the others.

Too much thinking is actually a problem: we go back to the various kinds of intelligence. The problem is worsened by the fact that there is a huge volume of information that needs to be tackled. Some solutions exist and they combine some change in the habits according to each one, the creation of new functions in the company etc.

### **7th Center**

When this center is opened as well as the 6 others, this is the state of union with yourself and with the universe: the Wow company.

It is the state of thoughtless awareness: you are in the "here and now" with no thoughts coming from the past that no longer exists and from the future that does not exist yet.

(It is not only the "here and now" but the "now and everywhere"). And yet, you are aware of the whole situation: the result of it is a type of very flexible management with visionary managers who solve day-to-day problems, practice simultaneous engineering and are fully aware of the present and its events that pop up spontaneously. If a manager thinks that – no matter what – he is the one who is right, that he does not need to change anything, that he has dedicated enough time on planning, and that is HIS work, then he is very likely to... fail.

This is because he is no longer connected with the reality that is being made out of all the small events and facts of the everyday life.

## CONCLUSION

We are at the eve of a new millenium, the corporate world is still looking for some models and solutions while the world becomes more and more complex and hectic.

We have attempted to show in this paper a model taken from the spiritual world and various other fields.

We can see that this model can answer the questions and give a path for becoming an enlightened leader and improve the world. This is a long path but is not it worth it?

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