

Dot “Calm”....Connecting The Dots Looking at Living Leadership

Mark B. Silber, Ph.D., Organization Psychologist.
University of Phoenix, San Diego, CA, psychol@adnc

There were tens-upon-tens of reasons or causes for the multitude of corporate failures of the “dot.coms”. Exploring those interacting causal variables would necessitate at least a two volume textbook which would be read by venture capitalists , contemporary MBA students and possibly in the future by students examining past history of organizational demise and death.

Questions: What failings produced the start, and then the snowballing effects, of the implosion of the organization? What cracks and gaps occurred between the VISION and the operational MISSIONS? What were the mega-rocks and blocks that emerged between STRATEGIC plans and TACTICAL follow through at the operational level(s)? What marketplace and external reality changes produced the pitfalls and pratfalls of corporate failure? Was there a lack of focus on the KSFs.....the Key Success Factors for profitable growth?

Questions: What lapse of memory produced “oversights & forgetting” about Cost Accounting 101 basics? Was there any Super-person EGO involved in fantasy geographical and the “magic bullet” product expansions? Yes, CEO’s, Marketing senior officers and Presidential EGOs that enthusiastically believed in the “yellow brick road” of expansion and extensions at all costs(many times EGO driven).

“Ego drives lots of people to do strange things.
Control your investments.”

—John Hendrix

Questions: What and where were there communication blocks and missed-information signals? How did the “M’s” shift and change....MEN, MACHINES, MONEY, MATERIALS resources become dissipated and destroyed? Could there have been a lack of inventory controls? In what ways did the competitors....locally, nationally globally....achieve superior advantages and lead time at the costly expense of the dying organization?

Single cause and the singled out event is the useless search for T-H-E one answer. The death rattle of the decline of the failing organization had multiple causes. But the signals, signs and sounds of that death rattle were missed or denied by the leaders who were in place at that time.

NOTE: “at that time”. Usually the stream of subsequent replacement leaders came and went through the revolving corporate front door in the frantic search for THE turnaround



savior! Each subsequent executive recruitment and hiring was seen as the search for THE leader who would take the organization to the “promised land” of regained wealth and health...the revitalization of peace and calm ...'dot calm'.

Finally, at last, the discovered woman or man leader would 'connect the dots' so that there would be no more gaps/missing parts between the dream and the execution for performance excellence. He/she would be THE dot connector so that peace and prosperity was renewed. Hail THE turnaround hero/heroine....the 'Caesar of Comfort'! Ah, the ONE super-human who will hold in his/her insights the true source of wealth wisdom.

**WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF THESE QUESTIONS IN THE ABOVE PARAGRAPHS?
WHAT ARE THE MULTIPLE ISSUES & BEHAVIORS CONFRONTED BY THE
QUESTIONS IN THE ABOVE PARAGRAPHS?**

“Success is a garden with too much sun.
Be careful it does not dry your roots.”

—Joan Walsh Anglund

Success, like failing, is a tough task master. Leaders can forget the many lessons of the restrictive years of formation and organizational construction. The beginnings of constructive 'thrashing around' arguments, the pain of finding financing in the national jungle of capital risk investment .The facing of initial failures can be forgotten.

The 'roots' of the initial organizational dream have lost their ability to support the organizational mid- life of success...they have dried up= roots have turned into dust !

Monies are being spread or even sprinkled around with the now 'easy ease' of success. Real costs are denied and even hidden. Duplication of people in the same positions produce loss of motivation and the 'success killer instinct' of winning.....fun, frolic and 'entitlement' attitudes have become direct and indirect costs.

NOTE: Job joy, job enrichment and employee empowerment are recommended & ENCOURAGED for achievement/organizational enhancement; these are key leadership behaviors for the release of employee motivation. Salary/money alone does NOT empower nor motivate.

The sunshine and the heat of success produce leader and organizational memory loss of those actions that produced success in the first place; root decay of memory loss replaces the zest of the entrepreneur.

“I had a major advantage: I was raised poor.”

—Kenneth Langone



The tough times of organizational forming and storming are once and awhile referred to by only the first generation of the 'old timers'. The 'newbies' assume continued success ! The battle scars that produced the success's are no longer seen and seldom reinforced by the "story tellers".

Exploring Executive Excellence & Managerial Effectiveness

Based upon the author's years of teaching at the University of Phoenix, San Diego Campus, the many preceding years of being a Professor at other great Universities and yjthe 30+ years of consulting to organizations nationally and internationally.....a reality-based lesson was learned.

There is neither a single nor a simple prescription for leader excellence.

Looking into the looking glass of leadership is multi- dimensional, like looking into a pyramidal prism.

Lest the reader becomes tangled in a web of an over-expanded article that might better be served by a textbook on the subject, the following highlighted points will serve to underscore the leadership " pyramidal prism". These reflect the winning ways of winners.

- If you expect your Associates, laterally and downward, to accept your values & vision, do you walk the talk or just TALK? "Talk is cheap because supply exceeds demand."
- Leadership wisdom is the inner connection of the knowledge in the head with the heart of caring." Age doesn't always bring wisdom; sometimes it comes alone."
- Leaders do not substitute 'presents' for being present. Do not hide in the office; walk, talk and listen to all. The same letters in the word LISTEN are the same letters in the word SILENT. Be with your staff, not above them.
- What shadow do you cast? Are you a servant leader who enables, enhances, enriches, empowers their strengths?
- Everyone likes to be UTILIZED, but none like to be USED or manipulated. How does your staff describe you when they talk about you to others in and outside the group?
- There are two "E's" in leader....E = ethics of decision choice and the E= effectiveness of implementation. Dr. D.L.Moody said, "Character is what you are in the dark."
- Effectiveness is doing the right things that really make a real difference in the real world.



- Calculated RISK, difficult choice points, difficult changes under stress measure a leader during controversy, chaos, and conflicting paths of challenge. Leaders do not hide from decisions; one can not do anything with indecision!
- Decisions may or may not be final, but few are fatal.
- Celebrate other person's honest mistakes and surely their successes. Do not hide or hog recognition and reward.
- Ego hunger is the human condition. Leaders have the opportunity to give and to heal the hurts of humans!

Most assuredly, the highlighting and listing of effective and excellent leadership practices could go on and on. Office and organizational politics ...that subject alone is worthy of a textbook. The management of time is core and a capstone of leader excellence. The leader's personal health , physical-psychological health, would have taken many pages in an article on supervisory success.

The transitions from being "a cop" to becoming "a coach" as a leader would have merited a multitude of ' how-to-dos' paragraphs.

Control of the executive EGO, yet having EGO STRENGTH, would have been a most interesting comparison and dialogue. Then there are the vital insights about employee empowerment and job enrichment.

How about the leader realities of facing marginal performers, employee discipline , as part of leader performance? Let us not forget the leader thrust of raising people UP, not tearing them DOWN is leader competency.

Others in the organization want to please others IF ONLY they knew what would really please others! The arenas of leader explicit communication and mutual goal setting could have sharpened the 'sword of the gladiator' through extensive paragraphs.

The futurisms of the organization depend on PICKING PROMOTABLE PEOPLE.... persons of ethic, of influencing strength, of vision for the needed changes. Organizations, like the corpus of individuals, need to adjust, adapt and innovate to succeed in their futures.

The LEARNING ORGANIZATION is the organization of both the present and its own future. Leaders continue to learn.

Organizational success and leadership excellence are only beginnings.

