Leadership & Vision

Definition of vision

Dreams in action!

Vision’s Importance

• Clarifies purpose
• Gives direction
• Empowers beyond assets

Six Scholars

• Fred Polak--Dutch
• Benjamin Singer--Canadian
• Viktor Frankl--Austrian
• Martin Seligman--American
• James Collins—Californian
• Jim Kouzes--Californian

Jim Kouzes

The Leadership Challenge

• Honest

• Forward looking

• Competent

• Inspiring

Fred Polak

• The Image of the Future

• WWII triggered his scholarship

• Why did the Nazis do so well?

Polak

• Decided it was their image of their future

• Theory: a powerful vision precedes great performance

Polak

• Studied Western civilization to see if it were true

• Found many examples

• Discovered vision is about pulling, not pushing

Polak’s Key Questions*

• Do you believe you make a difference in the world?

• Do you believe the world is basically
a good place or a bad place?

**Polak's Grid**

**Polak's Conclusions**
- Visionary nations outperform their assets
- The most visionary nation in history
- “Perhaps a civilization's mightiest lever is its own image of its future.”

**Benjamin Singer**
- Canadian educational psychologist
- “The Future Focused Role Image.”

**Singer**
- Looked at school performance
  - grades
  - leadership
  - teacher recommendations
- Interviewed the two ends of spectrum
- Asked students to describe their future
- Found startling correlation

**Specifics of successful students**
- Long time horizons
- Multiple alternatives
- A belief that their own behavior made a big difference in how their future would turn out

**Specifics of nonsuccessful**
- Very short time horizons
- No idea of what they were going to be
- Believed their lives were in the hands of fate (Polak's Grid)

**Singer**
- Could not find these two extremes by measuring:
  - IQ
  - family structure
  - economic structure
  - race
  - gender
  - culture

**Singer conclusion**
• Children with vision outperformed their assets

• Successful students had one thing in common: a profound belief in their future and their ability in their own efforts to shape it!

Viktor Frankl
• Man’s Search for Meaning

• Austrian Jew

• Psychiatrist

• Spent WWII in concentration camps

Frankl
• Went to Auschwitz

• Set goals
  – to survive
  – to help others
  – to learn

Frankl
• Observed it was impossible to predict who would survive by standard measures:
  – youth
  – strength
  – health
  – brains

Frankl
• None of those assets turned out to be useful measures over the long term.

• Most useful measure: There was something important yet undone waiting in their future.

Frankl
All of those who made it through had something significant yet to do.

• They definitely outperformed their assets

James Collins
• Built to last with Jerry Porras
  – Study of corporations with and without vision

• Good to Great
  – A study of mediocre corporation that became great corporations

Collins’ First Book
• Distinguished between visionary leaders and visionary companies

• Focused on companies

Mission & Vision*
• Mission is the guiding star
never to be achieved--Medtronic

- Vision is the Mountain to be climbed
  Difficult but doable

**The Research**
- Studied Parallel companies
  - same industry
  - same resources
  - same starting point
  - One was visionary, one was not

**The difference**
- Extraordinary
- Investing $1.00 in 1926 in 3 categories
  - general stock market
  - nonvisionary company
  - visionary company

**Results of investment in 1990**
- General Market--$415
- Nonvisionary company--$955

**The Payoff**
- Visionary Company--$6356
  - 15X the market
  - 6X its competitor

- Definitely outperformed their assets

**Collins Conclusion**
- Enormous advantage to have corporate vision!

- Accessible to all

**Collective Observations**
- Vision works at all levels of human endeavor
- Vision helps people and collectives
  outperform their assets
- Positive vision ennobles the human spirit

**Key Influencers of Vision**
- Family & friends
- Leaders
- the media

**Which is most influential?**
- In Europe?
- In Asia?
- In South America?
- In North America?

**Media’s influence**
- What kind of messages do the media usually convey to us?

**Negative Examples**
- Ozone layer
- Hospital infection
- Religious wars
- Terrorism
• Loss of medical care
• Alzheimers disease
• Global competition
• Bankruptcy
• The Great Recession
• Loss of jobs
• Global Warming
• Collapse of the Price of housing

Negative influence
• Profoundly negative
• Headline negative
• Inaccurate description of the real world:
  – What’s the likelihood of you being killed by terrorists in the next five years?
  – Compared to death in an auto accident?

The Negative Vision Question
• If the future is only going to get worse,
  then what is the best day of your life?

The Impact of Negative Information
• Destroys the power of positive vision

• Shapes our “vision” paradigm to only see the bad

Martin Seligman
• Learned Optimism
• American psychologist
• Explored the meaning of hope

Importance of Hope
• Started with a dog experiment
• Seligman immediately saw a larger implication
• What if it were true for humans
• It would explain much “strange” behavior

The Human Experiments
• Done with college freshmen

• Unsolvable problems

• In one hour, hopes were crushed

Key Observation
• For many people--

  As soon as they believed
  their actions had no effect,
  they became helpless.

The new axiom
• Hopelessness causes helplessness!

• A feedback loop that creates a spiral to despair

Double Edged
• Take away hope...
  takes away action
• Take away action...
  takes away hope

Caught in the spiral
• The homeless
• The unemployed
• Welfare parents
• Welfare children

• “Without vision, the people perish.”

Hope/Vision Connection
• Hope = attitude

• Vision = the reasons for hope

• No vision, no reason for long term hope

Exceptions to the rule
• Seligman found a subset of humans who could not be made to lose their hope
• It was if they had some kind of immunity

Key to Hopefulness
• A sense of control
  – Granddaughter picking her vegetable

• Action Orientation
  – Motorola axiom--Paul Galvin

The new spiral
• hopefulness------->helpfulness

Exceptions to Hopefulness
• One subgroup of people would NOT learn to be hopeful
  They were always finding reasons not to hope
• They lacked the stamina to persist
• Seligman discovered they were pessimists

Why could they not hope?
• UK scientist John Teasdale knew

• He blamed their “explanatory styles”
  – how you explain the workings
    of the world to yourself

Three keys
to the Explanatory style
• Pervasiveness

• Permanence

• Personalization

Pervasiveness
• Is the action
  – universal?
  – Local?

Permanence
• Is the action
  – Permanent?
  – temporary?

56 **Personalization**
• Is the action caused by
  – an outside agent?
  – Yourself?

57 **Pessimists Vs Optimists**
• The way the world is described using
  these criteria is fundamentally
  different between pessimists
  and optimists

58 **Good Events**
• the optimist’s perception
  – No matter where I was, it would find me
  – If not today, then tomorrow
  – I was the cause of this good fortune

• The pessimist’s perception
  – I was just lucky to be at that location
  – I could have missed it by a minute
  – I wonder why it happened to me

59 **Bad Events**
• The pessimist’s perception
  – No matter where I was it would have found me
  – Today, tomorrow, it still would have happened
  – It was all my fault

• The optimist’s perception
  – If I had moved just a little it wouldn’t have happened
  – A minute later or earlier, no problem
  – Sure wasn’t my fault

60 **Behavioral Results**
• The optimists persist through the bad stuff because “it is short in time and reach.”

• The Pessimists quit because all they expect is more bad stuff

61 **Seligman’s Summary**
• The stuff of hope: finding temporary and specific causes for misfortune.”

• “Finding permanent and universal causes for your problems is the pathway to despair.”

• You can learn to be an optimist!

62 **Vision/Hope connection**

HOPEFULNESS
HELPFULNESS

VISION
The Arrow of Influence
• Points forward at least as much as it points backwards

• If that is the case, then hope and vision are our greatest levers for change

Key Components to vision
• Leader initiated
• Community supported
• Detailed and comprehensive
• Positively inspiring--
  • “To defeat terrorists” = negative
  • “To make the world safe for freedom” = positive

Vision & values
• Values help us judge the correctness of the vision

• Values, by themselves, never give direction

Dreams, Hope, and Vision by Debbe Kennedy
Dreams give us hope. Hope ignites Passion. Passion leads us to enVision success. Visions of success open our minds to recognize possibilities

Far-reaching Possibilities help us enlist Support from others. Support from others keeps us focused and committed. Focus and commitment foster action.

Action leads to Progress. Progress leads to Achievement. Achievement inspires Dreams. Dreams give us hope.

The Vision credo
Vision without action is merely a dream; action without vision just passes the time; vision with action can change the world!

JB
What Does an I-Wheel Look Like?

• Non-linear in form

• Concentric circles and spokes

• Grows bigger and broader as you fill it out

1st Order
2nd Order
3rd Order

The Strategy Matrix®

• It helps you answer the following question: how will outside forces and inside actions make it easier or harder for my organization to succeed?