Transformational Growth and Disruptive Change

BY MARK THOMPSON

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Lyft Co-founder Logan Green (left) and Mark Thompson

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16 TRANSFORMATIONAL GROWTH AND DISRUPTIVE CHANGE

How do world-class leaders accelerate growth and teamwork in times of disruptive change? How do you touch and engage a diverse workforce and diverse customers in every community you serve?

By Mark Thompson

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

Developing Diversity Essential for Success

To get ahead in this global economy, companies must encourage diversity. But it's one thing to have policy that encourages the hiring of women and minorities, and another thing to actually get that talent on board. Several of the authors in this issue of *AMA Quarterly* tackle the question of how to hire a diverse workforce.

In the cover story "Transformational Growth and Disruptive Change," when it comes to addressing diversity, Mark Thompson says leaders need to ask about where a company's innovation comes from. "Are you tapping into a diverse collection of views and backgrounds or just one homogenous group of people? How do you touch and engage a diverse workforce and diverse customers in every community you serve?"

In "Race Still a Bigger Challenge Than Gender in Advancement," Anna W. Mok and Sofia Poyhonen share the results of a study by the Ascend Foundation, a nonprofit Pan-Asian career lifecycle organization. The study found that from 2007 to 2015, there has been very little progress made by all minority groups in reaching executive positions at San Francisco Bay Area technology companies. CEOs, their executive teams, and corporate boards need to continue to actively lead change and drive solutions.

In "Unconscious Bias: Hiding in Plain Sight," Pam Alfrey Hernandez defines unconscious bias as stereotypical beliefs about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. "No company or organization is truly free of unconscious bias," she warns. "Once it is acknowledged, managing it within a corporate/organizational structure requires a concentration on diversity and inclusion."

AMA illustrates in an infographic on page 26 how important diversity should be to companies because of the economic advantages it brings. For example, racially diverse organizations outperform non-diverse ones by 30%. And as Manny Avramidis, CEO of AMA, points out, the organization has recently launched several new diversity and inclusion programs that teach managers to constructively counter microaggressions, uncover implicit bias, and forge a strong team where everyone feels included.

This issue also highlights AMA's Operation Enterprise program, which helps give students the skills they need to transition successfully into careers and, in turn, brings Millennials and post-Millennials and their viewpoints into the workforce.

Christiane Truelove
Guest Editor, *AMA Quarterly*

Employee Healthcare Moves Onsite

Clinics help companies put employee health and benefits first.

BY BEN EVANS

Going to a doctor's appointment is hard. Leave work early. Come in late. Work through lunch. You finally get there, only to fill out a mountain of paperwork and wait 30 minutes for a 5-minute appointment. And that doesn't even address the worst part—this portion of the healthcare system is reactive to a patient's needs and doesn't often fulfill its promise of keeping people healthy.

The American healthcare model has broken down into a tangled, complicated system with soaring costs, long wait times, and complexities that are nearly impossible for employers, consumers, and health providers to navigate. However, some healthcare companies are working hard to flip that model and make healthy, happy employees the No. 1 priority. They are setting up multiple benefits to follow, including healthy outcomes, decreased costs, and increased productivity.

Luckily, leading employers are playing a huge part in the transformation. The enterprise wellness industry is growing at nearly double the rate of the overall economy, according to an IBIS World Industry Report on corporate wellness services in the United States. More than 40 companies on Fortune's 2016 list of the "100 Best Companies to Work For" offer an onsite clinic to control the rising cost of healthcare. These firms include USAA, Goldman Sachs, CustomInk, and Capital One Financial. But onsite clinics are not just for the Fortune 100, as local startups with a few hundred employees to major school systems and municipalities with several thousand employees can all benefit from this model.

With more uncertainty in the industry now than ever before, enterprise wellness is still a growing trend. According to a 2015 Towers Watson survey, two-thirds of large employers with onsite health facilities say they're planning to expand them, further validating the idea that the clinics are truly reducing costs for companies and providing exceptional care for the employees that use them.

Here are four of the biggest reasons these companies are saying yes to onsite healthcare:

Convenience

With onsite and near-site healthcare clinics, your doctor is just steps—or a short car ride—away. The idea behind these clinics is to provide easy access and immediate attention, at little or no cost, for a host of health services employees would normally have to leave work to receive. Because offsite medical appointments can legitimately consume a half day or more of an employee's time, giving employees convenient access to a nearby clinic keeps them physically and mentally present and reduces lost productivity.

Onsite clinics also effectively deliver healthcare to everyone in a company, including those who otherwise wouldn't have a primary care provider. For workers who already have a regular provider, clinic services can complement, rather than replace, their preferred primary care providers.

If your company doesn't have the headcount, budget, or physical space for an onsite clinic, consider a network of near-site clinics that multiple companies share. Using this model, patient access

is immediate because the network is already built out and the clinics are typically conveniently located where the hot spots of the local population live. Some clinics even completely change the mental model of what a clinic looks like and seem more like a half-spa, half-coffee shop with modern furniture and Spotify playlists in the background. In addition, high-quality health providers can deliver medicine in a personalized way that they simply cannot do as part of a major healthcare system.

Affordability

Onsite and near-site clinics give employees and companies healthy returns on both their productivity and bottom lines. Incorporating clinics at or close to work is much easier than implementing another costly, offsite program that doesn't get adopted and quickly eliminates the cost savings you sought to achieve.

Although much of the cost-saving data that comes from companies using onsite or near-site clinics is anecdotal by each business's experience, one study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce released in June 2013 shows that this type of well-designed, convenient health program can have a return on investment of $1.50 to $3 per dollar spent over a two- to nine-year timeframe. That return on investment can benefit your company's bottom line for years to come, as affordable, quality care helps keep medical leave down and employee productivity up.

It's important to realize that healthier employees are also better for your health insurance budget. As more companies make the shift to high-deductible health plans, it's critical to give your employees the tools to make more thoughtful decisions around how to spend their healthcare dollars.

Making preventive and first-aid services available on or close to your worksite will reduce the use and cost of hospital emergency room visits, the most costly place to receive medical services, for nonemergency or otherwise avoidable conditions. Onsite or near-site clinics can be tailored to the services your employees use most and

specifically designed to make sure all participate in services.

Preventive services made available through onsite and near-site clinics also encourage better long-term employee health. Providing low- or no-cost resources and treatment close to work increases the use of preventive and wellness programs, thereby lessening the severity of common illnesses, managing chronic conditions with regular checkups, improving and correcting prescription use, and boosting employee patient health outcomes overall.

Giving access to onsite and near-site healthcare clinics builds a continually healthy, cared-for workforce over time, creating a "health equity" with returning value year after year.

Increased productivity

It's no secret that human talent is at the heart of business performance and success. Implementing an onsite or near-site clinic for your company has a return on employee productivity simply because a healthy workforce is more productive.

The idea that healthy people are generally happier and more productive isn't new. Workplace clinics were developed decades ago for companies in industries with high occupational injury rates. Those companies, which employed doctors and nurses to treat workers, were some of the first employer-sponsored clinics to provide care for workers in shipyards and steel mills before World War II. In recent years, the model has seen a resurgence because of rising healthcare costs, which have prompted employers to look beyond traditional occupational health to offer broader primary care for all types of workers in all types of industries.

Onsite and near-site clinics also hold value in recruiting new talent and retaining the talented employees you already have. Nearby, high-quality healthcare and wellness programs from these clinics will give your company an edge in the recruitment marketplace and make talent attraction and retention easier. This is especially true for Millennials, who seek well-rounded,

untraditional workplaces with a wide range of benefits.

Empowered employee health decisions

Above all else, convenient care close to work gives employees peace of mind. Onsite and near-site clinics have a return on well-being for workers and show that you are actively listening and are willing to create a culture where wellness comes first. By providing workplace clinics, you are empowering employees to make active, informed choices in their healthcare and lifestyle.

Many clinics offer hour-long appointments with plenty of time for personal attention, questions, and health coaching. Many also provide out-of-office referrals and recommendations for employees who need more specialized care outside of what the office can provide. Some clinic providers even offer follow-up calls and assistance with appointments to ensure patients are using all the resources available. The payoff from these resources and touchpoints for employees during and after appointments often has a wellness value that can't be calculated.

In addition to serving employees, employers can choose to support dependents on their specific healthcare insurance plan, adding to the idea that these clinics are a well-rounded and modern approach to health for companies that seek to ease employee work-life balance strains and costs. In short, the clinics prove that your company cares about employees' individual and family quality of life.

Launching a close-to-work clinic gives everyone, from the CEO on down, the opportunity to get and stay healthy while also being productive and empowered. It also shows your organization is willing to move toward a new global business culture where companies put employee health and benefits first. AQ

Ben Evans is the CEO and co-founder of OurHealth, an Indianapolis-based provider of onsite and near-site primary care clinics for businesses of all sizes and industries nationwide.

The Roles of the
CHIEF EXPERIENCE OFFICER

BY B. JOSEPH PINE II AND JAMES H. GILMORE

To drive the experience economy, chief experience officers are needed, but many are still defining their positions.

In the two decades since we wrote *The Experience Economy* (Harvard Business School Press, 1999), interest has exploded in going beyond providing goods and services to staging experiences: memorable events that engage each individual in an inherently personal way. Executives and managers in enterprises of all stripes—for-profit businesses, nonprofit charities, tourism bureaus, ad agencies, healthcare systems, colleges and universities, political campaigns, government entities, and even churches—have embraced this distinct economic offering as the means of differentiation.

But for most goods manufacturers and service providers that seek to shift into the experience economy, experience staging is still uncharted territory. Even those who have always been experience stagers—sports teams, concert venues, theaters, museums, theme parks, game makers,

and many hotels, restaurants, and retailers—have gained a newfound vocabulary and set of tools for what they do, but experience staging still remains more art than science.

That's why thousands of companies across the economic landscape have created the position of chief experience officer, or CXO. And while CEOs do not know what this new C-suite title is exactly, they increasingly know they have to have one. They then fill the position with people of varying backgrounds (outside of financial) and ask their CXOs to get a handle on this new "experience thing." Newly appointed CXOs sometimes don't know themselves what they're supposed to do, and often the position is seen as the answer to every new question. The natural result? A loss of focus, effectiveness, and business success—with precious little improvement in experience staging.

"CXOs must work to turn mundane interactions into engaging encounters so that customers cannot help but remember them."

For both CEOs and the CXOs they hire to get the most out of this still-fresh title, they need to first understand what the position is *not* about, and then embrace what being a CXO should be in order to use the position to transform the company and its customer relationships, its operations, and its economic offerings.

WHAT BEING A CXO IS NOT

One of the major movements in business since the publication of *The Experience Economy* has been the focus on so-called customer experience management. CX, as it is generally known, concentrates on making interactions nice, easy, and convenient. These qualities are all well and good, and some CXOs might be focusing on them, but they are not actually attributes of a distinctive experience; they merely comprise good service.

Look at the primary economic distinctions between services and experiences. First, services are intangible—having little or no materiality (as tangible goods do)—while experiences are memorable. If you do not create a memory, then you have not offered a distinctive experience. And while being "nice" is, well, nice, it's rarely memorable. Instead of just being nice, CXOs must work to turn mundane interactions into engaging encounters so that customers cannot help but remember them—and tell others about the experiences they had.

Second, services are customized—done for an individual customer—while experiences are inherently personal. If you do not reach inside of people and engage their hearts and/or minds, then you have not offered a distinctive experience. Designing processes to be "easy" often gets in the way of making them personal, as companies then tend to make them routine for the benefit of workers. CXOs must instead always keep the company centered on the actual, living, breathing person in front of its employees.

Third, services are delivered on demand—when the customer says this is what he wants—while experiences are revealed over a duration of time. If you do not let your experience unfold dramatically over the course of your interactions in a way that goes beyond the predictable, then you have not offered a distinctive experience. (That's why services are delivered while experiences are staged!) Striving to be "convenient" drains the interaction of all drama, so CXOs must instead seek to choreograph the sequence of interactions in a way that embraces dramatic structure, rising to a climax and then bringing customers back down again in a personal and memorable way.

The best way to summarize these distinctions between consuming services—even excellent ones properly enhanced through a "customer experience" program— and encountering experiences is through this concept of time. Making things nice, easy, and convenient results in customers spending less time with you, and less money as well. Think of it as time well saved, and as a route to commoditization. And that's exactly what people want from services, so they can spend more of their hard-earned money and their harder-earned time on memorable, personal, and dramatic experiences that truly engage.

Nice, easy, and convenient only ever yield incremental service improvement. So as strange as it may sound, CXOs should not focus on CX—unless they want to rename the position chief service officer—but rather on those endeavors that will yield memorable, personal experiences that customers view as time well spent.

THE ROLES OF A CXO
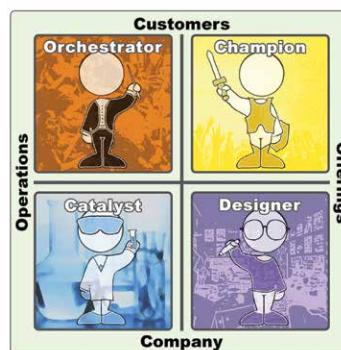
Kevin Dulle, The thINKing Canvas

But on what then is the CXO to focus? What should the position's portfolio be? And what roles should the person who fills this position take on within the company, so that it can go beyond commoditized goods and services to staging engaging experiences?
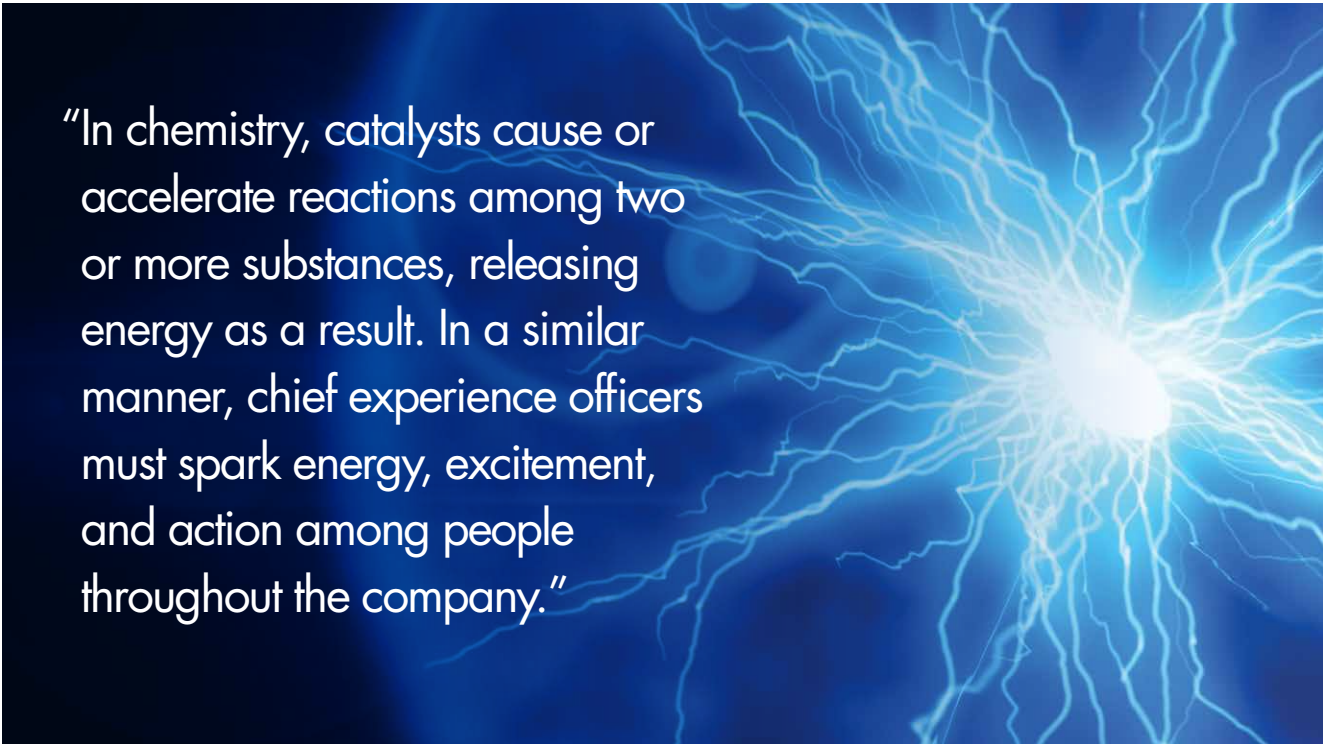
Based on our work with hundreds of experience stagers and scores of CXOs, there are four key objects on which every chief experience officer must center his or her time and attention: internally on the company and its operations, and then externally on customers and the offerings they value.

As seen in the figure "Roles of the CXO," the two spectrums defined by the company and customers on the one hand and operations and offerings on the other demarcate the four roles CXOs must inhabit to successfully lead their companies into the Experience Economy: Catalyst, Designer, Orchestrator, and Champion.

THE CATALYST

In chemistry, catalysts cause or accelerate reactions among two or more substances, releasing energy as a result. In a similar manner, chief experience officers must spark energy, excitement, and action among people throughout the company—people who rarely report directly through to

> "In chemistry, catalysts cause or accelerate reactions among two or more substances, releasing energy as a result. In a similar manner, chief experience officers must spark energy, excitement, and action among people throughout the company."

the position—so that operations can reorganize itself around experience staging on top of (or even rather than) the mere manufacturing of goods or delivering of services.

In their role as Catalyst, CXOs must engage, enliven, and energize the organization to embrace experience staging. They generally are not themselves the doers in the company, with huge staffs and direct responsibilities. Rather, CXOs work indirectly throughout the organization.

As Mark Greiner, CXO of Steelcase, put it to us, "Everyone thinks about their role and the work they do in a different light, or through a different lens." To make that happen, Greiner equips scores of Steelcase employees with the tools of experience staging by, among other things, personally co-leading Experience Economy Expert Certification courses for product managers, marketers, and designers throughout the company, which produces office furniture, architectural, and technology products for office environments and the education, healthcare, and retail industries.

The staffs that CXOs do have serve as internal consultants in the organization, supporting teams in applying experience staging concepts in their areas. They can go further, though, in creating physical resources to spark organizational activity.

Christine Holt, CXO of Holy Redeemer Health System in Huntingdon Valley, Pa., created the in-house Transformation Center, complete with an employee experience place called Spark. Holt sees it as "a place of inspiration and aspiration where people can come to be immersed in an experience," one that exemplifies the principles of experience staging

that employees learn there to, in turn, create experiences for Holy Redeemer patients, family members, residents, and other constituents. "Spark is the embodiment of our culture," she says.

And the job of Catalyst is never done. Sonia Rhodes, who led experience endeavors at Sharp Healthcare in San Diego for more than a decade, instituted a cascading set of catalytic mechanisms to engender and constantly regenerate the company's orientation on an amazing experience for team members, providers, patients, and guests. She established Annual All Team Assembly sessions (in three clusters) for every one of Sharp's 18,000 team members. She extended that flagship employee experience with Quarterly Leadership Immersions for leaders across the enterprise, each one focused on a different aspect of experience staging. And Rhodes recruited and coordinated leaders across the organization, called "Firestarters," who then undertook the responsibility "for keeping the spark of possibility alive and engaging team members at every level in the process."

For her next challenge, Rhodes expanded her purview by creating the Experience Lab and then joining the Advisory Board Company as CXO. She now works with scores of companies to help them catalyze their organizations through the lab's own cascading catalytics: weekly Sparks ("custom-curated Experience Design articles, videos, and other inspiring digital content designed to ignite action," as the lab's website attests), monthly Action Kits ("hand-selected books, tools, and unique experience curiosities"), several hands-on Experience Salons, and an annual TED-like event called STIR.

> "CXOs must be resources within the company to shape its offerings, in concert with those with direct responsibilities, to meet the requirements for a distinctive experience: memorable, personal, and time well spent."

As these exemplars show, when in the role of Catalyst, CXOs must be a continual spark of activity within the company to direct operations around the experiences it stages, and then keep the forward momentum going through ongoing interactions.

THE DESIGNER

In fields as diverse as art and fabrication, designers take raw materials and shape them, artistically and skillfully, into a form that fulfills their intention. Likewise, chief experience officers need to take the raw material of company capabilities and work with the organization to shape them into experience offerings.

In their role as Designer, CXOs must first of all know how to create and stage engaging experiences themselves. When Carnival Corporation wanted to reimagine the cruise experience, CEO Arnold Donald secured John Padgett, the visionary behind Magical Express, FastPass+, and MagicBand at the Walt Disney Company, to be his chief experience and innovation officer.

One of Padgett's first undertakings was to inspire Donald as well as Carnival's brand presidents to see the possibilities of going beyond standard cruise line offerings to staging incomparable experiences. In short order, he create the clandestine Experience Innovation Center (XIC) in Doral, Fla., as a way of engaging the company's leadership in iteration after iteration of what a game-changing cruise experience could be. The end result—announced by Donald in a keynote at the 2017 Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas—was the Ocean Medallion, a wearable that identifies every guest and then enables Carnival to essentially morph the cruise experience in real time around each one (as well as that guest's family or companions).

Knowing organizational integration is fundamental to staging innovative experiences, Padgett allied with Jan Swartz, president of Princess Cruise Lines, to become the first Carnival Corporation brand to create the Medallion Class experience shipboard. So now Swartz and her team are working with Padgett and his team at the XIC to make it a reality, with the maiden voyage set for November 2017.

This role is ideally one of co-designing experience offerings—something Diane Stover-Hopkins, who has served as CXO of several enterprises (including Beacon Health System in South Bend, Ind.) always emphasizes. At each company, she made sure to "fuel and shape the design of exceptional experiences" and "walk with those who stage the experience" on the front line, without usurping line authority.

CXOs must use their deep expertise in experience design to help the organization in its own experience offering development. At Holy Redeemer, Holt supports other departments with an Experience Producer Corps of designers, architects, consultants, faculty, experience producers, and talent scouts, and further provides re-imagination and "dreamscaping" services to other departments "so their offerings would be transformed from services and programs into remarkable experiences."

At Steelcase, Greiner is often asked to review new offerings and, more or less, "bless" them as "experiential," but he finds that so many fall short of being distinctive experiences. Greiner then gets into co-design mode, peppering them with possibilities and pushing them to reach their potential until they (not him) are confident the offering will cause the customer to scream "WOW!"

Similarly, Jim Cummings, the CXO of Life Celebration Inc. of North Wales, Pa., works with all the funeral homes that have licensed the company's offering of designing, creating, and shipping mass customized memorial products for end customers. Cummings conceived a celebratory lexicon for its funeral home operators to "transform conversations from functional to experiential" as well as "an entire playbook of 'what if' scenarios" and "intense role-playing exercises" to get worker behavior to match the experiences the company designs individually for each funeral.

When acting in the role of Designer, CXOs must be resources within the company to shape its offerings, in concert with those with direct responsibilities, to meet the requirements for a distinctive experience: memorable, personal, and time well spent.

THE ORCHESTRATOR

In music, orchestrators compose or arrange notes, motifs, and themes and align them with instruments, parts, and players to form an audience-pleasing whole. So too must chief experience officers align the various elements of operations to fit into a cohesive whole through a customer-pleasing theme.

> "In their role as Champion, CXOs must endeavor to truly understand customers and ensure that understanding permeates their company's offerings. Ocean Medallion Class at Carnival offers an amazing, customized experience for every single cruisegoer, no matter the ship or the brand."

In their role as Orchestrator, CXOs must "set the tone, tenor, and tempo" of operations to "ensure that everyone is playing from the same score," as Rhodes says.

And Stover-Hopkins, who like Rhodes now teaches other CXOs what she herself learned in the position, says CXOs "must take pertinent information from customer research findings, staff engagement data, competitor strengths and weaknesses, and operational limitations to synthesize all the facts and conditions to properly frame customer experience pursuits" for those in operations.

Steelcase's Greiner agrees, but notes that orchestrating all the elements of an experience into one cohesive whole "is very difficult in a large company with silo functions," so he reaches down into operations to "work it from the 'project' level."

Working with the cross-disciplinary project teams enables him "to give the same message to individuals from the various silos" and preach the "importance of alignment." Life Celebration's Cummings even calls himself "the maestro" as he provides direction to individual funeral home operators to align with Life Celebration's theme of "Creating Memorable Experiences" in the funeral industry.

This makes the office of CXO the "primary source of influence for the entire organization" around experiences, says Percell Smith, CXO of Trinity Senior Living Communities.

"I became the person who held the center of who we said we were and aspired to be in the organization," upholding its theme of 'My. Best. Life. Now.' throughout the company, Smith says.

Similarly, Sven Gierlinger, CXO of Northwell Health, says he "leads through influence" by, for example, walking with every hospital CEO from the parking lot in to give them the customer's perspective on every facet of operations. He's also positioned 55 "culture leaders" at every physical place and in every function to ensure alignment with Northwell's experience mission.

When functioning as an Orchestrator, CXOs must embrace this concept of theme—the organizing principle for the experience that enables operations to determine what is in the experience and, just as importantly, what is out. It is a well-orchestrated theme that forces an experience to be cohesive, to get operations to align together in a way that creates distinct impressions in the mind of each and every guest.

THE CHAMPION

In the social and political arenas, champions fight for a cause they believe in or on behalf of people they believe in. In the arena of today's Experience Economy, chief experience officers must fight for the needs, wants, and desires of customers and make sure that the company's offerings create value on behalf of each individual guest.

In their role as Champion, CXOs must endeavor to truly understand customers and ensure that understanding

> "CXOs not only fight for individual customers but battle on behalf of the enterprise's offerings. They must keep in balance the experience value required by customers with the economic value required by the business."

permeates their company's offerings. This often requires CXOs to fight for the diversity in thought and approach that they and other organizational leaders may not possess, so that customer needs may be fully understood.

Marriott International's Chief Customer Experience Officer Adam Malamut sees his charge as "elevating the customer's voice across the global business."

Stover-Hopkins likes to think of this role as a synthesizer, taking pertinent information from and for customers—"combining the bird's-eye view and the worm's-eye view"—and relate it with competitor material and even staff engagement information "to properly frame experience pursuits."

But customers cannot be thought of as part of a market, segment, or even niche; CXOs must get down to the individual level, because experiences happen inside of people, in reaction to what is being staged for them.

That's why the Ocean Medallion Class at Carnival offers an amazing, customized experience for every single cruisegoer, no matter the ship or the brand. Padgett sees his role here as one of "holistically reconstructing the enterprise with the customer at the center." In concert with creating a digital concierge for guests, called the Ocean Compass, Padgett's team—led by his longtime development partner, Michael Jungen, senior VP, experience design and technology—created the Crew Compass that the company provides to every crewmember.

It not only identifies individual guests, but based on context recognizes the market within the guest at this point in time, knowing, for example, that a particular guest's favorite drink on the pool deck with his kids is an iced tea with no lemon; in the bar with his buddies it's a mojito; and in the fine restaurant with his wife it's a glass of Shiraz. The offering is truly customer-centric, effectively championing every single guest in the eyes of the crew fulfilling the experience.

This applies in the marketing of the enterprise's offerings too. At Steelcase, when Greiner worked with a team on the launch planning for a new healthcare product, the initial plan was to send a sample out to all dealers—the same thing the company has always done. He instead got Steelcase to spend its entire budget on the 20 individual dealers who made up 80% of the company's healthcare sales—and not by just sending out a sample but by making them feel special via experiencing the offering itself. According to Greiner, "And it worked!"

Such events are marketing experiences—actual experiences that do the job of marketing by generating demand for a company's offerings. Padgett did that at Carnival's announcement at the Consumer Electronics Show, not only creating a great keynote experience but also a huge exhibit for people (press included) to experience the offering for themselves.

When performing as Champion, CXOs must accept this dual task, one where CXOs not only fight for individual customers but battle on behalf of the enterprise's offerings. They must keep in balance the experience value required by customers with the economic value required by the business.

GUIDING ENTERPRISE TRANSFORMATION
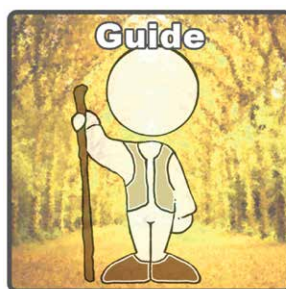
Kevin Dulle, The thINKing Canvas

The four roles of the chief experience officer—Catalyst, Designer, Orchestrator, and Champion—come together into one unified whole. And from that recognition comes the fifth role of the CXO: that of Guide. To make a manufacturer or service provider a true stager of experiences—even an organization such as Carnival, which already seeks new experience innovations to stand head and shoulders above its competition—requires a transformation of the enterprise.

In mountain climbing and other outdoor endeavors, guides equip, accompany, and propel a party to its destination. In the same way, CXOs have to propel their enterprises into becoming premier experience stagers with the ongoing ability to regenerate new and wondrous economic offerings—which include the goods and services atop which experiences must be staged.

And when that happens, the position of chief experience officer will have achieved its purpose of inculcating experience staging into the very fiber of the enterprise. AQ

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RACE Still a Bigger Challenge Than GENDER in ADVANCEMENT

BY ANNA W. MOK AND SOFIA POYHONEN

Despite Silicon Valley's focused efforts to improve diversity and inclusion among its workforce, the innovation capital of the United States has not yet delivered on its bold ambitions.

"The Illusion of Asian Success: Scant Progress for Minorities in Cracking the Glass Ceiling," a recent study from the Ascend Foundation, found that from 2007 to 2015, there has been very little progress made by all minority groups in reaching executive positions at San Francisco Bay Area technology companies. The Ascend Foundation is a nonprofit Pan-Asian career lifecycle organization.

The study is the first and only to analyze the intersection of race and gender using multiyear employment data for the Bay Area technology industry and provide an analysis of the management pipeline that acts as a proxy for upward mobility. The hope is that the research serves as a wakeup call to all companies.

The importance of diversity and inclusion in business has been proved many times over. Simply put: Data show that companies with better diversity at both the individual contributor and the management and board levels perform better. There is also a war for talent at these companies, because the best employees will leave if they don't feel they have a chance to succeed through the leadership pipeline.

Some gains have been achieved as diversity and inclusion have become CEO-level issues around the world. The diversity conversation in business has increased, and the role of diversity in driving bottom-line results has gained greater attention. Understanding unconscious bias has also moved further into the mainstream. Leading organizations now see diversity and inclusion as a comprehensive strategy and as an integral part of every aspect of the talent lifecycle to enhance employee engagement, improve the brand, and drive organizational performance.

Despite companies' investment in the recruitment and hiring of Asians, blacks, and Hispanics, advancement to senior corporate ranks and corporate boards is still highly limited for these talent segments. To make the systemic changes that positively impact and advance results, CEOs, their executive teams, and corporate boards need to continue to actively lead change and drive solutions.

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Ascend Foundation analyzed the leadership pipeline for San Francisco Bay Area technology companies through publicly available data covering 2007–2015. All companies with 100 or more employees are required to file EEOC reports identifying workforce composition by job categories, race, and gender. The study includes employee pipeline data aggregated from hundreds of companies, including Apple, Cisco, Facebook, Google, HP, Intel, Twitter, Yelp, and others. Ascend Foundation researchers found that diversity in technology leadership roles has generally stagnated over the last decade.

The importance of the intersection of race and gender is worth emphasizing—the research confirms that the typical breakdown by race only or gender alone hides many of

the distinctive problems that minority men and minority women have.

Some of the key findings in "The Illusion of Asian Success" include:

• Race is an increasingly more significant impediment than gender to climbing the management ladder, with Asian women and Latino women most affected.

• Asians are the least likely to be promoted to managerial or executive positions, despite being the largest minority group of professionals and the most likely to be hired. In particular, Asian women are the least represented group as executives, at 66% underrepresentation.

• There was no change in upward mobility for minority men or women, but a positive sign is that white women moved from below 12% parity to 17% above parity from 2007 to 2015. This indicates that the focus on gender can change pipeline dynamics.

• Even though white women are now substantially more successful in reaching the executive level than all minority men or women, white men are still 47% more likely than white women to be executives.

• Both blacks and Hispanics have declined in their percentage share of the professional workforce despite efforts to hire more underrepresented minorities.

• Minority women continue to bump against a double-paned glass ceiling of gender and race.

• There is no evidence that the glass ceiling for minority men or women will be cracked by the Millennial generation.

EXECUTIVE PARITY AND MANAGEMENT PARITY INDICES

As part of a 2015 research report titled "Hidden in Plain Sight: Asian American Leaders in Silicon Valley," which examined Bay Area technology company data for single years 2013 and 2014 with a focus on whites and Asian Americans, Ascend Foundation developed an Executive Parity Index (EPI) calculator tool that can be used by individual companies to help measure their leadership diversity. The EPI measures the percentage representation of a cohort at the top of the management pipeline of a company ("the executive" level) relative to the cohort's percentage representation at the bottom (the "professional" level). The formula for any cohort group is:

$$\text{Executive Parity Index} = \frac{\text{Percentage of Executives}}{\text{Percentage of Professionals}}$$

The EPI is a simple and quick way to obtain a first-level cohort analysis of the comparative representation between the top and bottom levels in the organizations. The advantage of using an index is that a comparison can be made independent of the absolute size of its population in any

company's workforce and it allows relevant cross-company comparisons of leadership pipeline flows. The EPI can be used to look for any significant gaps between cohorts that need to be addressed.

When looking at the Executive Parity Index to compare the numbers of minorities as executives to their numbers in the workforce, it was clear that efforts to promote more Asians, blacks, and Hispanics have made no meaningful impact to the minority glass ceiling.
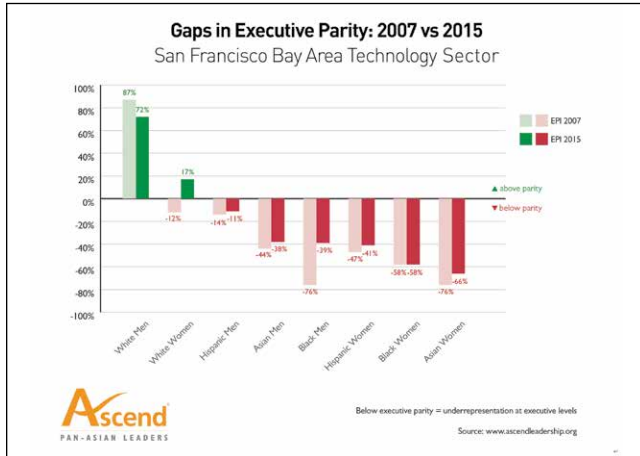
From 2007 to 2015, gender gaps remained for women of all races, and racial gaps remained for all minority men and women. In almost all cases, there were more improvements in the gender than in the racial gaps. Looking at the data, racial factors were consistently more significant as a barrier than gender in moving through the leadership pipeline. For Asians, the racial gap was three times the gender gap by 2015. For blacks, the racial gap was two to five times the gender gap. For Hispanics, the racial gap was 1.6 times the gender gap.

The Management Parity Index (MPI) provides a metric similar to the EPI. It compares the mid-level management representation against the professional representation for an assessment of the lower-level management pipeline flows. The MPI is the ratio of one group's representation at the management level versus its representation at the professional level. The formula for any cohort group is:

$$\text{Management Parity Index} = \frac{\text{Percentage of Managers}}{\text{Percentage of Professionals}}$$

We have often heard an argument that the Asian gaps will eventually be closed as more Asian Millennials reach the executive age. The argument contends that Asian Millennials are comfortable in a more diverse and inclusive workplace, are more eager for leadership roles, and will have fewer barriers reaching management and executive levels.

We examined whether Asian Millennials have had an effect on the racial diversity at middle manager levels. The 2007–2015 MPI for each race is shown in the figure on this page. The

flat Asian line on the chart shows no material change in the proportional representation and does not support the notion that the Asian executive gap will be solved by Millennials.
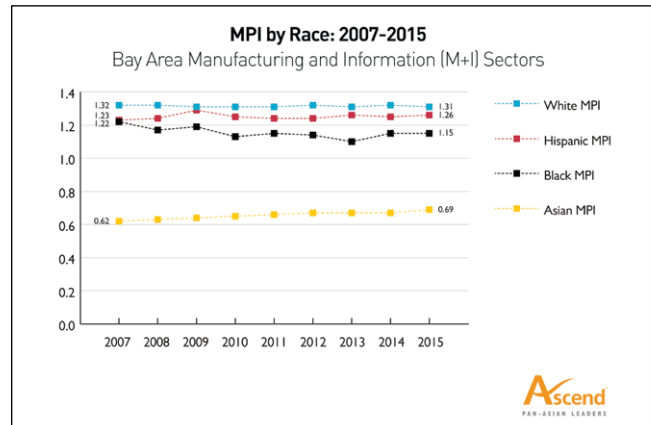
More generally, our MPI analysis of 2007–2015 data shows that:

• There was no material change in the proportional representation for any race to support the notion that the Millennial generation will improve racial diversity at executive levels.

• There is no clear evidence that the Millennial generation would improve gender diversity at executive levels.

• There is no evidence that the corporate efforts to increase management diversity had made a meaningful difference in closing the gap for any racial minority.

• The evidence does suggest that technology companies made progress to promote women overall into middle management, achieving management parity in 2014.
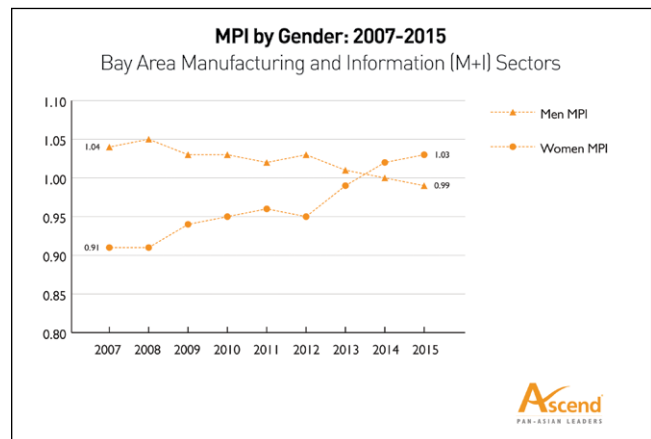
Each minority group has its own distinct challenges. To understand this point through the data, it is useful to look at the diversity challenges by cohort. The chart "Diversity Challenges by Cohort" shows the key elements of the analysis to summarize how Bay Area technology companies were faring in attracting, retaining, and promoting diverse talent.

"Employers need to start asking questions to understand their issues in the employee population and leadership pipeline."

Diversity Challenges by Cohort

Talent Challenges	Attract and Retain Talent		Promote Talent
Cohort	Change in Professional Workforce from 2007 to 2015	Percentage of Professionals in 2015	Executive Parity Index in 2015
White Men	31% growth	32%	72% above parity
White Women	10% growth	11%	17% above parity
Black Men	15% growth	1.2%	41% below parity
Black Women	-13% decline	0.7%	39% below parity
Hispanic Men	32% growth	3.1%	11% below parity
Hispanic Women	11% growth	1.7%	58% below parity
Asian Men	46% growth	32%	38% below parity
Asian Women	34% growth	15%	66% below parity

Ascend
PAN-ASIAN LEADERS

From the data, the conclusion can be drawn that company programs to attract and retain talent should focus on black, Hispanic, and white women. Special emphasis should be given to retaining black women. Company programs to develop and promote leaders should focus on both men and women in the black, Hispanic, and Asian workforce. Special emphasis should be focused on Hispanic and Asian women.

These results raise the question of whether it is reasonable to expect that doing more of the same will create different outcomes in the next few years. Or should companies reevaluate and innovate their diversity programs?

ACTIONABLE STEPS

So what does all of this mean for the future?

The recommendation is that companies keep conducting an in-depth analysis on their current demographic breakdown/pipeline by race and gender. Employers need to start asking questions to understand their issues in the employee population and leadership pipeline. Where is the fallout from the pipeline? Are there relevant differences in the workplace by region or organizational structure? Are biases unwittingly and systematically built into talent-assessment processes? What are the best practices?

Part of the reason there has been so little progress in minority upward mobility is that most people are simply not aware of the extent of the problem. There are also cultural issues at play, but the key point to remember is that there is no one-size-fits-all solution that is applicable to all minority groups.

As a first step, companies can examine their investments in diversity programs to confirm that they are aligned with their

specific diversity problems. The complexity of workforce diversity is an issue that is not lost on anyone. The hope is that the research contributes to higher awareness and begins a more informed and constructive dialogue, which should lead to more specific solutions for each minority group.

Companies should engage their minority community, especially executives, to lead process and training changes and seek out employee resource groups (ERGs) and business resource groups (BRGs) and proactively discuss and work on future strategies. An additional recommendation is for companies to examine internal human resources processes, such as talent assessment, hiring, and promotion processes and leadership development nomination, for any unintended or embedded implicit biases. Further, based on the research findings, companies should be reaching out to Asian women in particular for leadership development opportunities. Companies should calculate the EPI/MPI for different cohorts and see if any large minority leadership gaps exist. If they do, they need to find out what's driving the dynamics.

Available data should be followed closely, investigated, and considered. With actionable insights from research such as this, companies can take steps to drive awareness and offer solutions. In-house leadership development programs can be more focused and targeted to addressing the issues and supplemented with offerings developed by external organizations that provide leadership training and professional development classes grounded in research. These experience-based executive training programs and professional development programs can provide conceptual and pragmatic approaches to addressing the issues raised.

In summary, we recommend that companies join together in a cooperative effort to aggregate and analyze their internal data by race and gender; proactively enlist their minority leadership and employee community involvement; and develop joint and individual metrics to bend the curve in companies' ability to attract, retain, and promote talented women and minorities. AQ

Anna W. Mok is executive VP, Ascend Foundation. Sofia Poyhonen is public relations manager, Ascend Foundation. For further information on Ascend, Ascend Foundation, and its research, please visit: www.ascendleadership.org/research

Mark Thompson (left) and Evan Sharp, co-founder of Pinterest

Transformational Growth and DISRUPTIVE CHANGE

BY MARK THOMPSON

How do world-class leaders accelerate growth and teamwork in times of disruptive change?

This season, more than five historic hurricanes ripped across thousands of miles of the northern hemisphere, setting new records for destruction. Millions of people were plunged into darkness, bracing for a deadly storm. In the wake of these storms, whole communities are struggling to rebuild both their personal lives and their businesses.

In some respects, we are all experiencing a version of this drama and trauma at the office every day, aren't we? Do you know anyone who is not battling a series of sudden superstorms erupting in their industry or business? Is there anyone out there enjoying business as usual? The macroeconomic environment is serving up breathtaking disruptions with greater speed and such ferocious frequency that yesterday's superstar leaders and global brands are quickly outpaced or overcome by more effective competitors. We're all feeling the overwhelming pressure of change at work, whether we signed up for it or not.

Even one of the most powerful entrepreneurs in the world isn't safe from disasters in nature and business. As Hurricane Irma tore through his family home on Necker Island in the British Virgin Islands, Virgin Group's Sir Richard Branson and the remaining staff members on the island shivered in the basement. Deafening winds pummeled the walls like live ammunition, blowing out windows and doors and tossing buses and cottages like toys in *The Wizard of Oz*. This was not the first time disaster had struck his home. Just three years earlier, a single bolt of lightning incinerated his house. Now he was again taking refuge as yet another storm raged outside his newly rebuilt home in that very same location. And like most of his neighbors in the BVI and elsewhere in the Caribbean, Sir Richard would be starting over, again.

"If you're complacent, resting on your laurels, thinking you're somehow safe and above it all, disruption will come and get you!" Sir Richard says. "But this isn't about blaming others, becoming mired in victimhood, or surrendering to difficult circumstances."

Embracing growth in a chaotic environment takes resilience and persistence, and you can't take the risk of standing still or ignoring what's changing around you. As a leader in your own life and work, "you have to be the change you wish to

Back row (left to right): Mark Thompson; Jim Yong Kim, president, World Bank Group; and Keiko Honda, executive vice president and CEO, Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. Front row (left to right): Shaolin Yang, managing director and World Bank Group chief administrative officer; Philippe Le Houérou, CEO, International Finance Corporation; and Kristalina Georgieva, CEO, World Bank.

"Jim Yong Kim was the first-ever non-financial executive to be appointed to lead the World Bank, which invests more than $700 billion in projects aimed at ending poverty around the globe."

see," Sir Richard says, quoting Gandhi. "You can't scale up a company faster than you're willing to scale your own personal and professional growth."

You can't transform your organization any faster than you're willing to change yourself, Sir Richard believes. In a wild time where you're expected to grow your business faster every quarter, "your job is to build a new you and engage a new us who's better at what you do."

LEADERS STRUGGLE TO DEFINE SUCCESS

In a global survey we conducted in 110 nations, we asked high achievers about their definition of success in this new world. Even the most accomplished leaders are feeling under siege to accommodate what seems like contradictory pressures to accelerate growth while lowering costs. They're struggling to balance the dynamic needs of four generations of employees, clients, and stakeholders who themselves are now in a state of perpetual and unpredictable change driven by disruptive competitors, new technology, and shifting market demands.

Bestselling author Brian Tracy and I wrote a business leadership primer about how to manage in chaotic times in our book, *Now, Build a Great Business!: 7 Ways to Maximize Your Profits in Any Market* (AMACOM, 2010).

The trends we've seen in our research have become obvious in our coaching practice too. The greatest challenge for leaders today is activating their own willingness to continue to role-model change by demonstrating growth as individuals, and then engaging their people to drive change rather than be run over by it. Those who cling to the status quo, or who resort to defending past successes with complacency or denial, do so at their own risk.

What we discovered in our research is that high achievers don't have just one definition of success. Surprisingly we found three distinctly different ideals that collide as drivers of their behavior: Purpose—Performance—Passion. You will often hear these words being tossed around as synonymous, but our World Success Survey revealed that they are distinctively different but related concepts.

Purpose means that you're pursuing a mission or ideal that's larger than you as an individual; it could be a company, community, or other organizational ideal. Some people think of this as their legacy. Performance means that you're driven to produce results and have impact for that Purpose—it's something you care enough about to collaborate and even compete with others to win. In this context, Passion is about what drives your heart more than your head. It's what you'd secretly do for free because it intrinsically motivates you. There are many things that you care about in life and work, but those things that ring all three of these definitions of success at the same time—Purpose, Performance, Passion—that triad is the formula for sustainable success.

The No. 1 priority for the highest achievers today is to lead a personal and professional transformation for themselves and their teams. But that lofty goal can feel like attempting to change tires in the middle of rush-hour traffic. You have to lead transformation without sacrificing financial and operating results, or injuring your engagement scores. So how exactly do you accomplish that? Here are four principles applied by some of the most successful (and most disruptive) leaders of the new world.

WORLD BANK: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AS A SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

As a physician, anthropologist, and Nobel laureate nominee, Jim Yong Kim was the first-ever non-financial executive to be appointed to lead the World Bank, which invests more than $700 billion in projects aimed at ending poverty around the globe. During his five years at the bank, Dr. Kim has led a painful reinvention of the institution, reducing bureaucracy and waste, that has resulted in a spectacular impact on programs: More than 1 billion fewer people now live below the poverty line.

In just the last 30 days alone, the bank led over a dozen nations to raise $1.3 billion to support the largest women's entrepreneurship funding program in history. During my three years coaching the leadership team, I've seen them change the world many times over, and the core asset driving their impact is their profound focus on diversity and inclusion. It's not just a matter of fairness and humanity—which are obviously crucial—it's an issue of brilliance.

Great leaders have to ask: Where does your innovation come from? Are you tapping into a diverse collection of views and backgrounds or just one homogenous group of people? How do you touch and engage a diverse workforce and diverse customers in every community you serve?

The World Bank does it by welcoming, encouraging, and harvesting the eclectic, exotic, and entrepreneurial ideas and insights of a choir of more than 80 nations that fund the bank. It's not an imposition on management to hear out all these diverse ideas; it's not a separate HR "program" to be tolerated. It's a core asset, and the bank sees it as a crucial

> "Sir Richard has long been one of history's greatest living entrepreneurial innovators. But his biggest insight about self-awareness and executive renewal in business came from losing his family home."

sustainable competitive advantage. In fact, most countries send representatives to live right there onsite at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. Imagine working *and* living with people whose cultures are different and come from every corner of the planet, but whose voices each contribute to the largest brain trust of financial minds ever to assemble on the globe? Diversity is power! It's the most natural source of differentiation from your competitors.

VIRGIN GROUP: REINVENT YOUR ASSUMPTIONS, BURN THE HOUSE DOWN

Sir Richard's new home imploded, he had an epiphany about how to think about disruptive innovation that changed his life and work. He's long been one of history's greatest living entrepreneurial innovators, having launched more than 400 companies under the Virgin brand, touching almost every service business, from transportation to telecommunications, from health clubs to hotels. But his biggest insight about self-awareness and executive renewal in business came from losing his family home, the residence where he and his wife of three decades had raised their family (and now their grandchildren).

Think about what it would be like if your dream house went up in flames. Stop reading this article right now and consider that possibility seriously. Your house burned down. Feel that for a moment.

OK, fortunately it didn't really happen, but ask four important questions before the feeling wears off.

Would you:

- Rebuild your house exactly the same way, or would it be different?
- Recreate the same design, same architecture and space? Not likely.
- Restock it with all the same things? Probably not.
- Recruit all the same people to the project? If your organization vaporized, and your employees had all exited, would you work hard to invite certain people back to your

> "Lyft [is] the world's fastest-growing ride-sharing firm, whose focus on values-based service and collaborative leadership serves as ballast during this period of exponential growth and change."

organization? Who would that be? Would you not invite others back? If disaster struck, how would you decide what and who goes or stays? This can be a brutal and yet instructive set of lessons.

Why would you make all of the above choices?

For Sir Richard, seeing his dream turn to ashes was a teachable moment of epic proportions—an unexpected provocation to rethink innovation in a world full of surprises. With 400 management teams in the Virgin group clamoring for growth, he now coaches them to be absolutely sure they're not just paving the old cow path unwittingly as they start construction or renovation. "Keep the best; lose the rest! If you think you don't have time to do this, then reimagine the inconvenience of having it all burn down. That would be a bigger bother!" he says.

LYFT: VALUES-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP: NOBODY DOES IT ALONE

Another critical principle shared by growth- and change-oriented leaders is to explicitly select a shared set of values around your mission. How will you establish collaborative behaviors in the workplace to grow your team and your organization?

Lyft cofounder Logan Green was inspired to start his company after a trip to Africa, where he was awestruck to observe extraordinarily cooperative mass transit in Zimbabwe, despite the apparent chaos of a developing country. People would swarm toward their destinations loaded with chickens and produce, and Green was aghast to see how everyone who needed a ride was encouraged to get a lift from an agreeable driver, whether perched on the roof of an overloaded bus or precariously clinging to the back of a motorbike. The shared mission of helping each other get somewhere is intrinsic to the Zimbabwean culture, creating an unprecedented level of collaborative transit.

The experience inspired Green to start ZimCar, a name he chose in honor of the African country rather than his cofounder's name, John Zimmer. Version 2.0 of that vision is a company called Lyft, the world's fastest-growing ride-sharing firm, whose focus on values-based service and collaborative leadership serves as ballast during this period of exponential growth and change. Those values are part of the reason why Lyft is quickly overtaking Uber, whose ethical debacles tarnished a brand once destined to inherit world dominance.

Recognizing the value of Lyft's focus on treating people better and building a sustainable technology platform, Green and Zimmer won billions of dollars of support from disruptive investors like Andreessen Horowitz, KKR, auto giant GM, and even Didi Kuaidi, Uber's chief rival in China. As part of a shared vision for safer, autonomous vehicles, Google is writing a big check to Lyft after having initially invested early on in Uber. (Today Google is suing Uber for stealing technology.)

The lesson here is that values matter more than at any other time in organizational development history. Values-driven principles are not an idealistic luxury or a marginal choice. Management must sponsor leadership programs that empower teams to engage in professional development that helps everyone—from the CEO to the frontline employee—to change and grow in ethical ways that anchor their company to a customer-focused mission in the face of ridiculously challenging business conditions.

PINTEREST: REDEFINING SUCCESS

The fourth transformational principle embraced by the world's growth-company leaders relates to how you measure and manage meaning in your life and work. Pinterest founders Evan Sharp and Ben Silbermann envisioned a world where every individual could discover and activate his or her passions online—the world's biggest catalog of ideas to help you identify and actualize your desires.

Pinterest today engages more than 200 million users and this fall reached a pre-IPO market value of over $12 billion. If you haven't paid the site a visit, it's time that you give yourself permission to explore what success means to you, because that's part of the secret formula that will help you generate sustainable success in a world characterized by dizzying change.

Disruptively successful people don't settle on just one definition of success, but engage in a lifelong struggle to balance each of the three in their decision making, often describing it like juggling precious crystal balls while riding a unicycle. When you get them in sync, the result is something we all dream about in a world spinning with change: success that matters and lasts a lifetime. AQ

Mark Thompson is a New York Times *bestselling leadership author and America's No. 1 executive coach for growth companies. For a free copy of the* World Success Survey, *email Thompson at Mark@MarkCThompson.com*

OPERATION ENTERPRISE
Bridging the Gap Between Education and Workforce Readiness

BY AMA STAFF

Some say that life begins at the end of your comfort zone.

For Casey DeWoody, born and raised in the suburbs of Philadelphia, life took a dramatic turn when she stepped out of hers and entered college at UCLA. "I studied hard in high school, but I wasn't really confident in my leadership, communication, and business skills," she says. "School just hadn't prepared me for what was to come." Unfortunately, DeWoody is not alone.

HIGHLY EDUCATED, BUT UNPREPARED

According to Pew Research, Millennials are set to be the most-educated generation in U.S. history. Yet despite their heavy investment in education, Millennials currently have the highest levels of unemployment and make significantly less than their parents did at the same stage in life. Studies show that although 90% of college graduates feel confident they are adequately prepared for the workplace, employers are critical of their analytical thinking, communication, and public speaking skills, saying they just aren't ready to succeed in the workplace. Study after study reveals a shocking disparity between student competencies and the skills that employers are demanding. Consider these recent findings:

- 60% of companies say new college graduates are not ready for the workforce

- More than 40% of employers report having difficulty finding qualified candidates for open positions

- 59% of employers report having difficulty finding employees with strong soft skills

The career and workplace readiness gap is even more pronounced when the data is segmented by economically disadvantaged versus affluent students. Perhaps not surprisingly, 57% of private sector, full-time workers have reported that they want to learn a new skill set to land a better-paying, more fulfilling job, but half of them said they can't afford to do so.

"The future of every community depends on its youth," says Marina Marmut, director, Operation Enterprise, at American Management Association. "They are the next generation of business leaders, and when they thrive, the communities they live in are likely to do the same, with stronger economies, greater environmental awareness, social responsibility, superior schools, and solid ethical values. We need to do more to prepare them to enter the workforce and succeed, and we need to make this available to all students, regardless of their ability to pay."

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS SMOOTH THE TRANSITION FROM STUDENT TO EMPLOYEE

In 2013, the U.S. Department of Education began the college scorecard—a measure of vital statistics for colleges such as costs, value, and quality of education, including the average earnings of graduates. This increased scrutiny of education and the ROI of traditional educational paths has sparked a revival of career readiness programs in high schools and colleges. Looking to ward off the oncoming talent war, many organizations have also started to partner with educational providers to develop and recruit talent with specific skill sets.

In the midst of this transformation in education, some programs, such as Operation Enterprise, have been running successfully for more than 50 years.

"Back in the late 1960s, I was a high school student in an inner-city school in Indianapolis when I was selected to participate in Operation Enterprise," says Roger Stark, one of the original Operation Enterprise graduates. "My mother worked in a factory for a buck an hour, and I was juggling school while also working 30 hours a week to help pay for food and clothes for the family. Eli Lilly, a local pharmaceutical company, had decided to sponsor two students from my area to go for a two-week program at the American Management Association. It was a truly transformational experience. I knew I was good at what I did—I graduated in the top 10% of my class. But it wasn't until I was in this program that I realized I could stand and run with anyone—I didn't have to take a second seat. If I was willing to put in the effort, it was mine for the taking. It had an enormous effect on my self-confidence."

With that newfound confidence and sense of purpose, Stark led several corporate positions and eventually founded his

"I graduated in the top 10% of my class. But it wasn't until I was in this program that I realized I could stand and run with anyone—I didn't have to take a second seat." —Roger Stark

own company, BrainWare Learning Company (MyBrainWare.com). "I was inspired by one of the speakers who said it was his mission to give back to the community, and that's what we do. We make software that uses neurological principles to help people learn more effectively and reach their full potential. I want everyone to be able to have the same kind of transformational experience I had."

Created by American Management Association, a global leader in talent transformation for nearly a century, Operation Enterprise now serves up to 15,000 students through customized educational programs—and its programs continue to expand through corporate sponsorships.

"AMA partners with organizations all over the world, including the majority of Fortune 500 companies, to develop effective leadership development programs," says Marmut. "We took our robust curriculum and knowledge of what works to create dynamic, hands-on workshops that cover every aspect of being a working professional. We have a business curriculum, of course, but we go beyond that. From management, leadership, and communication to entrepreneurship, networking, and social styles, we bring all of this together to help students gain business skills, build confidence, and sharpen their focus."

> " At 16, I went to Operation Enterprise.... I admit, I didn't know what OE or AMA was. I didn't know that OE would completely change the trajectory of my life. OE has made me who I am. You're ready to take on the world! ...Constant inspiration and introspection, with peers and mentors in an intimate setting. I needed to sleep for days after this program because I was so excited every minute I was there. After OE at 17, I went on to serve as a Rotary Exchange Student to the Philippines; complete my BA at George Washington University in D.C., MA in Australia; serve as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar to New Zealand; complete my doctorate in Economic Development in Rural Wine Regions. To this day, the friendships and connections I made through Operation Enterprise are the most enduring. The skills I learned—communication, business writing, managerial skills, leadership, etc.—were far more impactful than anything I learned in my BA, MA, or PhD curriculum. This is real-world experts in an intimate setting—people that want to coach you on an individual level. I wish I could go back and do it over and over again. "
>
> —Daisy Dawson

> "The curriculum and structure of the OE program... provided me with the tools to be successful as I entered into my collegiate and professional careers."
>
> —Casey DeWoody

> " I wasn't always the smartest student, and at the same time I didn't really know what I wanted to do in the future. It all changed when I attended the workshops at AMA. During the AMA sessions, I learned a lot about professionalism and learned what it's like working there. I was extremely impressed with the professional attire. These skills changed me as a person and helped me build my leadership skill. Ever since that day, I started getting involved and took advantage of every opportunity. Those skills helped me get my first internship at Virtual Enterprise Internationals. Today I am attending University at Buffalo and I'm also the chief operations officer at Khushi Realty Buffalo Inc., a family business. This wouldn't have happened if I never attended the program."
>
> —Isfak Islam

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OFFERS LASTING RESULTS

Research has shown that experiential learning methods improve student engagement, support knowledge acquisition, and boost retention.

American Management Association has been refining its professional education offerings for nearly 100 years. AMA's unique blend of experiential learning and practical, action-oriented curriculum leads to long-lasting results.

"It has been over 10 years since I attended OE," says Alyssa Gruska. "As I look back to reflect on the program, I can say confidently that the program shaped my career in ways that I didn't realize it could. I became a lawyer with my own practice in New York and dedicate most of my time [to] defending indigent clients in state and federal court. Whether I am speaking before a judge, to a jury, to a client, or to opposing counsel, my ability to communicate and connect with people has defined my success thus far, and all thanks to the skills I first developed at Operation Enterprise."

DeWoody agrees, "I embarked on the OE experience at UCLA in 2006. The curriculum and structure of the OE program not only provided me with the tools to be successful as I entered into my collegiate and professional careers,

but it also afforded me a confidence in myself I hadn't previously experienced—pushing me beyond my comfort zone to expand my competencies in the areas of leadership, communication, and business management."

The structure of the program—a combination of classroom courses, team projects, one-on-one tutorials, mentoring, panel discussions, and teamwork activities—fosters collaboration across a diverse student group and allows participants to form long-lasting friendships while improving business knowledge and leadership skills. "With the confidence I gained throughout the program," says DeWoody, "I was set for success."

Establishing mentoring relationships for students and giving them the opportunity to network can really help open doors for students. "More than 15 years later, I still keep in touch with several of the people I met and I still use the skills I learned," says Michael Simmons, Operation Enterprise graduate. "Everything from the panel and simulation to speakers and evening events made such a big impact on me that they will be in my heart forever. I plan to have my kids apply to OE too."

RISE OF THE AGILE LEARNER

A crucial part of career readiness programs is to develop the right mindset. Organizations are struggling to keep up

> " Operation Enterprise came at a time in my life where my professional and academic skills were just starting to take shape. I was a junior in high school, with a lot of ambition and goals, but I did not have a defined skill set to get me to where I wanted to go. OE gave me the platform to discover my strengths. Without the training and experience that I received at OE at such a crucial time in my life, I do not think I would be the effective orator, advocate, and leader that I am today. It was through Operation Enterprise that I discovered my passion for connecting with people through public speaking. I have spent the last 10 years refining and developing the skills I first learned at Operation Enterprise."
>
> —Alyssa Gruska

> "AMA has always strived to improve the quality of life for both individuals and communities, offering business skills to millions worldwide and reaching out to the public with educational initiatives."
>
> —Marina Marmut, Director, Operation Enterprise

> " Through the relationships I nurtured in OE and the skills the program helped hone, I developed the confidence I needed to succeed. OE gave me the tools to fill my toolbox so I was able to capitalize on opportunities as they were presented. It expanded my views and showed me that there were more possibilities for my future that I hadn't even contemplated."
>
> —Katrina Philp

in a volatile, uncertain, and complex environment. Technical skills and business acumen are only a piece of what students will need to be successful. They'll also need adaptability, problem-solving, and resilience skills.

In addition, students and employees need to change how they view education. Gone are the days where a diploma or degree was enough to prepare students for their entire working career. Today, the half-life of many professional skills is only five years, which means the average employee will need to upskill or retrain eight times in his or her career. Employees who embrace change as an inherent part of business and actively seek out educational experiences to improve or increase their competencies stand out and rise to the top of the talent pool.

"Built into our program are not only business skills such as financial literacy, business writing, and conflict resolution, but also job readiness skills," says Marmut. "We set up mentoring relationships for students to prepare them mentally for the shift in being in a learning environment to being in the workforce. We teach them the basics like resume writing and interviewing, of course, but we also cover things like branding yourself, projecting a positive professional image, and above all, having the right attitude."

"One thing OE taught me that has stayed with me forever," says Operation Enterprise graduate DeWoody, "is that equipped with the right tools and self-confidence, there is no reason to fear a new experience and to push yourself to grow as a business leader and as an individual!"

"AMA has always strived to improve the quality of life for both individuals and communities, offering business skills

to millions worldwide and reaching out to the public with educational initiatives," says Marmut. "Over the years, we've partnered with organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America, DECA, National Academy Foundation, NPower, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), and high schools and colleges across the country to bring our program to more students. We're exceptionally proud to offer this program and have great plans to expand through corporate sponsorships."

SPONSOR AN OPERATION ENTERPRISE PROGRAM IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Sponsorship offers you a great opportunity to increase the visibility of your organization while supporting the youth who will be the future business leaders in your area. OE programs help ensure today's youth have the skills your business needs. Corporate grant funding and sponsorship support for OE's programs and events will also be acknowledged on the OE website and other marketing materials, helping to drive more traffic to your website. AQ

To find out more about sponsorships, contact Marina Marmut, Director, Operation Enterprise, at mmarmut@amanet.org

> " Adolescence is a time of uncertainty, exploration, and growth. When I attended OE, I was a junior in high school, and like many of my peers, unsure of my future. Listening and actively partaking in the seminars at OE, I realized I wanted to pave my own path and work for myself. Taking the skills and learnings from OE, I applied them to countless business ventures over the next 10 years. With each venture, I learned important lessons that I carried with me until I ultimately found my passion and created a business around it. I now run a very successful photography and film studio in Manhattan, NY, and get to travel the world capturing beautiful imagery and telling compelling stories for my clients. Had it not been for my days at OE, I might never have had the skill set, persistence, or knowledge to continue my pursuit for my dream job. OE will forever be a part of my past and, my hope is, a part of your future."
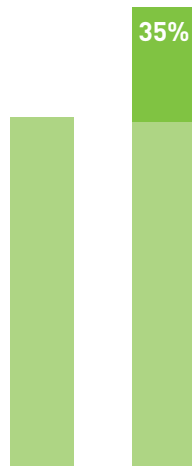>
> —Michael Porco

# Research Confirms Organizations with a MORE DIVERSE WORKFORCE Perform Better

RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY AT THE TOP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Racially diverse organizations outperform non-diverse ones by

35%[1]

35%

For every **10% INCREASE** in racial and ethnic diversity on the senior executive team, **EARNINGS** before interest and taxes **RISE 0.8%.** [2]

10% INCREASE IN DIVERSITY = **0.8%** RISE IN EARNINGS
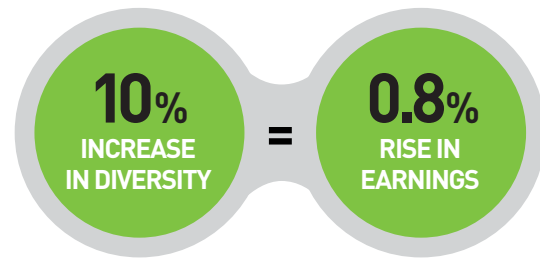
DIVERSITY ATTRACTS TALENT

57%

of employees think their companies should be more diverse.[3]

2 out of 3 job candidates

view diversity as important when evaluating where to work.[4]

Of the **16 FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES** in 2017 that reported detailed demographic data,

80% OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT WERE MEN

and **72%** OF THEM WERE WHITE, indicating that true diversity at the top is elusive.[5]

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[1] blog.clearcompany.com/10-diversity-hiring-statistics-that-will-make-you-rethink-your-decisions

[2] www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters

[3] www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/diversity/

[4] www.glassdoor.com/press/twothirds-people-diversity-important-deciding-work-glassdoor-survey-2/

[5] fortune.com/2017/06/09/white-men-senior-executives-fortune-500-companies-diversity-data/

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY YIELDS BUSINESS RESULTS

Organizations that have high gender diversity are

15%

more likely to have **HIGHER FINANCIAL RETURNS** than the national industry medians.[6]

Teams where men and women are equal earn

41% MORE REVENUE.[7]
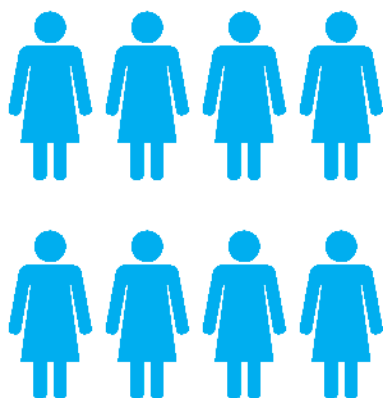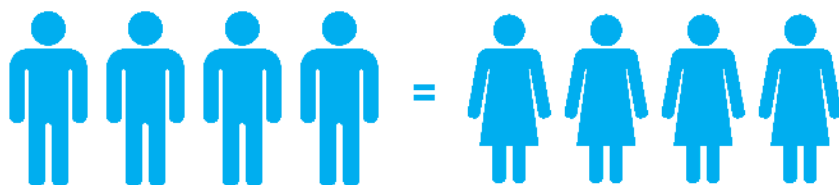
Companies with more women on the board statistically outperform their peers over a long period of time.[8]

Teams with **50-50 gender diversity** outperform other teams in quality of work.[9]

50% Men / 50% Women
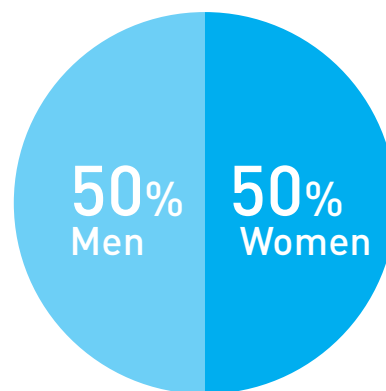
[6] www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters

[7] blog.clearcompany.com/10-diversity-hiring-statistics-that-will-make-you-rethink-your-decisions

[8] papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1826024

[9] www.catalyst.org/media/companies-more-women-board-directors-experience-higher-financial-performance-according-latest

6 TIPS
for Leading a Multigenerational Team

BY PAUL McDONALD

Older generations have grumbled about up-and-coming generations for time eternal. They're spoiled and entitled.

They're only concerned about themselves. They have a lousy work ethic. They're ruining everything.

Perhaps your Baby Boomer employees even blame Millennials for ruining the workplace. You may hear complaints about their alleged poor work ethic ("They're always taking shortcuts"), sense of entitlement ("They expect to be promoted without putting in the hard work"), and communication style ("They write emails like texts").

Millennials, in turn, sometimes feel Boomers are hovering over their shoulders, not giving them enough credit and, in general, treating them like kids instead of talented professionals. Meanwhile, Gen X'ers—the overlooked middle child—just sigh, roll their eyes, and keep plugging away, wishing everyone could get along.

If you sometimes feel like a family therapist instead of a business manager, you're not alone. Workplace conflicts eat up your valuable time, and one of the biggest sources of friction could well be the generation gap.

Most offices today feature a blend of employees from different age groups, from Baby Boomers approaching retirement to Generation Z, the latest entrants into the job market. As a manager, one of your responsibilities is to ensure all these generations work well together.

How can you minimize friction and maximize the unique contributions of your staff, regardless of the decade in which they came of age? How can the various groups feel that they are needed and their work has value? What can you do to get current and future leaders on the same page?

These are tough questions that business executives must ask themselves if they are to create a high-performing team today. Here are six tips for leading a multigenerational workforce.

UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

To effectively lead a multigenerational workforce, you need to have a better idea of each group's common traits. Here's a quick look at some of the key characteristics of the generations currently in the workforce, as detailed in a report from Robert Half and Enactus, "The Secrets to Hiring and Managing Gen Z":

Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964). Known for challenging the rules, Boomers prefer training in moderation and tend to be cautious about change. They prefer feedback in small doses, such as the annual performance review, and have a unilateral, top-down leadership style.

Gen X (born 1965–1977). This smaller generation has long been overshadowed by the previous one. Gen X'ers are independent learners who see change as an opportunity and value training and regular feedback. They like to solve problems on their own but appreciate being included in the company's decision-making process.

Gen Y (born 1978–1989). The first wave of Millennials thrives on collaboration and expects feedback on demand. They want to create the rules, but preferably as a team and with everyone's full input. Leaders are seen as partners, and change is good.

Gen Z (born 1990–1999). The second half of the Millennial group expects ongoing feedback, which they regard as essential. They're known for their tech and social media savvy, but they also prize face-to-face communication. Gen Z'ers appreciate rules but expect them to be customized.

It's never a good idea to stereotype an entire generation, as there will always be overlaps and exceptions. For example, some Boomers run circles around their younger colleagues when it comes to the latest communication apps. And while understanding the general attributes of each generation is helpful, these insights are just a start. As a manager, you should tailor your style to each employee's goals, interests, and needs.

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

Embrace a glass-half-full mindset when it comes to the generations and their unique traits. Too often, managers see differences as negatives, but strong teams feature diverse perspectives, experiences, and insights. This mix leads to many benefits, including improved products and service levels, greater collaboration, fewer misunderstandings, better communication, and a higher retention rate.

Take Millennials as an example of how a shift in mindset can help employers better manage staff from different age groups. When these professionals first entered the job market, they gained a reputation for having disruptive work styles. What

> "Regularly point out how employees' skills and attributes complement those of their colleagues, especially when solving business challenges [and] brainstorming new services."

we've learned since, though, is that they simply have a different outlook. Fast-forward to today, and many companies are conforming to Millennials' approaches, leading to changes such as more frequent feedback and collaborative goal setting, that are benefiting companies and employees of all ages.

As a leader in your organization, celebrate the differences of your multigenerational workforce. Regularly point out how employees' skills and attributes complement those of their colleagues, especially when solving business challenges, brainstorming new services, and understanding customer behavior. When you take the time to highlight each staff member's impact on a specific project, your workers will grow to appreciate, rather than bemoan, this diversity.

VARY YOUR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

In general, each demographic has a preferred and nonpreferred way of working, learning, and conveying information. The greatest difference among the generations, according to CFOs in a January 2017 Robert Half Management Resources survey, is in workplace communication.

Although everyone tends to use whichever method is the most effective at the time, Boomers often gravitate toward real-time conversations, be it by phone or in person. They may also be guarded when communicating. On the other hand, many Gen X'ers love emails and are known for writing multiscreen messages. At the other end of the spectrum, Millennials are method-agnostic, using all forms of communication constantly. This multichannel approach includes texting their boss, group emailing project teammates, Snapchatting with work buddies, and using Slack, Google Hangouts, or Skype for quick exchanges. They appreciate immediacy and are used to being reachable—and reaching out—24/7. The tricky part is that what works well for one group can drive the others crazy.

You can address such differing preferences by taking a multipronged approach to communicating skills training, change management, and even employee appreciation efforts. Diversifying your methods will take time but foster greater employee buy-in. Not sure what strategies work best with which employees? All you have to do is ask.

But one thing is for sure: Micromanagement kills motivation. A complaint among some Gen Z'ers is that their boss thinks entry-level workers don't know what they're doing and won't be able to deliver the goods. Don't risk demoralizing and alienating employees with your low expectations. Do give them the space and safety net to make mistakes, learn from them, and then thrive.

PROMOTE CAMARADERIE

If you're a manager who tends to frown on socializing, you may want to rethink your stance. While gossip and too much chitchat hamper productivity, giving employees room to build rapport and connect with each other will result in stronger work relationships. What's more, a report on workplace happiness from Robert Half and Happiness Works, "The Secrets of the Happiest Companies and Employees," found that employees who have solid on-the-job friendships are more satisfied than those who don't.

Again, mix things up. Think beyond trust falls or Friday afternoon drinks. In fact, these traditional methods may make some workers feel uncomfortable. Provide options that appeal to all generations and personality types, and encourage—not force—staff to attend. Think of activities where socializing is an added benefit and not the only goal. For example, volunteering together is an excellent way for employees across departments to give back to the community while getting to know each other.

Also, build in camaraderie during the workday. Begin meetings with a quick team-building activity. Go out for lunch once or twice a month—not to talk shop but to enjoy a meal together and find out about each other's lives outside of the office.

When creating project groups, don't divide them by age—such as lumping all the summer interns in one team and senior-level employees in another. Play up cooperative competition rather than pit workers against each other, and facilitate mutual understanding by intentionally bringing the various generations together.

ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEES TO LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER

Traditional mentorships are an excellent means of preparing less-tenured employees for advanced roles. But keep in mind that newer professionals also have knowledge and insights to share with their veteran colleagues. Consider establishing a reverse mentoring program so that Boomers and Gen X'ers can benefit from the skills and perspectives of their Millennial colleagues.

Additionally, encourage members of the various generations to collaborate, cross-train, and lead. As an example, the members of Gen Y and Gen Z are using social media in ways some of their more senior counterparts may have never imagined. To better understand your young consumers, ask Millennials to give a presentation on what Snapchat can do. This communication and networking tool is about more than just endless selfies and funny filters.

Conversely, with many years of experience under their belts, Boomers and Gen X'ers have much to teach Millennials about office politics, career advancement, client relations, and business etiquette. And, of course, institutional knowledge is not transmitted through books or instant messages, but from person to person and generation to generation.

A 24-year-old marketing professional in her first job sums it up well. When I asked her about the most valuable lessons she's learned so far from her Boomer and Gen X bosses, she immediately texted back: "Ask lots of questions, be the last to leave and form major points in groups of threes!" She gets it. She realizes she doesn't have all the answers, but she knows where to find them.

Gen Z'ers eagerly absorb knowledge from their boss, whom they typically respect. In a Robert Half survey of workers of all ages, 83% of Gen Z respondents reported their manager's leadership skills are strong. Compare that with 77% of Boomers, 75% of Gen Y, and 69% of Gen X.

We could all benefit from grumbling less about other generations and learning more from them. Managers play a large role in shaping the latest generation of workers, who, in turn, have much to teach those who may have only a few years left of their full-time career. Create a culture of positivity and mutual respect, no matter an employee's age or job title. And make sure this process starts from the top.

MAKE FLEXIBILITY PART OF YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE

In a way, it's true: Millennials are ruining the workplace, but only the aspects of keeping rigid office hours, following buttoned-up dress codes, and being physically present in the office. All the essentials of a dynamic company—motivation, commitment to deadlines, and delivering the best service and product possible—remain very much a part of this generation's DNA.

As a leader in your company, capitalize on this trend rather than force Millennials to follow "how things have always been done." In fact, retire this phrase if managers are still kicking it around. Trust employees, regardless of their seniority, and give people the freedom to make good decisions. Rather than making them earn management's trust before they're allowed perks like DIY scheduling and remote work, treat all employees equitably.

Really, all generations—not just Millennials—benefit from more flexibility. Boomers want to keep working, even past retirement age, but many wouldn't mind having less stress and slowing down a tad. Some options that keep them engaged and productive include reduced hours and a transition to consulting. Gen X'ers are in that sandwich generation of raising children and/or caring for ailing parents. If they have the ability to create their own optimum schedules and still advance their careers, they will reward their employers with loyalty and extra productivity. Generations Y and Z are masters of work-life blending, with fuzzy boundaries between the personal and professional. They think nothing of finishing up projects at home or their favorite café, so allow them that flexibility.

Don't fear the empty cubicle. With mobile devices and cloud-based tools, bodies in chairs is no longer an accurate indicator of productivity. Be open to alternative work arrangements, whatever they may be and whichever ones make the most sense for your company.

Managing several generations at work has a reputation for being challenging, and for good reason—each group has its own definitions of work and success and approaches the workplace with differing expectations and motivations. But instead of dreading or, worse, ignoring employees' disparate experiences and styles, take advantage of their complementary backgrounds, skills, and know-how to strengthen your team and your company. AQ

Paul McDonald is senior executive director at Robert Half, the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm. He writes and speaks frequently on hiring, workplace, and career-management topics. Over the course of more than 30 years in the recruiting field, McDonald has advised thousands of company leaders and job seekers on how to hire and get hired.

How to Create a Diversity and Inclusion Program from Ground Zero

How do you move a mountain? One spoonful of dirt at a time. —Chinese proverb

BY TRICIA DELEON

"What...you don't have a diversity and inclusion program in your company? No women's initiative? No affinity groups?" This was from a conversation I had with a friend who worked at a Fortune 500 company shortly after I made the jump from a large law firm of approximately 500 attorneys to a litigation boutique of about 20 lawyers. She opined that no matter the size of the company, the culture should still reflect important values regarding diversity, inclusion, and gender equality. Amen.

But where do you start if your leadership agrees that these values are important but no such programs exist yet? One spoonful of dirt at a time.

Here is a step-by-step guide to how our small law firm recognized our need for a diversity and inclusion program, what we did differently to create one, and what we learned—and are still learning—through the process.

How do you launch successfully?

As a starting point to creating a diversity and inclusion program, you need to know why this initiative is important to your company. Do not create one overnight simply so you can advertise on your company website or in social media that you have one. Think through what you want to accomplish.

We started our formation process the wrong way. For instance, I gathered all our female attorneys together and declared that we should have a women and minority forum to advance the many issues that were important to us. Thankfully, a few of my colleagues suggested a better approach. We created a program that was open to all attorneys and firm members. We concluded that for white men, for instance, to fully appreciate the strengths that a diverse work team could provide, we needed those white men in the room.

Said differently, a diversity and inclusion group should not be exclusive. To my surprise, this approach worked. Our first meeting was well attended. We began by answering the "why do we need this" question.

Do diversity and inclusion programs make a difference?

There are compelling economic reasons for a company to have a diversity and inclusion program. Here are a few of the many reasons:

Profitability. A 2015 McKinsey & Company article, "Why Diversity Matters," reported that companies in the top quartile for ethnic diversity were 35% more likely to outperform their cohorts in the bottom quartile for ethnic diversity. Gender-diverse companies were 15% more likely to outperform their less gender-diverse peers.

"While correlation does not equal causation (greater gender and ethnic diversity in corporate leadership doesn't automatically translate into more profit), the correlation does indicate that when companies commit themselves to diverse leadership, they are more successful," McKinsey experts wrote. "More diverse companies, we believe, are better able to win top talent and improve their customer orientation, employee satisfaction, and decision making, and all that leads to a virtuous cycle of increasing returns. This in turn suggests that other kinds of diversity—for example, in age, sexual orientation, and experience (such as a global mind-set and cultural fluency)— are also likely to bring some level of competitive advantage for companies that can attract and retain such diverse talent."

Client satisfaction. Clients are three times more likely to recommend a diverse legal team to a friend or colleague and 1.5 times more likely to rate a diverse legal team a perfect 10.

Client spend. In-house lawyers report spending 25% more with diverse legal teams than with their non-diverse counterparts. Companies expect their outside counsel to champion diverse and inclusive work teams. In fact, many clients are starting to demand it, according to a 2016 report from Acritas Research Ltd., "Acritas Diversity Report: Uncovering the positive impacts of a fully diverse legal team."

Acritas found that firms which enable higher diversity levels to exist in their organization will be rewarded with better financial performance.

More diverse teams generate higher performance levels, an increased share of spend, and a higher recommendation rate among clients. Acritas noted that to enable diversity to thrive, companies will need to adapt their business models and change their internal cultures. "The firms who take this seriously and make radical changes will move ahead of the rest of the pack," these experts said.

What goals should a diversity and inclusion program include and measure?

Once we got our firm's attention on why we should value diverse and inclusive work teams, we next decided to formulate some goals for the group. Our general goals were to:

• Retain and promote female and ethnically diverse lawyers and professionals

• Hire diverse lawyers and professionals

• Educate our firm and clients on the benefits of a diverse work team

The first two goals, although not easy to achieve, were easier to approach. For instance, we needed to incorporate this value into our hiring and evaluation processes. The third goal, though, was more of a "mountain": How do we educate our firm and clients on why a diverse trial team would ultimately be better for all involved? I recommended that our firm consult with an outside expert for perspective and education.

How does measuring a team's strengths help with diversity and inclusion?

Cynthia Pladziewicz is a former law firm partner and clinical psychologist who is trained to help business leaders identify their strengths and use them in an effective and efficient way. She recommended that we start by having all the lawyers take a 30-minute, online assessment of their work strengths through a StrengthsFinder survey that the Gallup Organization administers. The assessment measured which 5 of the 34 strengths were highest in each attorney. We collected the results and were able to assess differences and similarities and

make recommendations on which attorneys would work best together on teams with diverse strengths.

We were not measuring diversity by how we looked, but instead were assessing diverse strengths in how each of us naturally thinks, feels, and behaves. The results caused us to look at our colleagues in different ways.

For instance, Pladziewicz grouped the 34 strengths into Gallup's 4 categories of talents: relationship building, strategic thinking, executing, and influence. She taught us that a work team should have a combination of attorneys with strengths in several of these categories. If everyone on the team was a strong strategic thinker but no one had the skill, discipline, or knowledge of how to execute these brilliant ideas, the group would have challenges.

We did not undergo this exercise to assess whether there were correlations between diversity and inclusion and certain strengths or talent groups. However, we did not need to do this. We witnessed how some of our more senior colleagues had an "aha" moment when they realized, for instance, that they needed the different strengths of our female colleagues on their work teams.

How do we apply what we learned?

We would love to report that our firm's staffing on all cases dramatically changed based on Pladziewicz's one insightful exercise. We still have progress to make. We are proud that our small firm has a diversity and inclusion program that is open to everyone and encourages anyone to voice opinions. We are also proud that we are thinking about diversity and inclusion in a broad way that includes diversity of talents.

For small companies that have not yet attracted diverse and inclusive employees, assessing diverse work strengths is one step (or spoon) closer to moving the mountain toward a better workplace. AQ

Tricia DeLeon is a commercial litigation and bankruptcy lawyer at Gruber Hail Johansen Shank LLP in Dallas, Texas.

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS
Hiding in Plain Sight

BY PAM ALFREY HERNANDEZ

Most companies, if they are honest, will admit that they haven't reached the diversity and inclusion goals they have established.

We've all seen the statistics that prove the business case for diversity and inclusion. Many of us thought that it was just a matter of time before more women, people of color, and other underrepresented groups of individuals would make their way up the corporate, academic, medical, and legal ladders.

The question remains: Why hasn't it happened to the extent expected? Increasingly, the research, observations, and experience point to unconscious bias as the answer.

I define "unconscious bias" as stereotypical beliefs about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. No company or organization is truly free of unconscious bias. Once it is acknowledged, managing it within a corporate/organizational structure requires a concentration on diversity and inclusion. The benefits of attacking the problem are multiple, aptly

demonstrated in an organization's ability to recruit new employees and motivate the existing workforce. Understanding the implications of unconscious bias helps managers and senior executives create a corporate culture that is effective and enduring.

Companies are made up of people and organizational cultures that are the collective experience of the people who created the organizations and those who inhabit them presently. One of the tasks of management is to focus on helping individuals, teams, and organizations to become literal "learning machines," always seeking ways to improve. There are a variety of leadership models, assessments, and strategies available. Part of every leader's development is to recognize tendencies they have that inhibit their success. Part of that development is recognizing their own unconscious biases.

For decades, management gurus and human resources consultants have worked to understand how the human side of corporate culture influences business success or failure. In nearly all organizations, we are now beginning to understand that unconscious bias has been hiding in plain sight. Additionally, my experience and research, supported by numerous studies, suggest that corporate cultures that consciously invite and respect diverse workforces are more profitable than those that do not.

Those executives who understand the concept of unconscious bias seek ways to deal with it in their organizations. They decide that they will incorporate into their company culture the means and methods to escape the binds of unconscious bias. And they are the ones who accelerate the success of their organizations, which then attract better candidates and develop stronger leaders.

At the same time, anyone who has ever held a job in a company for more than a few years ultimately reaches a career point where upward progress seems to stop. Although this point sometimes occurs because a person has reached the limit of his or her capabilities, often that is not the case. This leveling off plays out in corporations, in academia, in medicine, and even in the arts world. It often happens because the individual just doesn't seem to fit the accepted idea of what the position requires.

A good example of this comes from the music world, where numerous studies prove that "blind auditions" result in more women being awarded orchestral positions than when judges are face-to-face with candidates. When judged on merit and not on the perception of what a professional musician looks like, women are chosen much more often.

The concept of unconscious bias explains a lot. It was often entirely unrecognized by managers, consultants, and experts. Upon further examination, it was determined to have always been there. However, it lacked either a name or even a semblance of recognition.

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOGNITION OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

All humans have unconscious preferences and biases. It's normal! Yet, many of us are reluctant to admit we harbor some bias. We have been taught that to be biased means that we are bad. Unconscious bias is one of those areas where recognizing the problem is part of the solution. Recognizing that it exists, even though it's not the entire solution, is the key first step to building a better, bias-free organization.

Unconscious bias is not simply a theory. Many years ago, Freud compared our minds to icebergs, where only a small part is visible and the bulk is hidden. Many modern social scientists agree, except they feel Freud didn't go far enough. They say our conscious thought is more like a small snowball on top of that iceberg, and our unconscious thought controls much more of our reactions than previously believed. Social scientists such as Malcolm Gladwell in *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* (Little, Brown, and Company, 2005) and Daniel Kahneman in *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011) illustrate that the vast majority of our thoughts, reactions, and responses to situations are unconscious. We then try to rationalize these unconscious reactions consciously.

Unconscious bias often exists as an implicit association or attitude about race or gender that operates beyond our control and awareness, informs our perception of a person or social group, and can influence our decision making and behavior toward the target of the bias.

To provide empirical evidence, the National Bureau of Economic Research sent 5,000 resumes, with some having names considered to be "typically white" and others with names considered to be "typically black," to more than 1,300 employers advertising for jobs. Each employer was mailed two "typically white" and two "typically black" resumes. For each group, one applicant was average and one was above average. Applicants with "typically white" names received 50% more callbacks than applicants with "typically black" names. Even more disturbing, average white candidates received more callbacks than highly skilled black candidates.

In another "test," law firms were given a fictitious legal memo with grammatical, factual, and technical errors. Half were from a fictitious black author and half were from a fictitious white author. When the memo was perceived to be by the black author, firm partners found more of the errors and rated the memo as lower in quality than when the author was perceived to be white.

A third example involves professional men and women who were asked to evaluate the competence of executives who voiced their opinions more or less frequently. Male executives who spoke more often than their peers received 10% higher ratings of competence. When female executives spoke more than their peers, both men and women gave

"Many modern social scientists say our conscious thought is more like a small snowball on top of an iceberg, and our unconscious thought controls much more of our reactions than previously believed."

them 14% lower ratings. One conclusion drawn is that gender stereotypes are at play here. Male leaders can be perceived as authoritative and approachable, whereas female leaders are often perceived as one or the other.

And it need not be a complicated test. Studies have shown, for instance, that holding a hot drink makes one interpersonally warmer. Holding a cold drink makes one interpersonally colder. Subtle, but important.

Temperature has also been revealed as a factor in something as seemingly benign as interviews for medical school. In a study conducted at the University of Toronto between 2004 and 2009, the scores of all the interviews were tracked against the weather on the days on which the interviews were conducted. Over the course of that time, 2,926 candidates were interviewed and identified.

While the study found that the demographics of the interviews were unrelated to the results, it revealed this striking result: Those interviewed on rainy days were rated lower than those who were screened on sunny days. The study found that the difference in interview scores was equivalent to the students reducing their MCAT scores

by 10%. Given the intense competition between high-performing applicants, this difference is enough to determine whether or not, or perhaps "weather or not," a student got accepted or even became a doctor at all.

In all of these examples, the participants were probably not consciously biased but honestly thought they were rating candidates/employees equally. But that's the ugly part of unconscious bias—we're not aware we even hold the bias.

WHAT TO DO?

We can begin by acknowledging that we all have bias, and then work to become aware of our own individual and corporate biases. It's in the best interest of every organization to level the playing field. One helpful book is *Everyday Bias: Identifying and Navigating Unconscious Judgments in Our Daily Lives* by Howard Ross (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014). The appendix of this book offers excellent suggestions for mitigating the effects of unconscious bias in every area of the employee lifecycle: recruiting, onboarding, assessment, and development.

The first step sounds simple: Recognize that unconscious bias exists within most organizations, including yours. It sounds

simple, but believe me, it is not. Unconscious bias affects all aspects of our working lives. The task of managers is to understand the concept and to employ techniques to manage it. For the success of your company, you need to understand how unconscious bias affects literally all of your professional activities and how to mitigate its damaging effects. It is not enough for the human resources department to address the problem. In my experience, the companies that attack the problem straight on are the ones most able to deal with it.

Unconscious bias exists in every level of business. It affects hiring, evaluation, promotion, dismissal, organizational changes, and customer and supplier relationships.

For senior managers, the task is to ensure your staff understands that unconscious preferences and biases are normal and that there are techniques to help manage individual and organizational biases.
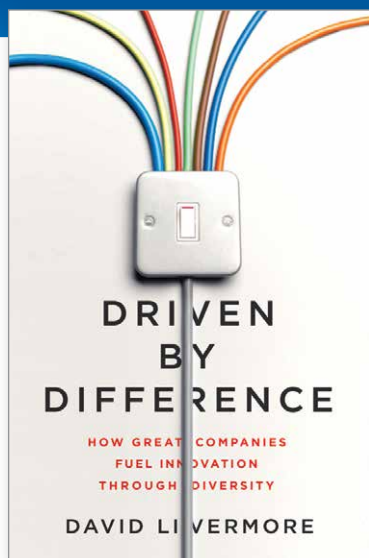
The goals of any program designed to create an environment that mitigates unconscious bias as much as humanly possible involve developing a deeper understanding of the filters we use to view, interpret, and judge ourselves and others. At the same time, you will begin to understand the personal and organizational values and norms of your organization, where those values came from, and how they impact the quality and effectiveness of your business and talent management decisions.

I tell my clients that by recognizing and dealing with the implications of unconscious bias, they will put stronger employees in every role. Employees will become more engaged. When reviews of your workplace are made on sites such as Glassdoor, your employees' "word of mouth" will enhance your company's reputation, which in turn impacts everything from sales to employee productivity. And finally, the fresh breath of perspective encourages invigorating new approaches and promotes a healthier and more productive work environment.

Taken together, the observations and data produce conclusions that are inescapable. Unconscious bias exists, and the longer an organization goes without addressing it, the more difficult it is to incorporate the processes and training needed to mitigate it. For those who run organizations and companies, unconscious bias is a problem with a solution. It's not necessarily an easy one, but one where recognition, training, education, and professional development can be provided at every level. AQ

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Wendy Sachs

WOMEN, Get Ready to Pivot

BY CHRISTIANE TRUELOVE

Wendy Sachs, the author of *Fearless and Free: How Smart Women Pivot and Relaunch Their Careers* (AMACOM, 2017), spoke with *AMA Quarterly* about how women can get themselves into new careers, become better negotiators for themselves, and cultivate more confidence and overcome "impostor syndrome," how the freelance economy has been both a boon and a hindrance to women, and how they can get themselves back into a corporate career.

What was the inspiration for writing this book?

WS: I was fired from my job, I was let go. I lost my job and I needed a new one. And I was interviewing all around New York City, at these bright and shiny Starbucks, for companies that I thought I wanted to go to. I was too qualified, and definitely older than everyone I was meeting with. And I couldn't get a job. I was trying to figure out what I was doing that was holding me back. Was it that I wasn't selling my story properly? Was it that I wasn't presenting the narrative in the right way? Was it that I just wasn't connecting with all the Millennials who were interviewing me? What was it that was holding me back?

It was at that moment that I sort of turned to Silicon Valley, which is sort of our North Star for the moment [in business], and wondered what they were doing there. Was there a way that women could own some of those successful lessons coming out of the startup world and apply [them] to themselves and their careers?

So that really started me on this journey of how do we pivot? Pivot, of course, is the term that is very much adopted in Silicon Valley, pivoting when businesses aren't working. It's all about the pivot and being agile and being able to stay relevant. And so all of these ideas, what if we applied them to ourselves? How do we stay agile and relevant? How do we pivot? How do we create serendipity, and how do we really leverage the power of networking? How do we do all of these ideas that are very much part of the ethos of Silicon Valley?

As you were doing your research, what was it that you found? What was common among the women you talked with, the ones who were trying to remake their careers and the ones who were successful doing it?

WS: I feel that it all comes down to confidence and the lack of it. Everything really circles back to confidence. So many women get stuck because they fear taking action. They're afraid to get it wrong, they're afraid to fail, they're afraid to be judged, they're afraid to humiliate themselves by trying something new. They're afraid of that whole impostor syndrome, saying that they are going to do something else and feeling, "Well, I'm really not all that. How can I create my own business when I don't even have an MBA?" Or, "How can I start a jewelry company when I really don't know all that much about retail?" That whole thing of, we aren't experts yet, therefore who am I to go and try something new? So really what I found is that so much of it came down to confidence, and women fearing the taking of risks.

I studied a lot about confidence, about what it is and why some people seem to have it and other people lack confidence. I found some interesting research that showed confidence can be grown, it can be cultivated. It's like a muscle that we can really train. And that the quickest way to become more confident is to take risks.

For a lot of women, there seems to be that paralysis that they can't do that job or do that thing. How do you bust beyond it? Where do "fake it until you make it" and self-delusion intersect? Or shouldn't you look at it that way at all?

WS: I would disagree with all of that. We can try something new. The Internet has democratized almost every industry for us. So everything we need to learn, I truly believe we can Google it, we can watch YouTube videos. Outside of becoming a brain surgeon or an astronaut, there are so many things—industries, jobs, careers you want to move into—you can learn so much about these things online. You can read and become an expert in social media, because no one's really an expert in social media. You can read the tricks and the hacks, and what you need to know and what these sites are all about, and how to optimize your page and SEO.

All these things that are really unfamiliar to you, you can really learn and read about. You can also take classes online. There is so much information out there. It's not the old-school, traditional "I need to get an MBA" or "I need to go back to a college environment and a graduate school program"—unless it's very specific industries. You want to become a lawyer, you need to go to law school for that.

But for so many other types of jobs or industries where traditionally there have been a lot of women—I'm not going to call them female industries, but industries where there have been disproportionately large numbers of women, such as in media, in publishing, in advertising, and in marketing—these industries have really blown up because of digital in the past five years. And you may feel like a dinosaur, that you haven't been able to keep up or had to take some time off because you were raising kids or taking care of aging parents. You don't understand the whole Snapchat thing. What are you going to do? With all those types of things, you really can learn and get up to speed. And again, it's about taking some action. So that whole "faking it until you become it" is just taking some step forward.

The more you do something, the more you will feel comfortable saying, "Oh yeah, I am a writer. I've been publishing some pieces on Medium" or one of those publishing platforms that are completely democratic, anyone can publish anywhere. Maybe you're not a writer for the *New York Times*, but you've been putting up some blog posts and sharing them. So you know what? You are a writer! You might not be getting paid for your work right now, but you're cultivating your craft. And that's where you can be faking it until you become it. You're figuring it out for yourself, and you develop more of a comfort level because you are developing an expertise.

These things take time. It's not going to be happening overnight. We need to be patient with ourselves.

How do you overcome that feeling of impostor syndrome?

WS: By doing. The more you do something, the more you become a specialist. You don't need to do 10,000 hours, but it is putting the time in. I'm thinking of one friend of mine who left her PhD psychology program to have children. One of them had autism, and she really had to forego her career, put it on hold about 15 years. And so when she went back to figure out how she could get accredited, how she could get a certificate to practice to be a licensed therapist—she's not going to be a PhD in psychology at this point unless she actually goes back and finishes that degree—she felt like an impostor. She was a licensed therapist, and she had clients and was seeing people. After the first six months to a year, she finally got over that impostor syndrome because she knew what she was doing and she started feeling good about the work that she was doing, rather than feeling that she was faking it. So you get over the impostor syndrome just by doing it.

What happens when we as women stop saying "sorry" and start being more direct?

WS: I think you take back your power. Our powers diminish by apologizing and using shrinker words, like the "just" and the "actually" and "am I making sense." Those words really diminish our power, and we start hedging because we don't want to be so direct. We want to seem more amicable. But instead, it's really hurting our sense of self. So I think when we stop saying the "I'm sorry," we start owning what we want to be saying, and we can be seen more as leaders and as strong thinkers and women with opinions. Yes, not everyone may like what we're going to say, but we shouldn't have to be apologizing for what we're saying.

What do women need to do to negotiate more effectively, besides stop saying "I'm sorry" all the time?

WS: That's a great question. So many women—and this is not just me saying this, so many studies point to this—we're terrible negotiators. We're just really squeamish when it comes to money. We'll take the first offer, we don't believe in our own value, we underestimate our own value, we're afraid we may not get the job if we ask for more. We're afraid to seem too obnoxious or too direct. We have all of these ideas when it comes down to taking care of ourselves financially and negotiating what we deserve, but generally we sort of underestimate our worth. One of the tricks or tactics I've
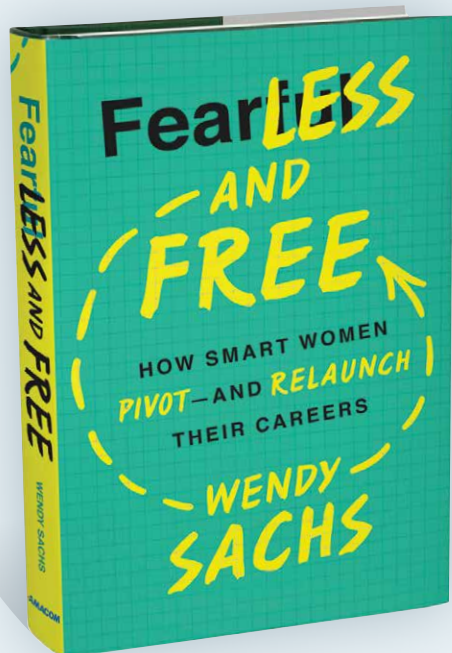
Starting Over, and Embracing the Start-up Model

BY WENDY SACHS

In August 2014, I lost my freelancing job as the Director of Content at Grey, a global, hundred-year-old advertising agency, often referenced in *Mad Men.* It's where Duck Phillips landed after being dumped by Sterling Cooper. Because Grey slashed my short-lived position, a frequent mini-tragedy at ad agencies, I was searching for a new full-time gig. I became obsessed with joining one of the bright, shiny digital media start-ups in New York City, partly out of fear that if I didn't work at a hot tech-based company, I would soon become a dinosaur. I had studied journalism, and traditional media were on life support. As a Gen Xer, I felt my professional currency was quickly fading, and I needed to switch gears so I could sparkle...or at the very least find a job.

I interviewed at a small hybrid PR/social media agency where a dozen under-thirty-somethings sat shoulder-to-shoulder on ergonomic chairs, huddled around an eco-friendly reclaimed oak table. Macs lit up the room as an Irish Setter meandered down the narrow aisles looking to be scratched. In a makeshift meeting room, the bearded Millennial interviewing me studied my resume on his laptop, refusing its paper version on ethical grounds. "We like to save trees around here," he said. I smiled and shoved my offensive wad of resumes and bios back into my bag. Old school, I invariably carry multiple hard copies to interviews.

"I see that you were a press secretary on Capitol Hill," he began.

"Yes!" I exclaimed, excited that the hipster noticed my first jobs out of college. While in my early twenties, I worked for two Democratic

heard that studies have shown, and I think this makes a lot of sense too, is to think you're negotiating for someone else.

Imagine that it's your best friend calling you, saying that they got an offer and they really want to work there. They were offered $120,000, but they know by asking around that other people are making $140,000 or $150,000. But they're afraid to ask for more. As that person's best friend, you'd say, "You need to go in there, and you need to tell them that 'I want to work here, but I can only do it for *x* amount of money; make it $150,000,' and be direct, be strong, be brave." You'd never say to your friend, "You know what, just take it. It sounds like you really want the job and they won't give you the money that you want." You would never, ever say that!

And women are really great for asking for more money when they're managers of an organization. They're really good for getting more money for their team. We're really good at advocating for others, whether it's our children, or our friends, or our colleagues. But we don't do it for ourselves. So you really need to put yourself into that headspace of pretending to do it for a colleague, pretending that you're doing it for your best friend or your sister. You've got to talk

yourself into it. You've got to bring on that mojo.

Just take your emotion out of it, and be very businesslike about it. Because that's how men are. Men would never take the first offer. They'd say, "Hey, I know my friend makes *x* amount of money. I'm going in there and asking for *x* amount of money. That's what I deserve." And that's what they do. So that's where I think women need to mentally get themselves. If it takes talking to your sister, or a best friend, or your colleague or mentor to pump you up before that negotiation, then absolutely do that. If you need to role-play it, do that. But know your talking points. Stand your ground, know what your value is, and start high because you know you're going to go lower. You go in, and you go big.

What is one particular piece of advice that you'd give any woman who wants to make changes in her professional life?

WS: You really need to activate your network. You need to start pushing out of your comfort zone and seeing who you're connected to on LinkedIn. If you're not on LinkedIn, you need to get onto LinkedIn. You need to start letting people know

members of Congress during the Clinton administration, jobs that I always thought were impressive and important.

"Well, the way we operate here is that we have good relationships with the media," the Millennial sniffed. "Relationships are everything. It concerns me that you worked in politics. I mean I wouldn't want you slamming down the phone and pissing people off."

Huh?

Until now, my political experience had opened doors and given me a certain gravitas and credibility. The Hill was the Google of the Gen X generation, paving the way for big-time careers. After Capitol Hill, I worked at *Dateline NBC*, FOX, and CNN. I'd had a smorgasbord of interesting jobs, but this guy was put off by my political background from the mid-1990s. "I'm not a character in *Veep* or *House of Cards*," I said cheerfully. "I started as a 21-year-old working for a freshman congressman from Miami in a super-crowded media market. I was begging reporters to cover us. I wasn't hanging up on anyone."

As I slunk out the door after grabbing a handful of kale chips and a coconut water, I realized that this struck at a bigger issue. I, a solid Gen Xer, who came of age during Walkmans and Diet Coke, was more culturally disconnected from this Millennial than I had imagined. Walking down Fifth Avenue, I realized my personal career pivot was going to be harder than I expected. I needed to hone my story. I needed to repackage my narrative and sell my skillset.

I needed to own my experience but reposition my pitch. I might even need to take a big pay cut and move backward before I could move forward again.

Big trends have a way of touching all of us. From tattoos to Birkenstocks to gay marriage, certain ideas, products, and

political movements have an uncanny ability to reach critical mass and then gain acceptance, folding into the fabric of our collective culture. Today, Silicon Valley and the start-up world are our cultural crushes. It's part mythology with its unicorns, the billion-dollar start-ups like Uber and Airbnb, and part psychology with its change-the-world, disrupt-the-status quo, always innovating ethos. In the past decade, Silicon Valley has become our North Star, influencing everything from news and entertainment to public policy and workplace culture.

The celebrated start-up model of disruption that embraces failing fast and pivoting is not a typically female one. Women tend to be more risk averse. We can overthink our next move and not act until we're 100% ready. We may feel like frauds when we're trying something new. Instead of being disruptive, women tend to be more disciplined. And we're often not pivoting—because we're stuck.

So what if women embraced the start-up model? What if we had the confidence to take risks, even if we knew we might fail first? What if instead of agonizing about which step to take, we leapt forward quickly? What if we could apply lessons of iteration, engineering serendipity, failing fast, networking, and strategic branding to help us redirect our path, enhance ourselves, or transform our careers? No one has spoken to women in these terms yet, and it's not because we aren't wearing the requisite hacker hoodie. It's because we still have a Barbie problem.

Barbie knows something about career pivots. Since she debuted in 1959, she's had 150 different careers. Her eclectic resume ranges from swimsuit supermodel to President of the United States. But her entree into the tech world in 2014 was an epic fail. The Barbie controversy exploded, fittingly, in the blogosphere

that you're looking to make a change. You need to start talking to people and telling them what it is that you want to be doing. And you need to create some visibility for yourself.

What are ways you can create visibility?

WS: Being on LinkedIn, being on social media, but also being on there in a way where it's not that you're posting pictures of the puppy that you just got or your children's accomplishments. But depending on what it is you want to be doing, creating visibility in more professional places. Again, I go to LinkedIn because that is where everyone is, recruiters and your professional network. Maybe you're posting articles that you're reading that are relevant to the industry you're looking to go into. So that's where you want to be visible. But you also want to be physically visible by attending either some conferences or networking events or meetups—something in the industry that you're looking to go into. Find an opportunity to start meeting people face to face and creating some more connections that can help you as you're looking to switch your job or to switch careers. You need to show up. People need to see you.

It seems to be right now that there are a lot of women in freelance. We're building our own businesses and our own networks. It's a lot of freedom, but are we shutting ourselves out of those corporate networks?

WS: About half the population will be freelance by 2020, according to some statistics. I don't think we have a choice. For so many of us, going freelance is not necessarily the first-choice option. Some people went that route because it made more sense for their lives, with children, with family life. The grind of 9-to-6 or 9-to-7 just made it not possible to stay at a company. And then many of us just got pushed out.

And so many industries, they just don't want to pay what they used to pay. That's really the problem, in that economically it doesn't make a lot of sense. The hours are so very long. You're expected to be on 24/7, and yet they don't want to pay the salaries that they used to pay. They can get people much cheaper. Digital has really changed so much.

Freelance can be a great thing because you're essentially creating your own hours and your own work schedule. At the same time, it can be incredibly stressful because you're not

after author and Disney screenwriter Pamela Ribon read the children's book *Barbie: I Can Be a Computer Engineer.* In the book, Skipper asks if she can play the video game that she thinks Barbie is making. Barbie laughs and says that she's only creating the design ideas. "I'll need Steven and Brian's help to turn it into a real game!" Barbie doesn't know how to code, but she does know how to draw cute puppies. Barbie then gets a virus on her computer that infects Skipper's hard drive, causing Skipper to lose her homework and music files. Silly Barbie!

"'Hi, guys,' says Barbie. 'I tried to send you my designs, but I ended up crashing my laptop—and Skipper's, too! I need to get back the lost files and repair both of our laptops.'"

"'It will go faster if Brian and I help,'" offers Steven.

The boy programmers save the day and fix Skipper's hot pink laptop, but Barbie takes credit for their work. Outraged by the insulting story, screenwriter Ribon blogged about Barbie and the story went viral. Barbie haters were out in force and a call to action was posted on a Facebook page for people to rewrite the storyline. Kathleen Tuite, a computer engineer, created the Feminist Barbie Hacker site, seeking female programmers to help crowdsource new text for the book. Tuite got more than 2,000 submissions. Mattel issued an apology and Random House pulled the book from Amazon. This was more than just another bad PR day for Barbie. To many this was further proof that not only does the tech world have a massive girl problem, but also that culturally we still think we need the boys to fix our laptops.

As the tech industry reinvents how we work, where we work, and the kind of work we all do, it's important that women across all industries understand how to use the valuable lessons and themes from Silicon Valley for our own advancement. Whatever our career, we need to hack the code and rewrite our own

storyline. All too often, we watch the guys do it. They iterate, pivot, and progress. Like Barbie's guy friends, they design the game and save the day, while women are left behind, drawing the puppies.

Studies show that women may not reach for the brass ring because, afraid we won't succeed, we won't even try. Inertia is a confidence killer, and with the world today moving at the speed of social, there is no time to get stuck.

In the past dozen years, even as the economy has contracted and people have lost jobs, we've seen an explosion of entirely new industries. Some careers have completely disappeared while others have morphed or evolved. Job titles that didn't exist 10 years ago—like social media manager, data scientist, and IOS developer—are flourishing.

"There is no such thing as a career path now," says Karen Shnek Lippman, a managing director at the former Howard-Sloan-Koller Group (now Koller Search Partners), a recruiting firm in New York. "The only career goal you should be focusing on right now is staying relevant."

On and off for the past 20 years, I've been pivoting so much it feels more like pirouetting. I started in politics, moved into TV news, and toggled back and forth in various strategic communications, content, and editorial jobs. I've worked at start-ups and legacy companies. And among my more random gigs, I appeared as the on-air spokesperson for TripAdvisor. I like to say that I'm not a travel expert, but I played one on TV.

To be clear, my professional pivoting wasn't always intentional. I didn't plan to tweak my career every few years; at first, it just happened. I got fired from jobs, I lost jobs when funding faded and start-ups folded, and I got pregnant twice. And certain careers—specifically those that require last-minute travel—

getting that paycheck every two weeks. You're not getting the benefits or the healthcare or a 401(k). So the whole idea of this gig economy, while it's been idealized, there's been a lot of pushback where people are saying, "You know what, we're sweating it out working six jobs." They're exhausted by this. It's actually really stressful. To be an Uber driver, it seems awesome,—people can make some extra money. But not when you're an Uber driver, and you're a freelance writer, and you're a graphic designer, and you're hustling all over town just to pay your bills.

I think it's a nature of the workforce, all this outsourcing. All of these companies, big companies, ad agencies, they just want to hire people freelance. They don't want to have to pay benefits anymore. You see it all over the place. I think it's actually sort of alarming.

When you've been in that freelance environment, how do you get back into a corporate career, if that's where your goals are?

WS: That's a great question. I think it really comes down

to the interviews, how you're going to talk about yourself, saying, "This is what I've been doing for the past five years. I've been working for myself." And when people say, "Oh, it looks like you worked for yourself so often, and you want to come back, and why here?" There's also a distrust, a little bit of "Ah, I don't get it. You seem like a person who wants to work for themselves."

Honestly, I sort of get lonely working by myself. I miss a collaborative environment. I miss working with other people. And people understand that. It's absolutely true that it can get lonely, and you learn more when you're with other people. You don't even realize what you're not learning by being alone. If you're in companies that are really forward thinking and evolving and fast moving, you're just going to learn so much and stay on top of new knowledge and new ideas. To me, that's a compelling reason to want to get back in, and that's what should be shared when you're sitting in front of a hiring manager—"I want to work here because you guys are growing and it's exciting, and I miss that collaborative experience." AQ

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aren't easily compatible with having small children. But in recent years, as the digital universe has blown up the media landscape, I tried to become more purposely strategic and entrepreneurial in managing my career.

LinkedIn's co-founder Reid Hoffman says that these days everyone needs to think of himself or herself as an entrepreneur, even if you're not running your own business. What's important today, he writes in his book *The Start-Up of You*, is an entrepreneurial mindset. With that comes the ability to adapt and change things up, which is vital to succeeding in today's workforce.

More than ever, employers today expect that people will learn on the job—and learn quickly. They also don't expect that you will stick around for too long. A recent study found that 91% of Millennials will stay in their jobs for less than three years and will have four jobs in their first decade out of college. Job hopping is the new normal, and agility is the must-have skill.

"There are so many hybrid roles now that require someone with multiple skillsets," Shnek Lippman says. "You can't just be an editor anymore. You have to be an expert in audience development. You have to understand how mobile works. It's a wild carpet ride and you have to be ready to work in different function areas than you are used to, and embrace it with an open mind, because it's the only way to survive."

The good news is that in many industries there is no longer a linear path to professional success. Technology has disrupted fields including retail, media, marketing, sales, advertising, and even law, creating millions of new jobs and hacking that professional ladder in the process. The climb is more indirect. But having the courage and confidence to make the move and take risks is critical. And for women, the lack of boldness and

how we perceive and position ourselves is what often holds us back.

Many of us don't fit neatly into the professional bento box. The benign question "So what do you do?" can set off a tsunami of existential angst.

"When I'm not working on a project, I feel like a fraud to say that I have a company," entertainment producer Nikki Kessler says. "So sometimes I wonder, am I retired? Am I a producer? Am I just a mom? What am I?"

As Madeleine Albright has famously said, women's careers are usually not linear; they zigzag. Women need to embrace the zigzag. To move forward we need the inner confidence to make a professional change and the outer confidence to make ourselves heard and noticed. We need to stop apologizing, afraid of offending, and instead be direct in voicing our opinions. We need to understand how to capitalize on our skills and give value to our experience—even the volunteer work. We need to craft a story, own our message, and develop networks to help amplify our voices. We need to create the momentum for change.

We are the generations of women who were raised in a culture to march forward. Now we must learn how to pivot.

The New Demand That Brands Make a Difference

Corporations are at the forefront of changing how we connect.
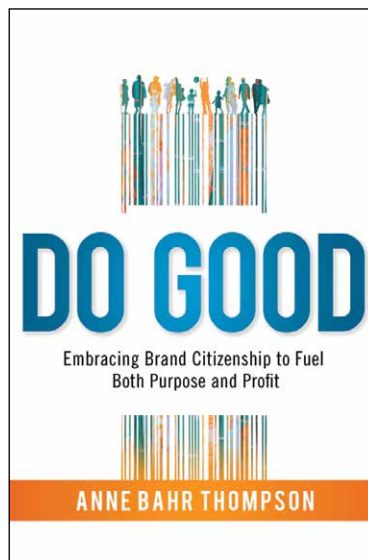
BY ANNE BAHR THOMPSON

In our personal lives, sometimes change comes slowly after we spend weeks, months, or years thinking about how we can be happier, more successful, or more fulfilled. Other times, change is not a choice. It is something that pursues us: We're fired from a job, a natural disaster strikes, our spouse calls it quits, or our child is diagnosed with a potentially terminal disease. Whether by choice or necessity, as we set out to do something differently or adapt to something unexpected, we quickly discover that changing takes time, is full of competing demands, and is far from easy—even when it's a proactive choice.

The process of change is no different for a business, particularly now, because the model that's guided business for the last several decades *must* change. What was an optional path for companies before the millennium has become mandatory. The global economy, technology, climate change, generational shifts, and an evolving cultural landscape are dramatically altering how business is conducted and the ways in which people consume, engage, and even abandon the brands in their lives. Over the past 25 years as a researcher studying consumers' and employees' relationships with brands, I've seen the signs of this coming revolution and watched their numbers increase at an exponential rate. If you've been paying attention, you've probably noticed some of these changes, too.

A new millennium and a changing landscape

It's hard to remember a time before mobile phones, wireless technology, and the ubiquity of social media. However, it really wasn't all that long ago: The first wireless Palm VII and BlackBerry were released in 1999, Facebook launched in 2004, and Twitter went live in 2006. In 1999 and 2000, as head of the consulting businesses at Interbrand, one of the world's largest brand consultancies with its finger on the consumer pulse in 28 countries, I saw firsthand how technology was transforming our lives and relationships with brands. Through comprehensive discussions with people ranging from CEOs and CIOs to 16-year-olds who knew nothing other than living in a digitally connected world, four concepts emerged that captured the ways in which technology was altering our lives: mobility, connectivity, freedom, and humanity.

Today, these concepts may seem like givens, yet the impact they have had and continue to have on us as individuals and as a society is profound. Behavioral psychologists, economists, and marketers alike all look to make sense of how technology is altering our brain patterns and impacting the commercial pact that exists between companies and their customers, employees, and other stakeholders. In other words, between businesses and people.

In 1999, people were seeing the benefits and challenges of this new existence:

• ̃We were gaining true mobility through the opportunity to plug ourselves in from anywhere to do almost anything—work, shop, make travel plans, and more. . . .

• ̃And we were connected to the expansive world of the Internet, as well as to our coworkers, families, and friends through email—anytime, anywhere.

• ̃Because of mobility and connectivity, we cherished the freedom and control to turn our environments on or off with the flip of a switch.

• ̃Yet many people reported they were missing the more personal aspects of communications; they were looking for reassurance that they would maintain human connections as technology interlaced itself more and more into our daily living.

As our lives became more integrated with machines, the nine-to-five workday was quietly disappearing. As people were expected to be connected anywhere at any time through a growing number of devices, an inherent tension was building: Employers were pressuring workers to be in touch constantly. This existed alongside a growing desire by individuals to use their newly acquired tech tools to stay in frequent contact

with colleagues, family, and friends while on the go. Suddenly, we were bringing our communication network with us in our cars, on our travels, and during what used to be our downtime. The ability to turn a device off and escape was an increasingly difficult choice, accompanied by a fear of missing out when doing so. So, did these new mobile communications truly make us free?

At the same time we were becoming wired, we craved the intangible and untethered things that made us human. Our intimate ties to technology had changed our social needs and emotions. With a force equal to that of the technological revolution, which was quickly integrating itself into the

to, represent more than things and services. They signify an ethos, the character of a culture or a group—either one that mirrors our existing values or one that we aspire to. And as more people grow concerned with equality and sustainability, more of us want to feel that our "relationship" with a brand links us to some kind of larger purpose designed to help shape a future that will both sustain the planet and enrich our modern lives.

Since branding became a focus for business in the late 1990s, businesses have looked to nurture consumers who will advocate on behalf of their brands— people who not only buy products or services themselves but who also

business executive, you're aware of the following movement: Each year, more brands that stand for good principles or causes are surfacing. While they are still in the minority among business enter- prises overall, the impact they are having on our collective psyche and expectations for all companies is growing.

Increasingly, politicians, scientists, economists, and the general public are recognizing that our current approach to business needs to change. More and more business leaders are seeking models to guide them through shifting marketplace dynamics. Increasingly, customers and employees are letting companies know that they are no longer willing to accept business as usual, with the attendant human, environmental, and community costs of prioritizing earnings above everything else. Ultimately, people want businesses to do more than just earn a profit. They want the brands they buy to go beyond being only bottom line–driven, to doing good on their behalf, as their customers.

"People love brands but brands don't love people back—this results in so many missed opportunities to connect." — Marc Gobé in *Emotional Branding*

fabric of our daily lives, an equal energy began to spring up in reaction: a quest for emotional connections and deeper human relationships and experiences.

As Marc Gobé so aptly wrote in his book *Emotional Branding,* "People love brands but brands don't love people back—this results in so many missed opportunities to connect." In response, brand consultants and marketers sought to humanize brands and create more meaningful experiences for connecting companies and their customers, for community building, and for ethical behavior. Sustainability and green consciousness—things more traditionally linked with corporate reputation—started creeping into brand image.

Over the past 15 years, the research I've conducted on my own and on behalf of my clients has demonstrated that we are developing a deeper connection with the brands we interact with. Brands, especially the ones we're loyal

recommend them to friends, "like" them online, and positively tweet or post about their experiences using them. Today, the tides are turning, and customers and employees alike are looking for the brands they buy and companies they work for to advocate on their behalf, as well as on behalf of those who are disadvantaged and for the planet.

Companies are no longer just companies. We imbue them with the characteristics of friends and family— and even enemies. So it's no surprise that people now demand businesses and their brands to do more than just make a profit. They expect brands to behave like active citizens and partner with customers, employees, and other stakeholders to co-create a better future.

Our changing attitude toward business

If you're a CEO, marketer, advertiser, entrepreneur, consultant, or other

Doing good redefined

Doing good. For most people this phrase conjures up images of kindness and self- sacrifice: A young Boy Scout helping an old woman to cross the street. A Peace Corps volunteer teaching a Nepalese man to build a smokeless stove. An aid worker in Haiti rescuing a young child from the rubble. Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, CARE, and other nonprofit orga- nizations come readily to mind. When we hear the phrase doing good, few of us think of a business of any kind—whether it's a bank, a fast-food chain, an oil and gas producer, or even a retailer. And if we do, we likely think of "hippy" brands like Tom's of Maine, philanthropic businesses like Newman's Own, social enterprises like TOMS or Warby Parker that apply commercial strategies to maximize social impact alongside profits for exter- nal shareholders, or our favorite brand of certified-organic chocolate bars we buy from stores like Whole Foods Market.

Yet today, many businesses across industries are doing good and adding social value. According to philanthropic

tracking and rating sites, Giving USA and Charity Navigator, U.S. corporations gave $18.45 billion to charities in 2015.

By the World Bank's 2015 statistics, that's more than the GDP of Iceland ($16.59 billion), Jamaica ($14.26 billion), the Bahamas ($8.85 billion), and many other countries. It's interesting to note that Giving USA's figures don't include the ways companies are directly contributing to the general good via, for example, initiatives such as employee-

volunteer programs, using only ethically sourced materials, recycling waste, and reducing water usage in manufacturing production. If the impact of these and similar efforts were added to charitable donations, the number clearly would be much higher.

So why don't we think of business when we hear the phrase doing good? One argument that continues to gain momentum is this: *Even though the number itself is large, corporate giving represents a very small percentage of corporate profits.* Less than 1.2% of the Fortune 500's combined $1.5 trillion in profits is donated to causes and communities around the world.

With an average total compensation of U.S. chief executives of the 350 largest publicly traded corporations estimated at $16.32 million per CEO, or approximately a combined $5.7 billion in 2014, when considered alongside executive compensation, the dollar value that 1.2% represents seems tiny. However, the issue runs even deeper. Our Western cultural narrative associates doing good with idealism

and altruism—two concepts we typically don't associate with corporations.

How technology is rewriting our cultural narrative

As technological advances and the digital era are altering our lives overall, and the way we accomplish daily tasks, communicate, produce, and consume media, they are simultaneously changing our cultural narrative. Think about the impact of cutting and pasting, for example. The

fact that we can digitally cut two seemingly different images and place them side by side has dramatically changed the way we see things fitting together. The act of mixing disparate elements—how we dress, what we read, what we listen to, what we watch—to create our own individual lifestyles has become practically second nature. This is especially true for Millennials—the generation born between 1980 and 1995—and Gen Z—the generation born between 1996 and 2010—who are far more comfortable with mashups of paradoxical things living side by side than their parents, teachers, and older coworkers have ever been.

We don't need to pick between H&M and Chanel, flip-flops and a suit, Beyoncé and Jimi Hendrix, or even *Brokeback Mountain* and *Back to the Future.* We now have permission to comfortably express the inconsistencies in our personalities daily and even moment by moment. This feature of our wired world has conditioned us to believe we have the right to have it all. We no longer have to decide between seemingly opposite states: competition or collaboration;

money or meaning; love or power; sustainability or prosperity.

The digital age has enabled opposites to congruously coexist alongside one another. The transformative result has been to move us beyond a world of *either/or* and into a new universe of *also.* In an interconnected world, where coopetition (collaborative competition), hybrid cars, mixed racial backgrounds, and gay marriage have moved from the margins into the mainstream, the notions of idealism and realism cease to be at odds with each other as well.

A growing number of CEOs today acknowledge that doing good is as essential a criterion for lasting business success as earning a profit. Organizations such as the CECP: The CEO Force for Good, for example, are growing. Founded by Paul Newman in 1999, CECP is a coalition of CEOs united in the belief that societal improvement is a measure of business performance. Membership now includes more than 200 of the world's largest companies as diverse as American Express, Coca-Cola, Estée Lauder, Pfizer, Toyota Motor Corporation, United Parcel Service (UPS), and Xerox. Although many of the companies on CECP's roster were once considered part of the proverbial problem, they are now investing in creating social and financial value.

So why shouldn't a business make a profit while simultaneously doing good? Why shouldn't idealism and realism comfortably sit side by side? Just as compelling, why shouldn't doing good or becoming a sustainable business be seen as an investment into brand loyalty rather than simply a necessary cost of doing business? AQ

> ## "The digital age has enabled opposites to congruously coexist alongside one another…. So why shouldn't a business make a profit while simultaneously doing good?"

Anne Bahr Thompson calls herself a "brand anthropologist." She is a global brand strategist and consultant for the Fortune 500, who has spent more than 20 years studying cultural shifts and the impact they have on people's relationships with brands.

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Create Diverse Leadership Through Talent Development

Through progressive hiring and recruiting practices, many organizations have been able to improve the diversity of their talent. Yet despite these efforts, most organizations still struggle with creating and sustaining inclusive cultures where the talent in key leadership positions is representative of the overall employed workforce. Of the Fortune 500 companies that report detailed demographic information, 73% of the senior executives are white, and only 20% of senior managers are women. Latino and black executives in these same companies are underrepresented by 9 and 13 percentage points, respectively.

Clearly, becoming an equal opportunity employer requires more than proactive recruiting practices or sensitivity training. Organizations need to actively involve their employees to create conditions where they have the possibility of upward mobility. To adequately address this issue, organizations need to make sure their leadership development tracks are flexible enough to allow for things such as an FMLA leave of absence without derailing an employee's upward mobility. In addition, these organizations need to have an aggressive talent development program.

Employees can only be promoted into senior management if they are qualified and if their skills are competitive with those of other candidates vying for a job. Organizations need to actively present development opportunities so that interested employees can acquire the competencies and experience they'll need to advance when opportunities arise. Through comprehensive talent development programs that include formal training, mentorships, job rotations, and flexible work environments, as well as internal councils and support groups, companies can help bridge gaps for high-potential minorities.

For nearly a century, American Management Association has been a leader in helping employees to develop skills so that they are prepared to take on more responsibility. We teach critical skills in core areas such as leadership, communication, relationship building, business acumen, and analytical thinking and decision making. Our approach to experiential learning allows participants to practice these skills with industry leaders.

AMA has recently launched several new diversity and inclusion programs that teach managers to constructively counter microaggressions, uncover implicit bias, and forge a strong team where everyone feels included. Our Women's Leadership Center offers events and resources for women to build essential skills, establish meaningful relationships with peers, and network in a supportive community. These resources, when added to our essential skills courses, prepare high-potential employees for advancement.

We train and develop people in accordance with individual and organizational needs so that when an opportunity arises, companies have a broad and diverse talent pool from which to choose.

Manny Avramidis
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