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Courses for Horses, The In-Side Track, Part II

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ABSTRACT
At the 2013 NBEA conference we introduced and presented our paper "Courses for Horses, Making Change Stick in the Workplace" and we laid out the framework for our systemic cybernetically informed process model to enable organizations to achieve second order change (Alanson, 1971) or "*change that sticks"*. We also addressed issues of language (Koestler, 1979) and currency (Llopis, 2012).

Keywords
Change, digital marketing, branding, globalization, process, systemic, models, systems theory, cybernetic theory, life cycle, life stages, sustainability, technology, social media

1 INTRODUCTION
This paper is a natural extension of our research and here we will develop these themes further and introduce 'new' themes – ones of branding, marketing and globalization. We will highlight ways in which these themes will have a direct impact on market share and the bottom line.

"Companies must balance more carefully their growth goals with the need to pursue sustainability". (Kotler, 2011) A shift in thinking – away from employing traditional marketing tactics to utilizing digital marketing and social media to engage new markets and secure strategic advantage.

"Marketers must create competitive advantage by constantly adapting to and instigating change…Adaptations to market changes are likely to be more successful if actions are guided by knowledge of the forces shaping market behavior and insights that enable the development of sustainable competitive advantage". (Shocker, 1994) We will elaborate how an organization's *adaptability* is critical to its success.

"…brands and trademarks have become strategic assets and a source of competitive advantage". (McKinsey, 2013) On the other hand a worrying influence of the internet and social media favors the *bite-sized* thought over the grand thesis. (Tanenhaus, 2014)

Underdeveloped organizations or ones that have not yet achieved second order change (Sutcliffe, Vitale 2013) should not exclude themselves as we will set out a model of differential training to organize groups of staff (large or small) selected for their talents and abilities to work on special globalization projects – and other training groups who will continue to help develop and implement the organization's life stage plan. We will do this by utilizing our "Courses for Horses, The Inside Track" model and metaphor to illustrate.

INFORMATION AS CURRENCY
Andrew Pettegree in his book, "The Invention of News – How the World Came to Know about Itself" reminds us that it was our need to know that led to the establishment of postal routes, private back channels and eventually newspapers. He further reminds us that there is absolutely nothing new in the multiplatform age we live in - as far back as the Middle Ages, both elitists and commoners gathered information in many forms. (Carr, 2014) The globalization of information in the digital age travels on different

terrain (our model "Courses for Horses, The In-Side Track" elaborates), and has far greater reach – thereby empowering even small organizations to play in the field. (Sutcliffe, Vitale 2013)

A strict chronology is a false hierarchy – yes we agree with Pettegree and that there has to be some respect for the passage of time. This reinforces our view that the language of globalization on digital terrain trades in its own currency and (lateral) linier (cause and effect) thinking is no longer the currency of change making in organizations.

INDIVIDUAL SEARCH FOR MEANING

"Last September, the professional networking site Linked-in added a feature that allowed its members to say whether they wanted to volunteer to serve on the board of a non-profit." Unfortunately Linked-in only posted 1000 listings (seeking volunteers) and received 1 million replies. One employer was quoted as saying "if I get another volunteer, I'm going to go out of business - staff have no time to manage volunteers". Research confirms that many people do find purpose in work primarily through making decisions about how to approach it – unfortunately having a purpose isn't necessarily about what a company makes or sells but rather it's about how the workers approach their day. (Hurst 2014)

How can individual needs be integrated into an organizations needs and goals? Further, how important is it to the health and wellbeing of the organization?

Much research has been done on this subject and indeed some have found that the ways in which individuals viewed work might be more tied to their personality traits than to the work itself. Does this mean that we need to harness personality assessments and other individual needs into recruitment processes and look at how this does or doesn't help organizations optimize their resources?

It's becoming increasingly clear that the influence of social media and particularly networking sites seek a different kind of employee than the traditional organization. While some organizations may place a substantial emphasis on self-fulfillment and an individual's sense of purpose – we have yet to examine how this does or doesn't impact the growth and development of organizations. Trying to integrate both the individual and organizational needs inspires us to continue to struggle with a model that will harness both individual needs while seeking to realize organizational objectives and optimize all resources. (Tanenhaus, 2014)

Digital currencies traded in social media arenas favor the "bite-size thought over the grand thesis" (Tanenhaus, 2014) – or the sharp insight over the "belles-lettristic narrative". Not much wrong here for satisfying individual workers that need to find purpose and meaning in their work. In a recent New York Times article, *A Life Beyond 'Do What You Love'*, Marino notes "The gospel of self-fulfillment severs the link between work and duty". A professor of philosophy Gordon Marino reminds us, when counseling students "I even go into a sermonette about how important [it is] to distinguish between what we think we are supposed to love and what we really love – but is do what you love wisdom or malarkey?" Miya Tokumitsu agrees very strongly with the latter, believing love what you love is elitist and downgrades work that is not done from love. (Marino, 2014)

GLOBALIZATION SKILLS TAKE THE LEAD

The primary drivers to motivation have become a quest for meaning and purpose – are organizations embracing these needs the winners? The internet and social media are merely the tools or the terrain within which individuals and organizations run their race. A new set of standards and recruitment criteria need to be articulated – nuancing the language for each terrain.

Is this art mimicking life or life mimicking art?

In recently published interview with Lazlo Bock, recruiter for all hiring at Google - who hires about 100 new hires per week, he remarked that "prospective bosses today care less about what you know or where you learned it – the Google machine knows everything now – than what value you create with what you know." He asserts that most applicants for work don't put enough thought into ***why*** (our Model references this as second order change) they went to college and what they wanted to get out of it. For him the first and most important thing when making decisions of that kind (go to college) is to be explicit about your choices and willful in your decision making. So far none of this speaks to purpose and self-fulfillment. And he councils further by saying be sure to "broaden your knowledge by acquiring skills that will be valued in today's workplace". An A+ in English is less valuable than a B- in computer science.

According to Bock the first thing that Google looks for is "general cognitive ability – the ability to learn things and solve problems." This will inevitably mean that the employee will have the ability to understand and apply information. "Analytic training gives you a skill set which differentiates you from most people in the labor market". (Friedman, 2014)

The recruitment criteria articulated here and the skill sets perceived as value added are what fuel the players' on the global race course.
And this reinforces our point: the language of success in the digital arena requires trading in new currencies, Courses for Horses.

THE LANGUAGE OF BRANDS AND THE TERRAIN

"Today's companies are adopting a more holistic marketing approach than was used in the past. Rather than just advertising a product, companies work to create and deliver a "brand experience" for the consumer while simultaneously maintaining active relationships with the companies' diverse networks and communities" (McKinsey, 2013).

The (digital) terrain offers a reach far exceeding traditional tracks – born global's sister is omnipresent – even small companies can flex their digital muscle – and launching a new product is to be distinguished from creating a brand experience. Those who do it right "maintain local context that is attuned to domestic culture…while others invest in building brand image and reputation regionally or worldwide".

A holistic or macro lens understands brand value and perception is driven by many factors. Issues of complementarity and no contradiction are amongst a firms key brand indicators – perception and value alignment of an organizations products/services, quality, reputation, conduct, image and social/ environmental responsibility are among the key factors which should be considered.

The McKinsey 2013 World Intellectual Property Report notes "brands and trademarks have become strategic assets and a source of competitive advantage. The value of brands is significant and for the most part is increasing with average values between USD 46 Billion and USD 91 Billion for the top 10 brands."

"While some companies, notably internet companies, are born global, the majority of companies invest in building brand image and reputation regionally or worldwide."

This is in direct contrast to the ways in which branding was managed in the 1990's. In a Business Week article "What's In a Name? Less and Less", the writers note, "Brand managers have been described as "murderers of brand assets" because such an important function typically has been left in the hands of relatively young, inexperienced managers, overloaded with analytical skills and often very short-term focused." (Landler, Schiller, and Therrien, 1991)

Note the irony – what was criticized as a negative - being overloaded with analytical skills is now a sought after asset. To say the landscape has changed is an understatement and much of it

due to the swift development and emergence of the digital race track – and to say approaches to recruiting and the skill sets needed in this new age have shifted is par for the course.

Because internet companies were born global they don't require programs and strategies to move them through 1st and 2nd order change – one size does not fit all. Therefore additional growth strategies and approaches to training will need to be constructed to serve this new species - these digitally driven organizations.

Our process model elaborates - it is not hierarchically limited (or dependent), is systemic in nature and depends on feedback systems to fuel growth and progress. (Sutcliffe, Vitale 2013)

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

Find a need and fill it. "Successful branding campaigns generate demand and willingness to pay, helping to increase profit margins, as well as increase companies' market share and value." (McKinsey 2013)

Consumer behavior is driven by perceived value. Communications technologies have erased the distance between organizations and their customers. The distance gap has been bridged by technology. As a result organizations have an "increasing availability of detailed consumer data [which] harbors the promise of more targeted, and thus more efficient, branding strategies". (McKinsey 2013)

2. CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that globalization is here to stay and that digitally driven companies like Google have already refined their recruitment process, created a new language and redefined the landscape – which will have a tremendous impact on how we brand, market and educate the workforce.

This new language for how to travel on previously non-existent terrain is the new currency of exchange and provides a roadmap that has given birth to new hiring practices and will require new approaches to training initiatives. How a person thinks is more important than how a person feels about themselves and how they connect with their work.

Will it still be possible to find companies with inverted hierarchies that will put individual staff needs ahead of organizational goals? Perhaps the bigger question is, will this new currency of exchange inhibit organizational growth, market share, brand awareness and global market reach? That remains to be seen and the research has yet to be completed - but perhaps is the subject of our next paper.

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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