

RSOG Seminar

The Revolution of The Willing : Creating Corporate Cultures of Innovation, Transparency & Productivity

with

Roger Konopasek

When : 8 October 2013
Where : Razak School of Government
Speakers : Roger Konopasek

About The Seminar

Technology and society are shifting at an unprecedented rate, creating a market in which all established businesses and business models are under constant attack. Small outfits can take on established global players and tilt the balance of power by working in fast, flexible teams using out-of-the-box ideas and cutting edge technology to outmaneuver big, slow, management heavy companies.

The key to the future success of companies will not be their size and history, it will be the ability of a company to create. High velocity teams are creating the new market reality as we know it. Operating in real time, fully aligned, highly focused and results driven these teams can turn on a dime and create new results within weeks where other companies take months.

The seminar discusses some of these key issues: 1) Transform the team from being employees to becoming Co-Creators (they not only should make a difference, they MUST); 2) Why corporate culture has become THE main success factor for companies in the 21st century; 3) Transforming culture from the traditional, risk averse, top down model into a dynamic, mature and fast culture of high cooperation; 4) Break out of the traditional emotional drama and office politics, creating emotional maturity and the ability to deliver; and 5) Thriving in Uncertainty is the new work paradigm. (Think and operate like a Millennial).

Summary

The speaker began the seminar by illustrating the current situation of the world today; the world is going at an unprecedented rate, hence, it is of the utmost importance that we find ways on how to stay relevant in today's changing and moving society. Moreover, he emphasized that we live in a highly transparent world where everyone can find anyone anywhere, as made evident by Snowden's whistle-blower controversy.

Unfortunately, the older generation takes change with hostility. These people still refer to the good old days and how good it used to be. In actuality, the good old days were not as "good" as they claimed because of the lack of technological advancement.

In an organization, people are in agreement of the notion of change in their heads, yet, they stay the same. If an organization continues to adapt same work culture and only operates within the same "boat", it will lose. Buckminster Fuller accurately claimed that, "to build a new system you don't compete with the old one, you build a new one that makes the old one obsolete". Simply put, the organization that is no longer relevant will be sunk, instead of being fixed.

In today's changing world, the speaker claimed that there are three game changers; ecology, technology and Gen Y.

For ecology, the speaker went on to describe the disturbing condition of today's ecology as people continue to over-use the resources of the earth; over-consumption, over-fishing, fracking, erosion, deforestation etc.

What about technology and business model? The speaker claimed that convergence leads to disruption and the way people perform business may change drastically. New business strategies are being invented, such as, Bitcoin, a business that may very well start parallel economy that eliminates the roles of banks, cards, transfer fees or delays.

The speaker raised the issue of social conversation, the art of listening, learning and sharing. If one is not updated with what is happening outside, one will be in trouble because the world, technology and society are changing rapidly. Jobs are also changing. For example, traditional jobs (bankers etc.) are disappearing because of the emergence of new banking system (Bitcoin) which could change the foundation of economy. The world is moving away from the typical organization of a company where the employers point fingers and the employees follow blindly. Instead, technology offers a platform for people to involve in work that they are passionate about, instead of working hard without any results in an organization.

What about GEN Y? This Generation has five freedoms:

- i) Education freedom: Parents enforce children to get an education so that they can grow up to work in traditionally successful fields. That should not be the practice; parents should let children study whatever they enjoy. Information has become generic because data is free, but students are not taught to research, so learning becomes hateful to them. Moreover, students do not comprehend that they learn because they are not taught by the “masters” of the field. Salman Khan and Sebastian Thrun are the catalysts who are changing the problems by making education free and by making students learn from masters.
- ii) Personal marketing freedom: In the age of YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Blogger, Gen Y has the ability to market themselves to become extraordinary, such as, twitchiker, ijustine etc. They do not wait for permission to launch a new business, as opposed to older generation who waits for permission. World has changed completely where Gen Y proves that a person can do whatever he / she dreams of and he / she can make dream come true out of nothing.
- iii) Funding freedom: kickstarter allows a person to plea for funding from strangers, to fund for their projects, such as biofuel for everyone project.
- iv) Production freedom.
- v) Distribution freedom: The ability to sell anywhere anytime to anyone through PayPal, UPS, FedEx etc.

Today, anything can be achieved through willingness as we are moving into the revolution of the willing. When a person is willing to work achieve something, he or she willing to change. Change is here to stay as society re-create “normal”. The new normal includes some new characteristics: catalytic, revolutionary and transformational, which organization must adapt. The new frontier of change and willingness takes into consideration two elements:

- i) Ability to be gentle – bring a hammer to change. Change must be done in a large scale, instead of slowly. This is exemplified by Air Asia competition with MAS, in which Air Asia does not play fair by offering services for less. Unfairness is not important; the ability to do is the most important part in order to change.
- ii) Changing of the culture. Our culture is to be understanding and nurturing, and these allow for incompetence behavior. The hiring process must be looked into so that only the right people are hired for the right job. Nowadays, hiring process include people who send in video recording of template, as opposed to the traditional CV. Do not fall off the talent cliff by hiring the wrong people (who are similar to you, but not the best at the job they are hired to do) because the organization is not aware of the change that is going on right now. Organization must realize that communication is key, so social networks should be

welcomed. Also, organization must take into account that crazy is now the new normal.

The speaker concluded the talk by reminding everyone that it is time to wake up because change is happening. People should move away from the psychological mindset of a victim because they always have a choice to better themselves. The new culture of transparency that is developing in today's world must be adhered. People should value a culture that is opened, fast and committed. In exponential times, if people improve their performances incrementally, people will fall behind exponentially.

Issues Raised :

In this changing time, there is no room for people who believe that they are indispensable. Although they are loyal and hardworking in an organization, they do not produce results. These people are called thieves.

The revolution of the willing should be taken into serious consideration. Without willingness, people are not able to work efficiently because of the lack of interest.

Organization should not be afraid to be crazy, because crazy is the new normal. Normal, traditional ways are no longer valued in the fast-moving business world.

Question and Answers

Q : The government sector has always believed that consultants know best. This leads to spending massive amount of money on hiring consultants and opening tender rather than using the open sources of training that are available online. How do we change this mindset?

(Representative from National Institute of Public Administration [INTAN])

A : The word tender is dangerous. It is only good if you want to build a bridge; you are given to choice to choose different construction companies to build the bridge for you and they better be good at what they do. The problem is most consultants is that do they have a proven track record? We tend to look at the prices of the consultancy, and we choose the cheapest of the 7 consultants, but they are terrible. Why do we trust consultants?

To get people to accept the necessity of change is to actually shock them into realization; if you don't do your own homework, I'm not going to help you. In your organization, you need to ask your officers: Why did I hire you? Do you know that you need to change? If you don't change you will be left behind.

The first thing that you need to do to change a person's perception is to create so much pain about not changing, and they need to be aware that change is inescapable; they should have done their research. The second thing is to have a higher goal, such as putting productivity and efficiency as higher goals and figuring out how to get there. Before, most people will say that the boss must tell them how to achieve the goals; however, now we must say "what would you do if you were me?". This will force people to see what we can do in-house without any interference to achieve the goals.

Two realizations will come; 1) awareness of what they need to do and leaders can guide them through what to do, 2) people already have awareness and they question why can't we not do it right now?

It can be observed that there are majority of students in a particular university are forced by their parents to undertake a study plan to prepare them for traditional fields such as accounting, engineering and law, although these students have little interest in such fields. How do I try to remedy the situation?

(A University Counsellor)

A : First of all, it is important to remember: you either do or you do not; there is no room for trying.

Second, you are highly encourage to prepare your own slides (similar to the ones I presented) that expose other highly respectable and profitable fields to these parents. Shock them by revealing data on unemployed lawyers, engineers etc. Moreover, find data and case studies to explain to them that their children are going into fields that will be extinct soon based on the rise of technology. Most importantly, you must be ready to be controversial.

About The Speaker

Over the past 18 years Roger Konopasek has worked hand in hand with top executives in several of the world's and the country's most recognized companies such as: HP, Philips, Standard Chartered, Coca Cola, Exxon, Nestle, Celcom, MAS and Pfizer, supporting their leaders achieve measurable accelerated rates of changes in their teams.

His hands-on, dynamic style creates fast and deep-reaching paradigm shifts in teams and organizations. These paradigm shifts allow organizations to stay at the cutting edge of development in a rapidly transforming market environment.

Roger focuses on working with leaders who have specific, measurable goals in mind and supports them in achieving them

Contact

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