

The Jump Network Newsletter

October 2011

Welcome to our 2011 Jump Network Newsletter, an update on what we've been up to and some ideas, insights and suggestions for your business as we return from the summer break.

We usually compile our ideas towards year-end, but it feels like the current environment warrants an earlier response this year, so here we go.

Change - that old cliché - is still with us. Consider these discontinuities:

Society and Demographics

- Why do we have fewer answers about the world despite the constant overload of information from news, TV, emails, tweets, blogs and posts?
- Why do people complain of isolation or alienation despite the hours spent on Facebook and Twitter which are supposed to connect us?
- Why do countries and governments seem increasingly at odds with each other despite increased globalisation, communications technology and convergence?

The World Map

- Did anyone predict the pace and extent of the 2011 Arab Spring, from Tunisia to Egypt, Libya, and Syria? What will these new borders and societies look like?
- Does planting flags on the Arctic seabed really extend border claims on oil rights?
- How real is the talk of new African colonisation by China in its rush to secure global resources for fuel growth?

Global Finance

- Will the BRICS really bail out the Eurozone as some are predicting? Will we be paying for cocktails in Drachmas next summer on Mykonos?
- Have you already sold off the family jewels, or are you waiting for gold to hit \$3,000?
- Will we have QE2, QE3 and QE4? A free-float Renminbi? Do we understand the attendant risks of these policies?

Most of these jolts have occurred in just the last 12 months. Like our shortening business cycles, global trending cycles are also accelerating and tightening. Innovation and change dominate our lives, personally and in business. It seems we have Black Swans everywhere.

What are the implications for business?

In our view, the capabilities you need today are less about technical, product or operational expertise (although those remain essential), and more about dealing with increased complexity and uncertainty. We need more systemic thinking and a way to make connections across a wider set of linked issues. Being great at things like complex stakeholder management, business agility, resilience in the face of tradeoffs, and innovation will be the new KPIs for commerce.

And the glue holding all this together is of course leadership. Leadership remains ubiquitous and essential to all organisations, societies and systems - and understanding the linkages and interdependencies inherent in great leadership are today's challenge.

The best organisations already look at leadership from a systemic perspective. So how do they do it?

Here is our suggested Big Three for creating effective leadership in a world of discontinuity:

1. Get Systemic

Do you understand the impact of your actions on the whole organisation? Do you reach beyond your team to identify opportunities at the group or corporate level? Do you see a clear line between your job and where it fits into your company, your industry, your region, and your customers? This kind of connected awareness helps accelerate decision-making, upgrades your stakeholder relationships, and will inspire your people with a greater sense of purpose.

2. Be Courageous

Are you courageous enough to have a point of view, express it, and set the example for others despite uncertainty or challenge? Do you take on tough conversations, expose the unspoken issues, and look for collaborative outcomes when there are tensions or contradictions? Today's complex business tradeoffs require more visible and purposeful leadership. People need anchors and frameworks to guide them through uncertainty, and your instincts will far outweigh your spreadsheets in these circumstances. Staying mentally and creatively alert will inspire others to cope too.

3. Flex Your Style

Complexity and uncertainty can also be pretty draining. Conflicting priorities and multiple stakeholders often make finding the "right" answer impossible. So having strong insights and an open mind are essential to guiding your decisions. Do you flex your style? Can you identify and manage ambiguity? Do you seek input from others and stay open-minded to make faster and more joined up decisions? Agility is all about letting go of our preconceived notions and looking outside for new ways to solve problems. So check your ego and enrol some smart people in your biggest problems.

Leadership is a moving target, as always. We are evolving from "Knowledge Leadership" to "Mindset Leadership" which means joining the dots creatively to get better business results. Brilliant leadership is all about connected and purposeful energy focused on clear goals. There are many paths to success, but these are a few notions that are close to our heart at Jump.

So how does your organisation rate against these criteria? What about you personally?

Finally, consider two stats from this week's Economist and the Boston Research Group:

- 27% of leaders believe their employees are inspired by their firm; only 4% agree
- 42% of leaders say they reward people for values-based performance on not just financial results; only 14% agree.

How inspired, connected, and culturally aligned is your organisation?

We hope these ideas are helpful as you continue to navigate uncertainty. Thank you working with us again this year to build your business into more culturally aligned and inspired organisations, and for participating in the creative journey that we call leadership development!

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The Jump Network

Leadership Strategy, Organisational Effectiveness, Talent Management

2011 Selected Client List

20th Century Fox
Barclays Corporate
Barclays Capital
Jardine Lloyd Thomson
Maitland Group
M&G
Old Mutual
Prudential
Sappi
SC Johnson
Sonatel Orange
Sony Ericsson
Standard Bank
Veolia
Worldcom

Partnerships

The Centre for Creative Leadership (www.ccl.org)
The Learning Partnership (www.thelearningpartnership.com)
Nexus Training (www.nexustraining.com)
Make Yourself (www.makeyourself.co.uk)

Creative Enterprises

Explorenation World Photography Workshops at www.explorenation.net

