

AGE OF TECHNOLOGY TO AGE OF CONSCIOUSNESS: FACILITATING GRACEFUL EVOLUTION

By Reverend Margaret Shepherd, MBA

We are moving from the Age of Technology into the Age of Consciousness. The shift is already leaving tracks. In individual life self awareness, personal empowerment, personal responsibility for ones' experiences, the human potential movement, accredited degree programs in consciousness studies all attest. In organization life there is a shift from the current model of why organizations exist, how and whom they serve, and the beliefs that underlie how they operate. There is an expanding body of knowledge cultivating higher corporate consciousness. Seven key beliefs make up the current reality, seven replacement beliefs are emerging.

Consciousness is defined as ones' mental faculties, being aware of ones' surroundings and self. Technology is defined as the practical application of scientific and mechanical arts. Technology has to do with understanding and manipulating the manifest universe. Consciousness has to do with understanding and harmonizing with the invisible, unmanifest universe. Understanding technology is a left-brain process. Understanding consciousness is a right brain process, or perhaps a mystical process in which the whole being participates.

Ironically, it is technology that leads us out of the technology age into the consciousness age. Technology has freed time and energy to explore the realm of consciousness. The Internet has been our teacher of unity, and our opportunity for authentic communication. It is as if by delving deeper into technology we move *through* it and find a new way of life on the other side.

Movement from one age to another is evidence of the natural process of human evolution. As in any passage from one age to another, it is not that the present age is bad or wrong in any sense, but that a new age has been inspired. Individuals perceive the need for change and are called simultaneously to the new way. Critical mass occurs, and change is in motion. Leadership emerges to articulate the new and to describe it in a way that inspires. Velocity is determined by the nature of the change; either evolution slogs along or a more cataclysmic transformation is called forth. Since the movement from a technologically oriented society to a consciousness oriented one is a shift to a model that follows Nature, I'd place my bets on a gentler, slower pace than we experienced in moving from the industrial to technological age. The role of change agent may be to tune in to the natural velocity rather than to accelerate or temper speed.

THE MODEL:

These seven beliefs of the old way and seven beliefs of the new way is the core of our movement from the Age of Technology to the Age of Consciousness.

<u>Age of Technology</u>	<u>Age of Consciousness</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Competition, limited resources 2. Marketing, selling 3. Motivation 4. Effort, striving 5. Negotiation 6. Separateness 7. Control, planning, organizing, strategizing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion, infinite possibilities 2. Attraction 3. Inspiration, vision 4. Effortlessness, flow 5. Higher solutions serving a higher purpose. 6. Oneness, unity of purpose. 7. Operating in the moment, flexibility, servant leadership and intuition

1. Competition is replaced with Completion and infinite possibilities.

Competition is a driving value deeply entrenched in business culture. We have been taught that competition is good and natural. It is not. There is a higher choice than competition. It will attract success in ways more powerful and humane than competition. It is the choice of love - not love as a sentimental emotion, but love as a positive causative energy, love as an attitude of goodwill that magnetizes resources. By “loving” the product or service - rather than on focusing on besting the competition the natural forces work in your favor. Focusing on *completion* of a goal opens the field of infinite creativity and possibilities, growth and expansion. Focus on *competition* constrains the field to the competitors’ realm, giving them the power, not you. Love is always the most powerful choice. Love your business "enemies"; seek your "competitors" success. View them as *partners* in serving the marketplace with excellence and integrity. Focus on offering your own best. Seek not to be "better than", but seek the best for those who share your goals. These attitudes expand business, free creativity, enhance organizational life, and ensure prosperity.

2. Marketing, selling, is replaced with Attraction.

Changing your beliefs changes your experience. There is a universal metaphysical principle known as the law of attraction. It is based on the reciprocal nature of the universe. Like attracts like. Have you noticed when you chose to have a peaceful day your experiences are of peace not stress? Have you noticed how when you realize it is flu season, start worrying you might “catch” the flu, and adopt an earnest program of preventing it...you find yourself down with the flu? You may have heard of this phenomenon in psychology as the self-fulfilling

prophecy. Where your strongest emotions are (from your strongest beliefs) your energy flows and creates with that energy. You have heard that success breeds success and failure breeds failure. It is true, and the law of attraction is why. When we seek through effort and wanting and fear - we fail. We fail because the fear and the belief of lack is the strongest energy. The universe is neutral. It sends us what we believe. Tell the universe "I believe I can't meet payroll" and it responds, "OK, you can't meet payroll." And you can't meet payroll.

In the old way a system that motivates sales "force" with money or time off to capture an identified market segment. In the new way the marketing is inspired by vision, and understands *that the vision contains the market, the means, and the manifestation*. Similarly, new product or service development is also driven by the corporate vision rather than by an identified market, trusting the vision.

The vision of the marketing function is inspired by a desire to provide *service*. A service focus serves the organization in valuable ways. It is a reminder of the unity of provider and consumer. It cultivates the quality of genuine commitment. It creates the reciprocal response of service. It assures there is always more to give by creating a vacuum that automatically fulfills itself. Expending service causes the universe expend itself to fund the expense.

3. Motivation is replaced with Inspiration and Vision

Motivation is a well-studied attempt to get results. It is based on incentives that generally have little connection to the intrinsic value of the result. Motivation earns mixed reviews. Studies have taught us we will dedicate ourselves to something we believe has value, fulfills us personally, and makes us feel useful. Organizations of higher consciousness craft a vision that inspires members. Individuals are led to see how the corporate vision aligns with their personal vision, and supports their self-actualization. The need for their contribution is clear, thus they feel like a valued thread in the corporate tapestry. They are inspired; they are *moved*, rather than motivated, to perform well.

4. Striving is replaced with Effortless Flow.

Another deeply embedded belief in business culture is the necessity of hard work. One must suffer and strive for success. Yet as we look to nature as our model we find the opposite – the proverbial "lilies of the field" that toil not at all, yet succeed in blooming magnificently. Effortless success. The principle of effortlessness operates when you act from your highest self, and when your actions are in support of authentic goals. These are the times of synchronicity, time "standing still", coincidental opportunities, and simple ease. Conscious intention is a simple and powerful practice that supports effortless success. Consciously setting your intention to *be* (not do or have) specific qualities, will call forth those qualities from within you, where they already reside. If I set my intention tomorrow to *be wisdom* in all my business dealings, my unconscious will focus on the wisdom that is within me and operate

from it throughout the day. Highly conscious organizations will set their intentions for what they chose *to be* and will get “lilies of the field” results.

5. Negotiation is replaced with Higher Solutions serving a shared purpose.

The Age of Consciousness is free of corporate politics and subterranean systems of power and influence. Negotiation implies each side giving up something and gaining *some* of what it wants. The evolutionary path of negotiation has given us “win-win” negotiations, whereby each side “wins”. The way of higher consciousness recognizes no sides, but instead a single team searching for the higher solution where all interests are fully served.

6. Separateness is replaced with Oneness, Unity of Purpose.

The notion of separateness, that individual needs must sometimes be met at the cost of another’s’ needs is outmoded. The Age of Consciousness moves us to an awareness of the unity of all life. This awareness is more than a warm fuzzy spiritual idea. It means that there is a cosmic reciprocity of markets and organizations offering products and services. Each provider and consumer is part of a universal system of order and balance and harmony and mutual benefit that is in support of the whole. Knowing this is profound. It reframes all of corporate life. It leads to effortless success.

7. Control: planning, organizing, strategizing, managing is replaced with Operating in the moment, Flexibility, Servant leadership, and Intuition.

In high consciousness organizations all systems and processes are aligned with natural laws. In nature there is a “vision” – a field yields wheat, a calf is born, a hurricane sweeps clean a coastline – all action serves the vision. Patterns of effort, known intuitively, are followed in an ordered focused manner. Internal anchors keep participants on the path. Consistent results are assured.

How does this natural law model manifest in the Age of Consciousness corporate realm? There is a clear mission and purpose, but it is always vulnerable to being surrendered to the moment, because corporate intuition holds sway over bureaucracy. Flexibility rules. Organization structure, communications, systems, functions, budgets all are subject to the organic nature of business, intuitive guidance, and whatever supports the vision.

The highly conscious companies are beyond values driven, as defined as a set of constructs created by a cognitive process. They are driven by a core energy of qualities of the spirit – wisdom, creativity, intelligence, compassion, generosity, harmony, unity, expansion, prosperity, authenticity, integrity, ease, vitality, flow, attraction, balance, order, patience, courage, fulfillment, peace, trust, risk and creativity.

Some further thoughts:

Our consideration of the seven emerging ways prompts wondering, “How does this consciousness transformation affect the *structure* of organizations?” Systems for communicating information, feedback, creative flow, financial and customer feedback, other measures of organizational performance will remain relevant. How they are structured may require updating. Organizations that have made the shift to more fluid forms will experience less structural impact than those operating under older models. Inventory management, manufacturing, assembly, production, accounting, data management MIS, - probably would operate close to current state.

And what of the *function* of organizations? How is it affected? This is the key area of transformation. The old function of making money for shareholders transforms into expressing creativity and excellence of goods and services. Profit increases, not incidentally, are a by-product of the new consciousness. “Resources (money) follow creativity not want.” Rev. Margaret Shepherd, MBA, “Cash and Consciousness.” 1999 SpiritSong Media.

There is a role for change agents in the move from the Age of Technology to the Age of Consciousness. Change agents can provide powerful support, but they must evolve too. To effectively support our clients’ as movement into the new age, change agents must not only understand the shift; they must change too. They will require skill in articulating the future, skill in interpreting its meaning, and skill in inspiring and facilitating harmonious transition. They may also be required to change their own thinking.

What if we were to re-cast the role of “change agent”, which implies an element of force, into the role of midwife? The midwife role is that of witness. It is a feminine orientation: made of acceptance, patience, inviting, attracting, gestation, nourishment. A midwife holds a VISION of what is to come. A midwife offers guidance and wisdom to make the birth process easier. A midwife is prepared with appropriate skills to provide support should crises occur. (Be reminded that the authentic masculine and feminine principles have nothing do to with gender and are fully present in all beings.)

As for facilitating the transformation, natural laws of human evolution that apply to individuals apply to those collections of humans we know as organizations. There is nothing to *do* regarding training, motivating, incentivizing, and selling the new. These are all from the models we are evolving beyond. The Age of Consciousness will usher itself in; the old ways will find their way to the door. Just as the emerging age of consciousness is more about *being* than doing, so is our role.

Three fundamental requirements of a graceful change process, and of the new paradigm itself are ***vision, self-esteem, and inspiration***. When these are present anything can be accomplished, and change agents have an opportunity to cultivate them. Vision defines the inspiration, self-esteem provides the means, and inspiration provides the commitment. With them we act with courage, clarity, focus and power, and change happens gracefully.

As the new beliefs take root in the organization, they will sustain themselves by their effects. Existing (or perhaps necessary added ones where none exist) systems of feedback and measurement will document results, and the transformation process itself will dictate necessary fine-tuning of systems. The organic nature of the change will guide us if we let it.

As for support systems to keep the new model in place, this may be less a system than an awareness of the causative power of commitment. The change agent who cultivates trust

in the power of vision and high intention, the power of universal laws, the awareness that belief creates reality can facilitate this, and that intuition is trustworthy.

I invite you to create your own early successes. Prepare your own consciousness. Anchor your own courage and commitment. Create your own vision and believe in yourself. Allow the Age of Consciousness to use you as an agent of graceful evolution.
