

My vision: love, meaning and the whole person in business

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My vision is to bring love into business. To recognise that everything is love, that business doesn't need to be the kind of 'dog eat dog', hard-edged, market driven process, which we see developed in its biggest extremes today. That it can return to shareholders while also contributing to the community and giving meaning to people's lives.

My work is about getting people and organisations to have the courage and energy to look at and accept that the whole person has a place in the workplace, as opposed to the historical perspective that subscribes to the adage that the person who turns up for work is part of a machine as a human resource. It's about having the recognition that the whole person has a whole life and that we don't have to turn off parts of our lives and ourselves as we walk in the door. Once we can get people to get that, then they're up for doing the transformational work. This shift in root perspective is key to the work that I do.

They can then support their teams and businesses to go through processes that assist people to make the necessary choices that recognise that firstly they are fractured, **and** that there is choice to reintegrate the mind, body and spirit - that all three do matter to all of us. The key is to have people get that while we are taking them on a personal journey of transformation, we are also able to measure and track that it's good for business. It does have to have a positive impact on business performance and not just be a touchy, feely, nice thing to do. We can prove this impact now on a wide range of measures. It makes intuitive sense that if people are their whole selves and are authentic with each other that the positive relationships that result will produce in an up lift in productivity. We can offer that as the strange attractor to others to follow suit.

The strange attractor

You know that restaurant scene in 'When Harry Met Sally', where the woman says I want some of what she's having. When someone sees that someone else is having something good that they don't have, it's becomes the strange attractor. This is one of the ways to influence global culture shifts. We demonstrate that it can and does work and then others begin to want some of that. Once in the door, we work with people and organisations in a transformational way and the productivity, creativity and engagement becomes a fait accompli.

In my travels round the world, working for organisational transformation, I'm now seeing a big shift towards more **people-focused** business. I believe this is due in great part to three things:

1. There's got to be a better way

The baby boom generation are the ones now leading these big companies and the baby boomers were either involved in, or on the fringes of, the 60's when the idea of love, peace and all that stuff came in to the vernacular. They've gone through their 'making hay while the sun shines' days and they're in their mid 50's and 60's now reflecting back, as I do, on what that was all about, thinking 'there's got to be a better way.' Also as we begin to see our own mortality with our parents passing, the questions arise in our minds - 'What

is my legacy? What am I leaving for future generations and how will I be remembered?

2. Young people on the leading edge of change

The younger generations are saying very clearly, "We don't want to be like you. In fact we resent the way you are, the 'me only' generation and we want something different. Yes we'll come and work for you and of course your money is important, but that just gets us in the door. So unless there's the challenge and the contribution that I want to work for, then I'm not going to stay." This is a generalisation, but it does seem that young people are the ones on the leading edge of change. They rattle things from inside, demanding that things be different. I feel this agitation of the field of business is a healthy one.

3. Hundreds of thousands of us

There are hundreds of thousands of us out there, if not millions, working on these big visions. I run across them every day in my travels around the world. They may be people who are doing similar work to my own, in business, the community, schools, government, or they're people who are packing groceries in the supermarket that you strike up a conversation with or a taxi-driver who tells you his life story on the way between home and work. There's a lot of thinking and reflecting going on out there. If you allow yourself the time to check into it, you find it everywhere!

What I've been finding is that if I shift the way I behave with people - connect more openly and honestly - then people are more likely to have these far deeper more meaningful conversations that are transforming the world. It's those conversations that you can have at any moment of the day that truly are a blessing. What I find so interesting is that I'm often more 'out there' when I have those kinds of conversations one on one with people than I am in a corporate setting. I can try things out that I would be more circumspect with in a corporate setting. It's very fascinating to find how people respond when you talk heart to heart with them. And yet organisations are made up of people just like this - people with hearts.

A global network

Being a visionary gives me the opportunity to really play at the edge and I love that. That's part of my contribution, as is connecting people. I'm always looking for opportunities to put people together with each other. I have this vision of having a neural network of people covering the whole globe. The reason that I'm happy and love going to different parts of the world is because it gives me the opportunity to taste that part of the world and where it's at, to see what's ready to be birthed and to meet those who are on the journey, to discover who's available for the work. At the moment, I'm working in Canada, the Middle East, Africa, Brazil and in the US. I'm going with the energy of working globally wherever there's an opening to engage in this new way and to co-create this neural network of like-minded people who share the vision.

Organisational Transformation (the ANZ Bank story)

My time and experience at ANZ has led the way for me to be a spokesperson and catalyst for organisational transformation. I was offered the opportunity to operationalise the transformation of ANZ as a business as the Head of Transformation reporting directly to the CEO, working very closely with him around creating a breakout in the cultural transformation of what was a pretty broken culture.

'Breakout' is action focused towards breaking away from the past, being a different organisation and bringing hearts AND minds to work. What I learned at ANZ, apart from the power of working with energy, is that we can create transformation as a way of being, a way of life, a continual process that is consciously chosen within an organisation to become more of what it's meant to be and for people to become more of their own potential. That's what happened and continues to happen under my successor Siobhan McHale, at ANZ. We were able to integrate it as a way of being into the organisation.

There were a number of contributing factors that helped us to achieve that, as opposed to one thing that created the paradigm shift:

- **We created a whole system buy in.** With organisational transformation, it's got to be more than the traditional meaning of having the CEO and the leadership team on side as platitudes. It's absolutely critical that the whole team is on board for this kind of change. Consequences for non-alignment are key as the role modelling is a key aspect from the leadership - formal and informal. Some of our competitors tried to go down the same path without this kind of commitment and alignment and it didn't work for them.
- **We had to learn to let go of the past and live in the present.** We needed to put in place structures and safe processes for people to forgive and sometimes to confront, to let go of their withholds and to move on into the present. So many people in organisations are actually living in the past whilst trying to live in the present through strategic intent, but they're not really in the present, not in the now.
- **We used story telling with metaphors and real life stories about real people from all levels of the organisation,** who they were, why they believed they were making a difference and why their contribution was important.
- **We learned to break old rituals in order to allow new ones to be birthed.** So things like celebrations and little things like thank yous, things that normally weren't common within the organisation became important. We saw that it was important to 'take the time to smell the roses' so to speak.
- **We celebrated people who discovered that they wanted to do something else besides banking.** Instead of chastising them, we made that cause for celebration, a part of finding themselves. We made that on a spiritual level a part of the contribution, which would then enable others to be attracted to us as the next part of their journey. In practical terms that shifted us from being the least preferred employer in financial services in Australia to being the most preferred over a period of about two and a half years.
- **We began to attract people who were very much of the heart profile,** people who wanted to be involved in something where they could make a difference. Heartfulness and business focused is a very powerful combination that is inspiring to self and others.
- **people.** So moving our people from saying they were ashamed of working for a bank, which we discovered in our initial rounds of diagnostics, to having people say they were proud of what we were doing was a big accomplishment.
- **We created the employees as part of the legacy,** recognising that they were part of that journey, being able to tell their kids and grandkids one day, 'I was there when ANZ decided to change the world of business and banking for the better.' They understood that the bank's vision and their part in it could contribute to their sense of having accomplished something in their lives. Allowing people the space to ask the question as to why they came to work and what was meaningful for them was a key consideration.
- **We worked on people's personal transformation from the inside out,** allowing them to transform their relationship to who they were, which meant business and the bank was transformed along with them. We spoke of the ripple effect and how it all starts with each of us being accountable for creating the future.
- **But we also worked from the outside in by transforming the organisational environment through policies, systems and procedures.** That was the non-sexy part I suppose. We changed the performance management systems, introduced a diversity agenda, a free internal job market, a bureaucracy alert to do away with bureaucracy and transparency around remuneration. We launched new recruitment processes, introduced a balanced scorecard, strategic reviews and all sorts of things that looked at creativity, growth and how to create innovation. Then of course there were things like the community agenda with Volunteering leave (one day's paid leave per year to do community work that a lot of people did in teams), the first ever national literacy survey, financial literacy training run for the community out of the bank branches and match saving schemes for underprivileged people to go towards their children's education.

It was amazing to be a part of all of this and I guess being in the middle of it all, it seemed there was always more to do, more challenge to continually raise the bar. But one morning in 2003 I woke up and knew that I'd done what I'd come to do. I knew that it was time for me to move on. I didn't actually leave until July 2004, but during that time I worked with my team and the CEO to put the transition in

place for my replacement, Siobhan, to take over. As part of the transition, there was a strategic review around 'Breakout' to determine the future focus for the work.

Prior to my leaving, we had started doing work on establishing an internal coaching programme for excellence with the dream that everyone at ANZ would be a coach for everyone else - 360 degree and in the moment. This came to me as a waking dream - one of the ANZ values was to **'Lead and Inspire each other'** and I had awoken that morning realising that through becoming a coaching organisation, this value would be realised. Once that was started, I knew I could leave and within a short period of time I found myself invited to New York to do the organisational consulting work that I now do globally.

Following the dream

For me, being a new visionary is about following the dream and following your heart, believing and knowing that the universe supports you and your visions. New visionaries are people who can go into the void and access what is waiting to be manifested into reality, translating that so that people can actually hear it and work with it. My sense of the power of the new visionaries that I'm seeing these days is that they are not sitting on the top of their hills with their mantras being righteous. They're very practical and out there getting their hands dirty. They're actively doing the work. New visionaries are up for it and as they say in Australia 'they put their balls on the line.' They're courageous and willing to go where no man has gone before, a la Captain Kirk, and then see how it grows. They're not fearful about making it up as they go along - to see what fits. I think that's the most exciting thing about the new visionaries that I'm seeing these days. They're up for it and are very substantive physical entities as well as emotional, mental and spiritual entities. It's about the integration of the whole. They are standing in all of those worlds powerfully and that's what the planet needs.

This wonderful blue marvel

People with a spiritual calling often have a great desire to escape to the other dimensions, whereas I have a very different attitude around that. My sense is that when my time comes to leave this dimensional wheel of incarnation, it will happen at the right time as everything does. But there's much beauty in this world. This is an amazing place where you can eat wonderful food, drink great wine, laugh at jokes, cry at sad movies, look at the beautiful tree outside your window and even marvel at all the very special creatures on this planet. I believe this is a very special time to be alive, to be a loving and nurturing supporter of Mother Earth in all of her glory and my sense is that the new visionaries are in that space. They're very much about the practical... how can we ensure survival of this wonderful blue marvel in its earthly reality and its consciousness.

This is the most exciting time of my life. I've been very blessed and my life experience has given me an understanding of the reason I'm here. I'm a new visionary and I get to bring my visions alive in the world at a very special time. But I'm also really grateful for the opportunity to link around the world with others of like mind and vision, of which there are many. People today are willing to go more deeply and are up for seeing the potentiality and for working in consciousness. We are in a time of exponential growth, a time when more and more people are finding themselves in transformational movement, discovering new levels of themselves and their potential to contribute to this amazing world.

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