

THE COMPELLING JOURNEY™

A PLAYBOOK™ FOR SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE GROWTH

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- ▲ To properly plan for success, it is important to assess the current world
 - ▲ Comprehensive examination should seek contribution from all team members
 - ▲ Understanding Brand and Culture are key factors

*"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the people to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders.
Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea."*

– Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

The Call to Action

In the 1960s the Cold War raged, and the threat of nuclear annihilation rested heavily on everyone's mind. The Soviet Union had launched Sputnik and succeeded in propelling Yuri Gagarin into space on one of their rockets. **By contrast, the American missile program lagged and had difficulty developing rockets that could handle to payload that could deliver a man into outer space.**



At the time, Congress dithered about increasing funding for NASA. Competing priorities threatened to hamper the progress of the space program. It might have been the logical step to lobby Congress for funds based on nuclear and military threats. **Instead, President John F. Kennedy, realizing the importance that other types of space exploration presented, made a speech to Congress in which he stated that, "by the end of the decade, we will send a man to the moon and return him safely to earth."** With that simple, bold pronouncement, President Kennedy transformed the mood in Congress, electrified the American people and threw down a bold challenge to the engineers at NASA and all the companies contracted to work on the program.

The notion of space travel was not only new, but it was also clearly risky. The President of the United States had created an overarching call to action for the government to solve the enormous technical challenges associated with propelling someone into space to reach the moon and to return safely. And not for the purpose of creating war machines, although that was clearly a collateral outcome of the program. Energized by this sense of purpose, NASA and its stakeholders responded. **On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong took his first step on the moon, fulfilling Kennedy's bold challenge when he and his crew returned to earth a few days later.** What underpinned everyone associated with the Apollo program as they strove to achieve this extraordinary objective?

The talented Australian executive coach, Peter Fuda, outlined the qualities that separate mediocre, good and superior organizations. He maintains that mediocre organizations understand and execute against two important things: **They know where they are headed; that is, they have a vision.** They also appreciate what they need to do to get there; they have a grasp of strategy. Good organizations have those two foundational points and an additional one: **They understand how they expect themselves to be on the way to their goals. That is, they emphasize culture, values, and leadership excellence.** Superior organizations, Fuda maintains, incorporate a fourth element: What is the WHY of the organization – What is its reason for existence above and beyond making money? What is the unique contribution that the organization makes? Who would miss it if it were not here? It is this sense of purpose, the entity's "Call to Action" that we seek to define in this step.



On The Compelling Journey, we take the time to assess the current situation and describe the ideal situation so that we can help our clients distill their WHY. If they don't have an overarching Call to Action for their organization, we begin there. If they do, and it is still effective, we move to describing the WHY for the upcoming strategic planning period, between 18 and 36 months.

The Call to Action needs to be the overarching purpose toward which all efforts among the team members can be directed. **Aspirational in nature, it should be an concept that provides everyone in the organization with the ability to connect their personal purpose for working to that quality which is greater and beyond themselves.** This requires a great deal of reflection, and the leadership team must achieve consensus. Without this, the process will be flawed and will not yield effective results.

When the WHY is effectively established, The Compelling Journey is ready to continue, and we can proceed to define what is necessary to fulfill this Call to Action.