

THE COMPELLING JOURNEY™ A PLAYBOOK™ FOR SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE GROWTH

- ▲ Most people seek to be connected to something greater than themselves
- ▲ Leadership must connect team members' individual goals "WIIFM" with company's larger purpose



*"We cannot live only for ourselves. **A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men.**"*

- Herman Melville

*"Integrate purpose into your for-profit business model through a long-term commitment **to a cause that is aligned with your core values and those of your community.**"*

- Simon Mainwaring

The Return: Community and Long-Term Benefits

The leadership team had worked steadily to ensure the continued progress of the organization. They had engaged in exhaustive annual planning sessions. Their work in recent years had borne fruit: the company was poised to grow dramatically in their market. **As the team revised its vision statement, they arrived at a sweeping declaration of what they wanted to attain as a business: "To become relevant to every business in Canada."**

What made this vision interesting was that not everyone used the company's products and services. Nor was it likely that some ever would. Nevertheless, they expected that, as a result of their work, the company would be relevant to all.



While it is important to recognize the long-term benefits such an effort suggests, this type of description of the expected impact naturally suggests the possibility of a great deal of risk and blowback should the company falter. **This kind of long-term focus leaves the leadership of the company vulnerable to the cynics when things do not go as planned.** Nevertheless, the importance of a long-term expectation and the vision of its impact on the community cannot be overstated.

Members of an organization come together to perform work that, done well, benefits the enterprise. **Those workers come with a myriad of personal expectations: provide food and shelter for oneself and possibly one's family; career ambitions; a desire to better oneself and many other reasons.** When an organization is able to create a vivid picture of what the future benefit is for the enterprise and the community, the members are able to connect their "WIIFM", what's in it for me, to the larger benefit beyond standard outcomes as profitability, employee retention, growth and return on investment. When they are able to see that their work contributes to a larger goal, it adds a level of inherent worth, dignity and meaning to their tasks. Thus, the worker working in an assembly line now becomes connected to the car, to helping others become mobile and enhancing a community as they pursue their work. The people doing the accounting are not just making sure that the numbers are accurate, they are contributing to the betterment of the people around them where they live and work.

It's the old story of the three workers digging three trenches: Someone walking along asked each of them in turn what they were doing. **The first replied, "Boss told me to dig a hole here." Further along, the second replied, "Boss said we're putting up a big building." The third, much farther away replied, "My boss said we were building a big library that everyone would be able to use and enjoy."** Which worker dug the better trench?

The last step of the Compelling Journey™ caps the planning effort. Not only does a leadership team need to describe what needs to be accomplished through the Call to Action and its supporting Strategic Pillars, the members of the organization need and deserve to know why they are being asked to respond in order to become fully engaged in the plans that have been created. **Explaining the why completes the circle and sets the stage for higher performance.**

With the Journey complete, our attention will now turn to cascading the information throughout the enterprise and more fully engage the members in responding to the Call to Action and executing what has been planned. At Level Three, we help organizations to create a PlayBook, which we will discuss going forward. It promotes clarity and a straightforward way of approaching their work.

Lots more to come!