

Openings: What are ideas, theories, and models? The only statement that can be made with certainty is that they are *not* what they describe. Even the most inventive thought captures only a partial essence of the simplest experience or object. Still, at the root of all creative acts are ideas from which our actions arise.

Spotlight: Our world is often described dualistically. For business, interactions and transactions are the two basic opposing elements. All that you do through the day is either a transaction (e.g., exchanging a product or service for money) or an interaction (e.g., providing information about a product or service). While the balance between these two elements varies from enterprise to enterprises, each enterprise follows an observable pattern where a series of interactions lead up to a transaction that is followed by more interactions.

Understanding your particular pattern helps you to understand the true nature of your business because it is the combination of interactions and transactions that define your unique product. The proverbial widget that you sell is totally unlike any other widget because of how you interact and transact with your stakeholders. The most mundane commodity can be raised to the level of high art by encapsulating it in a series of interactions and transactions that harness your passion for your enterprise. Excitement, intrigue, and suspense need not be reserved for dime-store novels, they exist within your accounting, purchasing, and sales departments. Only a lack of imagination hides this from us.

Imagine that a business reporter calls upon you today, what is the story that you tell her (if in doubt, refer to September's newsletter)? The truth of your enterprise lies within that story and that story tells of the *way* your enterprise interacts and transacts with its stakeholders. Tell yourself this story until you are captivated by its truth. The unique combination of interactions and transactions that you aspire to moves your enterprise beyond success to significance.

Evaluate the manner in which you interact with your stakeholders and the way you process transactions. Ask yourself: do your interactions inspire stakeholders, do your transactions show that you are easy to do business with, and together, do they express the ideals that you hold near to your heart? If you are happy with your answers, take a deep breath and plunge headlong into the next day. If you are not, evaluate your interactions and transactions to ensure that they are aligned with your intention.

Facts & Figures: The World Bank reports that industrialized countries spend \$350 billion a year on agricultural subsidies, seven times their budgets on aid and roughly equal to the total GNP for all of sub-Saharan Africa. Tariffs on meat, fruit and vegetables often exceed 100 per cent in the developed world. The Bank argues that ending agricultural subsidies is one of the most effective things that rich countries could do to help the poor.

Musings: After almost three decades of relaxing dress codes, the trend towards a wider range of acceptable business attire may be reversing as a number of organisations reinstate dress codes that are more restrictive. This may be nothing more than a natural correction as businesses look to define their unique style and it may also point to a more fundamental shift within the business.

Dress codes are a strong indicator of an enterprises willingness to tolerate difference. The stricter the dress code, the more uniform the activities and the less room there is for individuality. This is a benefit in enterprises such as the military where acting in unison on a clear and narrowly defined objective is common. Today's business environment is anything but clear and narrowly defined. The ability to adapt creatively to a rapidly evolving environment is a fundamental asset today so closely examine any policy that may stifle this within your enterprise.

The challenge of living with differences is worthwhile as it builds resilience and responsiveness.

Lexicon: Having recently lost an hour of evening daylight, you may be asking what exactly is Daylight Saving Time saving. In 1784, Benjamin Franklin proposed the idea of adjusting time for economic reasons and it was not until 1916 that the first implementation of the idea was put in place for the duration of the First World War. With the advent of the Second World War, the clocks changed again until September 30, 1945. Finally, in 1966, Daylight Saving Time in its current form was officially recognised throughout North America.

Just For Fun: For clumsy people incapable of doing-it-themselves, scientists have created the ultimate furniture kit. It talks you through the assembly process making it impossible, supposedly, to assemble it wrongly. The wardrobe has sensors that allow it to talk the customer through the job, transmitting instructions, tips and warnings to a computer screen.

Quotation: Ideas expressed in writing, from advertisements to epitaphs, have varying degrees of permanence. A New York City artist, James de la Vega, works in many mediums including the not so permanent sidewalk chalk. One of his pieces captured the essential truth of any medium through the following caption:

"I just bought real estate in your mind."