

## A WHOLE NEW MIND

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### *Abundance, Asia, and Automation*

- The US spends more on trash bags than ninety other countries spend on everything. In other words, the receptacles of our waste cost more than all of the goods consumed by nearly half of the world's nations.
- The paradox of prosperity is that while living standards have risen steadily decade after decade, personal, family and life satisfaction have not budged. The most striking feature of contemporary culture is the unslaked craving for transcendence.
- Three forces are tilting the scales in favor of right-directed thinking. Abundance has satisfied, and even oversatisfied, the material needs of millions – boosting the significance of beauty and emotion and accelerating individuals' search for meaning.
- Asia is now performing large amounts of routine, white-collar, L-directed work at significantly lower costs, thereby forcing knowledge workers in the advanced world to master abilities that cannot be shipped overseas.
- Automation has begun to affect this generation's white-collar workers in much the same way it did last generation's blue-collar workers, requiring L-directed professionals to develop aptitudes that computers cannot do better, faster, or cheaper.
- As the forces of abundance, Asia, and automation deepen and intensify, the curtain is rising on Act III, the Conceptual Age. The main characters now are the creator and the empathizer, whose distinctive ability is mastery of the R-directed thinking.
- Agriculture Age...Industrial Age...Information Age...Conceptual Age
- A master of fine arts, an MFA, is now one of the hottest credentials in a world where even General Motors is in the art business.
- Research by Goleman and the Hay Group has found that within organizations, the most effective leaders were funny.
- Standardized test that measures comedic aptitude: In Robert Sternberg's test, students are given five blank New Yorker cartoons and must craft humorous captions for each one. They must also write or narrate a story, using as their guide only a title supplied by the test givers. And students are presented with various real-life challenges arriving at a party where they do not know anybody, or trying to convince friends to help move furniture and asked how they would respond. Although still in its experimental stages, the Rainbow Project has been twice as successful as the SAT in predicting how well students perform in college.
- The capacity for compassion, care and uplift are becoming key components of many occupations in the Conceptual Age. The number of jobs in the caring professions (counseling, nursing, and hands-on health assistance) is surging.

### *Six Senses Essential in New Era: Design, Story, Symphony, Empathy, Play, Meaning*

- Design: It is no longer sufficient to create a product, a service, an experience, or a lifestyle that is merely functional. Today it is economically crucial and personally rewarding to create something that is also beautiful, whimsical, or emotionally engaging.
- Story: When our lives are brimming with information and data, it is not enough to marshal an effective argument. Someone somewhere will inevitably track down a counterpoint to rebut your

point. The essence of persuasion, communication, and self-understanding has become the ability also to fashion a compelling narrative.

- **Symphony:** Much of the Industrial and Information Ages required focus and specialization. But as white-collar work gets routed to Asia and reduced to software, there is a new premium on the opposite aptitude: putting the pieces together, or what I call Symphony. What is in greatest demand today is not analysis but synthesis seeing the big picture, crossing boundaries and being able to combine disparate pieces into an arresting new whole.
- **Empathy:** The capacity for logical thought is one of the things that makes us human. But in a world of ubiquitous information and advanced analytic tools, logic alone will not do. What will distinguish those who thrive will be their ability to understand what makes their fellow woman or man tick, to forge relationships, and to care for others.
- **Play:** Ample evidence points to the enormous health and professional benefits of laughter, lightheartedness games, and humor. There is a time to be serious, of course, but too much sobriety can be bad for your career and worse for your general well-being. In the Conceptual Age, in work, and in life, we all need to play.
- **Meaning:** We live in a world of breathtaking material plenty. That has freed hundreds of millions of people from day-to-day struggles and liberated us to pursue more significant desires: Purpose, transcendence, and spiritual fulfillment.

### ***Design***

- **Crapify your Graphic Design**
  - **Contrast:** IF the elements (type, color, size, line thicknesses, space, etc.) are not the same, then make them very different.
  - **Repetition:** Repeating visual elements helps develop the organization and strengthens the unity of your brochure, newsletter, or letterhead.
  - **Alignment:** Nothing should be placed on the page arbitrarily. Every element should have some visual connection with another element on the page
  - **Proximity:** Items relating to each other should be grouped close together.

### ***Story***

- When facts become so widely available and instantly accessible, each one becomes less valuable. What begins to matter more is the ability to place these facts in context and to deliver them with emotional impact.
- Economists McCloskey and Kramer calculate that persuasion (advertising, counseling, consulting) accounts for 25 percent of US gross domestic product
- Myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human manifestation. Joseph Campbell
- **Resource:** *Beyond Bullet Points: Using PowerPoint to Create Presentations that Inform, Motivate and Inspire* by Cliff Atkinson

### ***Symphony***

- Everything you create is a representation of something else; in this sense, everything you create is enriched by metaphor, writes choreographer Twyla Tharp. She encourages people to boost their metaphor quotient, or MQ because in the creative process, MQ is as valuable as IQ.
- Metaphorical imagination is essential in forging empathic connections and communicating experiences that others do not share.

- Self-made millionaires are four times more likely than the rest of the population to be dyslexic. Dyslexics struggle with L-directed thinking and the linear, sequential, alphabetic reasoning at its core. But as with a blind person who develops a more acute sense of hearing, a dyslexic's difficulties in one area lead him to acquire outsized ability in others. Shaywitz: Dyslexics think differently. They are intuitive and excel at problem solving, seeing the big picture and simplifying. They are poor rote reciters, but inspired visionaries.
- Resource: *Beethoven's Anvil: Music in Mind and Culture* by William Benzon.
- Resource: Dialogue: *The Art of Thinking Together* by William Isaacs

### ***Empathy***

- Have each participant write her name on a piece of flipchart paper and then list four categories: my highs, my lows, my frustrations, my rewards. Post all these sheets on the walls. Then ask everyone to walk around the room and write what they think the answers are for their colleagues. Once people write what they think each person reclaims his own sheet. Then everyone takes a turn responding to his colleagues' guesses and explaining what a workday is really like. (Variation: Do same exercise by departments.)
- Resource for combining volunteer work with a vacation. [www.globalvolunteers.org](http://www.globalvolunteers.org); [www.crosscultural](http://www.crosscultural) solutions.org; [www.alternative](http://www.alternative) breaks.org

### ***Play***

- If you are laughing, you cannot think. We achieve that objective in meditation. Happiness is conditional; joyfulness is unconditional.
- Resource: [www.bluelavawireless.com](http://www.bluelavawireless.com) for test of right brain.

### ***Meaning***

- A transition from material want to meaning want is in progress on a historically unprecedented scale involving hundreds of millions of people and may eventually be recognized as the principal cultural development of our age.
- Among the things that contribute to happiness, according to Seligman, are engaging in satisfying work, avoiding negative events and emotions, being married, and having a rich social network. Also important are gratitude, forgiveness, and optimism.
- A calling is the most satisfying form of work because, as gratification, it is done for its own sake rather than for the material benefits it brings. Enjoying the resulting state of flow on the job will soon overtake material reward as the principal reason for working, says Seligman
- A labyrinth is a spiral walking course. When you enter, your goal is follow the path to the center, stop, turn around, and walk back out – all at whatever pace you choose. Mazes are analytic puzzles to be solved; labyrinths are a form of moving meditation.
- Once a year, on your birthday, make a list of the things for which you are grateful – with the number of items equaling the number of years you are turning that day.
- Compile a list of some of the important changes you would like to make in your life and what is keeping you from realizing them. E.g. I would like to spend more time with my family, but I travel a lot for my job. Go back to each item and replace the word “but” with the word “and”. E.g. I would like to spend more time with my family, and I travel a lot for my job. So I need to find ways to bring my family along during some of my travels.
- Choose one common act during your day to serve as a Sabbath pause. Whenever you, say, grasp a doorknob or reach for the telephone simply stop, take three mindful breaths, and then go through the door or answer the phone.