

"I Have a Dream"

Speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free; one hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination; one hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land.

So we've come here today to dramatize an appalling condition. In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check.

When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was the promise that all men would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note in so far as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred check, a check has come back marked "insufficient funds." But, we refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is not time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism--now is the time to make real the promises of democracy; now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice; now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all of God's children. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. This sweltering summer of the Negro's

legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality.

Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquillity in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of the revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plain of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force; and the marvelous new militancy, which has engulfed the Negro community, must not lead us to a distrust of all white people. For many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone. As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights: "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of unspeakable horrors of policy brutality; we can never be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No. No, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until "justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream."

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi. Go back to Alabama. Go back to South Carolina. Go back to Georgia. Go back to Louisiana. Go back to ghettos of our Northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment. I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise and live out the true meaning of its creed, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as brothers and sisters.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day "every valley shall be exalted and every hill and mountain shall be made low. The rough places will be made plains and the crooked places shall be made straight," and "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope. This is the faith with which I return to the South. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we shall be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning, "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring." And if America is to be a great nation; this must become true.

So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire; let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York; let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania; let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado; let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California. But not only that. Let freedom ring from

the Stone Mountain of Georgia; let freedom ring from the Lookout Mountain of Tennessee; let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last. Free at last. Thank God almighty, we are free at last."

Celestial Navigation



Executives who clarify their navigational stars will sustain their strategic leadership, competitive advantage, and profitability.

FOR MANY YEARS, SAILORS RELIED ON the stars to navigate their way across the great oceans. Stars are fantastic navigational aids because they remain from our perspective in steady, predictable places in the heavens. To determine their position, sailors would gaze into the sky at night and "shoot" the visible stars with a sextant. From this information, they could locate themselves on the planet.

This method of navigation is called celestial navigation. Today sailors primarily use electronic navigational systems, but many are trained to navigate by the stars should these satellite and land-based positioning systems fail.

Celestial navigation provides an excellent metaphor for thinking about the role of values and ethical standards. While changes are fast and furious, people's ideal, desired states of existence (their values) and their criteria for determining good from bad, right from wrong (their ethical standards) provide stable navigational aids for steering a proactive, principled, and consistent course. In short, they are the primary factors motivating and guiding our choices, ostensibly leading us towards a "better" life and world.

Values and ethical standards are the stars that remain in the sky as reliable, steady navigational aids no matter how rough the seas and turbulent the winds become. Without these stars, our direction is dictated almost completely by external forces such as the sea state and wind conditions—representing socialization, competition, peer pressure, conflict, or simply unexpected changes.

While technology has given us the ability to navigate on the globe with amazing efficiency, we still need to regularly calibrate these instruments in relation to the stars to ensure that they provide us with accurate information. They also are dependent upon the larger celestial system of which the earth is one small part.

What happens when we don't calibrate our modern systems regularly? We slowly but surely drift off course, and head in a direction unknown to us—all the while believing we are on track. This happens to many executives, particularly in this time of rapid change. Most now rely on some sort of technology to guide them through problem solving, decision making, and the production and distribution of their goods and services. However, our true navigational aids can only be identified, clarified, and understood through an open examination of our values and ethical standards and of the systems we have created in their image. Technology cannot substitute for the effort that is required to develop this awareness and clarity of thought.

Top-down, blue-ribbon committee approaches will not result in the internalization of a selected set of values and ethical standards.

When we become obsessed with our technological systems and avoid the effort to understand our values and ethical ideals, we forget how to make sense of ourselves and our organizations as living, breathing, growing organisms. We forget how to determine what is "good" or "right" for us—what paths we should take, and how we can discover them. These answers came through self-reflection focused on the clarification of our values and ethical standards and how they relate to every choice that we make.

The results of this examination can lead us to an understanding and internalization of timeless principles—like the stars that are the basis for celestial navigation. The most brilliant star identified in this process inevitably will cast light on the sheer magnificence of life itself. Other stars take their place in relation to this one, together illuminating our heavens and showing us the way through the often turbulent seas of our personal and organizational lives.

To steer our way through these seas, we must never lose sight of the values and ethical standards that are the ultimate referents in our celestial navigation system.

How to Clarify Principles

How does an organization engage in the identification and clarification of guiding principles? The following suggestions will help you undertake this task.

- *Know at the outset that this process takes time and effort, regardless of whether it is undertaken in the context of problem solving, decision making, strategic planning, or developing a mission statement.* Because this process forces you to deal with your own and others' values and ethics, a canned, time-saving "program" to identify a core set of values, and to talk draft a values statement will fail to clarify the guiding principles that lie at the heart of a culture. This is not a quick-fix endeavor. It will not eliminate all conflict and tension. It will, however, help you to deal with them more effectively.

- *Have the courage to risk discovering hidden assumptions and standards, make these explicit, and allow them to be topics for open dialogue.* Top-down, blue-ribbon committee approaches will not result in the internalization of a selected set of values and ethical standards. It will, on the other hand, probably result in a round of cynicism that saps employee motivation, focus, and dedication. Executives must be willing to align systems with the values and ethical standards that are to be the guiding principles. They must be willing to lead people "across the Rubicon," for if they fail to "walk their talk" after starting this process, the problems associated with hypocrisy and inconsistency will be far more noticeable and difficult to deal with.

The steps that people take to clarify their values and ethical standards differ. Because much of this work entails personal discovery, attempts to apply one-size-fits-all approaches will stifle progress. A constant balancing act between providing structure, focus, and direction and allowing people to find their own way through uncertainty, confusion, and discovery must be struck by facilitators of this reflective process.

The dialogue and reflection that is the heart of this process should be linked to real experiences and actual results. This will minimize the chance that participants will feel they are engaged in some abstract exercise that has little application to the "real world." By constantly grounding the content of the dialogue to real experiences, problems, decisions, and objectives, more interest in the process will be generated, the chances for shared learning and buy-in will be increased, and the ability to implement the lessons learned will be enhanced. **EE**

Charles Bennett, Ph.D., is Director of Research California Center for Civic Renewal, Santa Barbara, CA (805) 687-2560.

Managing Tools



This is a time for results-oriented managers to take control of the management tools and to use them to deliver superior results.

BLEAGUERED MANAGERS—BATTERED by an unforgiving economy, threatened by restless shareholders, and eager to prove that they can cope in a world of accelerating change—are amassing new management tools at a rapid rate.

But it pays to ask: *Is increased tool usage good or bad for companies? Which tools produce what results under what business conditions? How effective are tools such as total quality management, reengineering, customer satisfaction surveys, shareholder value analysis, and activity-based costing? Are users satisfied or dissatisfied with the results? How can managers choose and use the right tools for each unique business situation?*

Management tools vary significantly in their abilities to increase current financial results and to improve performance along long-term strategic dimensions.

Managers are most satisfied with customer satisfaction surveys, mission statements, and cycle-time reduction, and least satisfied with activity-based costing, core competencies, value chain analysis, five forces analysis, and technology S-curves. But every tool has some extremely satisfied users, suggesting that under the right circumstances each tool has the ability to contribute useful results.

Tool Recommendations

I offer four recommendations for managing the management tools.

1. Put the strategic agenda in the hands of line managers, not tool gurus. Managers are focused on utility, while gurus can afford to play with novelty. Managers and tool gurus don't have perfectly aligned interests. The best managers recognize this fact and proactively take control of the strategic agenda and change-management process.

Tool users can be divided into four distinct segments: *Leaders*, *Faddists*, *Followers*, and *Skeptics*.

- *Leaders* adopt management tools

early. They stay on the cutting edge with the right tools, and believe that strategic planning is important to the success of their business. *Leaders* also place very heavy emphasis on managing cultural changes, and focus on complementary tools that work well together—such as customer satisfaction surveys and customer retention programs. When they find a tool that works, they like to stick with it to create the best financial results.

- *Faddists* also adopt tools, but they are much less sophisticated in using them to effectively advance the change process. *Faddists* give tool usage top priority, and tend to place the latest tool at the top of every management agenda. They give structures and information systems far less attention than *Leaders* do, and they pursue a wider variety of "major efforts." They suffer the worst financial results.



- *Followers* prefer to wait for a tool's track record to emerge before jumping on the bandwagon. Unfortunately, this approach doesn't always lead to timely decisions. *Followers* adopt tools after *Leaders* have already used them to gain competitive advantages, and sometimes after turns in economic or industry cycles have rendered the tools obsolete.

Followers don't stick with the same tools. They spend more time watching what others are doing than figuring out how to improve the performance of what they have. Their financial results are mediocre.

- *Skeptics* don't like management tools or strategic planning. They use some new tools and techniques, but don't put much effort behind them. Surprisingly, the financial results of *Skeptics* are better than those of the *Followers* and *Faddists*.

2. Diagnose which elements of the strategy are most seriously constraining performance. Improved results will only occur when companies build capabilities

that serve customer needs better than the competition. A tool improves results only to the extent that it helps to discover unmet customer opportunities, build distinctive capabilities, exploit competitor vulnerabilities, or better integrate these activities through improved teamwork.

A performance level is set by its weakest strategic component. If a business can't discover unmet customer opportunities, revenues shrink. Without distinctive capabilities, the company will only produce low quality at high cost. Unless competitor vulnerabilities are exploited, the competition will steal customers and profits. And unless all of these elements are pulled together by a collaborative team, individual efforts will be ineffective.

Prioritize the critical performance dimensions and address the elements most seriously constraining success.

3. Address constraints in sequence. When the diagnosis highlights uneven performance levels across the four strategic elements—customer opportunities, distinctive capabilities, competitor vulnerabilities, and integrative skills—addressing the lowest performance category generally creates the best results. The best approach is to focus on strengthening that constraining element, then moving on to the next. If the scores for all strategic elements are uniformly low, companies tend to do best by focusing first on customer opportunities and distinctive capabilities. These components push low performers to master the basics by defining what customers want and driving major improvements in current business processes. When the scores are uniformly high, emphasizing integrative skills and improved teamwork yields the strongest results.

Leaders work hard at increasing teamwork, managing cultural changes, improving employee satisfaction, designing appropriate structures, and improving strategy.

4. Choose the right tools for the job. Every tool carries with it a set of strengths and weaknesses. Success requires that managers understand the full effects and side-effects of each tool, and then creatively combine the right ones in the right way. The secret is not in discovering one magic tool, but in learning which tools to use, how, and when.

Once you take control of the strategic agenda, diagnose the elements constraining success, and address those constraints, you can use the right tools to inspire fresh thinking and renew enthusiasm for the work ahead. **EE**

Darrell K. Rigby, a director of Bain & Company in Boston (617-572-2771), has led several practice areas for the firm, most of them centered on corporate strategy.