

Test the ‘Implications Wheel’

As I think about this month’s BIZ magazine focus of “Going Green”, I have difficulty. The scope of the topic is so much broader than me just talking about how entrepreneurs should get on the “Green” bandwagon. In talking about “Going Green,” I could talk about products that claim to be green by being made with only natural products. I could talk about recycling and elimination of waste. I could talk about utilizing renewable resources. Or I could even talk about urban sprawl and wilderness protection. It all relates to the topic of “Going Green” in some way. I could address trends in marketing of green products or how to save on operating costs by becoming a green business. I could even rant a little about a lot wastefulness that occurs in packaging, promotion and consumption practices.

What I am going to discuss is the depth of implications to turning this world into a “Green” world. Please note, I did not say turning “you” into a green person. I mean this is a world issue and this takes a world prospective.

Several years ago as my organization was doing a strategic planning session, we were introduced to the concept of an Implications Wheel® developed by Joel Barker of the Institute for Strategic Exploration (<http://strategicexploration.com/>). The concept of this is to do “cascade thinking” about the implications that may occur as the result of particular choice or direction. It is important as you look at a choice, to look not at just the immediate level of positive implications, but to also look at negative implications and evaluate multiple tiers.



As a simple example, let’s do an implication analysis on the choice by Procter & Gamble to package their laundry detergent Tide into a 2X concentrated container. Positive implications may include less cost involved in the container and less plastic ending up at a landfill. Negative implications may include less visual

presentation on the store shelves to attract the consumer and difficulty with being competitively priced next to those products that are not concentrated. A second tier of implications may include gaining new customers who are concerned about plastic waste going to landfills and losing store shelving space to other brands. A third tier may include gaining recognition as a leading manufacturer of green products and increased costs for advertising and brand recognition.

Now let’s look at a more complicated scenario. What are the implications of making automobiles that are more “green”? Let’s say that in America 75% of passenger vehicles become electric vehicles, requiring no fossil fuels. What are the implications?

I’ll speculate on a few and I am sure that I won’t mention them all.

Tier 1: Less pollutants released into the atmosphere, less fossil fuels depleted from the earth, less dependency on oil producing countries, complications with

long-distance travel, requirements for recharging, environmental concerns for battery acid leaks during collisions, limitations on size and carrying capacity of vehicles.

Tier 2: Fewer health problems, slowing down of global warming, less annihilation of fragile flora and fauna, less automobile accidents, less gas tax, failure of petroleum related businesses, growth of battery and battery re-charging businesses, higher demand for electrical power, disposal of aged batteries.

Tier 3: Reduction in health care costs, longer life spans, a healthier ecological system, less tax revenue to support highway maintenance, reduced employment for highway construction workers, closing down of the oil fields and a collapse of the current economic structure in Vernal, higher demand for battery raw materials, shortage of electrical capacity within the current grid.

Tier 4: Housing for an aging population, new construction of electricity producing plants including coal plants, windmills, nuclear power

plants, increased employment in Price for coal miners, higher demand for property containing coal including BLM land and wilderness areas, the release of pollutants by coal power plants, new employment for the manufacturing and erecting of windmills, the demand for property to erect windmills, new employment for construction and operation of nuclear power plants, the safety concerns of operating nuclear power plants.

As I said, I am speculating on a few implications, but the gist of this picture is that we live in an economic structure that revolves around a certain model. For changes to take place, the whole model is impacted. As we think of making improvements to this world in certain areas, we also need to address the implications in other areas. What businesses will fail? What businesses will be created? How is tax revenues changed and how does that affect government spending? When spending shifts, how does employment shift? As employment shifts, how does the shift affect education, immigration and

world trade? How do we make this a world initiative including governments, entrepreneurs, scientists, educators, Mom, Pop and the kids?

So, do I have a solution? No, of course not. All I can say to you, as entrepreneurs, is to be a part of the change. Be prepared to shift and strive to lead that shift instead of follow.



For Mom, Pop and the kids, be concerned about your consumption, all of your consumption. Don't jump on one bandwagon and give yourself an A for being environmentally friendly. Look for all the bandwagons, research the facts, evaluate where you can participate and always evaluate the negative impact as well as the positive. Remember to drink your water each day, but don't dispose of a plastic bottle in a landfill.

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