

ABSTRACTS

PEAK: How Great Companies Get Their Mojo from Maslow

Chip Conley

Chip Conley's message and methods provide tangible tools for transformation and success in any business—in any industry—from start-up to Fortune 500. Chip started his own hotel business with virtually no industry experience at the age of 26. Joie de Vivre Hospitality (JDV) was riding high into the first dotcom boom, as Chip had grown his fledgling company—with a mission to “create joy”—from one renovated motel in the worst part of town into 20 unique boutique hotels throughout the SF Bay Area. But the travel industry was turned upside down when the bubble burst, followed by 9/11 and the SARS scare. Given JDV's geographic concentration no American hotelier was more vulnerable than Chip and his once thriving business.

Seeking inspiration and relief, he revisited the work of legendary psychologist Abraham Maslow, a business school staple renowned for his research into the motivations of healthy, happy and successful people. Guided by Maslow's theory—that “peak experiences” lead to self-actualization—Chip applied this principle to his business using the iconic Hierarchy of Needs as a template to focus on three key relationships (employees, customers and investors) and restore JDV's success. Many CEOs were introduced to Maslow in school but Chip was the first to actually take this motivational theory and apply it to real life business practices. JDV grew well beyond survival, more than doubling in size and making his award-winning boutique hotel company the second largest of its kind in the world. In his bestselling book, ***PEAK: How Great Companies Get Their Mojo from Maslow***, Chip shares his prescriptive model that can transform any business into a more successful enterprise.

What does it take to Lead from the Future as it Emerges?

Martin Kalungu-Banda

The massive institutional failure and disruptive changes at the beginning of the 21st century confront leaders across systems with unprecedented challenges of how facilitate desired change. These challenges hold the seeds for profound civilizational renewal while also holding the possibility of massive disruption and breakdown. We cannot attend to these challenges and the opportunities they hold simply by learning, as essential as this is, from the experiences of the past. We need to develop the skills to lead change by sensing and actualizing our highest future possibilities, individually and collectively.

Apple founder Steve Jobs in his famous commencement speech at Stanford University, left us with his credo, three of his core beliefs about what makes good leaders and innovators truly great:

You cannot connect the dots looking forward; you can connect them only by looking backward. The mind can see the pattern only in reflection, in hindsight.

And yet, we all have to make decisions facing forward. So how do we do it? Here is where Steve Jobs' second and third messages come in:

Follow your heart: Do what you love. The only way to do your best work is to do what you love, and to love what you do.

Ask yourself: If I knew I were going to die tomorrow, would I still do the same things today?

Steve Jobs' three core messages articulate the spiritual essence of our current age. That essence can be summarized in three human conditions. The first condition concerns the Open Mind (*connecting the dots*) and deals with the capacity of suspending old habits of knowing in the face of ever-increasing complexity. The second condition concerns the Open Heart (*do what you love, love what you do*) and deals with the capacity to connect to an inner knowing that can guide us when all the exterior navigation devices stop functioning. The third condition concerns the Open Will (*if I knew I would die tomorrow, would I still do the same things today?*) and deals with the human capacity to let go and let come: to let go of everything that isn't essential ("noise") and surrender to that which is.

In his presentation, Martin will talk about three main themes. One, we have to continuously *suspend* our habits of judgment in order to cultivate our Open Mind. Two, we need to *redirect* our attention in order to connect to the "highest future possibilities." And three, we need to learn to connect with the present moment, and *let come* what wants to emerge.

Reflections on Efforts to Change: Individuals and Organizations

Mike Mears

As someone who has had a fairly long management career and continues to write and consult about many of the topics discussed at this Forum, I am delighted to share my two cents at the close of this event. My study of leadership and organizations has taught me a great deal about myself – as well as those topics – and I'll share a bit of my personal journey with you at the start of my talk.

Next, we'll take a quick look at five simple behavioral categories associated with great bosses. These behaviors are straight forward so why don't more of us copy them? The answer lies in our organizations and in ourselves. So, first we'll examine two significant organizational barriers: culture and the surprising blockages hidden in the management chain.

Then we'll look at two challenging personal barriers to changing our behaviors for the better: self awareness and habit. Most of the moment-to-moment behaviors good leaders adopt are transferable to our daily lives. That said, paddling one's canoe against the rather swift current of basic traits is difficult and I'll close by sharing some stories that illustrate this challenge, but also how wonderful it is when we succeed!

Self-Love Is the Newest Bottom-Line Issue for 21st Century Organizations

Betsy Myers

Surveys consistently confirm that 50%-70% of American workers are disengaged in the workplace. Yet, we're still spending billions of dollars on traditional leadership enrichment programs. Are we teaching the right skills? What's missing?

Self-love.

This keynote will explain why the cutting-edge study of self-love must become an integral component of all talent retention and development efforts in organizations today. The reason? Because self-love is critical to boosting organizational productivity and performance.

Loving ourselves is the hardest job we'll ever have in our lifetime. But the art and practice of self-love leads us to the core of who we are. Our core, in turn, leads us to our purpose and passion. And those of us who are fortunate enough to connect with our purpose and passion are happier and more constructive contributors in the workplace. From a leadership perspective, only those leaders who love themselves in an organization can be expected to nurture and grow other team members in their careers. That's why helping executives and employees find their purpose and passion through self-love is so crucial for organizations today. This is the newest bottom-line issue for business.

Awe of Nature: How Culture & History are Shaping our Destiny

John Roulac

What is our relationship to the natural world? And what does this mean in the era of Google, Apple and FB?

For each one of us it might be a bit different. We may enjoy a walk in the park or relax by the river or ocean. Nature is not only healing but is the VERY fabric of life. The air that we breathe or the food that nourishes us are just some of the many "services" nature provides. It is no accident we refer to "Mother Nature." South Americans invoke "Pachamama" as the creative power to sustain life on earth. For tens of thousands of years indigenous cultures have not only revered nature but feared her power. The rise of empires began to shift our relationship to a more extractive one. The great Sahara Forest –now the Sahara Desert- was clear cut to make Roman warships. 7.4 billion people live on planet earth compared to less than 1 billion when our great grandparents grew up. Thinking of the brilliant Bucky Fuller's idea of spaceship earth, what if we are on a spaceship traveling through space (we are)... what if the way we're producing food on the ship is destroying our oxygen supply? What would you do?

Ironically, that's what's happening today. Industrial agriculture is slowly killing our oceans, "Today about 1 percent of the oceans' plankton dies annually from ocean acidification, which has increased by 30 percent in the past hundred years—mostly caused by industrial ag's high carbon pollution, with Exxon and transportation coming in as a distant second. We now know that 20 to 30 percent of all manmade greenhouse gases in the atmosphere come from industrial agriculture."

If an individual feels connected to nature (possibly by spending time in it), they may be more inclined to care about nature, protect the environment and perhaps draw upon the wisdom of nature to address the central issue of our time - climate change.

Drawing on my childhood upbringing on a small remote island, Celtic mythology and my journey to conserve natural resources, I will discuss how we can regenerate the soil and oceans to create a vibrant future for all.

Conscious Capitalism: Business in the Age of Transcendence

Raj Sisodia

We stand at a tipping point in the social and economic history of the world. Capitalism has been extraordinarily successful over the past two centuries at raising human living standards, life expectancy and life satisfaction. But many see it is extracting too steep a price for the prosperity it has enabled. Traditional capitalism elevates profit above all else and treats people and the planet as means to that end. No wonder it has failed to capture the minds of intellectuals, the hearts of citizens and the trust of society.

We need a better way, rooted in a higher level of consciousness about the myriad ways in which business impacts the lives of people. Conscious Capitalism is an emerging paradigm that realigns business to the emerging realities of our world and the shifting hearts and minds of people everywhere. Driven by a higher purpose and built on love and care, conscious businesses deliver extraordinary financial performance while creating multiple kinds of positive value for all stakeholders: financial, intellectual, physical, ecological, social, cultural, emotional and even spiritual. They bring joy, fulfillment and a sense of meaning to all their stakeholders. Their very existence enriches the world.

Promega 2078: A Fourth Space for the Art of Being and Business

Malynn Utzinger & Tim Weitzel

Promega is widely recognized as a thriving Life Sciences company whose growth has been remarkable over 35 years of business. And yet, notably, Promega has always been deliberate in reinvesting a portion of profits into the lives of the human beings who make Promega work—an investment in health and an invitation for employees to explore and pursue what makes them come alive in their work and beyond. In short, Promega's doesn't operate on a mandate for profit alone but rather holds a 100-year vision of a business that co-creates with the community.

Promega's enduring success has been, in a very real sense, a byproduct of people being animated by great science that serves humanity and the planet, by customer service that builds relationship for relationship's sake, and by a physical and emotional environment that inspires individual and collective thriving. From its early days, Promega has demonstrated an attunement to mindsets, practices, and structures which bridge the divides that challenge organizations. This awareness has supported the people and ecosystems of Promega in flourishing even as they produce goods critical to the real economy.

Drs. Timothy Weitzel and Malynn Utzinger have had a front-row view into these ways and means and are tapping into the well of Promega's human resources to call forth and refine the emotional and social intelligence that has been a part of Promega's "unconscious competence"—a competence for building success and wellbeing that seems to emerge naturally. Indeed, Promega is committed to fostering what it calls Fourth Space to allow critical elements to come together to new perspectives to emerge. During this talk, you will experience the power of the Fourth Space concept at Promega and hear how it enlivens the Promega mission through key initiatives and micro-experiments which shine a light on and grow the Emotional and Social Intelligence capacities that flow at Promega from the top down and through grassroots up and out.