

# MUSEUM MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Edited by [Richard Sandell](#) and [Robert R. Janes](#)



LEICESTER READERS IN MUSEUM STUDIES

## Museum Management and Marketing

*Museum Management and Marketing* reflects upon key trends that have emerged in the application of management and marketing method and theory within the museum and highlights innovative new research and thinking. The Reader considers trends and issues in museum management and marketing from diverse critical perspectives, drawing together a selection of high-quality, intellectually robust and stimulating articles on both theoretical and practice-based learning in the field.

The Reader is divided into three main sections. The first, Museums and Change, addresses the implications of the rapidly shifting contexts within which museums now operate and considers the fundamental reorientation of museum roles and purposes that have occurred in response to rapid and turbulent change. The second section highlights developments in museum management, exploring issues including leadership, strategic planning, performance measurement and workforce development which have emerged as especially critical to contemporary management thinking and practice. The final section, Marketing the Museum, offers wide-ranging perspectives on the increasingly important role of marketing and considers its tremendous potential to shape the relationships which museums have with their audiences and other stakeholders.

Bringing together a collection of key writings concerned with the investigation, study and practice of management and marketing in the museum, this volume will be invaluable to students and museum professionals who wish to develop their knowledge of this ever-changing and challenging field.

**Richard Sandell** is Deputy Head of the Department of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. His research interests focus on the evolving social purposes, roles and agency of museums. His recent publications include *Museums, Society, Inequality* (2002) and *Museum, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference* (2006).

**Robert R. Janes** is the former President and CEO of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Canada. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship* and a museum consultant. His recent books include *Museums and the Paradox of Change* (1997) and *Looking Reality in the Eye: Museums and Social Responsibility* (2005).

# **Leicester Readers in Museum Studies**

**Series editor: Professor Simon J. Knell**

## **Museum Management and Marketing**

Richard Sandell and Robert R. Janes

## **Museums in a Material World**

Simon J. Knell

## **Museums and their Communities**

Sheila Watson

# **Museum Management and Marketing**

Edited by

**Richard Sandell and Robert R. Janes**

First published 2007  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada  
by Routledge  
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

© 2007 Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester for editorial  
matter and selection; individual contributions, the contributors

Typeset in 11.5/12.5pt Perpetua by Graphicraft Limited, Hong Kong

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced  
or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means,  
now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording,  
or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission  
in writing from the publishers.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Museum management and marketing / edited by Richard Sandell  
and Robert R. Janes.

p. cm.

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Museums—Management. 2. Museums—Marketing. I. Sandell, Richard,  
1967– II. Janes, Robert R.

AM121.M877 2007

069.068—dc22

2006022741

ISBN10: 0-415-39628-X (hbk)

ISBN10: 0-415-39629-8 (pbk)

ISBN10: 0-203-96419-5 (ebk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-39628-8 (hbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-39629-5 (pbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-96419-4 (ebk)

## **Dedication**

In memory of Michael M. Ames and Stephen E. Weil – thinkers and practitioners who pointed the way.



# Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	x
<i>Series Preface</i>	xii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiv
<i>Preface</i>	xvii
<b>1 Complexity and Creativity in Contemporary Museum Management</b>	<b>1</b>
ROBERT R. JANES AND RICHARD SANDELL	
<b>PART ONE</b>	
<b>MUSEUMS AND CHANGE</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Introduction to Part One</b>	<b>17</b>
RICHARD SANDELL AND ROBERT R. JANES	
<b>2 Leading Change: Why transformation efforts fail</b>	<b>20</b>
JOHN P. KOTTER	
<b>3 From Being <i>about</i> Something to Being <i>for</i> Somebody: The ongoing transformation of the American museum</b>	<b>30</b>
STEPHEN E. WEIL	
<b>4 Museums: Challenges for the 21st century</b>	<b>49</b>
CHRISTINE BURTON AND CAROL SCOTT	

5	<b>Embracing Organizational Change in Museums: A work in progress</b>	67
	ROBERT R. JANES	
6	<b>Museum Staff Perspectives on Organizational Change</b>	82
	GLENBOW MUSEUM STAFF	
	<b>PART TWO</b>	
	<b>MUSEUM MANAGEMENT</b>	99
	<b>Introduction to Part Two</b>	101
	RICHARD SANDELL AND ROBERT R. JANES	
7	<b>The Effective Management of Museums: Cohesive leadership and visitor-focused public programming</b>	104
	DES GRIFFIN AND MORRIS ABRAHAM	
8	<b>The University Art Museum: Defining purpose and mission</b>	142
	PETER F. DRUCKER	
9	<b>Strategic Management for Visitor-oriented museums: A change of focus</b>	148
	EVA M. REUSSNER	
10	<b>Liberty Science Center in the United States: A mission focused on external relevance</b>	163
	EMLYN H. KOSTER AND STEPHEN H. BAUMANN	
11	<b>Measuring Social Value</b>	181
	CAROL SCOTT	
12	<b>Beyond Big and Awesome: Outcome-based evaluation</b>	195
	STEPHEN E. WEIL	
13	<b>The Strategic Significance of Workforce Diversity in Museums</b>	205
	RICHARD SANDELL	
14	<b>Volunteers in the Heritage Sector: A neglected audience?</b>	222
	KIRSTEN HOLMES	
15	<b>Emotional Intelligence, Passion and Museum Leadership</b>	236
	SHERENE SUCHY	

16	<b>Visionary Leadership and Missionary Zeal</b>	253
	STUART W. DAVIES	
17	<b>Interim Directorships in Museums: Their impact on individuals and significance to institutions</b>	272
	ROBERT I. GOLER	
	<b>PART THREE</b>	
	<b>MARKETING THE MUSEUM</b>	289
	<b>Introduction to Part Three</b>	291
	RICHARD SANDELL AND ROBERT R. JANES	
18	<b>The Marketing Approach in Museums</b>	294
	JEAN-MICHEL TOBELEM	
19	<b>Can Museums Be All Things to All People? Missions, goals, and marketing's role</b>	313
	NEIL KOTLER AND PHILIP KOTLER	
20	<b>Strangers, Guests, or Clients? Visitor experiences in museums</b>	331
	ZAHAVA D. DOERING	
21	<b>Museum Marketing: Understanding different types of audiences</b>	345
	RUTH RENTSCHLER	
22	<b>Expanding the Museum Audience through Visitor Research</b>	366
	CAROL M. KOMATSUKA	
23	<b>Revisiting Membership Scheme Typologies in Museums and Galleries</b>	377
	ALIX SLATER	
24	<b>A Delicate Balance: Museums and the marketplace</b>	400
	VICTORIA D. ALEXANDER	
25	<b>The Impact of Free Entry to Museums</b>	406
	ANDY MARTIN	
	<i>Index</i>	416

# List of Contributors

**Morris Abraham** is Senior Lecturer in the School of Management at the University of Technology, Sydney.

**Victoria D. Alexander** is the author of *Museums and Money: The Impact of Funding on Exhibitions, Scholarship and Management* (1997).

**Stephen H. Baumann**, former Vice-President for Education at the Liberty Science Center in New Jersey, is currently Executive Director of the Kidspace Children's Museum in Pasadena.

**Christine Burton** is Director of the Postgraduate Program in Arts Management in the Faculty of Business, School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism, University of Technology, Sydney and has extensive experience of cultural planning both in Australia and the UK.

**Stuart W. Davies**, formerly Director of Strategy and Planning at the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council in the UK, has written extensively on issues of museum management.

**Zahava D. Doering** is Editor of *Curator: The Museum Journal* and Senior Social Science Analyst, Office of Policy and Analysis, at the Smithsonian Institution.

The late **Peter F. Drucker** is widely regarded as one of the founding fathers of the study of management.

**Robert I. Goler** is a Professor in the Arts Management Program at the American University (Washington DC).

**Des Griffin** is former Director and currently Gerard Krefft Memorial Fellow at the Australian Museum, Sydney.

**Kirsten Holmes** is a Lecturer in Tourism at the University of Surrey with extensive experience of researching volunteers in museums.

**Robert R. Janes** is former President and CEO of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Canada. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship* and a museum consultant.

**Carol M. Komatsuka**, is Vice-President of External Affairs at the Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles.

**Emlyn H. Koster** is President and CEO at the Liberty Science Center in New Jersey.

**Neil Kotler**, formerly a Program Specialist at the Smithsonian Institution, is co-author of *Museum Strategy and Marketing: Designing Missions, Building Audiences, Generating Revenue and Resources* (1998).

**Philip Kotler** is one of the world's leading authorities on marketing and co-author of *Museum Strategy and Marketing: Designing Missions, Building Audiences, Generating Revenue and Resources* (1998).

**John P. Kotter** is an internationally renowned writer on organizational change and leadership based at the Harvard Business School.

**Andy Martin** is Head of Leisure Research at MORI (Market and Opinion Research International).

**Ruth Rentschler** is Executive Director of the Centre for Leisure Management Research and Program Director of the Arts and Entertainment Management Program at Deakin University and has published extensively on museum marketing and related topics.

**Eva M. Reussner** is a researcher and writer principally concerned with issues of museum management and especially the uses of audience research.

**Richard Sandell** is Deputy Head of the Department of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester.

**Carol Scott** is Manager of Evaluation and Audience Research at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney and past President of Museums Australia.

**Alix Slater** is Senior Lecturer in Heritage and Museum Management at the University of Greenwich, London.

**Sherene Suchy** is an experienced researcher and practitioner and is the author of *Leading with Passion: Change Management in the 21st-century Museum* (2004).

**Jean-Michel Tobelem** has written extensively on museums, management and marketing.

The late **Stephen E. Weil** was Emeritus Scholar at the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies and an influential thinker and writer whose writings have had a tremendous impact on international thinking and practice in museums.

## Series Preface

*Leicester Readers in Museum Studies* provide students of museums – whether employed in the museum, engaged in a museum studies programme or studying in a cognate area – with a selection of focused readings in core areas of museum thought and practice. Each book has been compiled by a specialist in that field, but all share the Leicester Department's belief that the development and effectiveness of museums relies upon informed and creative practice. The series as a whole reflects the core Leicester curriculum which is now visible in programmes around the world and which grew, forty years ago, from a desire to train working professionals, and students prior to entry into the museum, in the technical aspects of museum practice. In some respects the curriculum taught then looks similar to that which we teach today. The following, for example, was included in the curriculum in 1968: history and development of the museum movement; the purpose of museums; types of museum and their functions; the law as it relates to museums; staff appointments and duties, sources of funding; preparation of estimates; byelaws and regulations; local, regional, etc. bodies; buildings; heating, ventilation and cleaning; lighting; security systems; control of stores and so on. Some of the language and focus here, however, indicates a very different world. A single component of the course, for example, focused on collections and dealt with collection management, conservation and exhibitions. Another component covered 'museum activities' from enquiry services to lectures, films and so on. There was also training in specialist areas, such as local history, and many practical classes which included making plaster casts and models. Many museum workers around the world will recognize these kinds of curriculum topics; they certainly resonate with my early experiences of working in museums.

While the skeleton of that curriculum in some respects remains, there has been a fundamental shift in the flesh we hang upon it. One cannot help but think

that the museum world has grown remarkably sophisticated: practices are now regulated by equal opportunities, child protection, cultural property and wildlife conservation laws; collections are now exposed to material culture analysis, contemporary documentation projects, digital capture and so on; communication is now multimedia, inclusive, evaluated and theorized. The museum has over that time become intellectually fashionable, technologically advanced and developed a new social relevance. *Leicester Readers in Museum Studies* address this change. They deal with practice as it is relevant to the museum today, but they are also about expanding horizons beyond one's own experiences. They reflect a more professionalized world and one that has thought very deeply about this wonderfully interesting and significant institution. Museum studies remains a vocational subject but it is now very different. It is, however, sobering to think that the Leicester course was founded in the year Michel Foucault published *The Order of Things* – a book that greatly influenced the way we think about the museum today. The writing was on the wall even then.

Simon Knell  
Series Editor

2007

# Acknowledgements

The editors are indebted to a number of individuals and organizations for making this book possible. Most importantly, we sincerely thank the following people and organizations for permission to reproduce copyright material. The commitment of these authors to advancing our understanding of museums is a matter of record, and we are grateful for their thoughtful perspectives.

The following were reproduced with kind permission. While every effort has been made to trace copyright holders and obtain permission, this has not been possible in all cases. Any omissions brought to our attention will be remedied in future editions.

Kotter, J.P. (1995) 'Leading change: why transformation efforts fail', *Harvard Business Review*, March–April, 1995: 59–67. Reprinted by permission of *Harvard Business Review*. Excerpt from 'Leading change: why transformation efforts fail' by J.P. Kotter, March–April 1995. Copyright © 1995 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

Weil, S.E. (1999) 'From being *about* something to being *for* somebody: the ongoing transformation of the American Museum' in *Daedalus* 128:3 (summer), pp. 229–258. Copyright © 1999 by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Reproduced by permission of MIT Press Journals.

Burton, C. and Scott, C. (2003) 'Museums: challenges for the 21st century', *International Journal of Arts Management*, vol. 5, no. 2. Reproduced by permission of IJAM-HEC Montreal.

Table 4.1 'Mean weekly hours of free time?' From Bittman, 'The Land of the lost weekend? Trends in free time among the working age Australians, 1974–1992?', *Society and Leisure*, 21, vol. 2 1999 published by the European Centre for Education and Leisure Research. Reproduced with permission.

- Janes, R.R. (1999) 'Embracing organizational change in museums: a work in progress' in K. Moore (ed.) *Management in Museums*, London and New Jersey, Athlone, 7–27. Reprinted by permission of the Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Janes, R.R. (1997) 'Glenbow staff perspectives', in *Museums and the Paradox of Change: A Case Study in Urgent Adaptation*, University of Calgary Press. Rights reverted to the author.
- Griffin, D. and Abraham, M. (2000) 'The effective management of museums: cohesive leadership and visitor-focused public programming', reprinted from *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 335–368. Copyright © 2000 with permission from Elsevier.
- Drucker, P.F. (1977) 'The university art museum: defining purpose and mission', reprinted from *Management Cases*, Drucker, P.F., pp. 28–35. Copyright © 1977 with permission from Elsevier.
- Reussner, E. (2003) 'Strategic management for visitor-oriented museums: a change of focus', in *International Journal of Cultural Policy* (<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10799893.asp>), 9(1): 95–108. Reproduced with permission from Taylor & Francis.
- Koster, E.H. and Baumann, S.H. (2005) 'Liberty Science Center in the United States: a mission focused on external relevance' in R.R. Janes and G.T. Conaty (eds) *Looking Reality in the Eye: Museums and Social Responsibility*. Reproduced with permission from University of Calgary Press.
- Scott, C. (2002) 'Measuring social value' in R. Sandell (ed.) *Museums, Society, Inequality*, London and New York: Routledge, 41–55. Reproduced with permission of Taylor & Francis.
- Table 11.2 'Long term social value of participation in arts projects' from Matarasso, 1997, *Use or Ornament*, Comedia. Reproduced by kind permission of the publisher (<http://www.comedia.org.uk>).
- Weil, S.E. (2003) 'Beyond big and awesome: outcome based evaluation', *Museum News*, vol. 6, no. 3, American Association of Museums. Reproduced with permission.
- Sandell, R. (2000) 'The strategic significance of workforce diversity in museums', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10799893.asp>), vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 213–230. Reproduced with permission from Taylor & Francis.
- Holmes, K. (2003) 'Volunteers in the heritage sector: a neglected audience?', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10799893.asp>), vol. 9, no. 4: 341–355. Reproduced with permission from Taylor & Francis and the author.
- Suchy, S. 'Emotional intelligence, passion and museum leadership', reprinted from *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 18, no. 1: 57–71. Copyright © 1999 with permission from Elsevier.
- Davies, S. (1999) 'Visionary leadership and missionary zeal' in K. Moore (ed.) *Management in Museums*, London and New Jersey: Athlone, 108–132. Reprinted by permission of the Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Goler, R.I. 'Interim directorships in museums: their impact on individuals and significance to institutions', from *Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 19, no. 4: 385–402. Copyright © 2004 with permission from Elsevier.

- Tobelem, J.M. 'The marketing approach in museums', reprinted from *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 16, no. 4: 337–354. Copyright © 1998 with permission from Elsevier.
- Kotler, N. and Kotler, P. 'Can museums be all things to all people?: Mission, goals, and marketing's role', reprinted from *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 18, no. 3: 271–288. Copyright © 2000 with permission from Elsevier.
- Doering, Z. (1999) 'Strangers, guests, or clients? Visitor experiences in museums', *Curator*, 42(2): 74–87. Reproduced with permission of AltaMira Press.
- Rentschler, R. (2004) 'Museum marketing: understanding different types of audiences', reprinted from F. Kerrigan, P. Fraser and M. Ozbilgin (eds) *Arts Marketing*, 139–158. Copyright © 2004 with permission from Elsevier.
- Komatsuka, C. (2005) 'Expanding the museum audience through visitor research' in A. Kikumura-Yano, L. Ryo Hirabayashi and J.A. Hirabayashi (eds) *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaboration*. Copyright © 2005 by University Press of Colorado. Reproduced with permission of University Press of Colorado in the format Other Book via Copyright Clearance Center.
- Slater, A. (2004) 'Revisiting membership scheme typologies in museums and galleries', *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 3: 238–260. Copyright © 2004. Reproduced by permission of John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Alexander, Victoria D. (1999) 'A delicate balance: museums and the market-place', *Museum International*, vol. 51, no. 2: 29–34. Reproduced with permission of Blackwell Publishing, the author and journal.
- Martin, A. (2002) 'The impact of free entry to museums', *Cultural Trends* (<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10799893.asp>), vol. 12, no. 47: 3–12. Reproduced with permission from Taylor & Francis and the author.

The editors also wish to thank Simon Knell of the Department of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester and Matthew Gibbons of Routledge, for organizing and facilitating the development of this reader. Additional thanks to Julene Knox for securing permissions for the reproduction of articles we have included and Christine Cheesman for invaluable administrative support. We are very grateful to Yupin Chung, Matthew Hick and Susannah Penn for the highly useful bibliographic research undertaken at the outset of this project. Bill Barkley, Will Philips, the late Michael Ames, Joy Davis and Jane Kelley read an earlier draft of the introductory article and their comments and insights were invaluable. Priscilla Janes provided essential editorial assistance for which we are grateful. We also thank Kersti Krug for providing the reference on self-organization at the Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver, Canada. We continue to benefit immensely from the thoughts and actions of our museum colleagues and, while too numerous to mention by name here, we wish to thank each of them for shaping our thinking and enriching our experience.

# Preface

The great challenge to our times is to harness research, invention and professional practice to deliberately embraced human values – to provide direction for the directed tragedy of technical progress. Stewardship of a heightened order will be essential. Experts . . . perform both center stage and in the wings. And all of us speak from the chorus. The fateful questions are how the specialists will interact with the citizens, and whether the performance can be imbued with wisdom, courage and vision.

W.W. Lowrance, *Modern Science and Human Values*, p. 209

There is no doubt that management, as a body of knowledge and practice, is increasingly instrumental in 'imbuing the performance with wisdom, courage and vision', irrespective of whose performance it happens to be. Sound management and marketing are especially important to museums as social institutions – a perspective that lies at the heart of this book. When the first Leicester Reader on *Museum Management* was published 12 years ago, it was still common for museum management to be a target of disrespect or even scorn by museum workers, either as inappropriate, or as an activity of lesser importance than scholarship, collecting and exhibiting. Although this view may still have currency among disaffected museum workers, the overall museum world has changed with a vengeance in the intervening years. It is surprising, even for veteran practitioners, to contemplate the meteoric entrenchment of management and marketing in museum affairs. Kevin Moore (1994) anticipated this in the first Leicester Reader on *Museum Management*, and he compiled a selection of essential writings that outlined the development of museum management at that time. We note that much has happened since the publication of this seminal

collection in 1994. Building on the intellectual foundation of the first Management Reader, our purpose is to introduce the current breadth and depth of museum management and marketing thinking, and we have compiled a diverse selection of some of the best of the research and writing on these subjects with this in mind.

Gone are the days when non-profit management can be called an oxymoron, as it was by a senior Canadian business executive not so long ago. The opposite is true, as evidenced by the quality and range of articles assembled here. All of them demonstrate that management and marketing are not only integral parts of professional museum practice, but have also enabled significant improvements in both the effectiveness and efficiency of museums. These notable improvements range from greater economic self-sufficiency, to a much more sophisticated understanding of the nature and requirements of the visitor experience. Marketing is essential to enhancing our understanding of existing audiences, as well as to increasing our awareness of non-visitors and what museums can do to engage them. The reader will note ample proof of the pervasive role of management and marketing in the articles that follow.

What is not so obvious, although arguably as important, are the various tensions and complexities that have accompanied the adoption and adaptation of mainstream management and marketing techniques. As is the case with all human activity, museum management and marketing are imbued with both strengths and weaknesses, and it is incumbent upon all museum workers, be they professionals or students, to be familiar with the range and meaning of these issues. Our intention in this volume is therefore to deepen the appreciation of the value of thoughtful management and marketing in museums, while at the same time advancing the importance of critical thinking when importing methods and techniques from outside the museum field.

Richard Sandell and Robert R. Janes

# **Complexity and Creativity in Contemporary Museum Management**

Robert R. Janes and Richard Sandell

## **The complex world of museums**

**M**USEUM WORKERS OFTEN JOKE about the public perception of them and their work, noting the widespread belief that museums must be an ideal place to work – peaceful refuges, often elegant, usually clean and definitely not buffeted by the rude demands of a ‘real-life’ workplace. The non-museum world is continually surprised, however, to learn of the complexities and demands of museum work. Much of this complexity stems from the very nature of the museum enterprise itself, and any discussion of the role of museum management and marketing must begin with an overview of some of these complexities. In short, the range of issues and pressures confronting museums in the twenty-first century is equal to that of any sector of organized life.

Consider that cultural administrators must operate complex organizations with inadequate resources and, unlike administrators in the private sector, are rarely able to accumulate budget deficits to undertake the research and development necessary to improve organizational effectiveness. At the same time, underpaid staff (often unionized) and volunteers must be motivated to perform to high professional standards. Both executives and staff alike must answer to governing bodies consisting of individuals or organizations whose experience and expertise most often lie outside of the visual and heritage arts. This is in contrast to corporate boards, which seldom include anyone other than business people. At the same time, museums and galleries must also provide meaning and enjoyment to a diverse range of publics within the context of changing societal values. Museums, in their role as custodial institutions of the world’s material heritage, must also acknowledge and serve two unique communities – our ancestors and those who are not yet born. Neither of these museum constituencies vote nor consume, and thus have no visibility or involvement in the two dominant forces of contemporary society – commerce and politics.

Yet, these silent communities must be served. To add further complexity, most museums must somehow assume all these responsibilities in an era of declining or marginal public funding, while at the same time fostering individual and organizational change to ensure survival and sustainability. Simply making a profit might be seen to be a welcome relief from the potpourri of competing values and interests common to most museums. Museums, however, exist in a world of often baffling complexity and do not have the luxury of a simple profit and loss statement.

Managing these complexities within a rapidly changing world has necessitated substantial changes in mainstream museums, and many of these changes are chronicled in the articles that follow. Embracing both management and marketing responsibilities, however, can still result in polarized thinking among museum professionals, and there is often a tendency to see the adoption of business practices as a cure-all for the non-profit world or, conversely, a scourge to be ignored as fully as possible, although the latter view is far less common than it was a decade ago. It is understandable why polarized thinking emerges in the face of seemingly intractable management complexities, and it is instructive to have a closer look at a sample of these issues and their paradoxical relationships with this in mind. Nonetheless, it will be essential for museums to work through the tension between the dictates of the marketplace and traditional museum values, recognizing that this tension can stimulate creativity and new ways of thinking.

The following collection of management and marketing issues is universally applicable to museums, irrespective of size and history, although larger museums perforce have a greater share. Most, if not all, of these issues are related to an increasing interest in the visitor experience, especially over the past decade. We hesitate to call this a shift from a focus on collections to a focus on visitors, as collections remain a preoccupation for most, if not all, museums. The growing concern with the visitor experience is more accurately seen as an add-on to existing museum responsibilities. This gradual change in perspective has been accompanied by a decline in public funding for museums, notably in North America and Western Europe, coupled with the increasing use of business solutions to address the challenges that beset museums. For example, there has been a decline in museum attendance and the visitor base (Burton and Scott 2003; Martin 2002) that has prompted many museums to increase revenues through high-profile, blockbuster exhibitions and architectural sensationalism. The underlying theme in these initiatives is the conventional wisdom, 'build it and they will come'. Although the long-term success of this approach to business planning remains to be seen, it is generally recognized that these activities are so consumptive of staff time and resources that little of either are left over for other activities. At the same time, despite individual successes in audience development, there has been little change in the traditional visitor profile – those with post-secondary education and relatively high incomes are still the majority of museum goers (Cheney 2002).

These trends, in turn, have resulted in a preoccupation with revenues and attendance as the predominant measures of worth. Not surprisingly, many of the governing authorities responsible for these museums are also beginning to resemble corporate entities, with board members being chosen for their business experience and their fundraising skills. This tendency for business people to select other business people as governing colleagues is a sort of tribalism, and is characteristic of

business in general. This tribalism is also embodied in the near absence of any non-profit executives on corporate boards of directors, and this limited perspective has noteworthy implications for both museum governance and operations.

The increasing presence of the business model is also visible in contemporary searches for museum directors, or CEOs, as they are now called in deference to the corporate model. While an advanced degree in a related area or a professional designation may be required, the emphasis in these senior appointments is now clearly on fundraising, financial management, marketing and public relations. Museum critics observe that the pendulum has swung too far, and museums are at risk of eroding their core missions under the leadership of well-intentioned business people whose knowledge and experience are limited to the dictates of the marketplace. This may also partly explain the increasing ennui among various museum executives, weary of the perpetual round of cocktail parties and events required to keep many museums solvent these days. This is not meant to demean the importance of these activities, but rather to highlight the importance of maintaining an intelligent balance between the core mission and economic realities. There is relevant experience to be gleaned from the performing arts in this instance, as dance and theatre companies often have two positions – one for the managing director (read ‘business manager’) and one for the creative director (read ‘scholar’ or ‘scientist’). A clear protocol is essential in this instance to ensure both adherence to a common vision and effective communication. Museums would be wise to pay attention to the lessons of other sectors, if they are to manage these emerging complexities creatively.

Fortunately, the need for management and leadership training is clearly recognized by the museum sector, and there are a variety of well-established approaches for equipping museum professionals with the knowledge, skills and experience to become leaders and managers. These include the Getty Leadership Institute (USA) and the Clore Leadership Programme (UK), as well as the inclusion of management and marketing training in museum studies programmes around the world. It is important to note that leadership and management potential is not the exclusive domain of those with scholarly, scientific and curatorial credentials. Other museum professionals, whether educators or marketers, also understand the museum context and can make effective leaders and managers. It is clear that contemporary management and marketing issues are broad and deep, difficult to avoid and inextricably interconnected. It is this last characteristic, namely interconnectedness, that may have caught the museum community off guard in its rush to embrace business solutions. It is not necessarily obvious that declining public revenues might ultimately create boards of directors lacking in cultural diversity and community connectedness, and museums are not alone in their confusion. This newfound complexity is reminiscent of the revelations that have emerged in the progression from Newtonian physics to quantum theory. Where scientists once saw the world as a great clock, with independent parts and well-defined edges, they now see a level of connectedness among seemingly discrete parts that are widely separated in time and space (Wheatley 1994: 39). A worldview marked by boundaries and reductionism no longer serves physics or museum management.

Museums are also of this world, and cannot expect to ignore or retreat from this mounting complexity. The challenge is to identify the knowledge and techniques that will best serve the well-being of museums in a manner which befits

their particular role, while respecting the attendant ambiguity. It is important to note in this regard that museums are privileged work environments because they, like all non-profits, are organizations whose purpose is their meaning (Handy 1994: 183). This privilege is accompanied by the responsibility to take advantage of one of the most free and creative work environments on the planet through the application of thoughtful management and marketing. For example, an important challenge for museum marketers is to build civic brands around ideas that are less tangible than customer service and efficiency (Demos 2005: 4). Such ideas could include community, shared ownership and collective identity, and could be based on the use of marketing techniques to build brands that produce emotional identification and take credit for the public value that museums create. This is a creative alternative to using the language of the private sector, with its emphasis on individual consumption.

### **Managing complexity**

Surprisingly, and despite the growing body of management and marketing knowledge, a cloud seems to have settled and remained over leadership and management (Greenleaf 1996: 111). A partial answer lies in the observation that management is much more than a bundle of techniques, although many business schools still teach management with this approach. In the words of the late Peter Drucker (1995: 250), 'The essence of management is to make knowledge productive. Management, in other words, is a social function. And in its practice, management is a truly liberal art.' The notion of management as a liberal art is an instructive one, and obligates us to now consider several ideas that encompass this broader view of management, including the need for intelligent change that the twenty-first century demands. The reader will note that some of these ideas are also explored later in this volume, but their potential value in expanding the capacity of museum management justifies some judicious repetition in this introduction.

### ***Self-organization***

There is a burgeoning literature, and an enormous management consulting business, devoted to improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness in all sectors of society. A cursory search of the Internet using 'business consulting' revealed 82 pages of text. Whether it is books sold in airport bookshops, or the ever-increasing number of business schools with MBA programmes, the task of helping both profit and non-profit organizations to manage better is a growth industry of extraordinary proportions. The demand is there, at least in the private sector, if a recent survey of UK business consulting fees is any indication. The average salary for a partner or director in a business consulting firm is 109,000 pounds sterling, accompanied by an average bonus of 76,000 pounds sterling, or a total of 375,550 in Canadian dollars (Woodhurst 2005). Yet, despite all the efforts of organizations and their management consultants to understand employees and to manage them more effectively, many employees remain stressed, poorly managed and generally dissatisfied. According to the World Health Organization (Galt 2000: B15; Leka,

Griffiths and Cox 2003), stress, anxiety and depression will become the leading causes of disability in the workplace over the next 20 years.

One way of promoting the growth, development and self-respect of museum workers is to abandon or minimize hierarchical structures – the preferred organizational model for the vast majority of museums. Various museums are learning, however, that creativity can be stimulated by organizing differently (Farson 1996: 102–105), while many small museums have known this all along. A promising development in this regard is the idea of self-organization, a group phenomenon that occurs spontaneously when members of a group produce coherent behaviour in the absence of formal hierarchy within the group, or authority imposed from outside it (Stacey 1992: 6). Decisions are made at the most local level in the organization where they can be made well, and this requires that managers respect and nurture the so-called informal leaders – those individuals who exercise influence and authority by virtue of their competence and commitment, and not because of any formal position in the hierarchy. Informal leaders exist at all levels in all museums and are essential ingredients in effective self-organization by fostering interaction and interdependence. The key point is for management to focus on results, rather than insist upon any particular process or means for achieving the results. David Bohm (quoted in Jaworski 1998: 109), the physicist, writes that human beings have an innate capacity for collective intelligence, based on dialogue. Dialogue does not require that people agree with one another, but rather allows people to participate in a pool of shared meaning that can lead to aligned action. Simply put, hierarchical structures get in the way as staff attempt to navigate across and between organizational boundaries, be they departments, divisions or the manager's office. Responsible autonomy (Fairtlough 2005) is another alternative to hierarchy, and means a group deciding what to do, and being accountable for the outcome. Accountability is what makes responsible autonomy different from hierarchy. Zen Master, Suzuki Roshi, succinctly summarized this new thinking when he said, 'to control your cow, give it a bigger pasture' (quoted in Locke 2000: 28). An instructive example of self-organization is the Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver, Canada (Krug, Fenger and Ames 1999: 254). The boundaries of their position descriptions are flexible, and the museum's informal organizational structure consists of democratic, non-hierarchical committees where the chairs rotate.

Of particular importance to museums is the increasing use of multidisciplinary, multifunctional and cross-departmental teams that may include educators, marketers and security staff, as well as curatorial and exhibition staff. In some instances, these teams also include individuals from outside the museum, who are given both the authority and responsibility for decision making, in partnership with museum staff (Conaty and Carter 2005). Multifunctional teams are essential in cross-fertilizing the rich storehouse of knowledge, skills and experience inherent in museums, not only to develop programmes and exhibitions, but also to enhance the general level of creativity, innovation and problem solving.

### ***Reflexive management***

Management is about coping with complexity (Kotter 1990: 103), and a necessary ingredient in effective management is giving up certain unfounded beliefs, such as

the belief in managerial control. This is essential because the future is not knowable, as the links between cause and effect in organizations are complex, distant in time and space and very difficult to detect (Stacey 1992: 11). The technical term for this is non-linear feedback, and it means that the links between cause and effect are lost in the detail of what actually happens in between. Because no one can foresee the future of an organization, managers and staff should not all believe in the same things (Stacey 1992: 4), thereby avoiding the business tribalism mentioned earlier. Museum workers should question everything and generate new perspectives through discussion and dialogue. This approach is much more conducive to creation, invention and discovery, and all these are not only essential in addressing complexity, but they are also prerequisites for innovation and creativity. Typically, most museums continue to build on their strengths, becoming better and better at what they are already doing well. As counterintuitive as it may seem, there are more thoughtful approaches to management.

As the museum world becomes more complex, both managers and staff alike would benefit from greater tolerance of ambiguity, instability and unpredictability, although this is much easier to write about than to do. We are now dealing with what is called open-ended change (Stacey 1992: 150–153), meaning that we do not know with certainty what is causing the changes we are experiencing in our organizations, or what the consequences will be. Old ways of doing things do not necessarily work, and there is abundant confusion and anxiety. Open-ended change is rampant in both our work and personal lives, and it is best addressed by identifying what the problems are, what the opportunities are and then deciding what questions to ask. New mental models have to be developed and shared before the challenges of open-ended change can be addressed (Stacey 1992: 156).

For example, there is a technique used in business to assist with the creation of new mental models, known as scenario thinking or planning (De Geus 1997: 38–54; Schwartz 1996). Scenario planning is about thinking out loud and speculating, not making arguments requiring high burdens of proof (Searce and Fulton 2004: 23). It is a simple, dynamic and flexible process that results in powerful stories about how the future might unfold in ways relevant to a museum or a particular issue. An even more important result is a greater sense of the context in which an organization operates today, and the contexts in which it may operate in the future. Bearing in mind the growing complexity described in this introduction, museums ignore these reflexive management tools at their own peril.

### ***The second curve***

It is common for museum managers to use a variety of change programmes and processes to cope with this ever-increasing complexity. Many of these programmes are ephemeral, often abandoned and quickly replaced by new and different approaches. Some tough lessons have been learned as a result of the quick fix approach to management; the most important being that change in museums, as in all organizations, must evolve in a way that sustains commitment and individual capacity. This takes time, as change is a long march and needs ongoing leadership (Kanter 2000: 36). Museums may need continuous care, not interventionist cures, and it has been

suggested that nursing should be the model for all management (Mintzberg 1996: 66–67). This model implies the importance of steady and consistent caring and nurturing. More ominously, it has been noted (Galt 2000: B15) that it is only a matter of time before employers are held liable for the psychological harm caused to employees by poor management practices.

Whether it is interventionist change or gradual change, the real challenge of intelligent management lies in what is sometimes called second curve thinking. This is in reference to the S-shaped or sigmoid curve, which actually sums up the story of life itself (Handy 1994: 49–63). In effect, people, organizations and civilizations start slowly, grow, prosper and decline. Decline, however, is not inevitable if you adopt second curve thinking. This requires museum staff and leaders to challenge all the assumptions underlying current success, and this must begin with questions. Second curve thinking is admittedly a profound paradox, as it requires change, or scenario planning at least, at a time when all the messages coming through are that everything is fine. This is not as unrealistic as it may sound, if museums are willing to consult people outside of the museum community, as well as hire them, as they will bring in new ideas and fresh perspectives. It is also important to pay particular attention to front line staff, including marketers, as they are in direct contact with visitors and users, and are usually the first to know when something is lacking or not working. In the final analysis, each museum is unique and must find its way in this process. The fundamental requirement of second curve thinking is to be sceptical, curious and inventive before you have to be. If you don't do this before you are forced to, chances are you are already in decline. It requires profound courage to move to the second curve. For many museums, steeped in tradition and relatively privileged as a result of their widely recognized social status within society, second curve thinking may exceed their grasp.

## **Leadership**

Until now, no distinction has been made between management and leadership in this introduction. Although often considered to be one and the same, they are best described as two sides of the same coin. The challenge is to combine them, and use each to balance the other (Kotter 1990: 103). It was noted earlier that management is about coping with complexity. Leadership, on the other hand, is about coping with change (Kotter 1990: 104–107). This can mean a variety of things, but fundamentally it requires keeping people moving ahead, most often in directions they have never taken or are reluctant to consider. This is done, in part, by appealing to people's needs and emotions, including the need for achievement, providing a sense of control over one's life, and fostering the ability to live up to one's ideals. These are powerful considerations, and the study of leadership, like management consulting, is now a huge industry with an enormous literature, as well as an abundance of conferences and experts. This lucrative bandwagon does not diminish the fact that the thinking about leadership has become more intelligent and relevant.

For the longest time, charisma and style were seen to be all-important leadership characteristics. Fortunately, we are now beginning to see how important it is

for leaders to motivate and inspire. This requires that leaders be clear about purpose and direction, be inclusive, model the appropriate behaviours and recognize and reward success, in addition to the other requirements noted above. Not so obvious is the need to balance organizational and individual needs, sustain the energy required to do all of the above and, perhaps most importantly, determine how deeply to listen to the negative people whose voices are often the loudest. Along with these requirements is the necessity to acknowledge and support the so-called informal leaders mentioned earlier – those individuals who have no formal leadership designation, but whose competence and influence are widely recognized and respected.

Leaders must also not forget the ‘Principle of Systematic Neglect’ (Greenleaf 1996: 302). For responsible people, there are always more things to be done, or that ought to be done, and this is especially acute in the world of museums. The ‘Principle of Systematic Neglect’ requires that effective leaders decide on the important things that need doing, in order of priority, and neglect all the rest. Leaders are also increasingly required to be psychologically hardy (Kabat-Zinn 1990: 203), and those who have this hardiness have several things in common. They believe that they can make things happen; they are fully engaged in giving their best effort everyday; and, last, they see change as a natural part of life. They see new situations more as opportunities, and less as threats. It is also important for museum leaders to cultivate awareness, although, surprisingly, such awareness does not necessarily provide solace. On the contrary, it may disturb and awaken. As one management writer (Greenleaf 1996: 323) observed, ‘the able leaders I know are all awake and reasonably disturbed’.

## **What are we learning?**

Irrespective of the burgeoning complexities that buffet museums like a strong wind, it is clear that museum academics, practitioners and educators are paying attention to these current realities in a variety of ways, as evidenced by the articles in this volume. It is not sufficient, however, to simply acknowledge management and leadership complexities without an effort to consider their origin and implications. There are two key protagonists in this rising complexity, the first being the rapid intervention of marketplace thinking in museum management. Standing opposite this economic view of the world is the other protagonist – a museum’s capacity for self-reference, meaning the ability to be guided by a clear sense of purpose and values. This concept will be described in more detail shortly. Tempting as it is simply to create a polemic and dismiss the economic view of the world as outdated, the situation confronting contemporary museum management is far denser. It is not an exaggeration to note that creatively managing the tension between market forces and museum missions may turn out to be the most vital issue confronting museums in the twenty-first century. At stake might well be the identity of museums as unique social institutions or, conversely, their destiny as impresarios in the business of architectural sensationalism and culture as entertainment. This complexity has multiple origins, several threads of which will now be examined.

The first of these threads is the recognition that museums are complex portfolios. Museums have numerous assets that can be conceived and operated strictly as businesses, including food services, gift shops or facility rentals. Other assets have nothing to do with the marketplace, such as the preservation and care of collections. It is essential for boards and managers to have a clear sense of which is which, and not to confuse the two. Using visitor statistics, for example, to assess the success of a museum, library or archive is misguided as it ignores the impact of a user who writes a book that is read by thousands of people. It is also not useful to bemoan the abandonment of traditional museum practices in the face of very real economic and social imperatives. To do this is as naïve as insisting that museums must become profit-driven enterprises if they are to survive in the contemporary world. In short, neither the business nor the non-profit sector holds the exclusive keys to a secure future. The world of museums is far too grounded in the uncertainties of everyday life.

Part of this growing confusion, among managers and governing authorities alike, is based on the belief that continuous economic growth is essential to our well-being, and that the consumption of everything is an appropriate means to achieve unlimited growth. There is every reason to believe, however, that limitless economic growth is creating genuine and profound dilemmas, including destruction of the natural environment and serious disillusionment with buying things as a means of personal fulfilment. Much of this looming crisis, along with the attendant pressures on museums, is a result of a widespread misconception in Western society that markets create communities. The opposite is true, as the marketplace and its activities actually deplete trust (Rifkin 1997). It is the organizations of the non-profit sector, not government or business, which build and enrich the trusting, caring and genuine relationships – namely, the social capital – upon which the marketplace is based. These organizations range from political parties, to Girl Scouts, to museums, and there would be no marketplace without this web of human relationships. Social capital is born of long-term associations that are not explicitly self-interested or coerced, and it typically diminishes if it is not regularly renewed or replaced (Bullock and Trombley 1999: 798).

The challenge for museum management is to help governing authorities, staff and society to better understand these complexities and their implications, not the least of which is that the reigning economic growth model is an ideology that has profound implications for museums. This ideology is an integrated set of assertions, theories and aims that constitute a socio-political programme. Its primary measure of worth is money, which is at best a crude measure of success when applied to museums. The application of strict economic criteria to museum management is obviously misleading when, for instance, one considers that good collection management is based on a 300- to 500-year business plan, not the quarterly results common to business. In contrast, the average life expectancy of a company is 12.5 years, while the average lifespan of a multinational corporation (Fortune 500 or its equivalent) is between 40 and 50 years (De Geus 1997, 2005). The message is vital – museum managers must be aware and thoughtful as they seek management solutions to a host of paradoxes and unanswered questions. Bigger is not necessarily better, and millions of dollars or pounds do not guarantee either market sensitivity or organizational competence. Reputation, name recognition and the

trust of visitors are not the property of bigness. These traits are about quality, and worthiness can be achieved by museums of any size. In fact, smallness is often a virtue when you consider the inherent inflexibility of most large museums. Small museums can 'think big' through alliances, cost sharing and creative collaboration, without all the inherent disadvantages of bigness (Ohmae 1998: 20).

## **A new direction**

The other protagonist in the evolving story of management complexity, as mentioned earlier, is the concept of self-reference. This is a fundamental concept that aids in sensible change in a turbulent environment. For all organizations, museums included, self-reference means 'a clear sense of identity – of the values, traditions, aspirations, competencies, and culture that guide the operation' (Wheatley 1994: 94). It can also mean letting go of past practices, and deciding what not to do any longer. Self-reference can be a source of independence from the external environment. As societal forces demand new responses from museums, a strong sense of self-reference provides the foundation for change. This is particularly important in avoiding new ventures and unmindful solutions that underlie the limited lifespans of businesses and corporations noted above. This does not mean, however, that self-reference is a justification to remain beholden to tradition. On the contrary, intelligent self-reference can be a source of strength and stability in a turbulent environment, and allows a reconsideration of the role of museums in contemporary society. Such rethinking is now well underway, and one expression of this is an increasing interest in the social responsibilities of museums (Brown and Peers 2003; Janes and Conaty 2005; Sandell 2002). We will conclude this introduction with a discussion of the meaning and implications of socially responsible museum work.

The idea of a socially responsible museum is grounded in a new sense of accountability, as well as in new approaches to achieving long-term sustainability. This work places a greater emphasis on values, both moral and societal, while also respecting the marketplace. Defining what socially responsible museum work means for museums is neither simple nor formulaic as there are a multitude of possibilities and approaches. It is also important to realize that there are no fixed procedures or rules for engaging in socially responsible museum work, and all museums have the opportunity to explore and discover what is appropriate and useful for them. The underlying premise, however, is the time-honoured assumption that museums exist for the public good. Put another way, social responsibility might be considered the 'will and capacity to solve public problems' (<http://www.pew-partnership.org/resources.html>). Broadly speaking, being socially responsible can also mean facilitating civic engagement, acting as an agent of social change or moderating sensitive social issues (Smithsonian Institution 2002: 9).

A recent collection of case studies describing socially responsible museums (Janes and Conaty 2005: 8–10; Block 2002: 47–65) revealed that they had at least four values in common, including idealism, intimacy, depth and interconnectedness. Idealism means thinking about the way things could be, and then taking action, rather than

simply accepting the way things are. The second value is intimacy, which is about communication and the quality of the contact that is made. Quality communication lies in direct experience and there is no substitute for human relationships, and all the time, energy and attention these relationships require. Depth is about being thorough, complete and building relationships with particular groups of people, as well as about thinking, questioning and reflecting. Finally, there is interconnectedness, reflected in the growing societal awareness of the deep connections between our own well-being and that of our families, organizations, the environment and the whole of humanity. All these values are essential for museums that wish to understand what is important to their communities.

From a practical management perspective, museums also need to ensure that there is a sense of shared purpose, and that a commitment to socially responsible work is enshrined in the museum's mission. In addition, there is an ongoing need for active experimentation and risk taking. Most innovation occurs from hundreds of small changes and ideas which add up to enormous differences. Socially responsible work is also a shared responsibility, and museums must be prepared to reach out to their communities to acquire the expertise and experience they themselves lack. Last, is the vital importance of openness, as boards, staff and volunteers must feel free to discuss their values and beliefs. This makes for a more authentic museum, and is the foundation for socially responsible work.

None of these things will guarantee success in this era of unanswered questions, if one accepts, as the late Peter Drucker noted, that management is a liberal art. Knowledge, flexibility, passion are also essential ingredients in balancing the paradoxes of contemporary museum management. For museums to achieve balance, governing authorities and staff must get much better at defining strategic futures for their museums, while also ensuring that their boards are representative of community diversity and aspirations. One size does not fit all, and the marketplace is but one interpretation of reality. There is also no such thing as a single management approach, or a perfect organizational or leadership model. The key component of management is creativity, including imagination, intelligence, judgement and common sense (Lapierre 2005: 8–9). Gone are the days when one year of experience, repeated 20 times, is acceptable for museum managers and leaders. They must learn continuously, a notable challenge for those who are unwilling or unable to read the museum literature, not to mention the abundant knowledge outside of the museum field. Curators can no longer be content to claim authority on the basis of knowledge that is often exclusively theirs. Knowledge stemming from collections and their stories is a precious resource, and it must be shared in any number of ways. A curator is not only a keeper, but also a messenger of a museum's collective wisdom. Why can a curator not make explicit the successes and failures of our species in a manner that could inform and guide contemporary behaviour, whatever the particular society happens to be? Even as museums seek to include and honour varied perspectives, marketers must come to understand that the customer is not always right, and that all museums have a leadership role in defining the value they add to communities. Together, marketers and curators could begin by simply asking if there are any deficiencies in their community that their museum could help to address. In summary, all these questions reach far beyond education and entertainment as the primary mission.

It is helpful to consider socially responsible museum work as a purpose-filled experiment, whose intention is just as much about learning as it is about achieving (Block 2002: 3). In doing so, the choice of a worthy destination is more important than simply settling for what we know will work. This, in turn, requires a willingness to address issues that have no easy answers, and these are legion, encompassing the need for greater intercultural understanding, our persistent failure to steward the natural environment, the growing plight of the disadvantaged, and the contested ground of consumerism versus the responsibilities of citizenship. As the articles in this volume aptly demonstrate, the challenges of museum management and marketing are many, and much is being done to address these complexities creatively and forthrightly, and in a manner that effects positive change.

The economic necessity of seeing people and communities as museum audiences needs no further explanation, but it is hoped that the exploration of museums as meaningful social institutions will continue to grow to inspire the next generation of museum workers. Understanding does not necessarily mean resolution, however, as it is those problems that we will never resolve that claim the lion's share of our energies (Conroy 1988: 70). What is essential is the need to keep reflection and dialogue alive, and to avoid stagnation, complacency and the tyranny of outmoded tradition. Management and marketing are means to an end, not ends in themselves. They are essential tools with which to address the endless stream of uncertainties, paradoxes and questions that beset any thoughtful museum. The essential task of all sound leadership and management is to ensure both individual and organizational consciousness. Management and marketing, as is true of most of human thought, will continue the ceaseless cycle of new theories, fads and trends. Despite all this activity, there are no silver bullets or panaceas, as this book demonstrates. It is only through heightened self-awareness, both organizational and individual, that museums will be able to fulfil the lofty triad of preservation, truth and access (Weil 2004: 75).

## References

- Block, P. (2002) *The Answer to How is Yes*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Brown, A.K. and Peers, L. (eds) (2003) *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, Oxford: Routledge.
- Bullock, A. and Trombley, S. (eds) (1999) *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, London: HarperCollins.
- Burton, C. and Scott, C. (2003) 'Museums: challenges for the 21st century', *International Journal of Arts Management*, 5: 56–68.
- Cheney, T. (2002) 'The presence of museums in the lives of Canadians, 1971–1998: what might have been and what has been', *Cultural Trends*, 48: 39–72.
- Conaty, G.T. and Carter, B. (2005) 'Our story in our words: diversity and equality in the Glenbow Museum', in R.R. Janes and G.T. Conaty (eds) *Looking Reality in the Eye: museums and social responsibility*, 43–58, Calgary, Canada: The University of Calgary Press and the Museums Association of Saskatchewan.
- Conroy, F. (1988) 'Think about it – ways we know and don't', *Harper's*, vol. 277, no. 1,662: 70.

- De Geus, A. (1997) *The Living Company: habits for survival in a turbulent business environment*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- De Geus, A. (2005) *Corporate Longevity*, Leigh Bureau-W. Colston Leigh, Inc. Online. Available <http://www.leighbureau.com/keyword.asp?id=2055> (accessed 21 February 2006).
- Demos (2005) *Civic Brands: Public Value and Public Services Marketing*. Online. Available <http://www.demos.co.uk> (accessed 23 February 2006).
- Drucker, P. (1995) *Managing in a Time of Great Change*, New York: Truman Talley Books/Plume.
- Fairtlough, G. (2005) *The Three Ways of Getting Things Done: hierarchy, heterarchy and responsible autonomy in organisations*, Triarchy Press. Online. Available [http://www.triarchypress.co.uk/pages/the\\_book.htm](http://www.triarchypress.co.uk/pages/the_book.htm) (accessed 22 February 2006).
- Farson, R. (1996) *Management of the Absurd*, New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Galt, V. (2000) 'Toxic stress posing major risks: study', *The Globe and Mail*, 25 October: B15.
- Greenleaf, R.K. (1996) *On Becoming a Servant-Leader*, D.M. Frick and L.C. Spears (eds), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Handy, C. (1994) *The Age of Paradox*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Janes, R.R. and Conaty, G.T. (eds) (2005) *Looking Reality in the Eye: museums and social responsibility*, Calgary, Canada: Museums Association of Saskatchewan and the University of Calgary Press.
- Jaworski, J. (1998) *Synchronicity*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990) *Full Catastrophe Living*, New York: Bantam, Doubleday, Dell Publishing Group, Inc.
- Kanter, R.M. (2000) 'Leaders with passion, conviction and confidence can use several techniques to take charge of change, rather than react to it', *Ivey Business Journal*, May/June: 32–36.
- Kotter, J.P. (1990) 'What leaders really do', *Harvard Business Review*, 68(3): 103–111.
- Krug, K., Fenger, A.M. and Ames, M.M. (1999) 'The faces of MOA: a museum out of the ordinary', *Archiv fur Volkerkunde*, 50: 249–263.
- Lapierre, L. (2005) 'Managing as creating', *International Journal of Arts Management*, 7: 4–10.
- Leka, S., Griffiths, A. and Cox, T. (2003) 'Work organisation and stress: systematic problem approaches for employers, managers and trade union representatives', *Protecting Workers' Health Series No. 3*, World Health Organization: Geneva. Online. Available [www.who.int/occupational\\_health/publications/en/oehstress.pdf](http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/en/oehstress.pdf) (accessed 22 February 2006).
- Locke, C. (2000) 'Internet apocalypse', in *The Clue Train Manifesto: The End of Business as Usual*, Chapter one. Online. Available <http://www.cluetrain.com/apocalypse.html> (accessed 20 January 2002).
- Lowrance, W.W. (1986) *Modern Science and Human Values*, London: Oxford University Press.
- Martin, A. (2002) 'The impact of free entry to museums', *Cultural Trends*, 47: 3–12.
- Mintzberg, H. (1996) 'Musings on management', *Harvard Business Review*, 74: 61–67.
- Moore, K. (ed.) (1994) *Museum Management*, London: Routledge.
- Ohmae, K. (1998) 'Strategy in a world without borders', *Leader to Leader*, 7: 17–23.
- Rifkin, J. (1997) 'The end of work', address on behalf of the Volunteer Centre of Calgary, Palliser Hotel, Calgary, Canada, 13 November.

- Sandell, R. (ed.) (2002) *Museums, Society, Inequality*, Oxford: Routledge.
- Scearce, D. and Fulton, K. (2004) 'What If?: the art of scenario thinking for non-profits'. Global Business Network. Online. Available <http://www.gbn.com/> (accessed 2 January 2006).
- Schwartz, P. (1996) *The Art of the Long View: paths to strategic insight for yourself and your company*, New York: Doubleday.
- Smithsonian Institution (2002) *21<sup>st</sup> Century Roles of National Museums: a conversation in progress*, Washington, D.C.: Office of Policy and Analysis.
- Stacey, R.D. (1992) *Managing the Unknowable*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Weil, S.E. (2004) 'Rethinking the museum: an emerging new paradigm', in Gail Anderson (ed.) *Reinventing the Museum*, 74–79, Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press.
- Wheatley, M.J. (1994) *Leadership and the New Science*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Woodhurst (2005) 'The Woodhurst 2005 Salary Survey'. Online. Available <http://www.woodhurst.com/> (accessed 2 January 2006).

PART ONE

# **Museums and Change**



# Introduction to Part One

Richard Sandell and Robert R. Janes

Management and change are synonymous; it is impossible to undertake a journey, for in many respects that is what change is, without first addressing the purpose of the trip, the route you wish to travel and with whom. Managing change is about handling the complexities of travel. It is about evaluating, planning and implementing operational, tactical and strategic 'journeys' – about always ensuring that the journey is worthwhile and the destination is relevant.

R.A. Paton and J. McCalman, *Change Management*, p. 2

MUSEUMS HAVE NOT GENERALLY been renowned for their willingness to embrace change or, indeed, for their capacity to effectively engage with the imperatives and opportunities which accompany it (Hushion 1999; Janes 1999; Lewis 1992). Rather, their reaction has often been characterized by indifference, caution, scepticism and a desire to retain traditional values and working practices (Middleton 1990; Moore 1994). In recent decades, however, as the pace of change dramatically increases, resistance and inaction have proved to be untenable positions to maintain and museums have been forced to confront the challenges, navigate the obstacles and adapt to the opportunities presented by ever more complex, unpredictable and highly dynamic operating environments.

Rapid social, economic, political and technological changes have, of course, been brought to bear not only on museums, but also on organizations of all kinds, in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. Change has come to be widely viewed as a ubiquitous, inescapable phenomenon and one which has, as a consequence, become increasingly central to the discipline of management. Indeed, growing recognition of the pervasiveness and significance of change is reflected in the emergence of a large and rapidly expanding body of management literature that offers an array of models, strategies and tools designed to equip organizations

with the capacity to survive and thrive in turbulent and unpredictable times. Through this literature, 'change management' has emerged as a concept and set of practices concerned not only with strategies for coping with the myriad external forces that can threaten to derail organizations, but also with the strategic advantages to be gained from internal flexibility, organizational agility and the proactive instigation of continuous change from within. The ways in which organizations approach the concept and engage with the realities of change are now viewed by many leading management thinkers as powerful determinants of their future performance – of their ability to succeed or to fail.

The articles we have included in this section shed light on varied aspects of change and approach the topic from very different perspectives. John Kotter, one of the leading thinkers in the field of change management, provides the only contribution to the Reader which is not directly concerned with museums but, instead, draws on experiences and examples from the business sector. While we would argue that management theories developed in the for-profit environment cannot be uncritically and straightforwardly transplanted to the museum context, his accessible and thought-provoking contribution nevertheless offers valuable insights into the process of change and the pitfalls most commonly experienced by organizations attempting to transform and renew themselves. Although first published over a decade ago, Kotter's article also establishes a strong connection between leadership and the process of organizational change, a theme which has, in recent years, received growing attention in the literature on both management and museums and which resurfaces for further consideration in many of the subsequent articles in this volume.

Stephen Weil's seminal article considers how powerful forces of change have radically reshaped the museum from an organization principally focused on collections, preservation and scholarly research to one that must now also be concerned with audiences, education, public service and broader social change. The transformation Weil describes not only illustrates the far-reaching effects of change, but also usefully offers a way to understand the circumstances which have led to the widespread adoption of management and the growing prominence of marketing within museums. His account of change helps to explain the increased interest in, and engagement with, theories and practices stemming from these disciplines which had previously been viewed as irrelevant to, and incompatible with, the world of museums.

Whereas Weil's contribution offers a largely historical account of change, Christine Burton and Carol Scott consider the implications that growing competition, shifting attitudes to leisure time and evolving patterns of leisure consumption might hold for museums today and in the future. Their thought-provoking analysis blends theoretical perspectives from marketing and related disciplines with in-depth empirical investigation of audiences, revealing the value of research (and, in particular, an in-depth understanding of the needs, attitudes, behaviours and expectations of existing and potential audiences) in enabling museums to anticipate and adapt to change.

While the theme of change can be seen to run through many of the articles included in this Reader (and indeed more broadly in the museum studies

literature), surprisingly few reflections on the process of organizational change in museums have been published (Gurian 1995). The last two articles in this section offer valuable insights into this topic through the eyes of different individuals involved in a process of renewal at a single institution – the Glenbow Museum in Canada. Robert Janes, the then President and CEO of Glenbow, provides an honest account of the challenges, paradoxes and opportunities presented by organizational change and the impact of these on the institution and its staff. Drawing on concepts from the field of change management, his analysis alerts us to the need for, and the value of, new ways of thinking and new modes of practice to equip museums with the capacity to live with uncertainty. Although the effects on staff are commonly acknowledged in the literature on managing change, they are most frequently viewed from the perspective of senior management in terms of their potential to constrain or to facilitate organizational transformation. The personal experiences of individuals have largely been excluded from accounts of institutional change. The final article helps to address this deficit in understanding by considering the same set of events at Glenbow but, this time, from the perspective of a cross-section of staff occupying different roles within the museum. Their reflections attest to the importance, in any change management process, of understanding, respecting and dealing with an organization's culture – 'the unique configuration of norms, values, beliefs and ways of behaving that characterises the manner in which groups and individuals combine to get things done' (Eldridge and Crombie 1974). As these highly personalized accounts further illustrate, organizational change can be demoralizing, stressful, debilitating and painful and yet, at the same time, exciting, stimulating, energizing and empowering.

## References

- Anderson, G. (ed.) (2004) *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press.
- Eldridge, J.E.T. and Crombie, A.D. (1974) *A Sociology of Organisations*, London: Allen and Unwin.
- Gurian, E.H. (1995) *Institutional Trauma: Major Change in Museums and its Effect on Staff*, Washington DC: American Association of Museums.
- Hushion, N. (1999) 'Managing change or navigating turbulent times', *Museum International*, UNESCO, 51(2): 44–49.
- Janes, R.R. (1999) 'Embracing organizational change in museums: a work in progress', in K. Moore (ed.) *Management in Museums*, London and New Jersey: Athlone.
- Lewis, P. (1992) 'Museums and marketing', in J.M.A Thompson (ed.) *Manual of Curatorship: A Guide to Museum Practice*, London: Museums Association, Butterworth.
- Mason, R. (2006) 'Cultural theory and museum studies', in S. Macdonald (ed.) *A Companion to Museum Studies*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Middleton, V. (1990) 'Irresistible demand forces', *Museums Journal*, February: 31–34.
- Moore, K. (ed.) (1994) *Museum Management*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Paton, R.A. and McCalman, J. (2000) *Change Management: A Guide to Effective Implementation*, 2nd edn, London: Sage Publications.

## Leading Change

### Why transformation efforts fail

John P. Kotter

**O**VER THE PAST DECADE, I have watched more than 100 companies try to remake themselves into significantly better competitors. They have included large organizations (Ford) and small ones (Landmark Communications), companies based in the United States (General Motors) and elsewhere (British Airways), corporations that were on their knees (Eastern Airlines), and companies that were earning good money (Bristol-Myers Squibb). These efforts have gone under many banners: total quality management, reengineering, right sizing, restructuring, cultural change, and turnaround. But, in almost every case, the basic goal has been the same: to make fundamental changes in how business is conducted in order to help cope with a new, more challenging market environment.

A few of these corporate change efforts have been very successful. A few have been utter failures. Most fall somewhere in between, with a distinct tilt toward the lower end of the scale. The lessons that can be drawn are interesting and will probably be relevant to even more organizations in the increasingly competitive business environment of the coming decade.

The most general lesson to be learned from the more successful cases is that the change process goes through a series of phases that, in total, usually require a considerable length of time. Skipping steps creates only the illusion of speed and never produces a satisfying result. A second very general lesson is that critical mistakes in any of the phases can have a devastating impact, slowing momentum and negating hard-won gains. Perhaps because we have relatively little experience in renewing organizations, even very capable people often make at least one big error.

## Error #1: Not establishing a great enough sense of urgency

Most successful change efforts begin when some individuals or some groups start to look hard at a company's competitive situation, market position, technological trends, and financial performance. They focus on the potential revenue drop when an important patent expires, the five-year trend in declining margins in a core business, or an emerging market that everyone seems to be ignoring. They then find ways to communicate this information broadly and dramatically, especially with respect to crises, potential crises, or great opportunities that are very timely. This first step is essential because just getting a transformation program started requires the aggressive cooperation of many individuals. Without motivation, people won't help and the effort goes nowhere.

Compared with other steps in the change process, phase one can sound easy. It is not. Well over 50% of the companies I have watched fail in this first phase. What are the reasons for that failure? Sometimes executives underestimate how hard it can be to drive people out of their comfort zones. Sometimes they grossly overestimate how successful they have already been in increasing urgency. Sometimes they lack patience: 'Enough with the preliminaries; let's get on with it.' In many cases, executives become paralyzed by the downside possibilities. They worry that employees with seniority will become defensive, that morale will drop, that events will spin out of control, that short-term business results will be jeopardized, that the stock will sink, and that they will be blamed for creating a crisis.

A paralyzed senior management often comes from having too many managers and not enough leaders. Management's mandate is to minimize risk and to keep the current system operating. Change, by definition, requires creating a new system, which in turn always demands leadership. Phase one in a renewal process typically goes nowhere until enough real leaders are promoted or hired into senior-level jobs.

Transformations often begin, and begin well, when an organization has a new head who is a good leader and who sees the need for a major change. If the renewal target is the entire company, the CEO is key. If change is needed in a division, the division general manager is key. When these individuals are not new leaders, great leaders, or change champions, phase one can be a huge challenge.

Bad business results are both a blessing and a curse in the first phase. On the positive side, losing money does catch people's attention. But it also gives less maneuvering room. With good business results, the opposite is true: convincing people of the need for change is much harder, but you have more resources to help make changes.

But whether the starting point is good performance or bad, in the more successful cases I have witnessed, an individual or a group always facilitates a frank discussion of potentially unpleasant facts: about new competition, shrinking margins, decreasing market share, flat earnings, a lack of revenue growth, or other relevant indices of a declining competitive position. Because there seems to be an almost universal human tendency to shoot the bearer of bad news, especially if the head of the organization is not a change champion, executives in these companies often rely on outsiders to bring unwanted information. Wall Street analysts, customers, and consultants can all be helpful in this regard. The purpose of all this activity, in

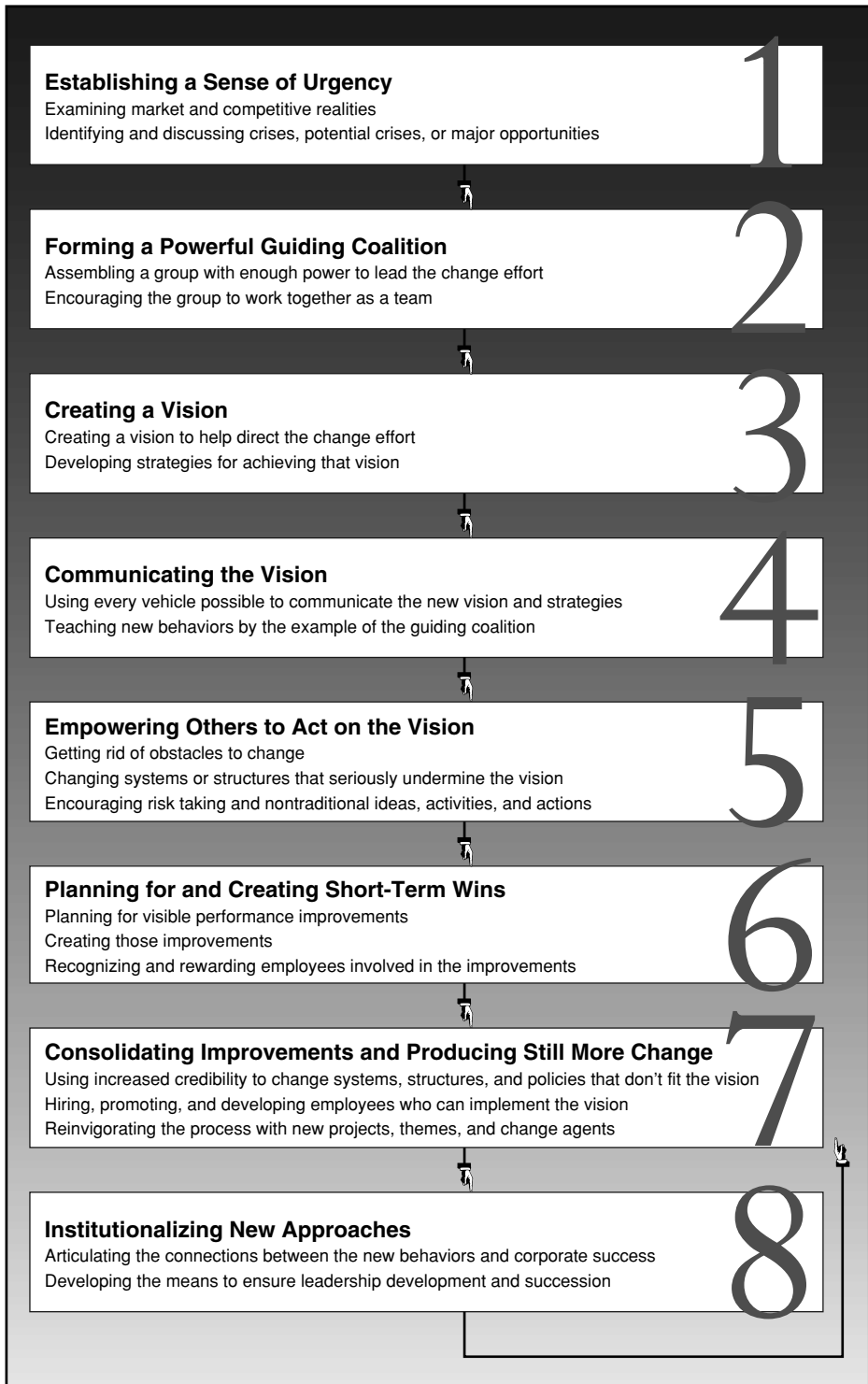


Figure 2.1 Eight Steps to Transforming Your Organization

the words of one former CEO of a large European company, is ‘to make the status quo seem more dangerous than launching into the unknown.’

In a few of the most successful cases, a group has manufactured a crisis. One CEO deliberately engineered the largest accounting loss in the company’s history, creating huge pressures from Wall Street in the process. One division president commissioned first-ever customer-satisfaction surveys, knowing full well that the results would be terrible. He then made these findings public. On the surface, such moves can look unduly risky. But there is also risk in playing it too safe: when the urgency rate is not pumped up enough, the transformation process cannot succeed and the long-term future of the organization is put in jeopardy.

When is the urgency rate high enough? From what I have seen, the answer is when about 75% of a company’s management is honestly convinced that business-as-usual is totally unacceptable. Anything less can produce very serious problems later on in the process.

## **Error #2: Not creating a powerful enough guiding coalition**

Major renewal programs often start with just one or two people. In cases of successful transformation efforts, the leadership coalition grows and grows over time. But whenever some minimum mass is not achieved early in the effort, nothing much worthwhile happens.

It is often said that major change is impossible unless the head of the organization is an active supporter. What I am talking about goes far beyond that. In successful transformations, the chairman or president or division general manager, plus another 5 or 15 or 50 people, come together and develop a shared commitment to excellent performance through renewal. In my experience, this group never includes all of the company’s most senior executives because some people just won’t buy in, at least not at first. But in the most successful cases, the coalition is always pretty powerful – in terms of titles, information and expertise, reputations and relationships.

In both small and large organizations, a successful guiding team may consist of only three to five people during the first year of a renewal effort. But in big companies, the coalition needs to grow to the 20 to 50 range before much progress can be made in phase three and beyond. Senior managers always form the core of the group. But sometimes you find board members, a representative from a key customer, or even a powerful union leader.

Because the guiding coalition includes members who are not part of senior management, it tends to operate outside of the normal hierarchy by definition. This can be awkward, but it is clearly necessary. If the existing hierarchy were working well, there would be no need for a major transformation. But since the current system is not working, reform generally demands activity outside of formal boundaries, expectations, and protocol.

A high sense of urgency within the managerial ranks helps enormously in putting a guiding coalition together. But more is usually required. Someone needs to get these people together, help them develop a shared assessment of their company’s problems and opportunities, and create a minimum level of trust and communication.

Off-site retreats, for two or three days, are one popular vehicle for accomplishing this task. I have seen many groups of 5 to 35 executives attend a series of these retreats over a period of months.

Companies that fail in phase two usually underestimate the difficulties of producing change and thus the importance of a powerful guiding coalition. Sometimes they have no history of teamwork at the top and therefore undervalue the importance of this type of coalition. Sometimes they expect the team to be led by a staff executive from human resources, quality, or strategic planning instead of a key line manager. No matter how capable or dedicated the staff head, groups without strong line leadership never achieve the power that is required.

Efforts that don't have a powerful enough guiding coalition can make apparent progress for a while. But, sooner or later, the opposition gathers itself together and stops the change.

### **Error #3: Lacking a vision**

In every successful transformation effort that I have seen, the guiding coalition develops a picture of the future that is relatively easy to communicate and appeals to customers, stockholders, and employees. A vision always goes beyond the numbers that are typically found in five-year plans. A vision says something that helps clarify the direction in which an organization needs to move. Sometimes the first draft comes mostly from a single individual. It is usually a bit blurry, at least initially. But after the coalition works at it for 3 or 5 or even 12 months, something much better emerges through their tough analytical thinking and a little dreaming. Eventually, a strategy for achieving that vision is also developed.

In one midsize European company, the first pass at a vision contained two-thirds of the basic ideas that were in the final product. The concept of global reach was in the initial version from the beginning. So was the idea of becoming pre-eminent in certain businesses. But one central idea in the final version – getting out of low value-added activities – came only after a series of discussions over a period of several months.

Without a sensible vision, a transformation effort can easily dissolve into a list of confusing and incompatible projects that can take the organization in the wrong direction or nowhere at all. Without a sound vision, the reengineering project in the accounting department, the new 360-degree performance appraisal from the human resources department, the plant's quality program, the cultural change project in the sales force will not add up in a meaningful way.

In failed transformations, you often find plenty of plans and directives and programs, but no vision. In one case, a company gave out four-inch-thick notebooks describing its change effort. In mind-numbing detail, the books spelled out procedures, goals, methods, and deadlines. But nowhere was there a clear and compelling statement of where all this was leading. Not surprisingly, most of the employees with whom I talked were either confused or alienated. The big, thick books did not rally them together or inspire change. In fact, they probably had just the opposite effect.

In a few of the less successful cases that I have seen, management had a sense of direction, but it was too complicated or blurry to be useful. Recently, I asked

an executive in a midsize company to describe his vision and received in return a barely comprehensible 30-minute lecture. Buried in his answer were the basic elements of a sound vision. But they were buried – deeply.

A useful rule of thumb: if you can't communicate the vision to someone in five minutes or less and get a reaction that signifies both understanding and interest, you are not yet done with this phase of the transformation process.

## **Error #4: Undercommunicating the vision by a factor of ten**

I've seen three patterns with respect to communication, all very common. In the first, a group actually does develop a pretty good transformation vision and then proceeds to communicate it by holding a single meeting or sending out a single communication. Having used about .0001% of the yearly intracompany communication, the group is startled that few people seem to understand the new approach. In the second pattern, the head of the organization spends a considerable amount of time making speeches to employee groups, but most people still don't get it (not surprising, since vision captures only .0005% of the total yearly communication). In the third pattern, much more effort goes into newsletters and speeches, but some very visible senior executives still behave in ways that are antithetical to the vision. The net result is that cynicism among the troops goes up, while belief in the communication goes down.

Transformation is impossible unless hundreds or thousands of people are willing to help, often to the point of making short-term sacrifices. Employees will not make sacrifices, even if they are unhappy with the status quo, unless they believe that useful change is possible. Without credible communication, and a lot of it, the hearts and minds of the troops are never captured.

This fourth phase is particularly challenging if the short-term sacrifices include job losses. Gaining understanding and support is tough when downsizing is a part of the vision. For this reason, successful visions usually include new growth possibilities and the commitment to treat fairly anyone who is laid off.

Executives who communicate well incorporate messages into their hour-by-hour activities. In a routine discussion about a business problem, they talk about how proposed solutions fit (or don't fit) into the bigger picture. In a regular performance appraisal, they talk about how the employee's behavior helps or undermines the vision. In a review of a division's quarterly performance, they talk not only about the numbers but also about how the division's executives are contributing to the transformation. In a routine Q&A with employees at a company facility, they tie their answers back to renewal goals.

In more successful transformation efforts, executives use all existing communication channels to broadcast the vision. They turn boring and unread company newsletters into lively articles about the vision. They take ritualistic and tedious quarterly management meetings and turn them into exciting discussions of the transformation. They throw out much of the company's generic management education and replace it with courses that focus on business problems and the new vision. The guiding principle is simple: use every possible channel, especially those that are being wasted on nonessential information.

Perhaps even more important, most of the executives I have known in successful cases of major change learn to ‘walk the talk.’ They consciously attempt to become a living symbol of the new corporate culture. This is often not easy. A 60-year-old plant manager who has spent precious little time over 40 years thinking about customers will not suddenly behave in a customer-oriented way. But I have witnessed just such a person change, and change a great deal. In that case, a high level of urgency helped. The fact that the man was a part of the guiding coalition and the vision-creation team also helped. So did all the communication, which kept reminding him of the desired behavior, and all the feedback from his peers and subordinates, which helped him see when he was not engaging in that behavior.

Communication comes in both words and deeds, and the latter are often the most powerful form. Nothing undermines change more than behavior by important individuals that is inconsistent with their words.

### **Error #5: Not removing obstacles to the new vision**

Successful transformations begin to involve large numbers of people as the process progresses. Employees are emboldened to try new approaches, to develop new ideas, and to provide leadership. The only constraint is that the actions fit within the broad parameters of the overall vision. The more people involved, the better the outcome.

To some degree, a guiding coalition empowers others to take action simply by successfully communicating the new direction. But communication is never sufficient by itself. Renewal also requires the removal of obstacles. Too often, an employee understands the new vision and wants to help make it happen. But an elephant appears to be blocking the path. In some cases, the elephant is in the person’s head, and the challenge is to convince the individual that no external obstacle exists. But in most cases, the blockers are very real.

Sometimes the obstacle is the organizational structure: narrow job categories can seriously undermine efforts to increase productivity or make it very difficult even to think about customers. Sometimes compensation or performance-appraisal systems make people choose between the new vision and their own self-interest. Perhaps worst of all are bosses who refuse to change and who make demands that are inconsistent with the overall effort.

One company began its transformation process with much publicity and actually made good progress through the fourth phase. Then the change effort ground to a halt because the officer in charge of the company’s largest division was allowed to undermine most of the new initiatives. He paid lip service to the process but did not change his behavior or encourage his managers to change. He did not reward the unconventional ideas called for in the vision. He allowed human resource systems to remain intact even when they were clearly inconsistent with the new ideals. I think the officer’s motives were complex. To some degree, he did not believe the company needed major change. To some degree, he felt personally threatened by all the change. To some degree, he was afraid that he could not produce both change and the expected operating profit. But despite the fact that they backed the renewal effort, the other officers did virtually nothing to stop the one blocker. Again, the reasons were complex. The company had no history of confronting problems like this. Some people were afraid of the officer. The CEO was concerned that he