

Paradigm Shift – Generation Y, Devil’s Advocates, and Globalisation



Old software can kill your career.

Now, more than ever, attitude and a willingness to adapt are critical to career success in the 21st century. Motivation is no longer a cute American ‘rah-rah’ phenomenon, but a serious necessity for those wishing to do well in the new market environment. The illiterate of the 21st century are no longer those that cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and re-learn.¹ An attitude of ferocious curiosity, adaptability and creativity is therefore required in order not to get left behind. More and more Generation Y are realising that this is the case, while others struggle to fathom the seismic shift that is occurring today.

Competition in the system of Globalisation is like ‘Darwinism on steroids’.² Joseph Schumpeter, former Austrian Minister of Finance and Harvard Business School Professor, notes that the essence of capitalism in our system of Globalisation is creative destruction – the perpetual cycle of destroying the old and less efficient products and services and replacing them with new and more efficient ones.³ Human kind is destined to do things ‘better, faster, quicker’, and while many in Generation Y are surfing on the fore-front of global entrepreneurialism, political developments and exploring new communication and lifestyle freedoms, others stream-line their energy to smashing McDonalds shopfronts and burning Starbucks tall latte cups.

While the author does not intend to pass judgement on either activities, suffice it to say that one of these categories of Generation Y is better suited for survival in this environment of ‘Global Darwinism’ than the other.

There is an inherent irony in Generation Why? behaviours. On one hand they are the most medicated generation in history, on the other hand they are very focused on personal development, evolution and happiness. They are also more externally focused and world aware (through the internet) than any other previous generation, while at the same time obsessed with the search for personal meaning.

Constant change is a way of life for them, yet many strive for traditional family values. They question the sobriety in job or industry loyalty, while at the same time seeking coaching, feed-back, and competent leadership for their own progress. It is almost like they play Devil’s Advocate with themselves. This flexibility of perceptual positions gives them a huge advantage in their analytical, communication and investigative competencies.

Like our Starbucks-smashing citizens, people in the West have over-estimated the effects of outsourcing in the short-term and underestimated its effects in the long-term. While the border-flattening effects of Globalisation mean a great increase in competition for jobs for Aussie Generation Y, as Indians, Chinese, Chileans, Russians and Brazilians have entered the educated fore, there are significant signs that promise prosperous and fulfilling times for our ambitious youngsters – both in the short and long-term.

1 Alvin Toffler, Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century

2 Thomas Friedman, The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalisation,

3 Joseph Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy

Idea-based workers do well in a global society – there is no limit to the number of idea-generated jobs in the world.⁴ But it is not enough anymore just to have brains and talent. Corporations are looking for a total picture. They won't put someone into a position unless they can see them as congruent with the company's image.⁵ Human attributes such as empathy, creativity and being able to shape oneself into a holistic being are aspects of a personality which are continuously gaining market recognition.⁶ So, while traditional white-collar, left-brain driven jobs are being outsourced from Australia, the US and Europe, right-brain driver competencies have quickly gained in stature and demand.

Louis Pasteur – 'fortune favours the prepared mind'

There is only one way to achieve success in the era of Globalisation: you have to constantly upgrade your skills. There will be plenty of good jobs out there in the flat world for people with the knowledge and the ideas to seize them. This means that 'you actually want to become really adaptable. You want constantly to acquire new skills, knowledge, and expertise that enable you constantly to be able to create value'.⁷ The world needs our young people to be the generation of strategic optimists, the generation with more dreams than memories, the generation that wakes up each morning and not only imagines that things can be better but also acts on that imagination every day.⁸ This attitude is the key to success and many in Generation Y have consciously or unconsciously made this link.

If the world operates as one big market, every employee will compete with every person anywhere in the world who is capable of doing the same job. There are lots of them and many of them are hungry.⁹ Remember that in China, when you are one in a million, there are 1300 others with the same talent, motivation and foresight as yourself. You are not competing in the Australian market anymore – you are competing in the global market.

We are moving from an economy and a society built on the logical, linear, computer-like capabilities of the information age, to an economy and society built on the inventive, empathic, big-picture capabilities of what is rising in its stead – The Conceptual Age.¹⁰ One of the main concepts that shapes this new age involves the capacity to detect patterns and opportunities, the ability to empathise with others, to understand the subtleties of human interaction, to find joy in one's self and to elicit it in others and to stretch beyond the everyday ordinary in pursuit of purpose and meaning.¹¹ Not only do these competencies make for a better world, they are also hugely satisfactory for the individual.

Left brain directed thinking remains indispensable, but it is no longer sufficient for success in the Conceptual Age. What we need instead is a Whole New Mind, a motivated attitude and a willingness to adapt.

'Society needs all kinds of skill that are not just cognitive; they're emotional, they're affectional'¹² -
Alvin Toffler, Futurist and Corporate Revolution Strategist

To survive in this age, Generation Y and organisations must examine what they are doing to earn a living and ask themselves three fundamental questions:¹³

4 Thomas Friedman, The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century
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6 Daniel Pink, A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age
7 Thomas Friedman, The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century
8 Thomas Friedman, The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century
9 Andrew Grove, President of Intel Corp, in James Dale Davidson and Lord William Rees-Mogg, The Sovereign Individual: Mastering the Transition to the Information Age
10 Daniel Pink, A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age
11 Daniel Pink, A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age
12 Alvin Toffler, The Third Wave
13 Daniel Pink, A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age

- 1 Can someone do it cheaper?
- 2 Can a computer do it faster?
- 3 Is what I am offering in demand in an age of abundance?

The answer to these questions will give you a good indication of whether the industry you are considering, or pursuing, a career in will be in continued demand in the 21st century. At the same time, pursuing your passions, a right-brain activity, is likely to always provide you with the recognition, income and fulfilment that you desire. More happiness increases productivity and thus results in higher income. Enjoying the state of flow which comes from working on your calling, rather than on a job per se, predicts Dr Seligman, will soon overtake material reward as the principal reason for working.¹⁴

'A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately at peace with himself'- Abraham Maslow

Thus, we finally seem to have reached a time in history when following one's calling is not only viable from a personal fulfilment perspective, but also holds the key to guaranteeing financial success in the 21st Century – as long as it is matched with a motivated attitude and a ferocious willingness to adapt and learn. The message to Generation Y – stop smashing McDonalds, find your positive meaning in life and pursue it with passion, and you are bound to be met with success – however you define it.

About Thinque:

[Thinque](#) is a boutique training and coaching firm leveraging the latest in cutting-edge global communication methodologies, tailored for our growing family of peak performers who seek immediate and permanent results by offering customised programs with on-going support to guarantee that you don't have regrets. We specialise in training and coaching tailored for Generation Y and X.

Peak Performance Coaching and Corporate Communication Trainings

[Thinque](#) is a coaching and corporate training company that focuses on your motivation, peak performance and success. We provide personal and professional development solutions in the form of one-on-one coaching and corporate and public seminars and NLP trainings. Based in Sydney, Australia, our NLP Trainers cater to clients nationally and internationally, and pride ourselves on our custom-tailored and professional solutions.

Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP)

At [Thinque](#), we provide state of the art human communication solutions in our public and private Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) (NLP describes how external information is processed internally resulting in a certain behaviour.), Hypnotherapy and Time Line Therapy Trainings which are stream-lined to provide our students with learning and integration that moves you, your career, and your business from where they are to where you ultimately desire them to be.

Our Mission

Our mission at [Thinque](#) is to live our dreams while empowering people and businesses to live theirs. Our inspiration is your fulfillment of your corporate, professional, personal, career and life goals, through the use of Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP), Hypnotherapy and Time Line Therapy Trainings. We are passionate about what we do and the results our clients have been able to achieve and are continually achieving in a motivated and successful fashion.

14 Dr Martin Seligman, Authentic Happiness