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# doing business richly

how to gain financial as well as human fulfillment

for enterprising innovators  
and innovative entrepreneurs  
who care about the world

désirée murk-scholten



thanks to  
**JCI** 

This book was  
41 days  
in the top 100  
of management  
books,  
highest ranking  
nr 13.  
In The Netherlands,  
2011.

## Désirée Murk-Scholten

Author of the book *doing business richly*®

"Since 1995 I have helped hundreds of mid-sized and small enterprises in making innovation opportunities clear and understandable, and in strengthening the capacity for innovation. This led gradually to my vision of 'doing business richly.' My path took me to foreign countries. I was asked to present 'Doing Business Richly' in India, Hungary, Cameroon, Tunisia, Lebanon, Germany, Curacao, Denmark, Japan, Surinam, Spain, Russia, Sweden, Belgium, Poland, and Jordan."

"For more than ten years I worked at Syntens as an innovation adviser, in the Netherlands and on Curaçao. I really should say: I have learned, played, and especially experimented. In 2007 it was time for renewal for myself, and I started my own business. I already knew then that I wanted to write this book. The nomination of my essay "Se la forma scompare la sua radice è eternal" for the Management Essay Prize 2006 was the last push I needed. In 2009 I received the JCI award of 'Best National Trainer.' And in 2010 I became the JCI ITF (International Trainer Fellow) and senator."

"Now I know that the foundations of doing business richly were formed as far back as when I studied business administration at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. And at the universities of Louvain la Neuve, Tunis, and Budapest. I was like a fish in the water there. Totally on my path. A path of rich sowing and rich harvesting. **Now it is time for sharing**"

"Doing business richly is what I am going for with my business. Doing business that gives commercial as well as human fulfillment."

New times, new solutions. Do you feel you are at a crossroads with your business or in your professional role? Then it is time to take the road of doing business richly. I help entrepreneurs, management teams, and employees in innovating toward doing business richly. I do this in all kinds of ways: individual programs with entrepreneurs, group sessions, training sessions, lectures, visualization, and even meditation.

It is characteristic of my way of working that opportunities and choices reveal themselves from the intellect and intuition, from achievement and pleasure, from preserving and innovating, from knowing and not knowing.

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## eBook 2012

new times, new solutions

doing business richly

for enterprising innovators  
and  
innovating entrepreneurs

désirée murk-scholten

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## paper book:

first printing

2010

second and third printing

2011

fourth printing

2012

photos:

désirée murk-scholten

design and realization:

arthur hermans

printing and binding:

libertas printers

ISBN: 978-90-815935-1-9

NUR: 801, 728

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For Annabel and Floris

On the one hand you invite me to be deep inside at the source, and at the same time you challenge me to play in the here and now. What a treasure you are!

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**Speaking:**

**Paul de Blot SJ**

Professor of Business Spirituality, Business University Nyenrode

## Doing Business Richly from the Broader Perspective of Business Spirituality

In this book about business and innovation from awareness, Désirée starts from the undercurrent—as opposed to the surface of our doings. In the force field between these two, paradoxical forces manifest themselves. Every organization is about people—and people are spiritually energized and physically formed. This relationship between body and soul, between matter and spirit, has never been intellectually explained. In my opinion it is simply beyond our intellect: human nature will forever remain a mystery to the intellect. The same applies to business.

Humankind is material by nature, and is thus connected to the entire material earth. Our DNA contains all the elements found in all other living things and nonliving matter. As long as a person remains alive, all those elements remain connected in the body, but at death everything reverts to dust. In essence, people turn out to be matter. Désirée calls that the surface or surface current. In business we speak of tangibles, such as physical products and buildings. People in the business world are then called visibles, as seen in the roles they assume and the manner in which they do business.

But mankind is also spiritual by nature, transcending and energizing matter. It is miraculous that two opposite components, body and soul, still compose a whole. From antiquity man has attempted to understand how body and soul relate to each other. The ancient Greek philosophers tried, eastern philosophers probed the question, just about all religions have reflected upon it, but it is and remains a mystery. Language can get close; if you are sensitive, you may recognize it. This way, you gain insight into the secret of inspiration, but you never quite get there.

Descartes thought he could gain an insight into unintelligible reality by cutting it up. This analytical method has indeed provided science with new insights, but they were limited to the material—the upper or surface current. Mankind itself was successfully cut up and analyzed by medical specialties. Even management systems were based on analysis. Man became a machine, a component of the

assembly line. The organization was chopped up and became a disciplined mechanical unit. Freud took this analytical method a step further in his psychoanalysis, which cuts up the human psyche.

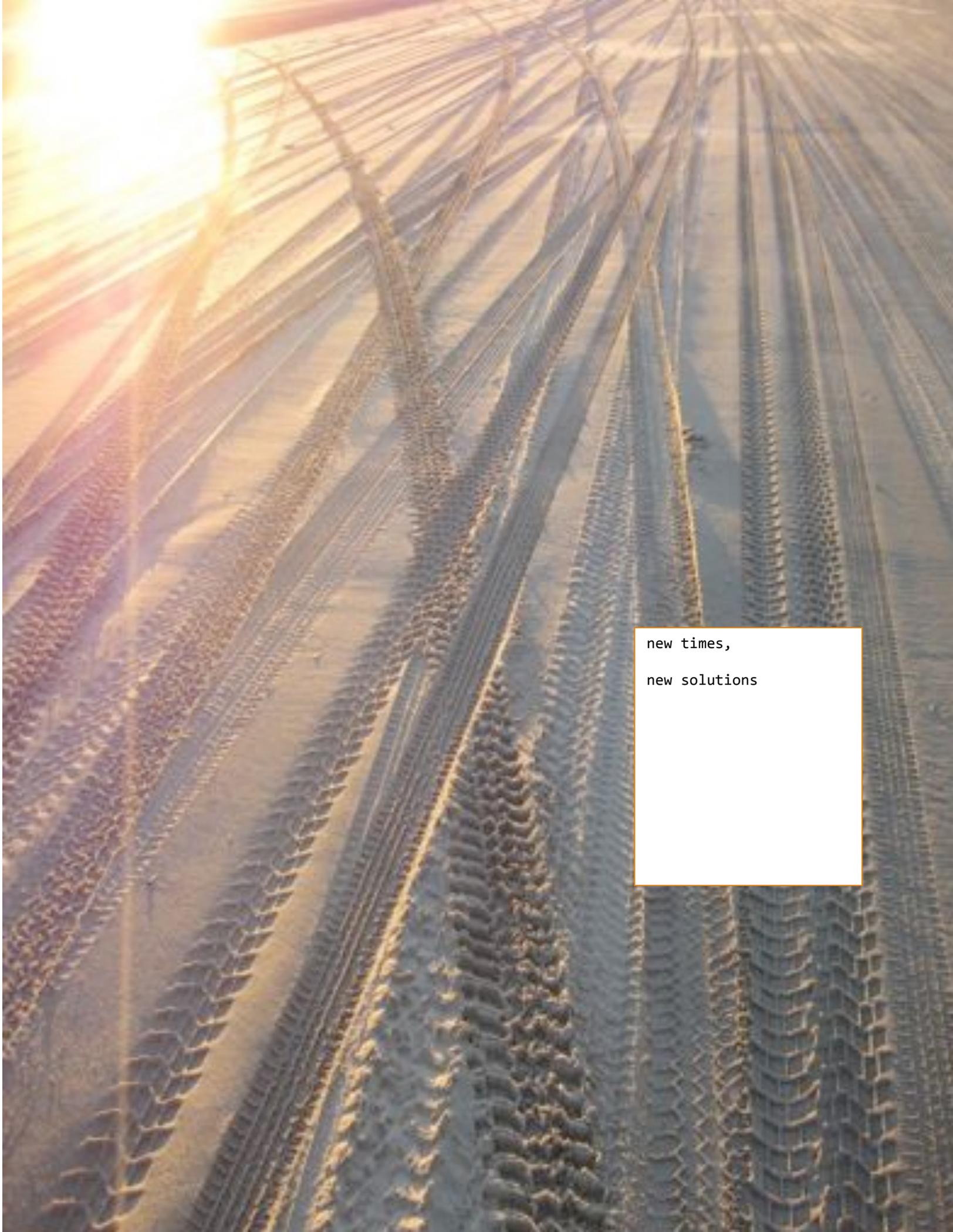
In Cartesian analysis, however, a significant error was made: it was based on the assumption that reality consisted solely of measurable matter. The world of the spirit was ignored, because it was not observable through the senses, and therefore not measurable. In Désirée's words: the undercurrent was ignored. The analytical method brought us specialized knowledge of the parts, but no insight into the whole. The one-sided focus on the material world resulted in fragmentation everywhere: in organizations, in social provisions, in education. The surface current, as Désirée calls it, gets all the attention.

Fortunately, along came a powerful countercurrent, which recognizes the undercurrent. By nature, this undercurrent of the spiritual life, of spirituality and of the giving of meaning belongs with the surface current. The two form one whole. The interplay between these currents has chaotic and paradoxical traits. As an entity of two opposites, it lies outside the reach of the intellect. The Tao system of Yin and Yang gives a practical answer to this paradox. We are talking about an entity of two opposite components that reinforce each other in their juxtaposition and thus produce greater cohesion.

It is about an entity of undercurrent and surface current, which complement and reinforce each other through their contrast. There is the riches. What does business look like from the unity of surface current and undercurrent? We no longer do business like a disciplined machine, but we do business with inspiration. We do business from inspiration. Désirée speaks of doing business richly.

Friendship and love are divine. How did that come about? Better ask God. An answer to this question may be found in a creation story found in practically all religions, which explains that mystery. I want to clarify this through one story. In the beginning there was only Spirit, which in chaos created a separation between heaven and earth, and then between earth and water. Then came plants and animals and finally man. God took of the earth and sculpted a human being. He blew his breath into the being's nose and man lived. Man was of the earth (earthly) but breathed God's spirit in and out. Man was entrusted with the care of the earth, but he felt alone. Therefore God created woman from his side. Woman became man's heart. Thus woman became the heart of man, and they became one. The surface current of the man and the undercurrent of the woman became one.





new times,  
new solutions

# Introduction

new times, new solutions

It is becoming ever more clear that as human beings—and therefore as a society, including our business world—we stand at the threshold of a new phase of the evolutionary process. We live in turbulent times. Even nature shows that we as humans are on the whole puny players. We are overwhelmed by volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, uncontrollable oil disasters that turn basic life upside down. The financial-economic crisis is way over everybody's head. Rescue plans are devised at an astronomical cost barely conceivable to man, and worse yet, at costs whose effects mankind can hardly grasp. It feels like we are applying Band-Aids instead of preventing wounds. As if we put out forest fires rather than clean out kindling. It feels as if we are helpless in the face of a power greater than ourselves. We have no control. We are no more than a toy. Individually also, people are uneasy, personally as well as businesswise. We are working hard on the problem, with our technology, our information, and our creativity. But we still find ourselves in the turbulent waves at the ocean surface.

If you have ever been tossed about in a tumultuous ocean by powerful currents with towering waves, you know that there is no sense in swimming in an enormous urge to survive. The only thing you can do is dive under the wave, to where the quiet is, and then float along. Don't fight against the current, go with it. This is what we are called upon to do: diving to the undercurrent, in stillness. Connect with the grand plan: the greater powers that far exceed ours. The powers that make it so clear that we have gone too far, that we are trapped in materialism, technology, and money, that we have worked too much on division, separation, and denial of greater powers. We are cut off from the Source, and are now being shaken about. We are on the threshold of a new phase in the evolutionary process: the phase of greater awareness. The phase of greater awareness of the unique undercurrent. People and businesses each have a unique undercurrent, an invisible path, according to the destination of our unique lives. That is the only right way to choose. All our unique, pure undercurrents together form the common road we need to follow as a society. For we have one Mother Earth, one God or however you want to phrase it.

And it is not only about living from a higher awareness, but also about venturing, managing, working, and doing business from a high awareness of one's own unique undercurrent. We are called, not only as human beings but as businesses and companies to navigate our own undercurrents. Businesses, too, have a soul, a core essence, an undercurrent. And it is more than that: we are called upon to allow our undercurrents to flow and resonate through our products, services, and technologies. And we are still not there. We cannot stand still; in order to move ahead on our path, we must renew, innovate. You understand that we have to innovate from a high awareness of the undercurrent, and, of course, also from an awareness of what the market values. You do business richly when your dealings match your undercurrent and the valuation by the market. You keep on doing business richly when you innovate from your undercurrent, along with appreciation by the market.

This is what makes this book unique. Countless books have been written about personal high awareness. Countless books have been written about high awareness as a business culture, woven through organizational structure and vision. Countless books have also been written about innovation. But there was no book about doing business and innovating from a high awareness. How do you innovate so that the market values it and you and your business keep making progress on the undercurrent?

Because people as well as businesses have their own undercurrent, you are being addressed personally in this book, and your business is being addressed. Where I address you personally, you may also read *business*, and vice versa. Perhaps you don't have a business of your own. Doesn't matter. To me, your business is the place where you work.

This book is intended for enterprising innovators and innovative entrepreneurs. For those who want to see through the external illusion of themselves and their businesses. For those who want to experience the essence and origin behind all that. For those who want to take the helm into their own hands and dare change course if necessary. Those who do not follow the course of their heads or hearts, but of their instincts.

Do you realize that new times demand new solutions? Are you open to a new vision, reflection, inspiration, and action? Then I have written this book for you. I wish you rich business!



# What is doing business richly?

## chapter 1

Do you remember doing business at one time or another and everything seemed to run by itself? A new contact happened by and turned out to be very useful, and then something happened to give the business a good push in the right direction, and all of a sudden from an unexpected source came surprising interest... In the end you had done good business and you looked back on that business with a rich feeling. You had set a train in motion, as it were. More and more people jumped on the train; the train seemed to find its track all by itself, and in the end everyone had done business richly.

And do you remember doing business and it seemed like a battle? You were pushing and pulling to try and draw people over the line. In the most positive case you reached your goal in the end, but you were totally spent. You had the distinct feeling that you had done everything all by yourself. You felt little appreciation from others and somewhere loomed the question: "Is this it?" That's the difference between trees that grow big and thrive effortlessly, and those that wither and die.

Doing business richly, effortlessly  
thriving tree (blossoming)>



I am sure you know both scenarios. The picture on the right is typical rich business. Everything works and you feel as if you get help from every side, even by "accident." Financially and economically your goal has been reached and you inwardly feel richly fulfilled. The second scenario, call it doing poor business, is one I know well myself. How often have I undertaken projects and fallen for the temptation to get going under my own power. A few obstacles on the way? Push harder and find a quick solution! Reached the goal? Must have more—something must be missing! Because I did not stay with my roots, the uneasiness began. I was not in touch with myself. I didn't listen enough to my undercurrent, to the unique path that has been laid out for me. Through many years of self-reflecting and helping other entrepreneurs reflect, I have got in touch with my path. From the moment I connected with my path I have experienced that doing business can be different—it can be rich!

### Are you ready to take your own path?

I remember feeling, two years ago, that I very much wanted to share my vision of doing business richly internationally. I knew a convention was coming up in India. I had a strong feeling my path would go via India. I decided to apply. And yes, they invited me! I was delighted. What happened next? That invitation was only the beginning. A week after I heard I could go to India, they asked me if I could also facilitate a session on corporate social responsibility! I was pleasantly surprised; I had not counted on this originally. Another week later there was another request: could I train up-and-coming trainers? I gratefully accepted the abundance. Eventually I departed for India all excited. A day before I was to do the sessions "Doing business richly," my glance fell upon the *Times of India*.



The newspaper had a very unusual front page such as I had never seen. Across the entire page was a diagonal bar with the words "Ready to take your own path?" This "coincidence" hit the core of doing business richly: you can do business richly only when you are on your path in life. The first step in doing business richly, therefore, is deciding to walk your own unique path! It's easy to see how wonderful it was when I could open the session "Doing business richly" the next day with this newspaper. In short, with my feeling that my path would take me through India a train took off. Gradually more and more "coincidental" businesses and people jumped aboard and I have done business richly without much effort. Doing business richly, by the way, has nothing to do with working hard, or often, or little. It's about whether you have easily sown a lasting harvest. Often that involves many hours, but they don't feel like hard work. Just go back in your memory to a moment when you did business effortlessly. If you don't know right away you are probably thinking in your head. Then sit squarely on your chair with both feet firmly on the floor, breathe in and out deeply, and ask yourself: "When did I do business very richly?" See what comes up. It doesn't have to be something big—it may be small. When you ask yourself that question a few more times, you will see that more and more situations come to mind when you did business richly.

Do you see that you have everything inside you to do business richly? You don't have to go looking for it: it's there!

The primary business of doing business is enrichment

Making money is the primary concern of doing business. Businesses that produce the greatest enrichment are businesses that are financially and economically interesting, and at the same time provide rich personal fulfillment. I look at it holistically: that is, not from different sections or compartments. I see everything as a whole. Certain businesses may not produce wealth in one particular area, but one area enriches another. Let me give an example. For JCI—a networking organization to create better leaders—I have organized a national convention about business spirituality. Spirituality is a theme of the undercurrent in my work as an innovation adviser to entrepreneurs. Through the same spiritual undercurrent I shape the upbringing of our children and my personal development. Some people did not understand why I put so much time and energy into a convention that did not financially benefit me at all. To top it off, I could have done business during that time that would have been financially interesting to me. But for me, the punch line is that everything enriches everything else, since everything I do—family, work, JCI, personal—is based on the same undercurrent. The new contacts alone that I make through this convention are useful in my work. Because of the convention, I also started taking courses in business spirituality. That is not only reflected in the way I work but also, for instance, in the raising of our children. Doing business richly, therefore, is a typically holistic vision. I take this concept a step further. When one individual does business that truly enriches him—financially, economically, personally—that enrichment

trickles down to other individuals and companies. It multiplies itself. Thus, when you do business richly yourself, you also give others the chance to do business richly. Herein lies the great profit of doing business richly.

## Characteristics of businesses and individuals who do business richly

Businesses and individuals who do business richly possess certain characteristics that stimulate the current of abundance. The reverse is also true: the opposites of these characteristics stagnate the current. Let me sketch for you the seven most noticeable characteristics.

- ✓ They don't need great stories to impress, and they don't need to surround themselves with prestige, present themselves in a favorable light, or court appreciation. Maybe they enjoy being appreciated, but they don't beat their chests. On the contrary, people who do business richly easily puncture stories told in superlatives.
- ✓ They dare follow their undercurrents and innovate in order to keep making progress on their paths, without losing their sense of self. They don't stay put in a familiar place, and do not choose the warm bath or the golden chain. That would stagnate the current. Inevitably, there would be signals from the outside (being fired, retraction of orders) and from the inside (a feeling of uneasiness) indicating that renewal is needed. Entrepreneurs who do business richly take the helm themselves, and are not the plaything of the force field that surrounds them.
- ✓ They work from trust, rest, and alertness. Whoever is on his life's path, on his own unique undercurrent, senses the genuine trust that the tree thrives on its own, from its roots. Working from rest enriches; hectic activity disturbs the ability to feel trust, which stagnates the current. Alertness helps us to keep seeing and sensing the signals. I always had a feeling of urgency, as if I were in the starting blocks. Before the starting shot was given, I was out of there. It is still helpful to me to lean back literally and figuratively. That makes me feel right away that the current works with me, and the cosmos for me.
- ✓ They stay true to their own souls and the soul of the business. In spite of innovations, they keep the soul of the business, its very core, alive. I asked an IT entrepreneur whom I had not seen for two years, how he had been doing since our last meeting. His answer was sad. He said, "My biggest customers left. I had no other choice but to ask our suppliers to buy into the business. I knew they were pretty smooth characters. But what could I do?" As a result, the entrepreneur's pleasure in his work had disappeared; he no longer felt like a fish in water

in his own company. Through the merger with a business that did business from a completely different undercurrent, his company literally failed.

- ✓ They are grateful and show gratitude for the stream that comes to them. Those who are not alert from trust and rest sometimes do not even notice the enormous torrent of opportunities that is coming at them. They are focused only on problems that have to be solved. And so, more and more problems come at them. Sometimes they notice, but push them away. When someone has done a whole lot for me, I can respond as follows: "I'm sorry I have asked so much of you. For now I can go ahead again and I won't bother you anymore. Thanks very much." Or I can react with: "I really appreciate your efforts; I realize how unique that is, and I thank you with all my heart for being willing to do all this for me." The first response holds the stream back; you don't dare accept all the riches that's coming to you. With the second reaction you welcome the stream with open arms, and it will run even stronger.
- ✓ They are dedicated from their very souls. Those who do business richly are involved to their core with the business they do. I shared my vision of doing business richly with entrepreneurs in Cameroon. I got into a conversation with an entrepreneur who owns forty Internet businesses in Cameroon. He started his first businesses in 1994! That was early, because I was still studying business at Erasmus University at that time—without the Internet! I asked him what had got into him to be starting and expanding an Internet business back then. He smiled and pointed upward: "God," he said. "God inspires my work."



- ✓ They reflect holistically. That is the way to grow in doing business richly. Some people say, "Don't look for hidden meanings everywhere; don't be so difficult and just go on with your business." Reflection is not about thinking till it gives you a headache. It's about seeing connections in the larger whole from above. At the same time you look "under water" to feel what message you are receiving: how can the next time be even richer for you, your business, and therefore for others? When you turn one wheel, they all start turning.

## Three sources of doing business richly

This book is made up of three main sections that correspond to the three sources of doing business richly. To do business richly you can draw from these sources; they need to be replenished if we are to do business richly. In this book we will experience these three sources more deeply:

1. The first source that needs to be nourished is the path, or the undercurrent. The path is invisible. What elements determine your undercurrent or that of a business? How do you explore this undercurrent? What is my undercurrent or that of my business? When and how do I do a path innovation?
2. The second source is the form, or the surface, which should be nourished. This includes all that is tangible and visible, such as products, services, technologies, types of clients, your own role in the company and so forth. How do you sense whether your forms fit in with your undercurrent, if you have chosen the correct form for your business and for yourself? How do I get to sensible goals and results? When and how do I innovate forms?
3. The third source consists of seven paradoxes that together affect the path and the form. How do I keep relaxation in these paradoxes so that they produce enrichment? When and how do I innovate paradoxes?

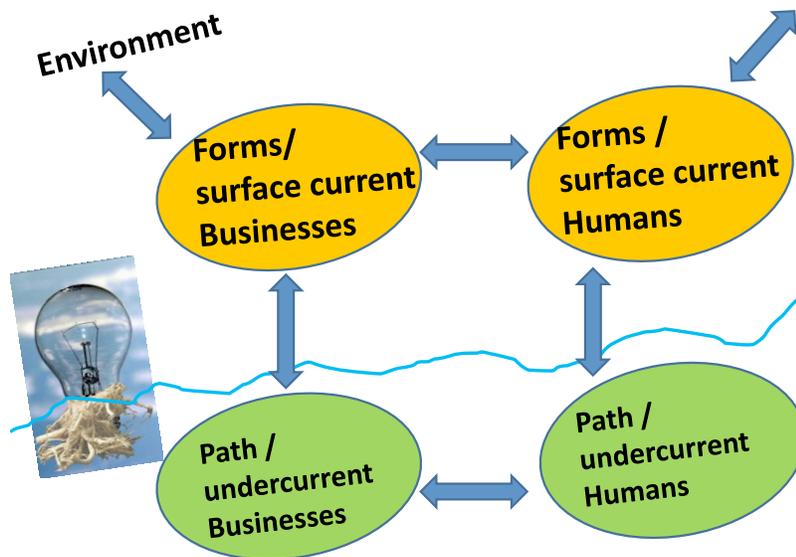
## Undercurrent: our path

In order to create those readily thriving trees you do business richly. How does that work exactly? I assume that we and our businesses have a unique path, our lives' undercurrent, as it were. By undercurrent I mean a path that belongs to us personally, a path that is geared to our essence and plots the way to our own unique destination in life. I can imagine that path or that undercurrent also as a sort of underground cable that functions as my guide book. The undercurrent is invisible, but you can get a feel for it by examining four elements: talents, values, incentives, and destination.

## Surface current: forms

"Aboveground" we deal with all kinds of visible forms in daily life: certain products, services, clients, and colleagues. We personally fill certain roles and show certain capabilities. Those, too, are forms in the undercurrent. Doing business richly is possible only when what we do and how we do business in the surface current match our unique undercurrents exactly, and the market values that.

For me, for instance, it was never an option to follow in my father's footsteps. He had built up a large clothing business. They manufactured high-end ladies' coats. Clothing certainly is a form that makes my heart beat faster. But forms such as technique, machines, and production processes do not fit at all with my undercurrent of experience, harmony, and feeling. The sound of machines disturbs me. When a machine malfunctions, I have two left hands. My father has done business richly, but I could never have done business richly there. In other words, whoever gives form to his own unique undercurrent can do business richly. This does not go only for people. It also goes for businesses: they have their own unique undercurrents. The past, the present, the founder, and the collective workers carry the business's soul inside them. Businesses also do business to the richest possible extent when they manage to give form to their undercurrents. For a business, therefore, it is necessary to choose a form—a business concept that is economically interesting and at the same time gives form to the soul of the business.



< Humans and businesses

In the figure above you can see that humans as well as businesses have their own undercurrents, and by doing business, forms are created for people as well as for businesses.

Imagine that an entrepreneur chooses a form that matches his own path as well as that of his business: the lines tally horizontally as well as vertically. This generates a flow of abundance! It's remarkable that when you are on your path in doing business, it seems like a flywheel has been put into motion. You get help from people and from businesses that fall into your lap from the cosmos.

Doing business richly is a continuous process of reflection. I have written this book on the subject, but in the end doing business richly is not book wisdom. It is a reflective peeling off of layers, moving from "What am I doing, what is my business doing?" to "Who am I and who is my business?" Then "Who am I and who is my business?" builds to "What am I doing and what is my business doing?" The entrepreneur and the enterprise cannot be viewed separate from one another.

My husband and a partner have an art business. The average income from art is not very high. But they do business richly. In the first place, they and the people with whom they give form to the business, have art in their genes and in every cell and fiber of their bodies. Therefore, everything they do comes from inside. In the second place, they have thought of a clever concept by organizing, several times a year, an exhibition of upcoming talent for some business. One artist is featured every time who is about to break through, and is therefore still affordable. For a certain amount the client buys their work from this exhibition. That gives them some guaranteed income. They also open the exhibition at that company to a wider public, generating extra publicity, attention, and income. This is how they give form to their business. As I said: everything really comes from inside. And as a client you notice that: when they have sold a piece of art, they don't ship it by FedEx. No, they deliver the purchased artwork personally, to a home or business. They give advice as to where it might be hung for best effect. When that spot has been determined, out comes the drill and they hang the artwork themselves. Before they leave, they take the time to enjoy the beautiful destination that piece of art has found. You can imagine what effect all this has on the client. The paths of both entrepreneurs and that of their business parallel each other, and they have found a form that matches both their own and their business's path exactly. The forms reflects the paths, as it were.



Margriet Smulders photographs exotic flowers on mirrors. The flowers and the cloth on the mirror may be compared to the tangible forms of the surface current of doing business richly. When you do business richly, forms exactly mirror the undercurrent.

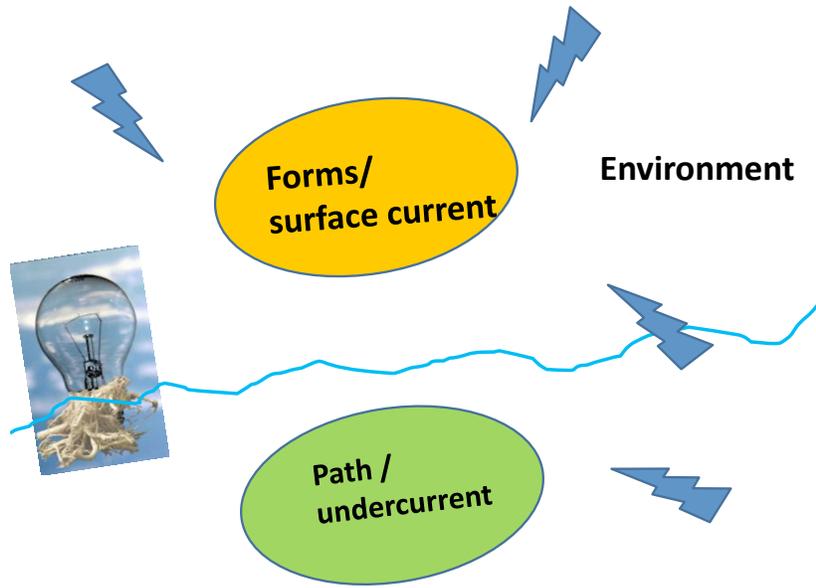
< Margriet Smulders

## Paradoxical forces

A path and a form of a person or a business do not stand alone. Einstein has already demonstrated that everything is energy, and therefore all things are connected. We and our businesses are also energy, and we are part of a large energy field, where everything is connected. Sometimes you know your own path and that of your business. You give it form as well as you can in daily life, but yet there is some imbalance or uneasiness. This is because certain forces in yourself, in your business, or in your surroundings clash by definition. Those are paradoxical forces.

I distinguish seven:

- ✓ Doing—being: If you only *do* you burn out; if you only *are*, you float about without results. We often have a decided preference for one or the other. Only in relaxed interaction can you do business richly.
- ✓ Entrepreneur—enterprise: To what extent are the things that are good for you also good for your business and vice versa? At times this is an area of stress. "I really want to take a trip around the world, but my workers and clients want me to be physically present here."
- ✓ Preservation—innovation: "We have to go along with the times but we don't want to renew." You can taste the tension. Innovating can be scary if you think you have something valuable to lose.
- ✓ Intuition—intellect: "My guts tell me yes but my head tells me no." A familiar pressure for many, especially in times of crisis.
- ✓ Zooming in—zooming out: Do you see the big picture or are you inclined to dive into detail? Both carry risks. A healthy interaction is needed for doing business richly.
- ✓ Us—they: "If we grease somebody's palm at the border in Africa, we'll get there faster to provide help, but we also keep the corrupt system alive for everyone."
- ✓ Prudence—spontaneity: When everything has been carefully projected and laid out, things always progress without a hitch according to predictable plans, and the passion disappears, but when everything happens spontaneously, we miss the overall direction and forget half. By emphasizing one or the other, we create stress.



Paradoxical forces play a role in matching path and form. They produce tension inside a person, inside a business, and in the interaction with the outside world. The trick is to relax these conflicts. When you allow paradoxical forces to freely interact, they become enriching.

### Original innovating

Innovating is a process of dreaming, thinking, daring, and doing. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses in these four phases. I know entrepreneurs who generate ideas continuously, but have trouble executing them. I know entrepreneurs who are very good at thinking through and accounting for things according to a plan, but have a tendency to get stuck there, because they don't dare take the leap. I know entrepreneurs who have the guts to start a new market or easily take action without seeing clearly what they are doing because they haven't thought the matter through very well to begin with. Within virtually every innovation process lurks the possibility that the innovation will not work out. In that case we typically look for excuses. The most common excuse is "We didn't have enough time for it," or "It wasn't the right time." When is the right time to make time for innovation?

In practice, I often see two triggers for innovation: When the pain of the present situation is too great, or when the desire for an imaginary ideal situation becomes too strong. In the first case, people choose "Get rid of the pain," and in the second "Let's go for what we want."

But what do I mean by innovation? For me, innovation is every transformation that is new for the business. Doing business richly is what you do when your path and form coincide, paradoxes have been overcome, and forms have been chosen that are interesting and promising financially and

economically. That is a lot. So it is understandable that innovation is not only fun—it can generate a lot of energy—but also necessary if we want to keep doing business richly. Someone who does business richly never innovates simply as a reaction to his surroundings. The wake-up calls may well come from the market. But someone who does business richly innovates from his origins, from his undercurrent. I sometimes call it original innovation.

I provided some guidance for a communications company that designs magazines. The market for the printed media had just wound up in a difficult place. Clients cut back on monthly publications. The Internet was a hip and speedy replacement. But the Internet did not in essence stir this company. They would not be deliriously happy by designing a cover for their bids to online media. With heart and soul they loved paper. During one session I sent these people outside to go for a walk alone and in silence. A new product resulted from this that touched them deeply: they would see that within eight hours of the event everyone who attended an event or a convention would have a physical magazine in his or her hands that kept the content and the experience of this event alive. This combination of Internet speed and the tangible quality of the magazine turned out to be a vacancy in the market.

### The way of the future: Innovation of form and path

I refer to innovation by doing business richly as original innovation. *Original* points to the source, the soul, the undercurrent, the original path. Form innovation is about finding new forms from the origins. An example of form innovation is moving to a new building that fits exactly who we are. Path innovation is about allowing the original path to develop and then following it. A path innovation includes a renewal of the undercurrent, the essence. A paradox innovation is about achieving a relaxed combination of paradoxical forces.

The road we took in the past determines where we find ourselves in the present. We have made certain choices or have let ourselves drift in a certain direction, because of trust, desire, or perhaps fear. If the chosen way does not totally satisfy you, it is good to remember there is simply no way back. The only thing there is, is this moment. Now. Now you can make choices for yourself and for your business. You can make the choice to alter the road of the future without ignoring the past. The road of the future can be altered in three ways: changing form, and/or returning to our path, and/or relaxing the paradoxes. And perhaps in a certain situation we need and-and-and rather than or-or-or.

Innovation does not always have to be grand or rigorous. Innovation can be small and delicate. The timing of innovation is important. By innovating at the right time the enriching energy of doing business can flow on through. The realistic question is, What step is good for us now? without letting fear guide your actions.

Innovation cannot be separated from doing business richly. Because doing business richly is a continuous process, doing business always prompts renewal:

- ✓ Those who are not on their path will need to innovate to get back to the path.
- ✓ Those who are on the path need innovation to keep progressing on their path.
- ✓ Those who experience tension in the paradoxical forces need innovation to create relaxation.



**Questions** > What do you see in your mirror? > In percentages, how moved are you to your very soul by the business you are doing and the way in which you do it? > To what extent do you experience abundance? > What takes no effort? > What takes energy? > Do you dare acknowledge what negative matters keep coming back? > To what exact extent are you on your path as a human being? > To what exact extent is your business on its path?



Section I

**first source**

**of doing business richly: undercurrent**



## Section I

unique path  
I can  
we can  
I stand for  
we stand for  
I want  
we want  
I go for  
we go for  
contact  
path innovation

# Your unique path

## Chapter 2

Invisible to us, but perceptible is the unique path we have been given in this life, which is our essence. Those who do business without feeling the deeper meaning of their business, do business superficially. I compare it to the following: When I worked in Curaçao as an innovation adviser, I fell for the temptation of learning to dive. As soon as I dove into the watery depths a whole new world opened up to me! Great silence and tranquility, through which fish and coral allowed themselves to be carried along quietly, without having any idea of the hard, busy world outside. I found it so surprising that along with the rapid world in which we do our thing there is always such an enormously quiet underwater world that you normally don't even see, and whose existence you are not even aware of. Thus it is with our own undercurrent, our path. When you do business ordinarily, you don't know about it. When your undercurrent starts *feeling*, you do business from your deepest soul, from your essence. Actually, your undercurrent is a sort of deeply hidden common denominator, which underlies all transactions you and your business enjoy doing. It would be great if you had sort of an underwater camera with you so you could see the match between what you do and who you are.



Anutosh—inspiration from the underwater world

## Entrepreneur and enterprise: Two undercurrents

Entrepreneurs and enterprises have undercurrents of their own. In a small business, with a founder who is still running the business, the undercurrent of entrepreneur and enterprise will have many similarities, provided that he started the business from his soul. When the founder is no longer actively involved in the business, if things are right, the business will then retain at its core the soul of the entrepreneur.

I have advised the cosmetics company Hannah, whose founder had suddenly died. During the memorial service, company workers pledged that they would maintain her "stamp." This was a beautiful sentence. They referred, of course, to keeping alive the company's soul. And they do. Recently they celebrated the company's jubilee in grand fashion. They hadn't sat still, and many product innovations had been introduced. Many new cosmetics products had been added and many had been renewed, but the company's philosophy, which had inspired the development of new products, was still the same. And clients feel this. Although the founder had died several years before, and many innovations had taken place, the company's soul had been kept alive.

## Energy flows

The company founder sets his or her own stamp on a business. That is logical, because if he starts the business from his heart, the undercurrents will match in essence. Paul de Blot has discovered that family-owned businesses remain true to the company soul more often than non-family-owned businesses. When that core is not maintained—which often happens in takeovers and sales, the business leaves its path, and you notice that. You don't taste the "meaning" anymore. As a client, an employee, a manager, a director, a supplier. You can keep reorganizing, but it will never be completely right anymore. Then there is a need for reflection: "Why were we founded, what do we contribute to the world, what drives us?" The answers to these questions hardly change over time. Not until the answers are found or at least a feeling is obtained from the answers can energy begin to flow again in this business. This is the energy through which we can build the business enough so that path and form match. It is the basis of doing business richly.

## Several captains on a ship

Many businesses have several entrepreneurs. In my practice I often see that sooner or later having more than one captain on a ship can prove to be a problem. This process is faster when the entrepreneurs don't look at their own paths, each other's paths, and the company's path under water. Just go and do it. Sometimes in the beginning things are still good, but then comes

a moment when someone asks "What are we really doing, and what am I doing?" Often that is the moment when I am invited in. This is a contemplative question. A question about meaning. You both work like a dog, probably make concessions privately, and then when you don't feel the undercurrent in what you are doing, you may very well get burned out and make the business lose energy. I often see that such a moment is seized to start looking at the undercurrent of the business. What values does our business stand for? What are we good at? What do we want to contribute through our business? Where are we going with our business? This is a good process, but it is not enough. Better yet, it is not even the starting point. In the first place—and I often see that this is forgotten—it is about exploring each other's undercurrent as entrepreneurs, and getting to understand and value each other. What used to be important to you when we started this company? What was your dream? Your intent? What do you stand for when doing business, and what is so valuable to you that you can't make concessions there? When do you jump out of bed in the morning to go to work? What drives you? For me, as an innovation adviser, the starting point is exploring the undercurrent of the entrepreneur as a human being. From there I move the dialog to the business, which is then often much easier. To the entrepreneurs' surprise, the result often shows that they are much closer than they had thought. Energy can start flowing from the undercurrent. Of course, at times we also find that the paths are so far apart, or even in opposition to each other, that they separate their ways.

I advised two entrepreneurs, a man and a woman—who were not a couple in their private lives—who had started a communications bureau together. Years before, in the startup phase, they had joined their two one-man businesses. It exuded energy. The business grew and flourished. Within a year they had six employees because they created so much work. That continued. When five years later the woman took maternity leave for her first child, they had twenty-five employees. The man, meanwhile, ran the office nearly single-handedly. During that period, the man discovered that he wanted to expand. Among others, from his individual incentives he wanted to open several branch offices throughout the country. He wanted the company to be of national renown. She came back from leave and he discussed his ambitions with her. His plans required a different type of management, a different style of entrepreneurship, different roles, a different organizational structure, and so forth. In short, different forms in the surface current. They did not agree. She stood for personality, familial relationships, and she saw all this getting lost with three offices scattered about the country. He continued with half of their employees and in quick succession opened businesses in three different locations in the country. She went on and eventually changed the form of the business to a network structure, because it fit in much better with who she essentially was. The entire process took a lot of energy, and that would not have been necessary to that extent had they explored both their undercurrents much sooner.

## New-generation and old-generation colleagues

There is often tension in a business between the old and the new guard, with the new guard thinking they know it all and not taking the old guard seriously. In exploring the undercurrent, however, the old guard plays an important part. Naturally, they often represent the lasting core of the business, its essence, just like the founder. That does not mean that innovations are not needed. I advised a publishing company where the tension between the generations regarding the future direction was clearly perceptible. The older employees seemed to lose out to the renewed enthusiasm of the young guard. The young guard, however, thought it was completely right about the future of the business, and was irritated to no end with the old guard. In a dialog we looked at what it was the old guard wanted to protect. That turned out to have everything to do with the company's soul. Better yet, they did want to renew forms, but not at the expense of the essence of the business. When that was voiced and clarified, they connected again, with each other and with the soul of the business, and rich innovations were found.

## Future choices of businesses



In future-related sessions I do with businesses, I always start by exploring the undercurrent of the entrepreneur as well as of the business. Get a feeling for the paths of the people as well as of the business. Not until after that do we look at market appreciation of various forms. And not until after that do I let people think creatively about possible innovations.

Next I address their inner knowing in choosing strategic directions and checking whether that direction matches the undercurrents of entrepreneur and enterprise. That is important, so the entrepreneur does not feel like a fish out of water in his own business. Sometimes, however, it's impossible, and it becomes clear that the paths of the entrepreneur and the enterprise no longer parallel each other, but have started to diverge.

## Knowing and valuing the path

To get something of a grip on the intangible, invisible undercurrents, I have unraveled four elements that form the basis of the undercurrent. By exploring them separately and then letting them affect each other and combining them in an undercurrent, the exploration process becomes doable. I will discuss the four elements in the following four chapters.

I will start with the most visible element and move down to the most slippery element. The first and best-observable element concerns your and your company's natural qualities. What comes naturally to you? What are you naturally good at? What talents were you born with? What qualities were there from the beginning? And what about your business? What is outstanding about your business?

The second element concerns the values from which you and your company do business, such as responsibility, customer orientation, integrity.

The third element consists of incentives. What makes you and your company do business day after day? What gets you, and eventually your business, moving every day?

The fourth element is your and your company's destination. Why have this company on this earth? What are you doing to contribute to society? If, therefore, you want to get a feeling for your path, it is worth examining the following elements:

- ✓ What am I capable of; what are my natural qualities?
- ✓ What do I stand for; what are my values?
- ✓ What do I want; what are my driving forces?
- ✓ What am I aiming at; what is my destination, my calling?

And if you want to get a feeling for your company's path, discover these same elements for your business.

Each of the elements is discussed in the following chapters in the above order.



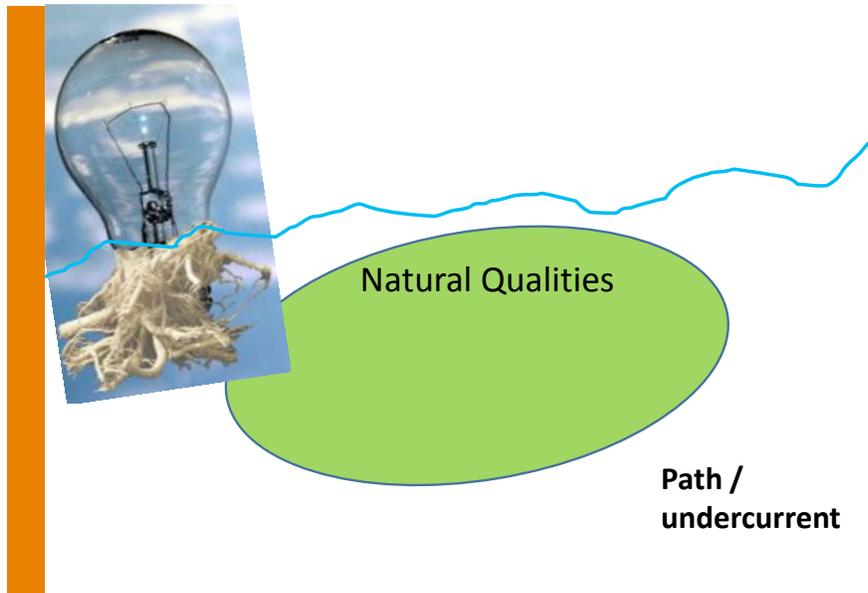
# Natural qualities: I can, we can

## Chapter 3

Natural qualities are qualities of people or businesses that seem so logical to everyone that you hardly see them as special qualities anymore. This is what you were born to be. At any rate, they are qualities acquired early in life, that together form the "nature of the beast." You take these natural qualities with you all your life. They are part of your undercurrent, your essence, your source of everything good.

People as well as businesses have natural qualities. These are the qualities that clients, suppliers, and others will always note in evaluation discussions. You may think, Oh yes, they're talking about that again; we have known that forever; isn't it obvious! At times, when during a session I start searching with people for the natural qualities of a business, they are disappointed at the qualities that emerge. They think these qualities are not so special, because they have so identified with them from an early age. They forget that these qualities are self-evident to them, but not to everyone. Many people regard them with admiration.

Natural qualities manifest themselves in all we do. Even if we should wish to hide them, we can't very well hide them. They often radiate through a person or a business. Maybe nothing has been done yet, but it is already clear. Natural qualities are therefore relatively visible for others. They signify "I am good at ... "



### Doing business richly: Using natural qualities to the full

These natural qualities belong to the undercurrent, because they come from deep within. You didn't get these natural qualities for nothing. They are there to put you on the way to your destination. For anyone to do business richly it is important to use these natural qualities to the full. Then business takes care of itself. It gives energy. If people in businesses can put to use their natural qualities to serve the purposes of the business, that is a first contribution to the vitality of the organization. I remember being employed and trying, for myself, to enhance one natural quality every year and use it in my work as an adviser. In a year when I had a new team manager, I mentioned that I would like to do some training in image thinking. In imagine thinking you absorb and store information in images. By nature I was inclined to image thinking, but as an adviser I didn't apply it optimally. It was not customary in our organization; we were about intellect and models, which made me a little hesitant to start image-thinking with entrepreneurs. I thought I first needed more inspiration. In answer to my proposal for training in image thinking, my new manager told me: "I don't know whether I'll let you do that. It almost seems like you are just working on your own development." I was flabbergasted. I paid for the training myself and attended on my parental leave days. I just felt I had to do this, it came from inside. I integrated the newly acquired knowledge into my advice programs in such a way as not to neglect the rational, methodical approach. I wanted to keep that rational element in there--that comes from inside too. I don't believe in the rational alone, or in intuitive image thinking alone. Pretty soon the walls of the rooms where I sat with clients were covered with drawings and pictures, and I even made movies. I remember well the first clients I did visual development sessions with, with image thinking incorporated in the approach. All the walls were covered. And they just couldn't leave after the session. They said, "This is so our wallpaper here; we belong

here!" In short, I thoroughly enjoyed doing exactly what worked with my qualities , and in that way my counseling program improved by leaps and bounds. Soon colleagues dropped by, curious to see what I was doing and how. What is richer than being able to help people put their natural qualities to work and at the same time achieve better business results?

The natural qualities of businesses are formed in part by the natural qualities of the workers. But it goes deeper than that. The real natural qualities of a business have been there all along. The business was born with them, as it were.

### ***How do we discover the natural qualities of a business?***

The key question here is: What sets your business apart and is at the same time self-evident? The answer to this question is the natural qualities of your business.

What answers to this question come to mind spontaneously for the workers? For clients? What qualities of your business are noted by colleague-competitors in your field? How does the newspaper reporter write about your business? Take a look at each of the big orders that have come in: What exactly got you orders X, Y, and Z? What natural qualities brought this about? What makes clients come back, and what makes them bring along new clients? Just what qualities of yours are the reason for this? When you consider this order by order and client by client, you will discover exactly what you are distinctly and obviously good at. As you can see, the key word here is *exactly*.

Look at the start-up phase of the business. What natural qualities were then put to work that built up the business and turned it into a business that generated money? The company was started, and at a particular moment some activity started and business was done. What self-evident qualities were the cause of it?

In practice, I often let a business walk through the entire business process in component activities. We consider which components readily do very well. And—here it comes—what makes these component activities go well so effortlessly? What natural qualities are at the root of it?

When you know the natural qualities, it is important to make use of them. It is precisely the people who have worked in a business for a very long time who often represent most clearly the natural qualities of the business.

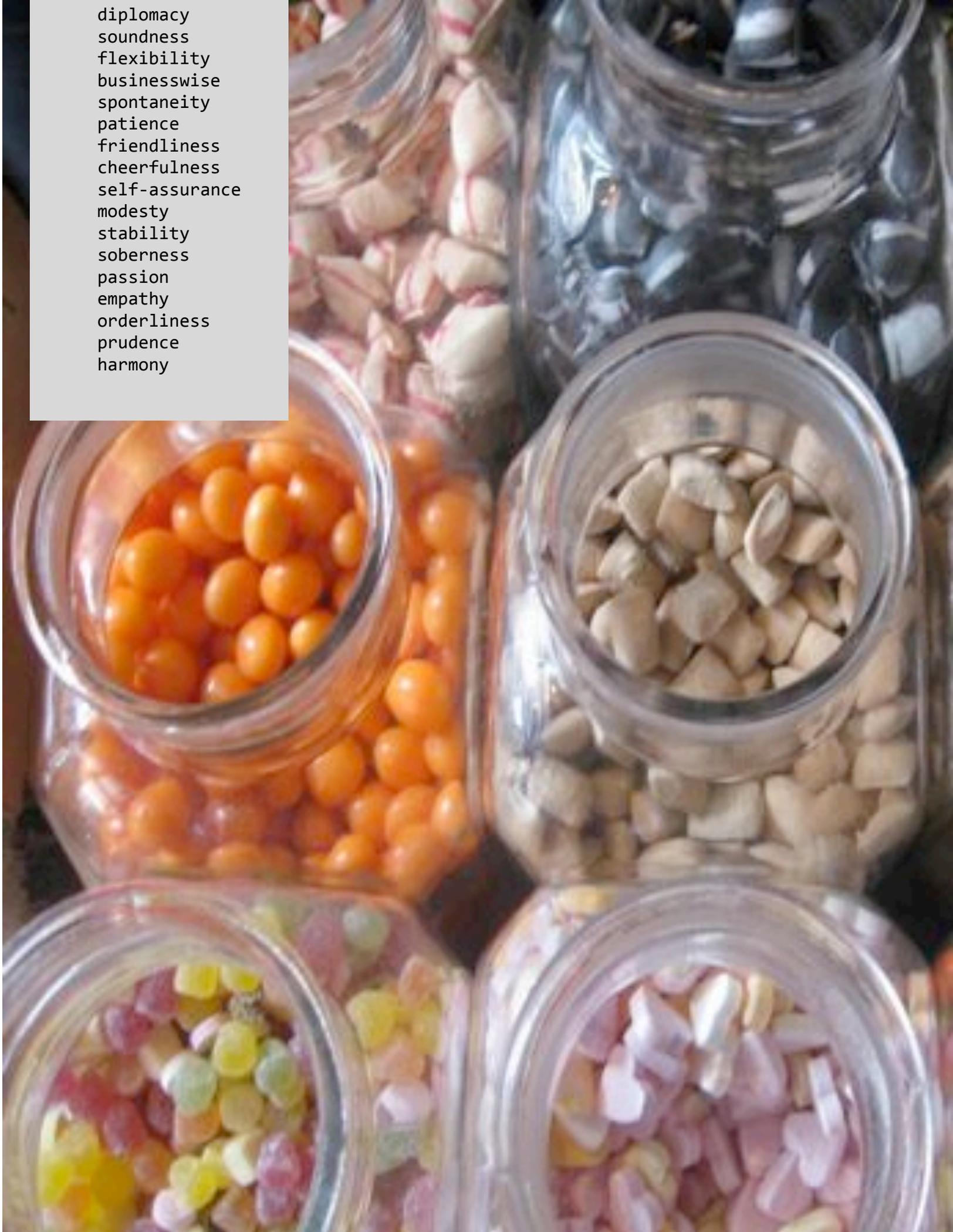
## Talents and roles

When people cannot invest their unique talents in their roles in life, there is no deep feeling of satisfaction, of contributing something. When organizations do not use their talents, the result is frustration. I advised a company that had a passion for good eating, and it catered parties and conventions. I asked them what had made cooking their core activity. They didn't have an immediate answer; it was the logical outcome of their passion for good food, they thought. I asked them what they were really good at. Their real talent turned out to lie not in cooking but in organizing and planning in such a way that other people enjoyed it immensely. They did not excel in cooking itself. They acknowledged that some colleague-competitors were much better at it. They changed course in order to make full use of their talent. They do not take care of the food anymore—they train, inspire, and furnish the servers at various exclusive locations.

Other ways to reveal natural qualities include Ofman's core quadrants, the DISC behavioral style analysis, and "back to childhood." Those will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

inspiring  
initiating  
foresight  
looseness  
humor  
helpfulness  
effectiveness  
diligence  
generosity  
lightheartedness  
solidarity  
initiative  
reliability  
creativity  
compassion  
sensitivity  
conciseness  
clarity  
courtesy  
tact  
independence  
improvisation  
pragmatism  
realism  
optimism  
courage  
openness  
diplomacy

diplomacy  
soundness  
flexibility  
businesswise  
spontaneity  
patience  
friendliness  
cheerfulness  
self-assurance  
modesty  
stability  
sobriety  
passion  
empathy  
orderliness  
prudence  
harmony

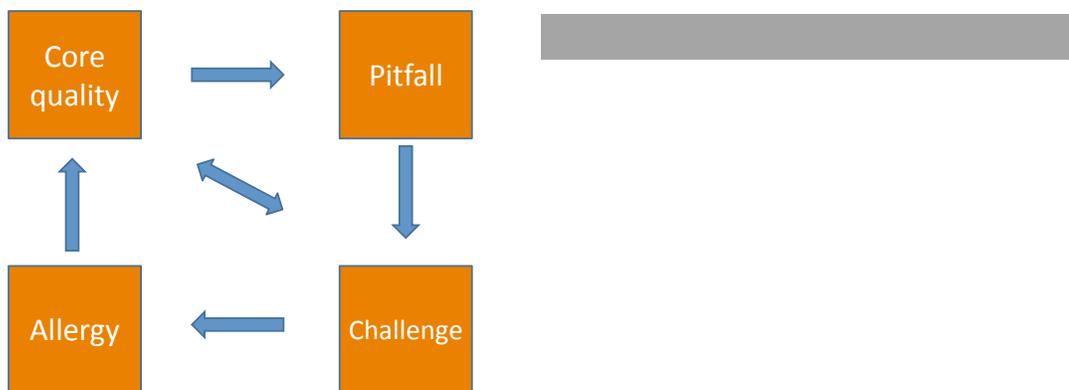


## Natural qualities and core quadrant

Daniel Ofman has formulated the concept of core quadrants. He defines those as qualities that belong to the essence, or the core of a person. What he calls core qualities I call natural qualities, because to me the latter term describes even better the fact that these qualities naturally constitute the makeup of the individual. He developed a way to uncover the core qualities, natural qualities, that is, the core quadrant.

The core quadrant consists of four components:

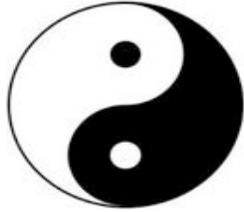
- ✓ Core quality: the qualities that pertain to the individual's essence
- ✓ Pitfall: the deformation when the core quality gets out of control
- ✓ Challenge: the positive opposite of the pitfall (therefore a quality)
- ✓ Allergy: too much of the quality in the challenge and the negative opposite of the core quality



>Ofman core quadrant

What appeals to me in his vision is that under every pitfall is a quality which, in fact, is "only" put forward too much. At the moment when I realized this, a mildness broke free inside me toward others. When I was a nine-to-fiver, I had a colleague who—in my eyes—always dragged along slowly, while I was dashing through the corridors. Her slow pace irritated me. Until I realized how much it would do for me if I slowed down a little. I'd see more, hear more, feel more. That would be good for everything and everyone, including me. Although at first it annoyed me no end, I now admired her ability to work so slowly, and it inspired me. By now I wouldn't ever want to change this ability to fluently alternate between speeding up and slowing down. So I have not gone from faster to slower. I have harmoniously combined acceleration and deceleration.

Natural  
quality >



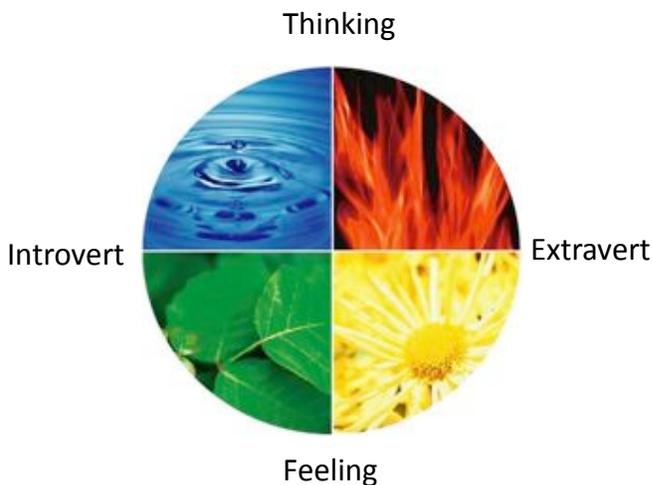
< Challenge



I apply Ofman's core qualities to businesses also. During sessions I have people consider what qualities they are strong in as a business, and in what opposite quality they find the challenge to go for that harmony in order to do business more richly. The handful of people who do not have the core qualities of the business, but perhaps just the opposite, are often the outsiders in the business. In such a session, however, everyone suddenly realizes how significant his or her qualities are. How much more richly we can do business when we work together. That harmony, that teamwork, is seamlessly created in such sessions.

### Natural qualities and behavioral styles

Behavioral styles contain certain natural qualities. Behavioral styles arise from the measuring of behavior. Measuring behavior, and the desire to understand the difference in behavior in different people is nothing new. Four hundred years before Christ the Greek Hippocrates was already observing people and their behavior. More recent is the work of Dr. Jung. In 1921 he distinguished and described four human behavioral styles on the basis of four psychological functions: thinking and feeling, introvert and extrovert. Each of the four behavioral styles contains certain natural qualities. In discovering your behavioral style, you also discover your natural qualities.



Introverts derive their energy especially from privacy; they keep a calmer pace, and like to take time for contemplation and reflection. Extroverts mostly derive their energy from contact with others, and they maintain a fast pace in simultaneous talking and thinking.

Introverts often consider extroverts stupid and superficial, because they so easily blurt out something that may be wrong, or even offensive to someone else ("Think before you say something!"). Extroverts often find introverts slow and stupid, because they take so much time to make up their minds and are so cautious ("Just say what you think!").

Thinkers decide with their heads, logically and analytically. Once they have made a decision, only very well founded arguments can dissuade them from it. They are focused more on the task than on the relationship.

Feelers decide with their hearts. They change their minds easily when another feeling gets into it, or just to please someone. They are focused more on the human relationship than on the task.

Thinkers consider feelers unpredictable ("There is only one objective truth"). Feelers find thinkers cold and distant ("You are right, but you won't hear it from me").

Thus we get four behavioral styles, which are usually indicated by colors. If everyone knows the colors, discussion becomes easier. The four behavioral styles are dominance (red), influence (yellow), stability (green), and conformity (blue). Every individual has inside himself all four of these behaviors. The only thing that varies from one person to another is the intensity of the behavioral style. Your unique combination of behavioral styles gives you certain natural qualities on the way to your destination.

What natural qualities do the four behavioral styles contain?

### **DOMINANCE (thinking and extrovert)**

The higher this score, the stronger the tendency to dominate and control the environment. The lower this score, the more compliant and the more relaxed the behavior. Natural qualities of someone with a high D-behavior include proactive reaction to change and challenge, ambition to aim high, very result-oriented approach, competitiveness, tenacity, decisiveness, courage, and a dynamic urge toward action. Pitfalls under stress: High-D people can be demanding and impatient.

### **INFLUENCE (feeling and extrovert)**

The higher the I-score, the more someone through his behavior exerts influence on his environment via verbal persuasiveness and nonverbal radiation of charm. The higher the I, the greater the trust in others. The lower the I-score, the more skeptical the behavior. People with a low I-behavior are usually quiet, and don't like to sell others on their ideas. Natural qualities of individuals with high I-behavior include charm, enthusiasm, warmth, and unbounded optimism. Pitfalls that show under stress are tooting your own horn and being unrealistic.

### **STABILITY (feeling and introvert)**

Persons with a high S-behavior like to work by unchanging, customary patterns. The higher the S-score, the less flexibility in dealing with change. The lower the S, the greater the will and the capacity to adjust to changes in the environment. The work pace of someone with a high S-score is slow but steady; the work pace of someone with a low S-score is high but hectic. Natural qualities of someone with a high S are patience, attentiveness, service orientation, good listening, and reliability. Pitfalls under stress are fading into the background and indecisiveness.

### **CONFORMITY (thinking and introvert)**

The higher the C, the more the individual sticks to set rules and regulations. The lower the C, the stronger the tendency to unbridled thought and action. Natural qualities of someone with high C-behavior are preciseness, orderliness, and perfectionism. His pitfalls are pettiness, being overly critical and pessimistic. Low C-behavior is creative and nonconformist; someone with high C-behavior is in the first place analytical.

To discover your unique blend of behavioral styles, you can perform analyses that produce 97% certainty. Such as the MDI-analyses I was certified in myself. In a business, a particular behavioral style combination often comes to the fore. It reflects a part of the undercurrent of the business. Sometimes the natural behavioral styles are not "lived" in the daily routine in a business. In uncertain, turbulent times I see that often. People are off their paths. It will then take energy, because the chosen behavior does not match the natural qualities. Path and form then do not match. Innovation is needed.

## Abbreviated analysis to discover your natural behavioral style

- > Read each of the four words on the first line.
- > Qualify the four words on a scale of 1 (least like your behavior) to 4 (most like your behavior).
- > Use every number (1, 2, 3, 4) only once per line.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Be yourself!

<b>1</b>	<b>cute</b>	<b>rude</b>	<b>polite</b>	<b>charming</b>
<b>2</b>	attractive	cooperative	stubborn	helpful
<b>3</b>	competitive	precise	cheerful	considerate
<b>4</b>	daring	entertaining	trustworthy	cautious
<b>5</b>	observant	determined	playful	moderate
<b>6</b>	social	stable	independent	introverted
<b>7</b>	cautious	courageous	persuasive	content
<b>8</b>	impulsive	quiet	dynamic	indulgent
<b>9</b>	frank	talkative	controlled	particular
<b>10</b>	peace-loving	pleasant	decisive	good- hearted
<b>11</b>	witty	agreeable	calm	forceful
<b>12</b>	perfectionist	inquisitive	optimistic	obliging
<b>13</b>	kind	modest	confrontational	lighthearted
<b>14</b>	responsible	rule-abiding	companionable	sharing
<b>15</b>	visionary	inspiring	mediocre	exact
<b>16</b>	cooperative	impressionable	demanding	invincible

Determine your reaction score per color. Your responses indicate your preferences for a certain behavioral style. When you add them, you will see which is your dominant behavioral style, with the associated natural qualities, and which are your supporting behavioral styles.

1	green	red	blue	yellow
2	yellow	blue	red	green
3	red	blue	yellow	green
4	red	yellow	green	blue
5	blue	red	yellow	green
6	yellow	green	red	blue
7	blue	red	yellow	green
8	yellow	blue	red	green
9	red	yellow	green	blue
10	blue	yellow	red	green
11	yellow	blue	green	red
12	blue	red	yellow	green
13	green	blue	red	yellow
14	red	blue	yellow	green
15	red	yellow	green	blue
16	green	yellow	blue	red

Number of red points:  
Number of yellow points:  
Number of green points:  
Number of blue points:



Above, you have read what the various behavioral styles mean, what natural qualities are associated with each, and what the pitfalls are. What is your dominant behavioral style? What is the dominant behavioral style in your business? What natural qualities come with it?

## Natural qualities and your favorite toys

Back to your childhood! Your favorite toys from childhood may reflect your natural qualities. What did you like to do best?

> Legos, K'NEX, building toys. One of your natural qualities is "applied creativity." You are strong in result-oriented solving of problems, and you have an eye for detail.

> Painting, drawing, modeling clay. One of your natural qualities is "original-imaginative creativity." You approach things a little differently than most people; you can think of innovations and you have an eye for beauty. You assimilate from different disciplines.

> Dolls. Among your natural qualities are social awareness, nurturing. You have a sense of responsibility and you know how to organize. Refusing to work and to delegate can be problematic, especially if empathy is also among your core talents.

> Reading. One of your natural qualities is "a broad field of interests." You are interested in many things (unless you always read about one specific topic—then you'd be more of a specialist). You are good at concentration and spending time alone (temporarily).

> Watching television. One of your natural qualities is absorption. You passively enjoy dreaming, absorb much, and you depend on chosen programs—your are not critical or eager to learn.

> Playing soccer. One of your natural qualities indicates that you are "active, social, and in need of space." You are a team player, you are energetic and dynamic, and you literally and figuratively need your space. Excessive supervision irritates you.

> Bike riding, rollerblading, skateboarding. One of your natural qualities is perseverance. You are tenacious and have a tendency to possibly problematic stubbornness.

> Puppet shows, dress-up parties. One of your natural qualities is adaptability. You like to interact with others and adjust very well, but you are in danger of losing yourself.

> Playing school. One of your natural qualities is transmission of information. You speak well, you have authority, you are sometimes too eager to always be right.

> Chess, Stratego, Monopoly, toy soldiers. One of your natural qualities is strategic insight. You can think several steps ahead and assess long-term consequences. You are strongly territorial.

> Other parlor games for more than two people. One of your natural qualities is sociability. You enjoy working with others, like to win, but you are usually a good loser (unless as a child you really liked to play school and do not possess the natural quality of empathy).

> Computer games. One of your natural qualities is psychological activity. You are good at being alone, focus well, and can be completely absorbed by something.

(From : "Toys reveal your core talents" in *Psychologie Magazine*, 3, 2005)

Natural qualities are the most visible element of the undercurrent. Making full use of the natural qualities is a condition for doing business richly. A layer below we find values, the second element of the undercurrent.



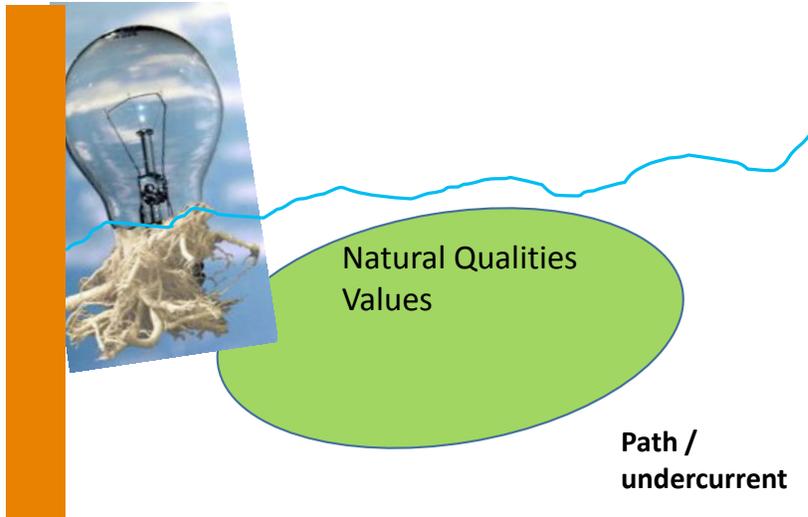
**Questions** > How well do you make use of your natural talents? How do you evaluate yourself in this area? How richly do you and your company do business when you look at the use of your natural qualities?

# Values: I stand for, we stand for

## Chapter 4

Everyone has a deeply anchored set of values. Values are less visible than natural qualities. You carry them with you throughout your life. They show why it is valuable to you to live and to do business. Values say: "I stand for . . ." And it's about standing strong! If someone does business contrary to your values, you immediately feel uncomfortable. Maybe you cannot even define it yet, but you do feel it.

Values are deep-rooted convictions that reveal what a person or a business stands for. What is at its core important for someone or for a business? Values that are important for many people are integrity, safety, freedom, respect, love, faithfulness. Values that are important for many businesses are customer orientation, serviceability, conscientiousness, result orientation, and innovativeness. In a manner of speaking, you will give up your values only if it's a matter of life and death.



### Doing business richly: values are compatible

Values answer questions about significance. They determine to a large extent the individuality of people and businesses, and therefore are part of the undercurrent of a person or company. Shared values connect people and businesses. It is difficult to do business with someone who does not put a high value on honesty, when you do. Even if the other person's dishonesty leaves you better off, something still goes against your grain. Conversely, doing business with people or companies that share your values is a smoother process. In making strategic or personal choices, values provide direction.

In a business where several people have to work together, shared values give a feeling of connectedness, they give direction for desired behavior and they give energy. A business where people do not have the same values creates islands. In that event, it is impossible for a business to walk its path to its destination. The business lacks clout. It is impossible to do business richly.

Shared values are at the heart of the matter. That's where the energy is to walk the path together.

In order to do business richly, it is important for the undercurrents to be in harmony with each other. Therefore, it is important to know your own values and those of the business and the parties with whom you work, and know that they agree. To be able to live by core values it is important to define no more than five shared core values. How do we discover values?

Attention

Freedom  
Continuity

Originality  
Client orientation

Love  
Quality

Simplicity  
Result

Fellowship  
Renewal

Modesty  
Efficiency

Loyalty  
Success

Integrity  
Expertise

Pleasure  
Durability

Trust  
Significance

Beauty  
Devotion

Dedication  
Comfort

Solidarity  
Gratitude

Simplicity  
Responsibility

Involvement



### Exercise

Look back at a situation where you did business really richly. It was effortless; more and more good opportunities presented themselves, and you knew how to welcome them all effortlessly and translate them into success. Think of such a situation. Think of what values were completely borne out for you there? For inspiration you may look at the list of values.

Or do the reverse—look back at a situation where you did not do business richly at all. It was a hard struggle, pulling and pushing, and it cost a lot of energy. Think what values were at stake for you then.



Look at the illustrations. Which appeal to you? Which ones give you a good feeling? What exactly is it that is valuable to you in the pictures? What makes this so valuable to you?



When a business team sets out to discover values, similarities come to the fore that are important to everyone. You will also see certain values you can combine under one denominator, such as honesty and integrity. That leaves a few differences. Now the job is to come to a consensus on whether those values should be noted separately, whether they belong under some other heading, or should be eliminated altogether. I emphasize here the word *consensus*. It is not a tug-of-war. What is important is the question: Can I live with this choice or does something here really go against my grain if we choose to leave out this value, for instance?

Values are part of the undercurrent. They do not begin to carry rich meaning in doing business until these values are transformed into a certain behavior in the daily course of doing business.

Values are the second element of the undercurrent, and less visible than natural qualities. Even deeper down are driving forces or incentives.

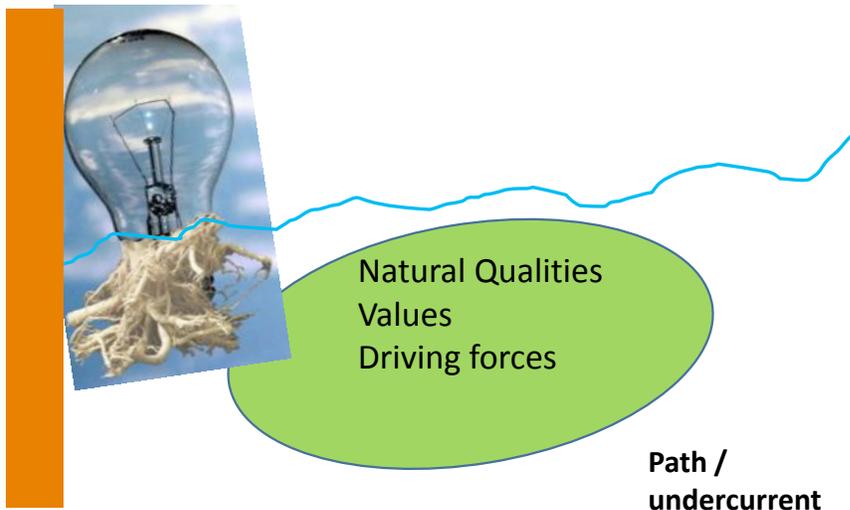


**Questions** > How well do your values tally with those of your company? What grade would you give it? How well do the business values correspond with the customers' values? To what extent do you and your business do business richly in terms of the realization of your values?

# Driving forces: I want, we want

## Chapter 5

I bet you know the feeling of hardly being able to stop because you're having such a great time. You are looking forward to getting back to it, and you can hardly wait! That's when you are doing something that appeals totally to your incentive. Incentives or motivations are internal motivators. The reason why we want to get out of bed in the morning, the reasons why we want to get into the action. Incentives are about "I'd like..." They say nothing about behavior. Incentives say why we get moving, and behavior says how we get moving. From the outside, you don't see a person's strongest incentives or driving forces. They are anchored deeply inside us. They constitute a third important element of the invisible undercurrent. That also means that what drives us does not change quickly. It is only, at times, through a drastic event that internal motivators may change.



## Doing business richly: Doing business from incentives

Imagine you are doing business and you are coasting ahead without any effort on your part, and are almost automatically moved to actions that subsequently render great inner enrichment—then you can imagine that you do business richly when you do business from your own incentives. It inspires right away. This inspiration has a magnetic effect upon you, upon others, upon chance, upon new opportunities. All kinds of things show up on your path that are simply offered to you. The reverse is also true. When business choices are made that do not justify or make allowances for your own incentives, there is a feeling that something isn't right; business drags along, takes energy. Business and relationships stagnate.

Businesses as well as people have incentives. The driving forces or incentives of a business indicate what in essence drives the company to do business. The question is, What do we really want to accomplish in doing business? In order to do business richly it is important that undercurrents fit in with each other. Along with that, it is important to know your own incentives and motives, and those of your business and of the parties with whom you work, and that they work together in a relaxed manner, for some incentives produce tension between them. First I will explain the various driving forces.

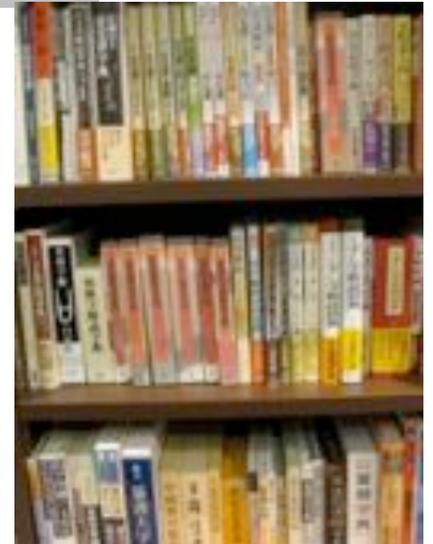
## Six incentives

I analyze incentives, among others, by MDI analyses, in which I am certified. These are based on studies by the Swiss behavioral scientist Eduard Spranger. After years of observation, he classified six essential inner motivators:

1. *Intellectual*. The primary passion of people with this incentive is the search for knowledge and truth.
2. *Practical*. The primary passion of people with this incentive lies in "return on investment" of time, money, and talents.
3. *Aesthetic*. Those to whom this incentive is important appreciate in the first place beauty, form, harmony, and balance.
4. *Social*. Those thus driven possess an intrinsic love for people, or for humankind.
5. *Individualistic*. The primary interest behind this incentive is power.
6. *Traditionalistic*. People driven by this incentive see the universe as a whole, and give themselves a place in it.

Your two strongest driving forces usually determine the needs you want to see filled in doing business, and urge you on to action. Incentive does not involve value judgments. All incentives are good. It's about enterprising from your incentives, your internal motivators. Below I discuss the primary passion of each incentive, its characteristics, and the direction in which it can be expressed.

## Intellectual incentive



The primary passion of people with a strong intellectual incentive is the search for objective knowledge and truth. They have an urge to acquire knowledge continuously, to order knowledge, and formulate new theories. The knowledge such people seek for may be utterly useless. It is not the application that matters to them, it is knowing itself. An example: In a market you are offered caracoles. You ask what it is. It is a sort of shellfish, boiled in water, and it tastes mostly like pepper. Why the name? Nobody can tell you. You Google it to solve the mystery. You feel totally satisfied that you have found the answer: *caracole* is French for rotation, like a snail shell. People who are less intellectually driven can still be eager for knowledge in their professional field, but they do not have that across-the-board curiosity.

The intellectual incentive can be aimed at the past, such as when an archaeologist wants to know exactly who built the pyramids and why. The intellectual incentive can also be aimed at the future, such as when a researcher wants to develop a drug to fight AIDS.

A condition for intellectually driven individuals to do business richly is the possibility of gathering new knowledge continuously, and becoming experts and being viewed as experts by others.

## Practical incentive



The primary passion of people who are strongly practically driven consists in "return of investment" of time, money, and talents, as well as other resources. What is invested must be earned back. No such thing as a free lunch. They keep an invisible tally of what they give and take. Practically driven people expect something in return, even for their efforts and interest. An example: A girl asks her practically driven father if she can go to sailing camp. Dad could very well start negotiating about that and expect some kind of effort in return. "If you see to it that you pass all your classes, you can go to sailing camp." Practically driven people hate wasting money, materials, and services. The practical incentive may be aimed at conservation, such as an art collector who buys but does not sell. Or people who want to save things against a rainy day: who knows, something may be worth more in the future. The practical incentive can also be aimed at production, such as the investor who takes risks in order to make a profit in the future.

A condition for practically driven people to do business richly is the possibility of getting a concrete return on an investment, translated into facts.

## Aesthetic incentive



Aesthetically driven people long deeply for beauty, for, harmony, and balance. There is a continuous interaction between the environment and self, so the external and the internal

worlds. It's about the interplay between impression and expression, between how the world works upon us and how we express what that means to us. The environment and the inner self must be in balance. Self-development is important. The goal is to experience, and to personally learn from that and grow. Whatever aesthetically driven individuals experience—they react more fiercely and emotionally to it than others. A work of art, for instance, or a musical rendition may move these people to the depths of their souls, and bring them to tears. They are also susceptible to atmosphere. If aesthetically driven people work in a gloomy space with little natural light and little interaction with the rest of the business, it drains them of all energy.

The aesthetic incentive may be aimed at impression, as in gaining impressions from nature, literature, music, and daily conversations with others. The aesthetic incentive may also focus on expression, such as in a fashion designer or a photographer.

The condition for strongly aesthetically driven people or businesses to do business richly is that in doing business they can develop physically, mentally, and spiritually, that there is enough opportunity to experience new things and give expression to these through their own creativity.

## Social incentive



Socially driven people have a profound desire to remove all hate, pain, and conflict from this world. They try to fight pain by unconditionally making money, time, and talents available to humanity, to animals, or to the environment. They are driven to contribute to the world's welfare. They have empathy for others and concern themselves with others' problems. They fill their own needs by helping others. They often stay out of the limelight. The social incentive can be aimed at their immediate circle, such as family, friends, and neighborhood.

The social incentive may also focus on a more broad-based improvement of the world such as less ozone, no nuclear testing, or human rights.

The condition for socially driven people to do business richly is the possibility of eliminating pain and conflict, and contributing to a better life for others.

Individualistic incentive



The individualistically driven person has an intrinsic desire for power, leadership, and control over his own destination as well as that of others. Without fear of mistakes, individualistically driven people easily make decisions that affect large numbers of people. They have an ambitious side, that must lead to the highest position available. Material status symbols are welcomed. They see life as a chess game of strategic alliances that provide position and power.

An example: An individualistically driven beauty specialist has specialized in cosmetology for famous Dutch citizens, and works on the highest social levels. She has the drive to get to the top, to distinguish herself, and to associate herself with famous names.

The individualistic incentive may focus on power over others or power over self and control of one's own life.

The condition for individualistically driven people to do business richly is the opportunity to make progress, and as people and as companies to be able to reach a higher position with expansion of power and self-affirmation.

## Traditionalistic incentive



Traditionalistically driven individuals are driven by principles they believe in. They follow principles they sincerely believe to be the guidebook for life. They have a need for principles and a system to give direction, meaning, and content to life. There is a desire for unity, order, and tradition. This may refer to religion, but also to student unions with long traditions, or Avatar—a self-development program—or to being a confirmed vegetarian.

The traditionalistic incentive may express itself in the direction of an idealist who tries to reform the world according to his principles. The traditionalistic incentive may also be expressed somewhat like a protector who will protect his own world against everything that clashes with his principles.

The condition for a traditionalistically driven person or company to do business richly is the opportunity to fulfill from conviction a mission which touches upon the meaning of our existence.

**Questions** > What are your two highest incentives? What drives the business? How well does that match your incentives?

## ***What are your two most important intrinsic incentives?***

Read the statements below and see which statements you hear yourself make most often.

### ***Intellectual***

- ✓ "I can hardly stop reading. Newspaper articles, professional journals, nothing goes into the trash unread."
- ✓ "I graduated in six disciplines. I just couldn't make a choice. Everything is interesting to me."
- ✓ "That looks too easy to me: people who run to a colleague right away to ask for a solution. Why don't they first think through a problem on their own."
- ✓ "I am crazy about discussion. When we really get into a topic, I can get carried away."

### ***Practical***

- ✓ "If I can decently do it, I negotiate for a discount or something extra that's free. That's a bonus then."
- ✓ "I keep noticing that the advertised offers are wrong. I'm going to have to call their attention to that."
- ✓ "I am absolutely not lazy or casual. I am efficient. If something can be done better or faster by somebody else, definitely let someone else do it."
- ✓ "I am not going to herd cats. If you don't want to, fine, but don't complain when you get a little less."

### ***Traditionalistic***

- ✓ "What I like about service clubs is that they have a certain protocol."
- ✓ "I refuse in principle to accept orders from cigarette makers."
- ✓ "I joined the Freemasons. It satisfies my need for philosophical thinking and inspiration."

### ***Individualistic***

- ✓ "I am allergic to people who want to control me."
- ✓ "They really don't need to tell me how to do it. The words *have to* alone!"
- ✓ "My team had put together the neatest presentation for the year-end results. The entire room was rolling in the aisles. That was kicking butt. I am super proud of that. The rest was so trite."
- ✓ "I want to be financially independent at age forty. That's real freedom."

### ***Social***

- ✓ "The other day my colleague told me to quit fussing, because he could take care of himself just fine. In hindsight I should probably have stopped a little sooner."
- ✓ "Society—that's you!"
- ✓ "Tacky. I thought the flag was at half mast because of the earthquake in Pakistan, but I found out that it was to impress upon the employees that our stock has reached a low."

### ***Aesthetic***

- ✓ "In choosing a supplier I have taken the building into consideration. If it looked gray and messy it didn't feel right to do business with them."
- ✓ "When I design something for a client I do not look only at what is beautiful, but I also sense what fits the client."
- ✓ "I like to write columns about all kinds of things that catch and hold my attention. I am my own greatest fan. They're not always easy to follow for someone else."
- ✓ "I sense immediately if arguments or disagreement are in the air."

## Driving forces and behavior

As noted above, incentives often lead to certain behaviors, but behavior is not always predictable. The power of the MD-analyses as compared to other analyses lies in the separate analyses for incentives and for behavior. Assume that I have been fired, I am depressed, and you are my friend and you have a social incentive. So you want to get moving and help me. With social-empathetic behavior that can be done through much patience and caring. But you can also help if you are task- or goal-oriented: you give me a stack of newspapers with ads for new jobs. A social incentive, therefore, may not always translate into social behavior. That is why the distinction between incentive and natural behavior is important. Natural behavior can be "read" somewhat from the outside. The reason for the behavior, the incentive, cannot be seen, however.

## Giving both of your most important driving forces their due

If something isn't right, nags at you, or doesn't feel good, it is time to look at your two most important incentives: are you doing justice to both? Most probably not. And then comes the next question: what can you do to make sure you do justice to both your incentives?

I advised an entrepreneur who dealt in parts for ships. The financial results were under pressure. He concluded that coworkers went home at 5 p.m. on the dot and he was working till late into the night. It didn't feel right to him. Some years ago he had taken over the business as an employee. The previous director had conducted business with a heavy hand, from a position of power. As a new director, he thought, I don't want to do things that way. I analyzed his incentives. As expected, his highest incentive was social. A second high incentive *practical* emerged. This business needs to make some money, and I hate wasting time, money, and energy. It did not take long for him to discover, during our conversations, that he conducted the business from a social incentive, and that he did no justice to his practical incentive. His concern for the workers and prevention of forced dismissals were his focus. His practical view of the business therefore suffered. And precisely because as a director he did not make any concrete decisions and did not focus on results, the unease in the business increased. That was the reason that things did not feel good to him, that something was nagging at him. To justify his social as well as his practical incentive, his investment in others had to produce something for him. Through these incentives he actually wanted to both give away *and* expect something in return. He started making concrete decisions and leading based on facts and results. He reduced the number of employees, started an intensive cooperation with a foreign partner, and has focused his own role on the financial side of the business. Thanks to the turnaround resulting from the analysis of incentives, he had a portfolio of two years' worth of orders.

**Questions** > What is the combination of your two highest incentives? How well do you do justice to both as you do business today? Are you perhaps letting one incentive prevail over the other? What does not drive you? How do you rate yourself on incentive with respect to doing business richly?

### Conflicting incentives

I want to help coworkers, *and* I'd like to have the most important position myself. I want to pass on my personal experience *and* I want to factually investigate the truth. I like to give things to others *and* I would like to see something in return. You keep feeling the tension between the driving forces. The two highest incentives may be in conflict. Conflicting incentives may exist within one person or within a business. In order to do business richly you need a relaxed, balanced combination, in spite of the contrasting needs.

### *Incentives that may clash and create tension:*

#### *Practical/aesthetic*

"Beautiful never ends, but when is my creation 'done' so that I can put it on the market?"

#### *Practical/social*

"I like to give things away but I want something in return!"

#### *Aesthetic/social*

Self-sacrifice and attention focused on others, whereas from an aesthetic angle the individual is focused on his own positive experiences.

#### *Social/individualistic*

The wish to improve one's own position and help others.

#### *Intellectual/practical*

Which comes first: acquiring more and more knowledge or applying existing knowledge to generate profit?

#### *Intellectual/aesthetic*

Which is more important—personal experience or objective truth?

#### *Intellectual/social*

What is the price of searching for truth?

#### *Intellectual/traditionalistic*

Aspects that are considered essential, but which are unexplainable or impossible to prove or examine rationally.

### Knowing each other's driving forces

If I should ask you to help as a volunteer to organize a festive occasion for the homeless, it would be good to know what drives you. Are you going to help me because from your social incentive you want to give the homeless an unforgettable day? Are you going to work with me because from your individualistic incentive this could put our organization on the map and get some good publicity? Are you going to help me from your intellectual incentive so you can learn more about the life of the homeless and maybe even do some research on them? You make the most of a business and of a person when you know what drives them to do the best job. Those internal motivators may be very different from your own. We have seen that they may even clash with each other. That is why at times we do not understand why others have a vision different from ours. Whereas in many areas we enjoy some variety (nobody wants to eat the same thing every day) we have a hard time with people being different from us. Individuals with different incentives often provoke negative reactions from

us, or leave us cold. When we know someone's incentives, we can focus our communication directly on the needs and incentives of that person. When we can see the world through their eyes and are able to communicate with them from their viewpoint, the satisfaction and the pleasure of this contact increase. We can make well-founded decisions about the optimal work situation for ourselves and others. We can do business richly.

Incentives are the intrinsic motivators of people and businesses. They are hard to see from the outside. They give important direction to the undercurrent. The best-hidden element of the undercurrent is the destination or calling.



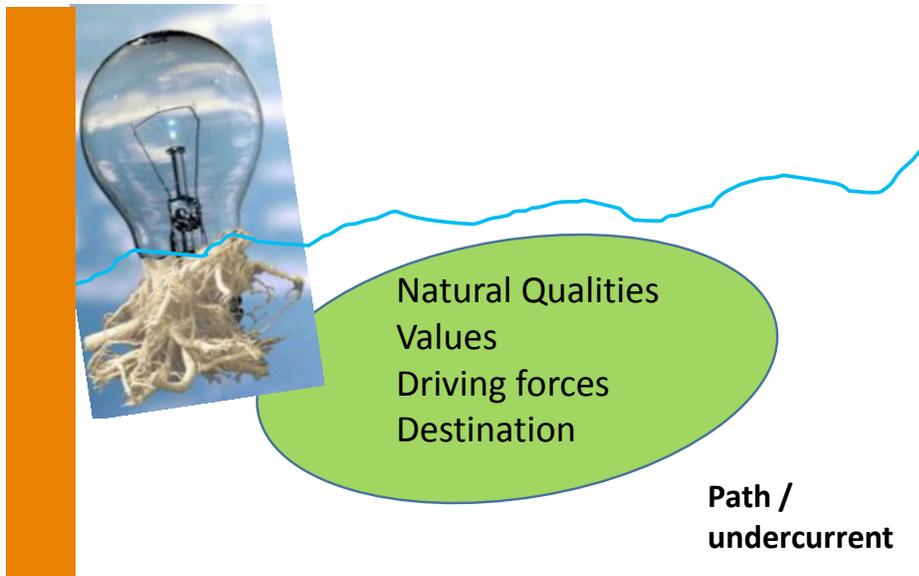
**Questions** > What incentives does/did the founder have? What incentives does the management team have? What incentives do the various teams have? How do these incentives interact? Which reinforce each other? Which clash?

# Destination: I go for, we go for

## Chapter 6

Destination is the least visible element of the four elements of the undercurrent. It is also the hardest to define. In addition, it is the element that gives the most direction, and it is therefore extremely important that we explore it. Without giving a ready-made definition of it, I think everyone has a feeling for the meaning of the word *destination*. It suggests a calling—being called by an inner voice to face a certain direction, where you can add something beautiful to the world. It is not something you choose, but a movement from within that holds a powerful appeal for you, and if you go along with it, you will automatically move with it. It is a longing and an invitation. Your "calling" is nothing more than a life through which your deepest self blossoms and thus contributes wisely to a more just, more loving, more human world. That kind of living is a fascinating adventure. This is "as it should be."

Those who go looking for their destination often arrive first at a wild plan, such as, for instance, starting a bed-and-breakfast in a sunny country with fields of lavender. But those are bad forms. The question is, What exactly attracts you in that image? Is it the freedom, the relaxation? In 2010 I met Roland Kwemain, world president of the worldwide entrepreneurial network JCI. Voluntarily taking on such a role requires a lot of time and at the same time demands many concessions from you and from your environment. I asked him what had inspired him to go for the position of world president. He said simply, "God's will. It has to be like this." For him it was not a goal in itself; it was purely being on the way to his destination. It was something higher than himself that inspired him.



### Doing business richly: Doing business that rolls on to your destination

"This has to be a calling, otherwise you couldn't keep it up." I know that statement especially from professions that are physically and mentally almost unbearable, such as ministering to dying people, or attempting to bring addicted youth back to the right path, professions in which people have to be able to count on you night and day. Entrepreneurship should also be a calling. What is interesting about the statement is the suggestion that "... otherwise you could not keep it up." It appears that if you are destined to do something, an enormous source is available to draw strength from. Then you don't have to do it all under your own power, but you have access to a higher power than yourself. This way you can imagine that if you do business that is in harmony with your destination, and when you do business in such a way that they bring you closer to your destination, you do business very richly. Then you are exactly on the right path.

### Businesses have a destination too

"That business has spirit." It is a statement that is not immediately identifiable, but which makes you feel that people mean it from deep inside. Businesses have a destination too. It is invisible, and can never be something in the line of money or profit. This is the element of the undercurrent where the voice of authenticity comes through loudest. It's about your essence, or about whatever your business is essentially meant for. Destination has nothing to do with a goal. A goal is a doable form. It is more about the meaning. Whereas *goal* is a spot on the horizon, *meaning* goes beyond the horizon. Samhoud calls this a higher

purpose. What unique, ideal significance do we have as a business on earth? The unchangeable anchorage of the organization.

## Original desire

What was deep within the founder's original desire? I once advised an international engineering firm. The Dutch founder had left the business two generations ago and was by now in his eighties. The firm did not do business richly. It was sluggish. The spirit was gone. There were islands. There was no real pride in the business. What it came down to, in essence, was that there was no feeling of connection with the firm's undercurrent. I suggested that they invite the firm's founder for a visit to the business. Most had never met him. It was nearly Christmas and the time of year was a nice lead-in. The founder was halfway through his eighties and young in spirit. He talked enthusiastically about how he had started out with one partner and without any employees. They had considered it important to build up a firm that was not only technically sound, but also what he called "socially customer-oriented." It was social, courteous, empathetic, and clearly understandable in its verbal communications. He told us about what he had wanted. He wanted to leave a technically perfect and social imprint on the world where they had been at work. The staff hung onto every word. He outlined how they had gone from a two-man firm to joining an international network. The path had unfolded more and more; it could not have been foreseen, but he had found the path and found it back whenever he lost his way. A connective energy grew between the workers, and a connection with the company. In fact, a connection grew with the undercurrent, and particularly the firm's destination. Then the founder asked the staff if they would draw whatever they wanted to do now, and what the firm needed in their opinion. Everyone turned out to have internalized his words. Drawings showed footprints, hearts, people, helping hands, listening ears.

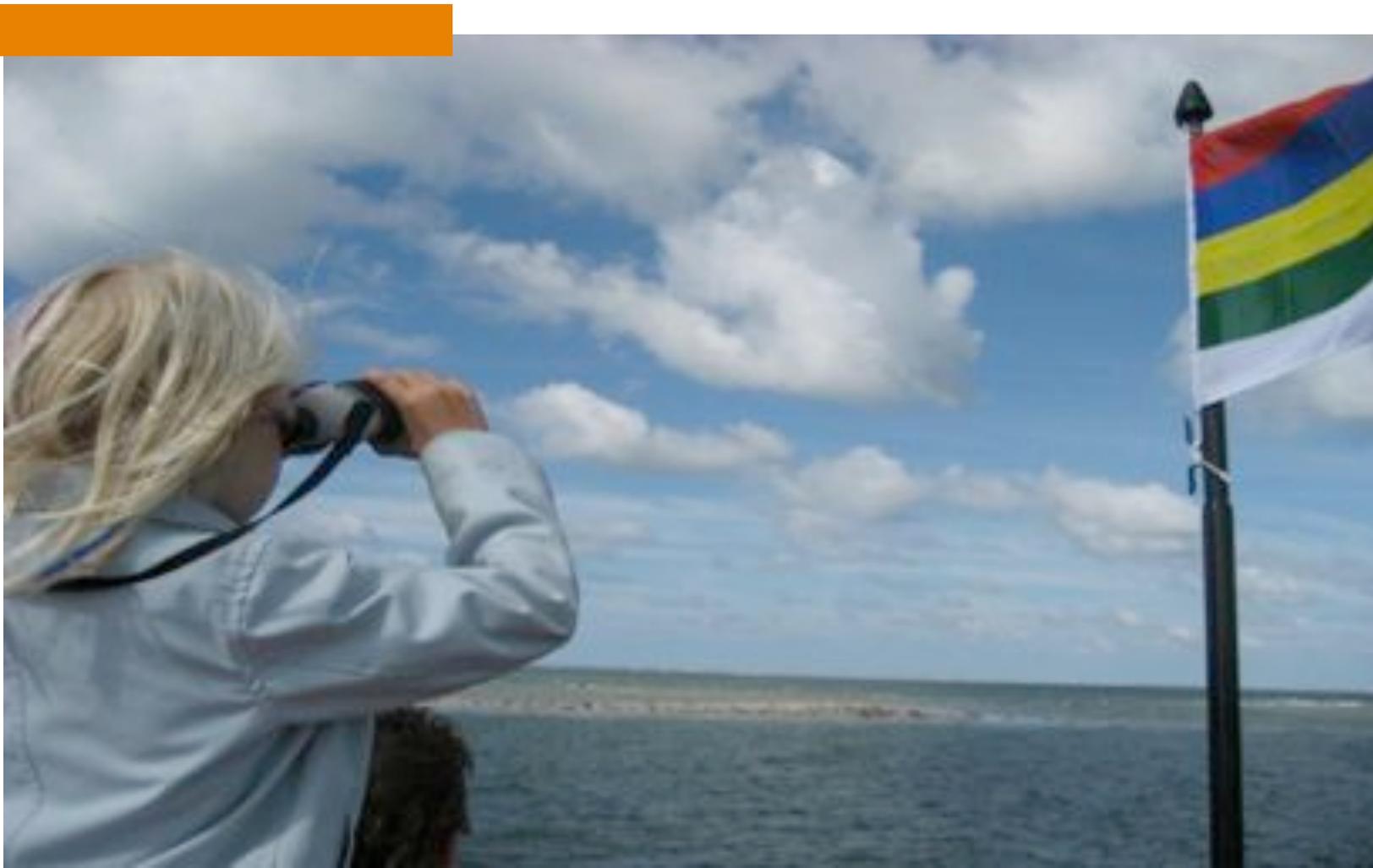
## How do you find your calling?

Finding your calling is not easy. Intuition is of real importance. You can't think your way to a calling with your head, but you have to develop a feel for it. You then inevitably find that you want to keep things as they are, and you don't want to risk changing course.

Do you feel you want to make a difference in doing business? In your business dealings, do you feel a sort of responsibility to others, society, the world, that goes further than an obligation or commitment? Do you sense a particular direction you should follow in doing business?

To feel this, it is necessary to be well-grounded. Be in contact with your own essence. It will certainly not be clear right away, but the more richly you do business, the more evident your destination and calling will become, will reveal themselves. They will unfold. It is a process. The task with which each of us has come to this earth does not need to be spectacular by definition. What matters is that our lives are not only about feeling good, but also about doing good, that we walk a path in this world and leave tracks in this world that renew the world in a positive manner. This goes also for companies. I never know who I am in the end. I keep growing—that's what we live for. Organizations also keep growing in quantity and/or quality. It is not possible to give an easy insight into calling or destination. We can approximate them with words, get closer, but we never quite get there. Those who are sensitive can recognize them. Thus you keep getting a greater insight in the secrets of mind and spirit, but never complete clarity. It is the same for a business: its exact destination remains a mystery. I forget who said this, but someone once told me, "I can't see myself from the back, but I know there is a back view to me. It's about invisible observation."

Living up to your destination does not by definition have to involve a radical change. You may well give substance to your work in other ways.



## *My deep desire*

Consider some business you felt you did quite richly. Name the activities, the forms for yourself, but also ask yourself the following question: What deep desire, what intent, what meaning underlay these dealings to contribute to the world with that activity? Then ask yourself at least five times; Why was it important for me to contribute this to the world? Keep asking questions; it gets you beyond another layer.

When you line up several instances where you did business richly, a red thread will appear, or perhaps a red cable with interconnected red threads.

Sit down quietly for every question, with eyes closed. Breathe in deeply so you get down into your body instead of hanging around in your head. Don't be afraid to ask yourself questions and wait to see if answers, or directions of answers emerge from inside. You can do the same thing with a team. Ask each other these questions in groups of two or three. Gather everyone's most profound answers. Then look at the red thread between these answers.





### ***The right to exist and the reason to exist***

You have a right to exist, because you exist. You don't have to earn it. You should, however, discover the fundamental reason for your and your company's existence.

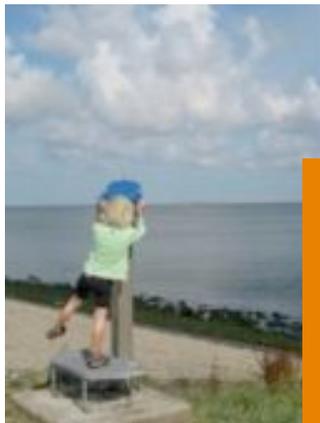
It starts with the question: What does my business do? That's a question businesses do ask themselves in practice. Next comes the question, For what purpose do we do that? or in other words, "What are we aiming at?" If you repeat that question ad infinitum, you eventually uncover at the deepest level to what end your business exists on the earth, what your business is essentially about. The reverse is interesting also: What exactly would be lost if we cease to exist? The answers also points out the business's right of existence.



### ***Inspiration***

Take a look at the following destinations. Take them in, taste them, and feel how true they are for your business. What we are going for is . . .

- ... being a laughter specialist, for laughing makes healthy. (Cliniclowns)
- ... letting visitors experience a magical day full of surprise, recognition, and wonderment! (Efteling)
- ...creating happiness for people of all ages, everywhere. (Walt Disney)
- ....building a brighter future together. We realize breakthroughs by inspiring and connecting people. (& Samhoud)
- ... making all information accessible and usable worldwide. (Google)
- ... enjoying responsibly. (Ben & Jerry's)



Do you like a little more guidance as you search for your destination, beyond just answering open questions from your innermost self, as above? This exercise will then appeal to you to develop a feeling for your destination. The exercise is also suitable for a business.

## Destination: What am I going for in doing business?

Money	Excitement	Love	Leave footprint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Luxury</li><li>• Giving to others</li><li>• Freedom of choices</li><li>• Safety and protection</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenge</li><li>• Experience new developments</li><li>• Variety</li><li>• Being part of a problem solving team</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leaders</li><li>• Colleagues</li><li>• Clients</li><li>• Family and friends</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change individuals</li><li>• Change systems and habits</li><li>• Develop enduring products</li><li>• Touching family and friends</li></ul>

Follow the steps:

1. Put the four columns in order (1 through 4) of importance for you.
2. Also record for each column an order of points (1 through 4)
3. Collect all your number 1's and complete the sentence: Where I / we go for in doing business is...

Destination is the most intangible, invisible element of the undercurrent. It can unfold, but it will never be totally concrete. It partially remains a mystery. Yet it very clearly shows the direction of your and your company's undercurrent.



# How do you connect with your undercurrent?

## Chapter 7

Doing business richly is about business that provides personal and economic enrichment. To a large extent it concerns feeling what is right for and what fits in best with you and with your business. Your undercurrent and that of your business show you the way here. We have looked at four elements of the undercurrent in order of visibility on the outside. Natural qualities are the most visible and destination the least visible. Making correct choices in business requires that you are in constant contact with your undercurrent. Contact with your undercurrent is also necessary for you to find actual answers to the questions of what your natural qualities, values, incentives, and destinations are. Being practical and realistic, we have another question: How do I make contact with my undercurrent and with that of my business?

### Inner knowing

You may already sense that finding the answers to the four elements of the undercurrent by much and rational thinking has its limitations. Eventually you just don't know anymore. Your rational knowing brings chaos. Your intuition and your inner knowing will be of much more help in exploring and valuing your path. Just think of a moment when you did something intuitively. Without being able to explain it extensively, you had a premonition that something would turn out totally well or that something wasn't right. You felt your undercurrent and knew deep inside that this was the undercurrent that you should follow if you were to take care of yourself in the best possible way. You can do this alone, but it also works very well with a business team.

### Slowing down

You undoubtedly know the feeling of mentally running around in circles. Or the feeling that your thinking never stops. That your head is going on all cylinders, and gives you unsolicited as well as solicited advice. It can drive you stark raving mad. And if that was only limited to your own thoughts! No, there are also the thoughts, advice, and convictions of your environment that echo inside you and which you allow to guide you. For instance, how do you in your business hit targets? Is there a sort of mutual competition going on? A race against the clock? Are you at the edge of your chair? Do you wear yourself out because it is below your dignity in front of your colleagues to not hit your targets? Or do you perhaps get

a feeling of not being able to keep up and then quitting? I have experienced all these in person and seen others do the same. Until I learned how I can let myself "coincide with myself." It all started during a retreat in the Drente countryside, which I went to at the beginning of my maternity leave for our first daughter. I arrived with the feeling that I had just stumbled over the half-marathon finish line on sheer willpower. Once there, things started slowing down. I marveled at finding myself capable of doing that. Meditating, walking in nature, singing, self-reflecting, supporting others in self-reflecting. I felt that I could increasingly focus all my attention on myself, on who I actually am. Pure serenity. If I wanted to, I could hear the opinions in my surroundings, of course, but they didn't touch me anymore. I didn't let them sidetrack me. They didn't scatter any more doubts. I felt calm and strong without having to exercise my strength. In slowing down I learned to recognize the feeling that I was in contact with my undercurrent, and learned how I could establish contact with my undercurrent myself.

My relief was great that even I, who from childhood on could only run instead of calmly walk—even when I had to go and get potatoes from the garage for my mother I jogged—that even I was capable of slowing down and with reasonable ease make contact with my undercurrent. I also discovered that there is an important condition for the opportunity to succeed: you have to want, perhaps even dare to disengage from the intellect and tune in to what is higher in yourself and higher in the world. You must want to connect with the cosmos, of which we are part energy-wise. When you feel, yes, I want that, a number of forms are listed below that can support you in being in contact with the undercurrent. And imagine what power this amounts to when you do this collectively!

Below I describe six ways that can help you slow down and connect with your undercurrent: Ki, image thinking, dialogue, constellations, going outside, and inspiration.



## Ki-energy

The word *energy* is a translation of the oriental words *Chi* (from Chinese), *Ki* (from Japanese), or *Prana* (from a language of India). When you focus your attention on a spot in your body, you can feel that you are there not only in thought, but your energy has been moved there. You can measure a rise in temperature at that spot. In the modern world we are exposed to all sorts of distractions that draw our attention, such as the Internet, television, advertisements, and all objects around us at home and at work. Because in the past people did not have all those attention-getters, they were able to pay more attention to their bodies and feelings, and were therefore better able to notice energy.

Ki is inner, quiet, loving power and a wholesome, large energy field around you. Being in Ki is not concentration or focus on a thing or a person, but paying attention to a thing or a person in a situation. Attention is broader, and thus you have empathy for another. In Ki, people have space around them, and are automatically in contact with their undercurrents. As we do our daily business, we are often pulled out of Ki. Business is completed by pulling and pushing. It becomes a fight. It shows in your eyes, your voice, your posture, your facial expression. Wanting to win and being in Ki at the same time is impossible. Winning and being in Ki at the same time is possible.

### How do you get into Ki?

Tai Chi has taught me that there are several ways. See which way or ways suit you best:

- ✓ Relax completely and lower your body weight. Exhale deeply, knees lightly bent and let your entire weight press down as if you are pushing down something really heavy. You can start with your head, neck, and shoulders. Don't forget your pelvis. My Tai Chi teacher always said: "As if you have a penny between your buttocks and let go of it." When the weight starts going down you let it flow out like through a valve under your feet, as it were. At the same time you press yourself up from your feet until you stand straight up. It feels as if you have a little roll-up paper whistle in your belly that you blow into and it rolls out.
- ✓ Look calmly straight ahead. If a conflict is right in front of you, calmly look ahead past the conflict, where you have mentally placed something cute and loving. I often use the picture of our daughter when she was a day old and came home from the hospital in a little jacket that was too big and a pointed cap that was way too big. For me it is a loving, funny, and happy picture. Besides behind the conflict, the picture may also mentally be placed right in front of it. That creates distance and removes the sharp edges.
- ✓ Radiate Ki out of your body. Imagine that your Ki-energy flows from your hands, your fingers, your eyes, your voice, your breath, your belly. You can very easily feel this yourself. Spread your hands in front of you and imagine that Ki-energy flows from your hand and fingers. If you now slowly hold your hands farther apart, you can feel the energy, the size of a ping-pong ball, a tennis ball, a soccer ball, a skippy ball.

Perhaps now mental voices pipe up. "I can't do that, I am too nervous right now." Leave them be. Focus your attention on being physically in Ki, not mentally. That changes all by itself.

### *Ki-energy magnetizes*

Ki-energy attracts, and it attracts you literally and figuratively. A test I have learned to check if I am in Ki goes as follows: Take a spoon and lay it against the inside of your wrist. If you are in Ki, the spoon sticks by itself, and you can move your arm every which way without the spoon falling off. If you are not in Ki, the spoon will fall on the floor. Stick the spoon against your forehead, too. If you are in Ki, you can walk around without the spoon falling off your forehead. Imagine how richly you do business when you are doing business in Ki, do presentations in Ki, communicate in Ki! You bring your own energy field in Ki, and people around you will react positively to that. It is amazing how effortlessly the solutions will pop up.

### Image thinking

As children we are real image thinkers. When our children were toddlers and we drove past my husband's business, BDO, they immediately shouted "BDO!" They couldn't read, but they remembered the entire image. Many toddlers who are far from being able to read, recognize the makes of cars. Image thinking means to call up images or make associations through images and subsequently use the mind, through words, to interpret them.

Visualizing, the use of metaphors, drawing, or making association through music, or adding a scent to an image are all forms of image thinking. Everything that involves your senses evokes images. Those who think in images are on alpha waves and invoke their intuition. An image may be called up by seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, or smelling something. We all know images of memories that spontaneously emerge when we hear a certain song or smell a certain scent. Next we start thinking about how to interpret those images. Thinking goes a lot faster when you have first formed images. Without first forming images, you are at great risk of rambling.

A wholesome process is illustrated in the figure below.

## Perception process



### An example of image thinking

What image do we have of the Triodos Bank? We associate the Triodos Bank with stability, and with the fact that by way of exception they kept yielding profits in time of crisis.

How do we interpret that image? We interpret it to mean that stability pays. How do we evaluate it? We develop the opinion that for every business stability should be the number one priority. What sort of behavior do we adopt because of this? We stabilize our own business.

The translation of images into meaning, words, and action is important. If images remain images without interpretation and keep accumulating, image thinking grows from a cozy campfire to a raging wildfire, and leads nowhere.

### Conditions for image thinking

Do you feel comfortable with not knowing? As children we started playing and didn't know what the game would lead to. At a given moment it stopped, and we started playing something else. We felt fine with not knowing and were open to whatever presented itself. Perhaps a child from the neighborhood would show up and play with us. Perhaps someone all of a sudden thought of another game. Anything was possible. Because later we have

become so accustomed to work rationally, a feeling of resistance emerges as we appeal to the alpha waves. During my training I lay out pencils, wasco, modeling clay and such ahead of time. People have at times been shocked and asked what we were going to do with that. The first reaction was "I am not creative, I am not good at this, I can't do this." When you can face the resistance and accept it, the creative process can start to flow. The nice thing is that there is no right and wrong. It's about your images, eventually transformed into action that benefits you and your business.

So relax, concentrate, be curious about something new, observe everything that presents itself, and should you feel resistance, embrace it!

### Image thinking in business

If you want to address a particular aspect of your business, you could ask people to make a drawing or collage of how they see that aspect now. What emerges as the common nominator? Are they light and airy drawings, or heavy, big, small, exuberant, in straight lines, or very imaginative? What did they express through this medium, consciously or subconsciously?

Image thinking can also be used to pinpoint talents. Bring an object that can be a metaphor for your talents or those of your business. Or make a clay model of an object that represents a talent. What is amply represented, and what is still missing? Or start dreaming about the ideal situation for the business. What business are you doing then, with whom, and deep in your heart—what do you want to accomplish?

### Dialogue

We are usually accustomed to discussions or debates that center on knowledge, demonstrating knowledge, giving answers, defending, convincing, fighting with winners and losers, power and proof. Even if you have decided ahead of time not to do this, it is easy to get sucked into one or more characteristics of debate or discussion.

If you go in search of the path of your business in the business, that won't work. Then dialog is especially effective. A dialog circle has room for the collective and the individual. Dialog is not just pointless chatter. When I advise dialog groups in businesses, I put people in a circle, and there is no more hierarchy. The employee is just as good as the boss. The group has to be large enough to have various opinions and insights and yet manageable. Somewhere between seven and twenty people.



### *The etiquette of dialog*

1. **Open** yourself to whatever presents itself. That also means letting go of your personal agenda.
2. First understand someone else before being understood, as indicated by Stephen Covey. That means **listen** first, and be quiet.
  - ✓ Try to understand the deepest meaning, the essence of what someone is trying to say. Not until you have succeeded in that do you speak.
  - ✓ Listen person-to-person, not as members of various groups and organizations.
3. Speak from your **heart**.
  - ✓ Allow yourself a moment of inner silence before you speak.
  - ✓ Speak from your deepest knowing, not your first thought.
  - ✓ Share why you say what you are saying, share your underlying incentive.
  - ✓ Only react, if at all, by sharing what previous words have inspired or touched in you.
  - ✓ Don't repeat yourself. Trust that people have been listening.
4. **Trust** that the result will come.
  - ✓ Open yourself up to receive something more beautiful than you had ever expected.

How does dialog really differ from discussion?

#### *Discussion*

#### *Dialog*

Knowing	Examining and understanding, to better understand others and self
Demonstrating knowledge	Listening not just with your ears but with all senses
Answering	Silence. The power of silence is enormous; the last drop that falls may well be the essence.
Proving	Person to person
Convincing	Speaking from the heart
Defending	Asking questions
Reacting and advising	Sharing insights, uncertainties, doubts, assumptions
Winning and losing	Respectful of each other's emotions, truth, experience
Content	Result emerges. Result is not an end in itself. A good process is logically followed by the result.
"Having to"	Meeting

I use a talking stick with dialog. If you do not have a talking stick in your hands, you are silent. If you do have the talking stick, you may either speak or be silent. Sometimes that seems a little childish. But it is useful. I had a dialog going with mediators and the director of a temp agency that had just merged. At first everything went nicely with the talking stick, and immediately the emerging connection could be felt. People dared voice what they had never dared to say. They indicated that they felt hugely unburdened. After lunch we continued the dialog at their request. People relaxed, and didn't take the talking stick too seriously anymore. What then happened immediately was that the nature of the dialog and the connection weakened, and persuasion and opining took over almost routinely. It was great to let them feel the effect and the difference for themselves. Meanwhile, they now use a talking stick in their deliberation structures.

Conducting dialog is congruous with the essence of doing business richly. It is about respect for everyone's essential path and for the path of the business. Good dialog is therefore enriching.

## Constellations

Constellations is a no-nonsense instrument to reveal irrational and dysfunctional processes in people and in organizations. Entanglements come to light, so that you can let go of them.

"What a hornet's nest this is, I'd just as soon get out of here right now." This was said by the woman who represented me in the organizational constellation. The structure related to a getting-to-know-you conversation I, as the innovation adviser, had had with a business where everyone at the table seemed to be fighting for his own interests. The conversation had given me a very uncomfortable feeling. The next day I had a peer review. My peer review group used organizational constellation as a peer review method for the first time. The conversation seemed to me an interesting occasion to experience the effectiveness of organizational constellations in person.

I was curious what really went on in this company, what was happening with me, and what was needed for me and for the business. But of course, I was actually just curious about the usefulness of organizational constellations. And what happened? As soon as the constellation had started and I sat on the sidelines, observing, my mouth fell open in surprise and I got gooseflesh on my arms. It was unexplainable, but true! This woman put into words exactly what I had really felt and thought during that conversation. From that moment on I was on the edge of my chair. After this, it took only an hour (!) of constellation before I could tell at a glance what kind of game was being played in this business, and

through what means I would be able to really make contact with the business and with the entrepreneur. And it turned out to work in practice. After the constellation, I approached the entrepreneur again and we were able to pursue an inspiring route, which eventually, during evaluation, they even rated a 10.

### ***How does organizational constellation work?***

The process of constellation consists of three phases: interviewing, constellation, and inquiry.

#### **✓ Interviewing**

Participants sit in a circle. Constellations start with a short dialog between the facilitator and the "problem owner." In this phase the most important players, including the person who brought up the problem, are informed in the matter, without addressing its content. This is to prevent that the observations of the representatives in the structure are influenced by advance content information.

#### **✓ Constellations**

After the dialog, the problem owner intuitively chooses, without speaking, individuals from the circle to represent the most important players in the matter of concern. The problem owner then intuitively positions the chosen representatives relative to each other in the space. This clarifies his perspective on the problem situation, and also his perspective on the relationships between the various players. Which representative is chosen first? Who is looking out and away from the system? What are the distances between the representatives?

#### **✓ Inquiry with the representatives**

On the spot the representatives receive—in a manner that is inexplicable to us— access to information about the feelings of and relationships between the people they represent. Information that continually influences everyday life, but which receives no attention. This information becomes visible in the constellations, and its effects become clear in the system. The representatives are not play-acting. They are questioned by the facilitator about their actual personal experiences, whom they feel attracted to, and from whom they want to take some more distance, etcetera. At the same time an effort is made to find a way to suitably restructure the system, so that it has a healing effect for everyone. When roadblocks are passed, energy and love can flow freely again. The system is relaxed and can find back its harmonious balance.

### *Constellations exercise*

A simplified form of organizational constellation that you can do on your own is laying sheets of paper on the floor in a space, where each sheet represents a certain player. You yourself as problem owner can stand on one of the sheets. This way you put yourself in someone else's place. Naturally, it can also be done by placing chairs in the space and sitting down on one of them.



### Going outside!

When I am tired and I sit down in the sun, I feel better. When I need inspiration and I walk or ride my bike through the polder, then I can reach my "artist" again. Nature's energy does many of us good. Beach, woods, mountains. It does make a difference if you walk outside stewing over a problem or leave the problem at home and walk around in nature with awareness and attention. Sometimes I bike home from my office and my head is still totally in my work, or even in the client's business. I eliminate that by looking around and pronouncing aloud what I come across, through nouns. So: *house, tree, bird, fence, road, car, grass*. I leave out the adjectives, such as *large, old, shiny* and so forth, so I can stay with what is pure, the essence. Sometimes I also pay attention to the sounds I hear and say aloud again *car, scooter, bird, carillon*. If feelings flow through all this, such as *glad, angry, doubtful* and such, I name those aloud along with the word *feeling*. I don't add what feelings I am having. I just say "feeling." That gives me a lot of peace. Then I feel that I *am* not that feeling, I only have it. As if it were a bird that lit on my shoulder, but which will fly away again all by itself. The state I then get into I call "blank." From blankness I have real contact with my undercurrent and truths present themselves to me. Then I feel that I have choices again. That

in essence I am myself and nothing more than that. I am not a feeling, I am not a judgment, and so forth. You can do this exercise, by the way, when you don't have the opportunity to be outside: *elevator, door, computer, desk, closet*. You don't have the cooperation of the cosmos to the same extent, but it is still more meaningful than going overboard with your work. In nature I can ask myself questions. Something bubbles up or my spirit is stimulated by something I see, and the answer is there.



## Inspiration

You cannot force inspiration. It is more about giving the correct attention and value to encounters and matters that are on your path. Don't just sit and wait for an idea, but just go do something else. When I can't figure out something, I tell myself before going to sleep: "When I wake up tomorrow I will know the answer." This has turned out to be true so many times that I go to sleep with the greatest confidence in the "not knowing." The next morning I ask myself the question again before I get out of bed, and I also come up with something meaningful. We do get help, and luck is on our side!



# Path renewal

## Chapter 8

Path innovation comes into play when you or your business is not true to natural qualities, values, incentives, and destination. That is noticeable. At the least there is a nagging feeling that something isn't quite right. You can ignore it, go right ahead with what you were doing and act as though nothing is the matter. But it keeps popping up. What is needed is going back to the source. There is little choice. The only choice you can make is whether you continue on your path at all. Do I choose to follow my path, and the path of my business? That is the closed question that can be answered only with yes or no. There are no other choices.

Path innovation means returning to your path. Develop your talents, bring your values to life, accommodate your two highest incentives, and seek out your destination. That is basic to madly happy enterprise. So a path innovation begins with exploring of your path according to the four elements. But path innovation is more than that. Path innovation nearly always forces form innovation. That's why path innovation can have far-reaching consequences. It can be painful, for it concerns the development of the essence. It is an innovation from here to "I don't know exactly where." Destination is never a set point on the horizon.

I know a lady who had taken over her father's sports academies after her father suddenly died. The sports academies were basic sports academies: there was easily usable equipment, there was no continuous oversight, and there were no group lessons. They were functional sports academies, cheap, with members of the type: "Act normally, that's crazy enough." Everything low-profile. The practical incentive was easily apparent. The daughter had some strong values such as service and hospitality. Perception was also high on her list because of her aesthetic incentive. She got to work and reinvented the schools as trendy schools, expanded the curriculum, installed a juice bar, a sauna. Some upgrading. But it did not go well. Employees complained and gossiped. Posters of people with beautiful bodies provoked comment. Members didn't feel at home anymore. Utilities and other expenses went up. Fees were raised. What actually happened was that the original essence of the sports academy had got lost. You can feel that. There was no longer a match. The business had left its path. Whatever the daughter tried, the upgrade was a flop. Something had to happen. A path innovation for the business was needed. First came exploration of the path:

"What are the talents, the values, the incentives, and the callings of the business that should be preserved?" And the second step—how can we renew forms so that we can keep going forward, and at the same time do justice to our path? Exploring the destination yielded the question "What is this business on earth for?", an interesting one. During some philosophical contemplation, statements were made such as "An apple a day keeps the doctor away," and "For the price of an apple a day make it possible for everyone to give his body a healthy chance." After some examination, an important renewal turned out to come, among others, from an expanded offer of group lessons, while a separate fee was assessed to participants in group lessons. You pay for what you use. The daughter has left the business and followed her own path.



## Speaking: Johan Bontje

Boardroom consultant and former partner of Boer & Croon

### You have to dare do business richly

Doing business richly sounds attractive and it is! Why go against the current? Easy question—defiant answer. Where is the current going? It's easier to see in hindsight than in the moment. When the industrial revolution started, few people saw the perspectives. Many saw threats, or a passing fad. Looking back, it's understandable: the changes were far-reaching. We now once again face such a turning point in history. It is time to switch on: how do I listen to the weak signals of a new day? The more open you are to them, the easier it is to receive the signals.

This book offers many starting points to discover and use the undercurrent. And we need it.

Organizations are looking for new possibilities to follow or enable a turnaround to stability. We speak of following when we respond to the call for stability. Enabling is about passionate entrepreneurs and companies, who want to contribute to "a better world." Socially conscious enterprise goes well beyond stability. Knowing what your product or service contributes to society in proportion to what it takes out is a condition for the new style of doing business. It will surprise no one that people choose to contribute to society. That requires new products and services. New ways of looking at things. Courage and knowledge.

Research shows that the younger generation thinks more of "meaningful" work than of a high salary. Being happy in what we are doing is more important than the material reward. To bind talents to organizations you have to be able to captivate them. And this captivation comes with attention to the ability to develop one's own talents, and apply these with one's own creativity. This way, entrepreneurship is closer to the individual.

Particularly for successful managers of the past it may be difficult to swallow the notion of going along with the times. If you have become successful through strategy, stern direction, and control, it is a considerable challenge to start doing business on the basis of trust, knowing, and greater equivalence. As an employee put it the other day during a brainstorming session about the desired atmosphere and leadership in a company: "I want a leader with vision and vigor, who sets boundaries, but who can also share his vulnerable side." That sounds like a paradox. But in that paradox lies truth. The undercurrent determines when some question or other comes up. You can't say, "Tomorrow during my speech to the staff I am going to be vulnerable." That's drama. Being transparent and genuine belong completely to surfing the undercurrent. You are rich if you don't have to do everything through willpower, if you don't have to work against your will, and if you don't have to work for something you don't believe in. The amount of energy lost in people who adapt in order to be liked is hard to quantify. The greater the security, honesty, and transparency in an organization, the greater the space to be yourself. If you trust in talents, everyone can share the wealth.

This book offers many signposts toward that wealth. It requires nerve to change the way you are doing things. Nerve to look, in all honesty, at the patterns and reflexes in your own behavior. Looking for new avenues requires humility and openness. You must be ready to turn on the navigator, to listen, and to ask others for advice. This book offers the tools. The real wealth is in getting to work.

I wish you a rich path!





Section II

# second source of doing business richly: surface current



A photograph of a utility pole with a glowing yellow light fixture against a grey sky. The pole is covered in a dense network of black wires. The light fixture is a rounded, yellowish-gold shape that is illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. The background is a pale, overcast sky. The image is framed by a solid orange border at the top and bottom.

## Section II

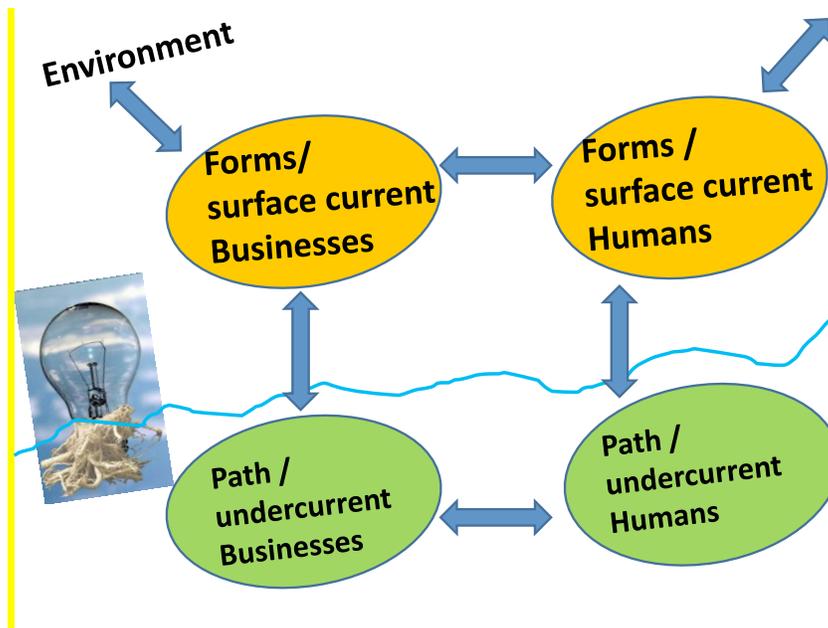
giving form  
in the surface current  
giving form  
to humans  
giving form  
to a business  
form innovation  
form innovation process  
in practice

## Giving form in the surface current

### Chapter 9

We cannot live under water. We have to breathe above water. Until now you have focused on your undercurrent and that of your business. But people and businesses cannot live on an undercurrent focus alone. We also have to do something, like work! And so, in our daily lives we run a business, do certain kinds of work, make certain types of customers happy, work together with certain coworkers, and fill a certain role. The business plays a certain part in the market—we bring a particular product or service, and we do that from a particular spot. And we do a lot more. Maybe you invest yourself or the business in a certain training. Maybe you yourself or your business do volunteer work for the betterment of society. You may engage in a particular sport, or have other hobbies. Perhaps you are an active member of some network. These are all different forms in the surface current. Forms are visible in daily life. Giving form to something means doing, acting, making visible what was invisible. Whereas undercurrent is about being, and the essence, the surface current is about being doable, and giving content to the path.

Just focusing on the undercurrent leads nowhere. But giving form only in the surface current leads to frustration in doing business, and perhaps even to stress and burn-out. Whoever finds forms that are valued by the market, and which match both his personal path and the invisible path of his business, does business richly.



>Forms for people and business:  
matching horizontally and vertically

Looking at myself: from an early age I was interested in spirituality. It is an essential element of my undercurrent. How do I give form to this in my surface current in my daily life? It is woven into my advice programs with medium- and small-sized enterprises (sme) and entrepreneurs. It is woven into doing business richly. I am a member of the international networking organization JCI, and have been an organizer of the business spirituality convention. I have two children whose upbringing is also based in spirituality. I do yoga and I meditate. Apart from each other these forms match my undercurrent. But the real enrichment in all this lies in the fact that one form feeds another. So there is also a horizontal match. To give an example: by organizing the business spirituality convention I started taking courses at Nyenrode from Paul de Blot. What I gain there in contacts and knowledge I gratefully use in my advice programs. Conversations with Paul de Blot sharpen my vision of doing business richly. They even give me a new perspective on raising our children. Through JCI I started training internationally in—yes—doing business richly. Because all forms, personal as well as commercial, are based on the same undercurrent, they nourish each other and the enrichment flows. Hence, the various forms in the surface current are not separate cubbyholes, but a holistic whole.

## Forms need not be unique to survive

Looking for an opening in the market. Let me disabuse you of the delusion: the form does not have to be unique. Several businesses and several people may have the same forms. But because the undercurrent is unique, and the forms can never be exactly the same, the total picture is still unique. Two health food stores may have the same products, be approximately the same size, and have the same number of employees, and be established in the same village in a B-location. But yet they can be very different stores. In the first place because not all forms are always the same. One may advertise in a newspaper. The other sends out newsletters by putting them into doctors' waiting rooms, for instance. One store gives elaborate personal advice along with food supplements, whereas the other adds a leaflet about food supplements. In the second place, the stores can be quite different because the undercurrents are unique. Whereas one owner, for instance, started the store out of idealism, wants to work at bettering the world and is socially driven, the other entrepreneur may have started by picking up on a trend and started his store from a practical incentive. Management books tell us we must be unique. We have to innovate in such a way that we bring something new to the world. But we should look at it holistically. We should look at the total combination of forms and undercurrent—is it unique? And—is it valuable to the market?

" Innovation is about a mix of breakthroughs and innovation of what already exists. Compare it to walking. You've got one foot firmly on the ground and the other floats in midair. That's how it is with innovating in a business. If you keep in touch with the undercurrent, you can do business richly."

*Ben Verwaayen, CEO Alcatel Lucent and ex top executive of British Telecom*

## Forms matter!

"Marketing is marketing. Managing is managing. I like small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). So a position as marketing manager in an SME is exactly what I'm looking for." This is about how an applicant reported to the director of an SME in the financial sector. He mentioned three forms here that will match his undercurrent: marketing, managing, and SME. The applicant has a good work record with Internet and cell phone companies. That appealed to the director. Deep in his heart the applicant wasn't that much into the financial sector, but he thought, oh well, nothing's perfect—three forms that are important to me match the job, that's what I'm going for. But this is exactly what makes the difference

between—at best—doing good business and doing business richly. If not all forms match the undercurrent, there's at least a nagging feeling. In this case for the marketing manager as well as for the director. After a year they parted ways. Form matters.

## Meaningful goals and meaningful results

Knowing the undercurrent is not without strings. Life is meant for some useful activity. Forms, therefore, should not be disengaged from the undercurrent, but on the contrary, should see to it that the undercurrent comes to life. That you and your business come to life. So you know that it matters that you give form to your own unique undercurrent as well as that of your business. You and your business matter! For then concrete goals and results are achieved that lead to wealth. Meaningful goals are goals that give form to the undercurrent. They have meaning because they lead to concrete, meaningful results. And you derive meaning from them because they mesh seamlessly with your undercurrent, and that's where your great incentives lie.

"These are the goals. Decide for yourselves how you achieve those goals." I hear this statement often from entrepreneurs to their staff. This goal orientation implies freedom, responsibility, creativity. Yet a *provided that/as long as* should be attached. That is to say, as long as the way you do it is in line with the undercurrent of the business. The undercurrent, for instance, holds the values of the business. The behaviors through which goals are achieved should be in line with the values of the business.

## Tasks elevated to goals

Police task their officers with a number of tickets to write out. That is a task-oriented goal. Tasks are measured—what do we have to do? You get sort of a checklist. In reality, productivity is elevated to the status of a goal. The internal means becomes the objective. What matters is the output, meaningful results in line with the undercurrent. How do you contribute to the end result of the business, the common goal that reflects the company's soul? So the police officer should ask himself, "Why was police created?" That has to do with how safe citizens feel. That's a meaningful goal we can set. It also touches upon the meaning of a police officer's work. The question for all officers then becomes, How do you contribute to citizens' safety? The committed officer certainly didn't join the police force to write as many tickets as possible. Too often tasks are made into goals. If you are building a ship and you want to get it finished, you mustn't pressure people with meaningless jobs, but let them yearn for the ocean.

**Questions**> How well do your people know the sea? How well do your people recognize the yearning for the sea?

## On the horizon and past the horizon



Form objectives are concrete. They lead from here to there. To a concrete point on the horizon. Let's say an accountant says, "We want to be among the top three in customer satisfaction with respect to competitors." That's a concrete point on the horizon. It is possible to rationally sketch out a step-by-step route to the objective: where do we need to improve, what skills are needed, what processes are needed, whom do we need to get to know, with whom do we need to cooperate, and how are we going to do this? A goal is both challenging and workable.

A destination, however, is a point past the horizon. Destinations lead from here to "I don't know where." This is a more emotional and intuitive process than setting goals. In setting goals we should be continuously aware of the undercurrent, in particular our destination.

Where I speak of destination and form objectives, Samhoud speaks of higher objectives and daring objectives. Higher objectives refer to destination and to the soul of a business or person. Why do we exist? Daring or challenging objectives refer to the challenging images of the future which, although achievable only with the greatest effort, are in principle within reach.

The Yin-Yang interplay between the point on the horizon and the point beyond the horizon yields riches. It's like the pendulum of a clock, which keeps going back and forth from left to right. If you hold the pendulum on the right or left, the clock is out of balance and stops ticking. If the pendulum hangs still in the middle, the clock also stops ticking. It is, therefore, the cadence between the two extremes that creates balance and produces abundance. The point on the horizon in cadence with the point beyond the horizon.

### Growth with 150-foot visibility

I talked with the founder—by now in his eighties—of a large international accounting firm. I asked him if the business that is now in existence was his goal fifty years ago. "Oh no," he said, "we couldn't have foreseen that. But you grow with baby steps, and at each step you need to sense again whether it still feels good. That way we automatically grew to the international office we are now."

Visibility is 150 feet. You can't look ahead for miles and miles. If the path develops in its environment, along with it new, meaningful objectives develop also, which enrich each other. An eye for ostensibly accidental meetings, information, and events, synchronicity, that descend on your path out of the mists are the signposts. Do they tally with your undercurrent? Then give it sincere attention, even if you cannot foresee where that will take you. At one time at JCI there were assessments by professional training firms that attracted my attention. I thought to myself, let me go along and see if that training suits me. I looked more closely. I started training. Never with the goal of being an international trainer at the highest level within JCI five years later. Visibility is 150 feet. My objectives always resulted from being alert to business and people I met. Being alert to how matters that connect to my undercurrent can enrich each other. Another example. I had the goal of entering an essay contest. After I was nominated for this and ended up in a book, I got a new goal: more clearly and concretely than ever before, I knew I wanted to write a book about my ideas. As I trained more, I smelled the international opportunities and it became clear to me that I wanted to keep growing internationally. It became clear that I wanted to chair a national convention about business spirituality. It became clear to me that I wanted to keep encouraging entrepreneurs to innovate. But they weren't disconnected objectives anymore, they were multiplying objectives, anchored in my undercurrent. Then growth can come quickly, even with 150-foot visibility. Synchronicity is the moving pendulum of the clock that connects the intent of the undercurrent with the manifestation there of in external forms.

**Questions**> How have you grown? How has your business grown?



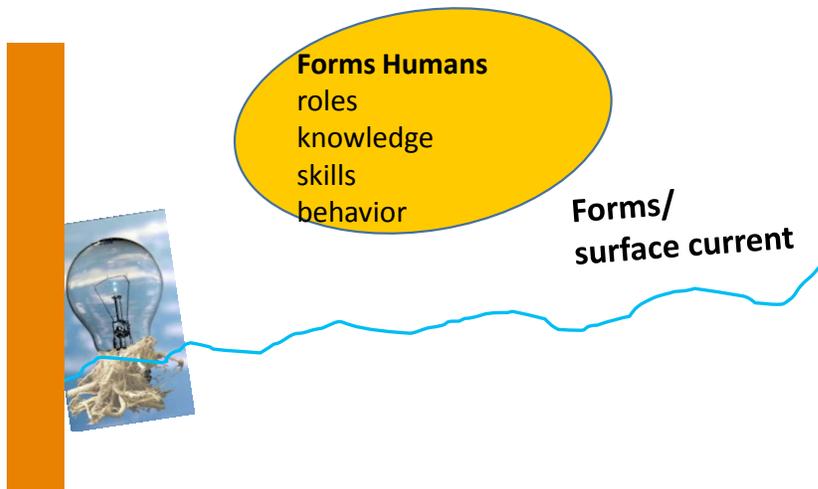
In the next two chapters you will read about the various forms in the surface current that are connected to people, and then about forms in the surface current that are connected to businesses. These are especially reflection chapters for you: How well do the forms discussed reflect, in your current situation, your undercurrent and that of your business, and how well are these forms valued in the market? In the next few chapters, therefore, you are going to reflect on how richly you and your company are doing business.



# Giving form to people

## Chapter 10

In Section I (undercurrent) you have explored the undercurrent of yourself as a human being. The question is how well you give form in the surface current to the undercurrent of you as a person. In daily life you play various parts, you show certain behaviors, you use and develop certain skills. Those are different forms of you as a person in the surface current. To do business richly, you should as a human being choose the forms that keep your energy channels unobstructed, so that the energy can flow freely. That's why your roles, your behavior, and your skill development should reflect your undercurrent. Then the business you do is done with spirit.



Below I discuss the three most common forms which you as a human being employ to give form to your business practices: the roles you assume, the behavior you demonstrate, and the skills you use. And I have an assignment for you as you read the forms in this chapter: How exactly do your personal forms match your undercurrent? How are you situated on your path?



## Roles

Entrepreneur, craftsman, manager, director, visionary, decision maker, listener, motivator, salesman, inventor, coach. Which roles do you play in your business? Parent, partner, captain of a sports team, board of directors member in an organization, friend—which roles do you play outside work? Everyone plays many roles in daily life. For some the roles are not all that different, for others they differ immensely. As long as those roles match the undercurrent, you can do business richly. Working hard because you have taken on so many roles is not a bad thing as long as those roles come naturally to you. Then you play them easily.

I know that the ideal role, which fascinates me from within, is not that of chairman of an association in a particular year, where the beginning and end of the chairmanship is determined by simple points in time that indicate beginning and end. However, chairing a project of an association with a clear and concrete end result that terminates the chairmanship—that makes my energy flow abundantly. That's because the first role is closer to director, which does not come naturally to me, whereas the second is more that of an entrepreneur, which is my natural style. Nuances in roles is important, therefore.

**Questions** > How do each of your roles match your natural qualities? > How does each role match your values? > How does each role match your incentives? > How does each role match your destination? > Where, if anywhere, might there be tension that gets in the way of doing business richly?

## Roles that come naturally to you will enrich each other

In my work I bring entrepreneurs closer to their intuition in order to help them make eventual decisions from deep within. In the same way, as a parent I bring our children closer to their intuition when they don't know what is the best thing to do. As a facilitator of group sessions I am a keen observer of what happens with me and others. In the same manner I observe at home, as a parent and as a partner, how everyone is doing. Whatever role I am playing, my undercurrent shines through. And then roles enrich each other.

**Questions**> How do your various roles enrich each other? > How does something required of you in one role, help you in another?

## The role of entrepreneur

When you started your business you probably had an image before you of yourself as an entrepreneur. How realistic is that image now? As an entrepreneur you go through several phases. You start from your craftsmanship. You grab every opportunity you come across. You pioneer away. Your business grows. You can't handle things anymore on your own and you involve others, or start working in some network. That changes your role. You now have to start managing your business. To a greater or lesser extent you need structure, guidelines, and procedures everyone knows and sticks to, or things go to hell in a hand basket. If then business goes well, you delegate these management tasks, or perhaps you have appointed a manager. You can then lead or prod a little from some distance, or act as adviser. Again you get another role to play.

**Questions**> Where do you stand as an entrepreneur, and how does that role suit you? >What do you like about it? >How does this match your undercurrent? >What would you rather get rid of? >Where does this not match your undercurrent? >What role do you want in three years? >In what areas does this new role match your undercurrent?

## The behavior you demonstrate in the surface current

From the undercurrent you know your natural qualities and your natural behavioral style: dominance (red), influence (yellow), stability (green), or conformity (blue). It is helpful, of course, to be flexible in your behavioral style. Imagine a sales conversation between you as a seller with a lot of green behavior and a buyer with a lot of red behavior. Then it is a good thing if you can speed up your pace a little, get right to the point to start your conversation, the way red likes it. But imagine that for a few months, or a few years, you have adapted to a behavior that is not natural for you. That takes mountains of energy! Our energy channels become choked and blocked. In your natural behavior in the undercurrent you have no choices to make, that grows from your soul. That's what is naturally inside you. But the actual behavioral form you show and demonstrate, that is, your behavior in the surface current, does give you choices. Being able to do business with your natural behavior makes for doing business richly.

I have worked with an advisory organization where everyone started out with targets for individual advice programs as well as for conducting group sessions. Every adviser got about the same number. Then one adviser was dismissed because he did too many sessions and too few individual advice programs. That did not go over well with him. Although he was an excellent group facilitator, that was his forte. Perhaps an organizational adjustment would have been possible so that as a team we would still have made the result totals, while he could have applied himself completely to his role as a facilitator of these sessions. Not checking this out is a missed opportunity for the person as well as for the organization.

### Questions for you>

- ✓ How well do you do business with your natural behavior? Which behavior colors to you allow to predominate?
- ✓ Is there any business where you operate with a different behavior than is natural for you?
- ✓ Do you accelerate or slow down with respect to your natural behavior?
- ✓ Do you act more like an extrovert or introvert than you really are?
- ✓ If so, what sort of business do you not do with your natural behavior?
- ✓ What percentage of your time is spent this way?
- ✓ What conviction is at the root of your not doing business with your natural behavior?
- ✓ What changes when you start doing business with your natural behavior?
- ✓ What do you need to be able to tackle business with your natural behavior?
- ✓ What is a first, small step you can take to do business completely from your natural behavior?

### Questions for your business>

- ✓ With what behavior and in what roles do the people in your firm do business?
- ✓ To what extent do they bring their undercurrent to life that way so that they can work with inspiration?
- ✓ To what extent can adjustments be made in the organization for everyone to be able to function in a matching role and with his natural behavior?

## Knowledge and skills

If everything is right, knowledge and skills you use in doing business reflect your undercurrent. Years ago I was naturally attracted to training in image thinking. I could put my heart and soul into it. Almost without trying I started applying this knowledge and these skills in my work, and I achieved unheard-of results with entrepreneurs. Recently I talked with an entrepreneur I hadn't seen in seven years. He said, "Your training was so appealing because in addition to a rational approach we also went to work with images." He remembered that. That is characteristic of my training programs. Of course you can solve problems in the workplace in different ways—there is more than one way that leads to Rome. But this is what I stand for. A colleague of mine is creative—she sculpts and has taken reading training.

In reading training you learn to make contact with people on a soul level, and "read" their minds and spirits through strong intuition. Like the majority of advisers, he tackled his counseling work rationally, with models and analyses. Besides his counseling job with our firm, he had a business of his own for readings of people. It did not occur to him to integrate this skill into his counseling with our business. He saw them as separate things. But reading came so from within, and belonged so much on his path, that I told him, "Bring it into your counseling." After that, the quality of his counseling rose steeply.

It also happens that you have a role that requires completely different knowledge and skills from you than you have available. You have to dig very deep to reach those. The other day I served as a sounding board for an office manager of an insurance company. He confided, "I enjoy managing, but that financial soup is really not my thing." Of course, he does have to be able to read and counsel about financial reports. He has acquired that ability, but because it isn't "his thing," it takes a lot out of him, and it is difficult to do business richly.

**Questions**> How do the knowledge and skills you use in doing business reflect your undercurrent? >How does your environment value this?

Your roles, your behavior that you show, and the skills you use are three forms you assume as a person in your surface current. In this chapter I have tried to spur you to reflection on your personal forms. How precisely do these forms match your undercurrent? Are you settled on your path or are you tempted by renewal? To what extent do the business and its environment value these forms? Is it perhaps time for renewal? In the following chapter you will reflect on the forms with which your business gives form to its undercurrent.



# Giving form to the business

## Chapter 11

### Reflections

In section I, about the first source of doing business, you got the feeling for the undercurrent of your business. Now it is time to shed light on the business forms in the surface current. Below you will read about the business forms: product or service, brand, customers, building, IT-applications, suppliers, staff, and businesslike behavior. Of course this is not an exhaustive list and many more forms exist in your business. The purpose of this chapter is to urge you to reflect: to what extent do the current business forms of my company reflect my company's undercurrent? And to what extent are the current forms valued by the market? Think about this for a minute according to the following. Then you will know if your company is on its path.



## Product or service

My preferred brand of food supplement came from a company that has food supplements as its core business, where the products are developed with physicians, and where extensive training is given to store personnel. One day I came into the store for a new jar. They said, "We now also have a less expensive brand, and it contains the same ingredients." They showed me the packaging. It was from a cosmetics firm. I didn't do it, but I chose the expensive, familiar brand. Because foodstuffs are taken internally, I'd rather see physicians involved than a cosmetics firm that has started its own brand of food supplement on the side.

Do you know how that goes, deciding by feeling in what business this product comes from within? You should ask yourself the same thing in your own business. Do our products and services come from within? By the principle that you actively do business and project yourself to the outside world with what fits with the undercurrent of the business, whatever does not fit with your undercurrent you either outsource, do with a partner, or don't do at all. Or you do it as an exception, and low-profile. Of course, as an entrepreneur you will always run into some business that doesn't fit, but which represents a chance you don't want to miss. If you decide to outsource also, your business undercurrent is important, because it is from there that desires and demands regarding the service can be distilled for the new partner.

**Questions>** To what extent do your products and services reflect your company's values and its purpose on earth? To what extent does the market value your products and services? What exactly does the market value?

## Brand



Another form of your business is a brand. And you want a strong brand. A strong brand is a brand you can be rightfully proud of. A strong brand, of course, contributes to the market results of your business and to a strong work environment for staff and potential staff. A strong brand is deeply anchored in the company's soul. You get a strong brand not just by playing into hip trends. You get a strong brand in the first place because your brand connects with people's souls—customers' and employees'. Then you connect with the values, incentives, talents, destinations they find important and valuable. In the second place you get a strong brand because you connect with your own company's soul, so that the brand is strongly anchored in the company's genes. Then it is "real." When Philips wanted to get into cell phones, it was a short-lived venture. The Philips brand was associated more with home appliances than with digital instruments. That home association is in Philips's genes, and makes it a strong brand. It becomes very difficult to build a strong brand into a product form that doesn't exactly reflect the undercurrent.

When the founder still strongly symbolizes the company, it is good to highlight those elements of the brand that were strong in the founder. Rabobank, for instance, came from the Raiffeisen bank with a credit bureau cooperative. In the '90s the cooperative was no longer hip. Yet Herman Wijffels, then chairman of the board of directors, saw to it that the cooperative identity of the Rabobank would be maintained and strengthened. Rabobank would remain a cooperative, and that's how Rabobank is presented as a brand in the market. That is something so strong in the genes that it cannot be denied.

**Questions**> How well is your brand valued in the market? >To what extent does your brand reflect your company's soul? >And to what extent does your brand reflect the souls of people such as employees and customers?

## Clients

The type of clients serviced by your company may be seen as a visible form of a business, with which the company does business in the surface current. Although, of course, you cannot speak of "the" client, there are probably certain types of clients who predominate in your business. In order to do business richly, your clients should connect with your undercurrent. Check out to what extent your clients connect with your company's undercurrent by looking, among others, at the line of business they are in, their personalities, their incentives, their needs, their values. How well do these connect to your company's undercurrent? It is also worth the trouble to take a good look at your ideal client. On what points does that client match the undercurrent of your business?

## Clients' lines of business match your undercurrent

I advised a temporary employment agency that has focused on manufacturing companies as clients forever and a day. The temp agency has production in its genes. The temp agency thinks like a manufacturing company, acts like a manufacturing company, and speaks the language of manufacturing companies. Those genes differ completely from those of a temp agency that has had its clients in the service sector since time immemorial. It may be a heavy task for a temp agency to switch from servicing manufacturers and grow with clients from the service industry.

## Matching incentives of clients with your and your company's undercurrent

A client with very high practical and individualistic incentives will be quick to negotiate to the bitter end. If your business is highly socially driven, however, you may interpret this as wanting everything, wanting something for nothing, greed. A socially motivated person may

be annoyed by that. The nicest and best clients are driven to do business with your company from incentives that are not in conflict with those of your company. Matching incentives of the client with yours and with those of your company promotes doing business richly.

### Being excellent at what your client values

If you and your company's natural qualities are exactly what is needed to satisfy the needs of clients, business is done richly. It is your company's challenge to deliver even more value than your client expects. If this requires the natural qualities you and your business possess, there is a valuable match with the undercurrent.

### Valuing each other's values

You can imagine that doing business richly is more likely if your company does business with clients who fully validate your values. Just do the following exercise:

Visualize the best and most pleasant clients. Look at the inspiration list of values from chapter 4. Which values are fully validated in business transactions between your company and your best clients? What shows that? With how many clients do you do valuable business?

### Ideal clients

It is often said that the ideal man does not exist. You could say the ideal client does not exist. Yet it is important to figure out who your ideal client is, who matches your undercurrent. If you know that, you can make a more focused search for more of these clients, who create abundance. You will find this ideal client in less time and with less energy.

Discover your ideal client in four steps:

1. Look at your client list. Who are your most valuable clients? Financially speaking, of course. Then also from a human viewpoint. It's about and-and. Select the best and most valuable clients on a financial and a human scale.
2. Write down as many characteristics per client as possible that make him one of the best clients. Look at hard and soft elements. Look at all phases of the sales process. Look at the client as a business and at the buyer as a person.
3. Check out: What characteristics do your best and most valuable clients share? What characteristics do your best clients have in common?
4. Where do their characteristics match your undercurrent and that of your business?

If you want to do business more richly in the current market, you now know what to look for.

A commercial business in promotional gifts began to analyze its client list. They didn't see any parallels in shared characteristics among their best and most valuable customers. According to them, the tally of the best clients was a hodgepodge of clients scattered all over the place, from all sorts of businesses, large and small in size. Then we started looking a level deeper. It turned out that the common denominator between the best and the most valuable clients was client personality. They were all between thirty and forty, personable, enterprising, informal. It was with them that the commercial company clicked fastest, and with the most trust. It was also with them that they felt the most friendliness and friendship. And so the clients grew to be best and most valuable clients. A match between client personality and your undercurrent and that of the business promotes doing business richly.

**Questions**> To what extent do my clients' lines of business connect to the undercurrent of my business? >And the clients' personalities? >And the values? >And the incentives? >What qualities are specifically needed to fill your clients' needs beyond expectations? >Are those your natural qualities? >And those of the business?

## Building

Perhaps, especially if you are not aesthetically driven, you now think, oh, how important can a building be for doing business richly as a form in the surface current. But do you recognize this? You often have a certain image of a business and what it stands for as soon as you enter the lobby. As you enter the Interpolis building, you see brightness and transparency and trust, elements they stand for. The building is very light, you may use every work station in the building; management is flexible and is not isolated on the top floor. Everything works. That way, the flow of abundance multiplies itself. You can imagine the opposite also. Let's say you have an architects' office that stands for transparent work and is aesthetically driven toward beauty, and the office is in a dark, neglected office building. It doesn't seem right, and as a potential client you think, nah, I don't think so.

**Questions**> In what sort of building is your company situated? >How do the building, the location, and the furnishings reflect the undercurrent of your business? >How does your client like that?

## IT applications

The use of IT by your company is a form that can constitute a real part of the business you do daily. Nearly all products and services are supported by IT to a greater or lesser degree. If your IT applications strengthen your product or service offers to the extent that the character of the company is better expressed, they contribute to doing business richly.

Take online coaching by the Volkskrant newspaper. The character of the Volkskrant is as follows: "An opinionated and unconventional newspaper which keeps its assertive readers involved and challenged, so that they get the best out of themselves and others." When in 2008 they started online coaching, coaching in the Netherlands was still a face-to-face procedure. Online coaching was unconventional, just like the character of the Volkskrant. Online coaching was totally in line with "getting the best out of yourself and others." And through a coaching series they kept readers involved and challenged. In short, the IT application supported the character of the Volkskrant.

**Questions**> What IT applications does your business use and how do they help your business to let your business illuminate who it is, and why it was born? How does the market value the IT applications?

## Suppliers

Although "the" supplier does not exist, in the course of daily life your suppliers do give form to your business to a certain extent. The match you have as a person and as a business with your suppliers can be an essential factor in your possibilities of doing business richly. The Van den Braken contracting firm, for instance, focused on having the lowest possible failure costs and on working efficiently. On that basis it competed in the market. The contracting firm matched its suppliers especially on the practical incentive. Together with its suppliers, this firm has developed a digital ordering system from price list to invoice. The big plus was that digital ordering is less mistake-prone. Orders are easier to check and mistakes easier to remedy. Product, price, and delivery information are fast, up-to-date, and permanently available. It also resulted in administrative cost savings. When suppliers are a good match with your undercurrent and that of your business, and you achieve a form that is well valued in the market, you can do business richly.

**Questions**> Who are your suppliers and to what extent do they connect with your company's undercurrent? >What part do your suppliers play in the market valuation of your business?

## Employees

Employees give form to your business to a considerable degree. "People at my work don't need to be my friends." How true is that for you? It is true and it is not true. Of course they don't have to be your best friends, but a friendly relationship between people does create a more fluid exchange and flow of knowledge.

Paul de Blot, professor of business spirituality at Nyenrode, told me that knowledge multiplies better in companies where friendly connections exist between people. When employees in a business feel hardly any connection with each other, knowledge is left floating on lonely little islands. By inviting others, you go from individual wealth to multiplied, common wealth. I advised UTL, a dental laboratory. The business had changed owners several times. People did the work they had to do. And that was it. The director told me that hardly anyone would go along on their Saturday off to go to professional exchanges to see the newest of the newest. The picture was quickly clear to me: people work alongside each other and they work for the business, but they are not together and they are not there for the business. In an employees' session I first gave people space to express criticism. They did this in dialog form. In that process, people dug deeper and deeper, naturally reaching their level of being. That was new to them, and they all welcomed it. For they discovered that their thought processes weren't so different. They also discovered together what really mattered. And they discovered together what they actually wanted. At the end of the session two people jumped up who were going to organize a dialog with all the employees and management. They did that, and they adjusted the way things were run. Two days after my session with the employees, the director said to me, "Désirée, I don't know what you did, but even the one who hardly wanted to do anything extra spontaneously went to help another department." Six months later management said, "Désirée, I actually thought that the effect of one session with you would dry up one day, and then we'd be back to the old patterns, but we are still doing well." Success, of course, lies in the fact that changes, or the new forms, that have been incorporated in the undercurrent, reflect the undercurrent of the people and the business.

The above example is strongly related to the workplace environment. One business has a less formal work environment than another. One business operates strongly from its environment, whereas another is focused more inward. There are no right and wrong work environments. There are only work environments that match particularly well with your or your company's undercurrent, and those that don't. The match creates the connection.

**Questions**> To what extent is there a friendly connection between people in your business? >Which points in the undercurrent connect employees? >How does that work itself out to the market? >What valuation does that result in?

## Business behavior

The business behavior of your company in the surface current is an actual form of the surface current of your business and the valuation that evokes in the market. "Practice what you preach" is the starting point. Many companies determine their core values, an important element from the undercurrent. That does not necessarily mean that the company really does business based upon these core values. People interpret the core values differently and give them their own translation. Or worse yet, the core values disappear in a drawer and people go back to business as usual. What is missing here is, after determining the shared core values, giving them form in behavior. The core values should be expressed in behavior. How do you know that someone lives by a certain value? To bring a core value to life it is important to define observable behavior together that leaves behind a particular desired feeling.

Let us say a core value of a consultancy firm is "enterprising." The next question is: What does the client who does business with the consultant notice about the value *enterprising*? Next, as a firm you define observable behaviors that leave a certain desirable feeling in clients. For example:

- ✓ Behavior a: You always answer e-mail within 24 hours.
- ✓ Behavior b: You call your "warm" contacts who are not yet clients once a month.
- ✓ Behavior c: On your own initiative, you put the client in contact with contacts or events that are interesting to him.

Each value goes for everyone in the business. But it is measured in the aspect that each value for each role within the business achieves form in a different behavior. The core value *enterprising* is applicable just as much to the consultant as to the internal controller and the secretarial staff. Together you define what behavior shows that the secretarial staff is enterprising and what feeling you want to leave behind. For instance:

- ✓ Behavior a: You answer e-mail always within 24 hours.
- ✓ Behavior b: In editing advice reports you come up with proposals for improvement yourself.
- ✓ Behavior c: When a consultant is in conference with a client, you take the initiative to check after a certain interval of time whether the client wants a second cup of coffee.

Of course, these are only examples. What is important is that you choose, together, three matching behaviors for each core value. Thereby answering the question: What feeling should this behavior leave? You can check with clients to see if core values are coming through. Ask, for instance, about the extent to which a business leaves them with a certain feeling about the values.

**Questions**> To what extent does the business behavior in your company fit in with your company's core values? >How do clients value that?

## Innovate!

In this chapter you have contemplated the way forms in your business match the undercurrent. perhaps you see even more forms in your business. Look at how these forms reflect the soul of your business. And how those forms are valued in the market.

What is your conclusion? How well is your business settled on its path with its forms? If your business is not on its path with its forms, or forms are not valued by the market, it is high time for form innovation. But even if your business is on its path, it's essential to keep going forward on that path. Innovating is a continuous process. The following chapters about form innovation are meant to inspire you and facilitate a creative and structured innovation process.





**Question**> How well is your business settled on its path with its forms?

# Form innovation

## Chapter 12

### The need to innovate

Until now you have explored your own path and that of your business. You have investigated whether your and your company's current forms match your path. You know how your forms work out in the market financially-economically. In doing so, you have taken an essential step on the road to doing business richly. Perhaps you have drawn the conclusion that you are beautifully on your path personally and in your business, and that the market values this. Perhaps you have come to the conclusion that you have strayed from your path personally or with your business. Whatever the outcome, innovating means ongoing work. *Innovate* is a verb. Innovating is a necessary step in doing business richly or in keeping on doing it. Those who are not on their path must innovate to get back to the path. Those who are on their path must also innovate to keep going forward so as not to become a sleepy, rusty enterprise. And innovation usually means using your analytical and creative tools. Innovation is not a wild process of ups and downs, trial and error, where you haphazardly put into action ideas that enter your head or intuition. It is a structured process that encourages creativity.

### Form innovation

The essence of form innovation for businesses is achieving new forms which both connect to the path, the undercurrent, and are seen by the market as an enrichment. I write new *forms*, in the plural, because a form innovation practically always entails renewal of several forms at the same time. The forms are interlocking wheels. And these days they interlock faster and faster. So a renewal of one wheel automatically necessitates renewal in other places. A form innovation is therefore about a combination of renewed and new forms. Thus, a form innovation more often concerns a revolution than a renewal that comes about piece by piece. Contrary to a path innovation, form innovation is characterized as an innovation from here to there. It is concrete, can take place radically, at short notice, and can often happen consecutively. The path shows the way in form innovation. On your path, after all, you and your business are of maximum value to the world.

## Rusty forms: Time for innovation

Do you know that feeling that when you come somewhere as a client and you feel the organization is on its path all right, but you also feel, hey, why don't they do something about this? Are they doing well enough, no worries, and therefore they do not invest in innovation? A restaurant in a splendid spot that runs beautifully, but isn't open on Sundays, although people are asking for it. An amusement park that was started with a beautiful philosophy and was quite a renewal, but where you stand dully in line longer than you actually enjoy the experiences. Sometimes we are on our path, but we get stuck in certain forms. They can even be lucrative, but there is no more stretch. Sometimes also because over the years convictions have taken root that may and may not be valid anymore. For example, about what clients like the best and what they want at a minimum. Just the question "Is that really still true?" can open the way to innovating forms the market values.

I was talking with a business that put together excursions for business people. It was done in the usual way with well-laid out brochures and booklets. The question whether people still want to see this brought about an innovation process. Now they have guides on the smartphone with GPS. The form changes, the roots remain.

Innovation is necessary to keep going forward on your path, or things may get away from you—often unnoticed. Have you ever been a client in your own business? Then you can discover this sort of necessary innovations. Like the hospital superintendent who didn't exactly have a good time in a few days as a patient in his own hospital. "Why can't I eat kidney beans every day? Why am I lying in this impersonal little sick room?" He was also irritated to death at the undesired patronizing behavior of his own staff. His conclusion: "We are going to do things *very* differently from this very day. The patient is going to the boss from now on."

Changed forms may refer to new products or services or technologies, but also to a new way of working. Mooy Logistics, for instance, has eventually chosen to break up a long international drive with relief points for drivers. At the relief stations they do not only load and unload, but they change drivers. The new driver drives the truck on to the next relief station. Local drivers can be used for parts of the international routes. That way a truck was able to cover 200,000 kilometers (nearly 125,000 miles) per year.

## Four choices

A form innovation may be in order after a path innovation, or it may stand alone. For innovation is about action. For a form innovation, four choices need to be made:

- 0 What are we not going to do anymore? What are we stopping?
- 0 What are we going to do less of?
- 0 What are we going to do better or more?
- 0 What are we going to do that's new? What are we going to do in a new way, or what new things are we going to do?

## Phases of form innovation to do business richly

The first step is always to see that you have explored your path as a person and as a business, and that you have developed feeling in doing so. That way you can go on to connect the forms with the undercurrent. The preparation process goes as follows:

- ✓ Exploring the undercurrent, with path innovation if needed
- ✓ Becoming aware of the current match between forms and path
- ✓ Becoming aware of the valuation by the market

The form innovation process then goes as follows:

- A. Create the right setting.
- B. In a structured manner, chart all forms of the current business model. Parallel to this, generate new ideas for form innovation creatively and intuitively.
- C. Image-think.
- D. Share images and form a common image.
- E. Check whether new forms match the undercurrent.

These are, of course, not the only steps in the process of getting to innovative forms. At some point numbers and plans and documents must be put together and discussed. What I mean, however, is that details more readily fall into place when entrepreneurs and managers start with a broad perspective of ways to free themselves from what is. With the form innovation process proposed above, which addresses the rational as well as the intuitive approach, you increase your chances of doing business richly.



form innovation  
to do business richly  
follows different steps

# The form innovation process in practice

## Chapter 13

I enjoy facilitating and inspiring you now in the process of form innovation the way that may look in reality. At this point, the undercurrent has already been explored, and an awareness has grown of how the forms match the undercurrent, and of how the market values the forms. We go through steps A through E. I encourage you to see how you can take those steps in practice.

### Step A:

#### Creating the right setting for the process of form innovation

The innovative part of my approach is the combination of methodology, intellect, analysis, and creativity, imagination, and visualization. Participants invariably enjoy starting this demanding and relaxing innovation adventure. My role as a facilitator is on the one hand to see that the group stays on course and up to speed, and that main issues remain separated from side issues. On the other hand the role of the facilitator is to ask questions that stimulate the creative spirit of participants, ask questions about matters that up to then have been taken for granted, and ask questions that have never been asked before. It is, therefore, about creating space for the participants to get new ideas. For that matter, it is not only the facilitator's task to ask questions, participants are also invited to place question marks.

#### Who are the participants?

The composition of groups can differ: entrepreneurs and management team members are naturals. What is also refreshing is to bring in a number of talented young "pups" from the business. Or, taking it a step further, the so-called wild card: people from the outside, a student perhaps, or a colleague-entrepreneur. They often have refreshing ideas, and a new wind starts blowing in the process. You can also do crowd-outsourcing: via the Internet you can get ideas from a large group.



On the wall you create your "own wallpaper," as a client once expressed it so beautifully. Have a flipchart or literally a roll of wallpaper, colored markers, Post-its, stickers. At any rate, prepare these flipcharts:

- ✓ "Enriching" and "impoverishing" points: These come from the analysis of the current business model.
- ✓ "Developments" that play out in the neighborhood of your business, which are irreversible and provide direction
- ✓ "Not doing anymore," "Doing less," "Doing better or more," and "Doing something that's new"
- ✓ "Ideas" that result from this innovation process

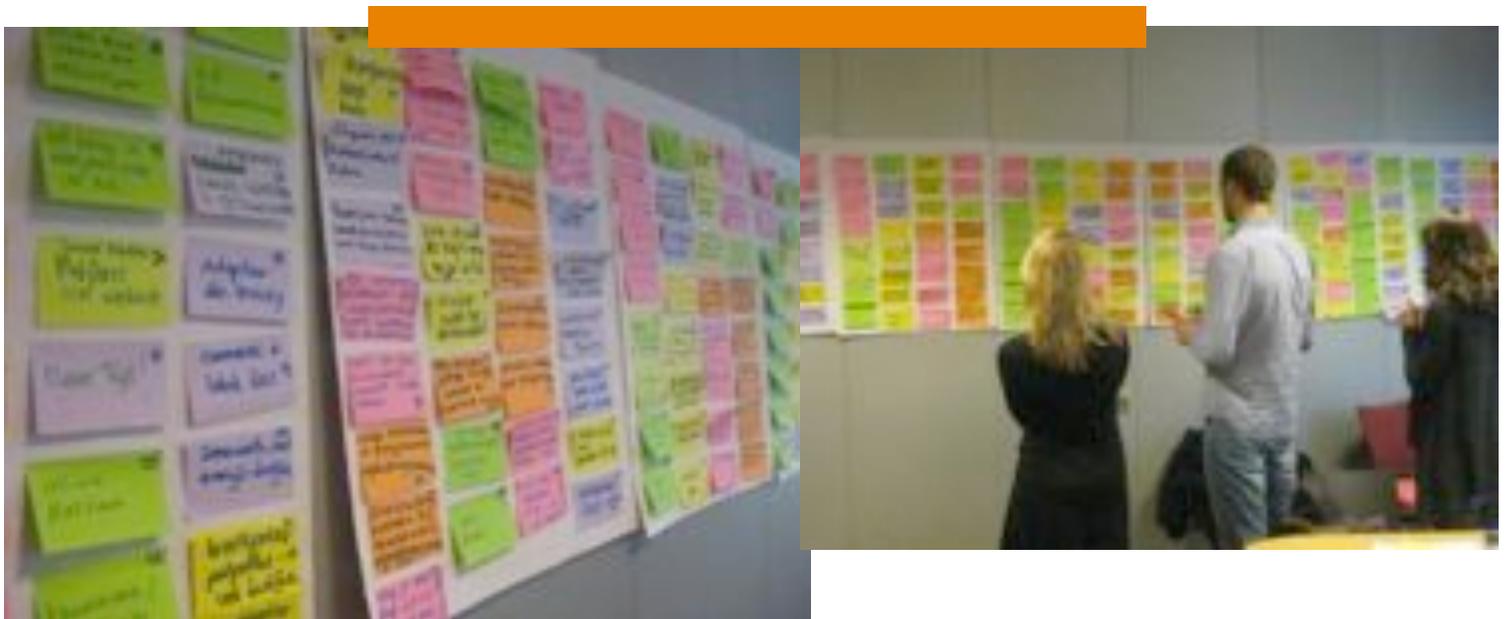
Before and between sessions I do activities that stimulate participants to "hang" above themselves and their business and be in contact with their undercurrent. It is essential that participants step outside themselves and free themselves of their learned knowledge and their own familiar truths. Thus, they will experience being nourished in the field, and the right information will come to them at the right moment of its own accord. Participants just need to open themselves up to be able to receive.

### Step B:

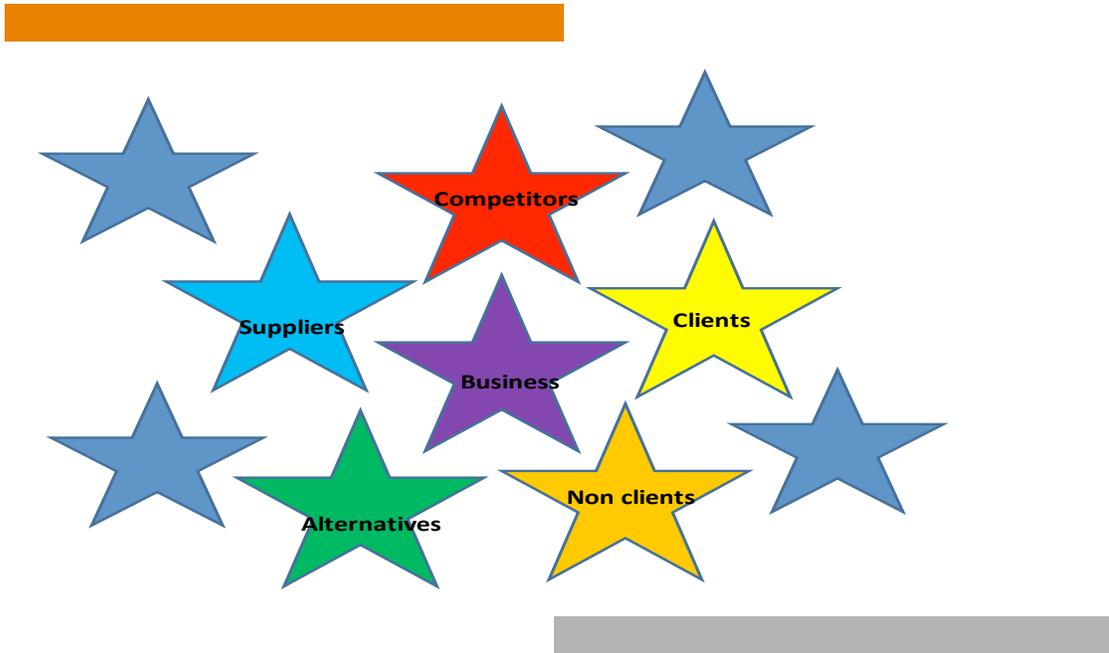
#### Current business model and new ideas

All forms are charted in structured format. Parallel to this, and not afterward, new ideas for form innovation are generated creatively and intuitively, in a structured manner. Forms I always throw open to questions are clients, nonclients, suppliers, competitors, and alternative products or services. You can, of course, add elements that are important in your situation. We are going to test all these forms by asking the right questions. That's how we discover where the enriching and the impoverishing points are in the business model, seen in the context of the business. And this way we get new ideas.

It is an analytical, rational process, because it asks for facts, and we study the logical consequences of facts. It is at the same time a creative process, because it requires creativity from those who ask and from those who answer the questions to get to new ideas. This questioning phase of form innovation has two important rules. In the first place, it is important in this phase to postpone judgment. No question is too crazy for words. No answer is too crazy for words. In the second place, it is important to get many answers. When I ask, "What sorts of fruit are valued by the market?" apples and pears will come first, for everyone knows them, and not until later come passion fruit and lychees, so a distinction can be made. If the process is stopped too soon, all you get is apples and pears. That is an opportunity lost.



For inspiration, below you will find stimulating, searching questions about the most essential forms. In practice we take several sessions for this. Because examining the facts runs parallel to the generation of ideas, the question keeps coming up: what ideas are inspired by this for the business model, the product, or the service offered, or for the internal process? I also present relevant examples throughout the entire process. Followed again by the question, How does this inspire you and your business? This phase of the process yields ideas of doing business in a new way, to stop doing things, do less of them, or do them better. These lists of questions are, of course, not exhaustive and serve only to stimulate and inspire you to think of your own questions.



## Clients

Clients are, of course, an essential form as business is conducted daily in every company. Let's start with the clients in this form innovation process.

- ✓ Every business has strategic groupings of clients. Which are the groups in your business? Consider what developments are going on with the client groups. Examine how these developments are going to influence the demand for your product. What possibilities come from this? *What ideas does it inspire?*
- ✓ Which aspects of the product or service delivered are experienced by the client as truly enriching, as really valuable? Besides the obvious matters such as variety and price, other things need to be looked at. Aspects such as the jargon used, pleasure, or adventure may pop up. *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Which aspects does the client not experience as particularly enriching? It is important to dare let go of and refuse to invest in aspects that are not experienced as enriching. That keeps costs manageable and you stay away from expensive business models. *What ideas does this inspire in supply as well as in the internal process?*
- ✓ Client of the client: Ask yourself who the clients of the client are. Which aspects of the product your client supplies to his client, are experienced as truly enriching by his client? It is at least as important to look at which aspects the client of the clients

finds not particularly enriching. Consider how you can even better serve your client, so that your client can enrich his client even better, more easily, and more precisely. *What ideas does this inspire?*

- ✓ Chart de buyers, consumers, and influencers. They will overlap, and at the same time they will differ from one another. Who do you focus on and what possibilities result if you focus on other groups? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ What possibilities arise if you deliver straight to the client of the client? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ What possibilities arise if you invest in a product jointly with the client and share the profits? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ What barter possibilities are there with the products and services of the client? *What ideas does this inspire?*

**Questions>** What are you not going to do, do less of, do better, or start doing?

## Substitutes and alternatives

In order to renew, I can, for instance, take a course, read a management book, or hire a counselor. To bring employees together, I can organize a dinner, attend training together, or do volunteer work together. They are all alternatives for each other.

- ✓ Client groups meet a need with your product. If you know their deepest need, you can consider what alternatives to your product are available.
- ✓ Which aspects of the alternatives are truly enriching for the clients? *What ideas does this inspire?*

Make sure that the new ideas appeal to the aspects that are seen as truly enriching by the client. You need to let go of the aspects that are not experienced as enriching, so that expenses stay manageable and no expensive business model is created.

**Questions>** What are you not going to do, do less of, do better, or start doing?

## Suppliers

We cannot produce something all by ourselves. Our suppliers provide us with the materials or knowledge to produce our products or services.

- ✓ First chart the suppliers of your business.
- ✓ Also chart those who are not suppliers. What are the reasons? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Some activities you do not subcontract to suppliers, and you do them yourself. What possibilities arise if you do subcontract these activities? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Review the developments going on with suppliers. Ask yourself how these developments are going to influence the delivery of your product. What possibilities arise because of this? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Say you invest in your product or in a common product jointly with the supplier, and get to where you split the profits. What possibilities arise here? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Say you are going to perform the supplier's activities yourself. What possibilities does this yield? The supplier provides your business with materials or knowledge. It is essential to know which aspects of the products delivered by the supplier are truly enriching as you supply your clients. *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ It is equally essential to know which aspects of the supplier's product add little to no value. *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ What substitutes are there for the suppliers? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ What alternatives are there for the suppliers? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ What barter possibilities are there with the products and services of the supplier? *What ideas does this inspire?*

**Questions>** What are you not going to do, do less of, do better, or start doing?

## Nonclients

These groups are often overlooked, among others because of theories about first renewing what already exists before you target new groups and products. In practice there are innovation opportunities here that are easily tracked through the Internet. List your questions on the Internet (for instance, via social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn) and let the (non) client speak up.

- ✓ There are groups that are not clients in your business, but do use the products of a competitor. Find out the most important reasons why these nonclients do not use your products. What enriching aspect do they miss in your offers? For example, sports academies with childcare have sprung up. *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Often, nonclients operate on an assumption, a conviction as to why they do not patronize your business, and buy from a competitor instead. How can you adjust that conviction? *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Chart groups of nonclients who buy neither your products nor those of your competitors. What are the most important reasons why these nonclients do not buy this sort of product? *What ideas does this inspire?*

**Questions>** What are you not going to do, do less of, do better, or start doing?

## Competitors

Killer competition or not, in both cases this element can be a source of inspiration for renewal. Make a list of who your business considers to be competitors.

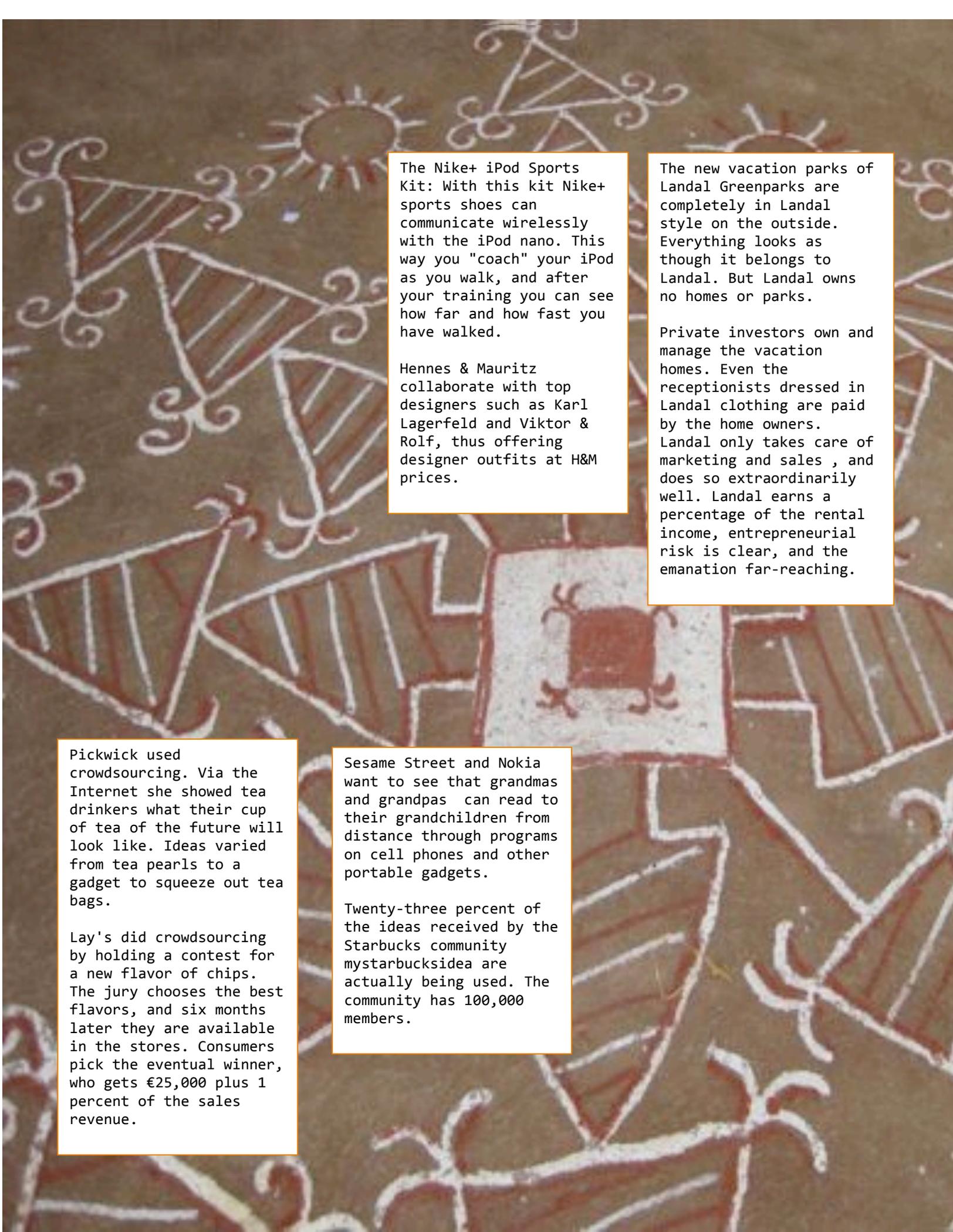
- ✓ Sketch the developments going on with your competitors. *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Some players in the market may not consider you a direct competitor, because, for instance, they are in a different price or quality segment of the market. Who do you not see as competitors? What product aspects of these players are valuable and enriching to the market? Say you combine these product aspects with the truly enriching aspects of your own offers, and you stop the non-enriching aspects. *What ideas does this inspire?*
- ✓ Competitors can also start collaborating. In which of your business activities could you start collaborating with competitors? *What ideas does this inspire?*

**Questions>** What are you not going to do, do less of, do better, or start doing?

## Cocreation: Combining leads to innovating

From an us-and-them attitude, doing business remains a battle focused on winning. As soon as an equivalent connection with others is made from a *we* feeling, new innovation opportunities arise that can be quite enriching. That way clients, nonclients, competitors, alternative suppliers, and suppliers can be tremendous cocreators with your business on the basis of equivalent collaboration.

On the next page you will find examples of cocreation that can inspire you for your situation.



The Nike+ iPod Sports Kit: With this kit Nike+ sports shoes can communicate wirelessly with the iPod nano. This way you "coach" your iPod as you walk, and after your training you can see how far and how fast you have walked.

Hennes & Mauritz collaborate with top designers such as Karl Lagerfeld and Viktor & Rolf, thus offering designer outfits at H&M prices.

The new vacation parks of Landal Greenparks are completely in Landal style on the outside. Everything looks as though it belongs to Landal. But Landal owns no homes or parks.

Private investors own and manage the vacation homes. Even the receptionists dressed in Landal clothing are paid by the home owners. Landal only takes care of marketing and sales, and does so extraordinarily well. Landal earns a percentage of the rental income, entrepreneurial risk is clear, and the emanation far-reaching.

Pickwick used crowdsourcing. Via the Internet she showed tea drinkers what their cup of tea of the future will look like. Ideas varied from tea pearls to a gadget to squeeze out tea bags.

Lay's did crowdsourcing by holding a contest for a new flavor of chips. The jury chooses the best flavors, and six months later they are available in the stores. Consumers pick the eventual winner, who gets €25,000 plus 1 percent of the sales revenue.

Sesame Street and Nokia want to see that grandmas and grandpas can read to their grandchildren from distance through programs on cell phones and other portable gadgets.

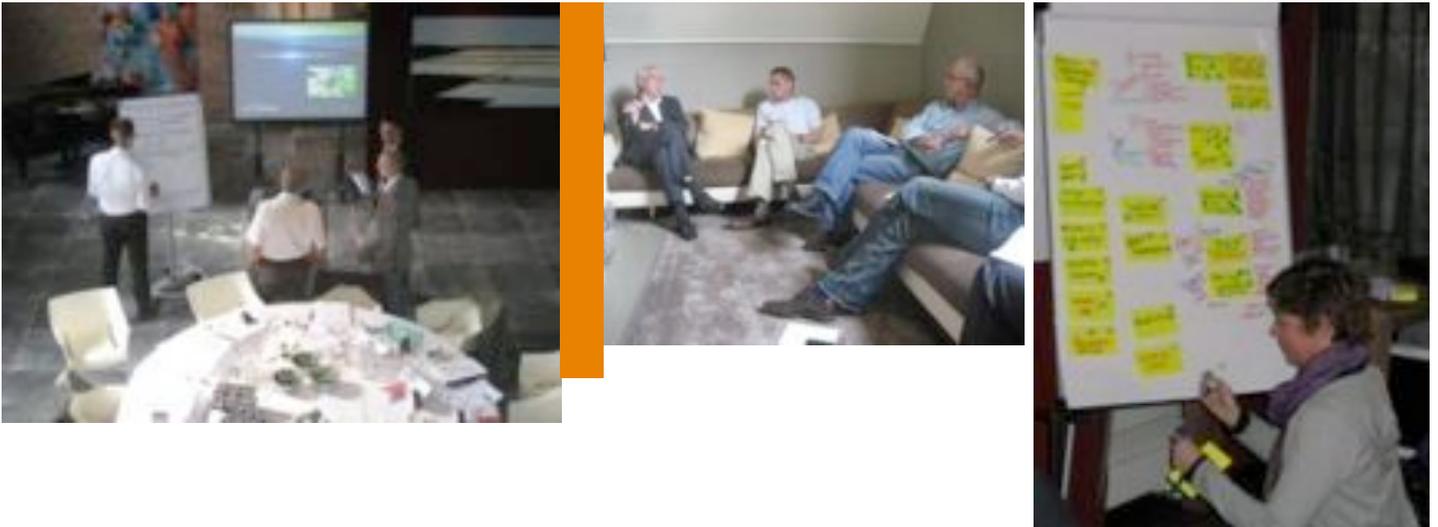
Twenty-three percent of the ideas received by the Starbucks community mystarbucksidea are actually being used. The community has 100,000 members.

We have now generated an abundance of ideas for form innovations. You know which aspects of the market are really experienced as enriching. You know which aspects are not perceived as enriching, and where, therefore, you can economize. Then comes the next phase. The new ideas should not be a hodgepodge. It is important to get to combinations that work and that make a form innovation together that the market sees as enriching, and which fits with the company's path—and by preference also with the entrepreneur's path.

### Step C:

#### Image thinking

We now land in a phase of image thinking. In this phase, the total picture of the desired future of your business in its context is visualized. Again, the right setting must be created first. Creating the right setting focuses on meeting the conditions of being able to image-think, as we saw in chapter 7. The result is that people arrive at a complete picture of their business in the future from their undercurrent. I often send participants outside, for instance, for a quiet walk. I send along an assignment that promotes staying in the here and now, not milling about with all kinds of thoughts.



In the meantime I prepare a story about their business in the future, of course with empty spots they will fill in from their intuition. I am going to tell them the story, and they form their own images.

### Example of a story

You have been invited to get into a hot-air balloon. You rise above time and space. You are relaxed and enjoy the journey. The journey takes you to your business in X years. You walk around in the workplace of the future. You observe. The first thing you experience is that this outfit does business richly. What exactly is it that makes this business so rich? You walk around and meet workers, clients, suppliers, and even competitors and people who are not clients . . .

Then you weave into the story the aspects and ideas that have come up during the innovation process. This is essential. While you are intuitively image-thinking, ideas fall into place by themselves for people; ideas interlock and ideas drop off.

You can finish your story with the following: You walk back to the hot-air balloon. With a smile you think back to X years ago (now). And you realize the best choice we made at the time was . . .

The most important goal is that people form a complete puzzle, where the puzzle pieces fit together, and the puzzle pieces that don't fit are left out. Take out enough time for the story, and pause often enough in the story for images to form. After the story I give people the opportunity to take notes and make a drawing of their business of the future.

### Step D:

#### Sharing images and forming a common image



After that, it is important to share everyone's story in word and image. Of importance also is that the only reaction allowed from other participants is questions. Remarks and judgments are not welcome. By sharing different stories a company story should eventually emerge.

That can happen by focusing on two things during the sharing of each other's stories:

- ✓ What similarities are there in the stories?
- ✓ As regards the differences: Which valuable matters can be combined?

Because everyone is in tune with the undercurrent, everyone will pick up the correct information, the nourishment from the field. It is an energy-rich process. The eventual company of the future can be expressed in word and image.

### Step E:

#### Checking form innovations against the undercurrent

The common image of the business of the future in its context is now formed. Time for a check against the undercurrent of the business! Look at the new forms—how well do these match the natural qualities, incentives, values, and destination of the business? Because the entire process has been followed from the awareness of the undercurrent, I have never seen it happen that the image formed failed to match the path of the business. Should that be different on certain points, then create again the correct setting for a visualization and aim the visualization at the points in contention, how these should look in the future.

What I *have* witnessed, is that the new forms do not match the personal undercurrent of some people anymore. How do the new forms, natural qualities, the natural behavior, the values, incentives, and destination of the entrepreneurs appeal to them as individuals? What role is natural to them in the new business model? How is that with other people?

Sometimes, an entrepreneur saw that the business would from now on follow its own direction and that direction was no longer his. That can happen. And if that happens, that is a good result too. For if everyone and every business follows his own path, the whole is best served.

#### How do we tell others, who weren't there?

Now we need to make sure that no ten different accounts make the rounds. You can do the following exercise together:

#### *The elevator exercise*

Imagine standing in an elevator. A picture hangs in the elevator portraying the vision. A guest with whom you are to go up ten floors asks you what it means. You start telling him. Should the elevator have arrived already, you keep the doors open till you are done with your story.

After this the teams get started to physically work out the futuristic vision in digestible chunks. But don't forget to celebrate this rich moment: connection has begun with the walk down the road to doing business richly.

Sometimes you are positive that you and your business are on your path with the forms. And yet you feel that the energy does not flow in fluid motion. It is quite probable that the effects of the paradoxical forces evoke that tension. In the following chapter I talk about seven paradoxical forces and my approach to paradox innovation.





work out  
the futuristic vision  
in digestible chunks

## Speaking:

### Salem Samhoud

Founder of & Samhoud, no. 1 Great Place to Work of Europe 2010

Doing business richly has everything to do with connection.

Connection is the most fundamental and powerful instrument a person can use to develop himself. Self-development is not something you need to activate. It is part of life. Every human being wants to be stimulated, day after day, to satisfy (subconscious) needs: to get through the day, to get a good feeling, to change things. In short, you always want something, even if it is doing nothing. If you know what you want, the need for self-development grows and you develop focus. You will then increase your knowledge and skills till you are very good at something. To want to and to be able to are two sides of the same coin; that coin gets bigger and more valuable as you develop yourself. Having a goal brings joy, development itself brings joy, and the end result brings success besides: you have achieved something. In short, connected people are happier and more successful.

Self-development is possible only because of connection with other people. The stronger the connection, the better you develop. Connection, therefore, does not only derive from charity, it is also in your own best interests. It is an interplay of give and take.



In this book Désirée tells about the course of your intuition, about the undercurrent inside each of us. I experience the undercurrent very strongly, because I am connected with myself and others. That's why I find the concept of "doing business richly" so touching. And so recognizable. For my business is successful. Not only because of its financial worth, but especially because of the sum total of the exchange of values between staff, clients, and society. They all go along in the same current. And that is the development companies must actively respond to: from thinking in terms of expense and proceeds to thinking in terms of exchange of value. In other words: Organizations will increasingly connect rationality with spirituality.

third source

of doing business richly: paradoxical forces





Section III

paradoxes

paradox innovation

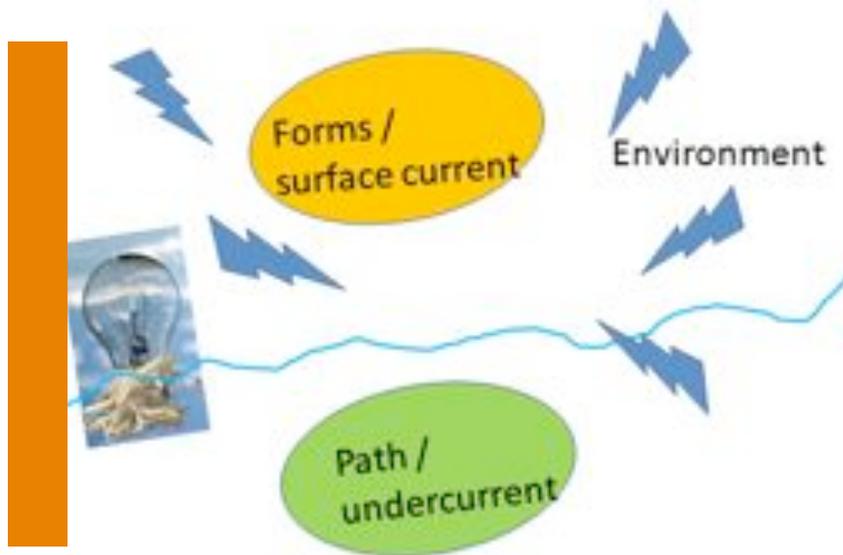
# Paradoxes

## Chapter 14



In the Guggenheim Museum in Venice I saw this work by Magritte in the flesh for the first time. I asked my children what was so special about this work for them. Their grandma had just died, and one of them said, "Oh, I know, you see, in heaven the sun always shines!" The work refers to the polar creative powers of life: day and night, light and dark, male and female. They are always both present, even in business life. The words *creative power* indicate that these polarities exert force within us and our businesses, that they respond to

us and influence us. Whether we want to or not, they are there. The words *creative power* also indicate that something new can be created from it. The newness does not lie in the choice for one extreme or the other. Nor does it lie in the choice for a solution which has both sides compromise for the sake of harmony. The newness, and with that the innovativeness, lies in choosing a new third option that derives from the power of both extremes. It's about focusing on achieving synergy in polarities by rising above the polarities.



### Relaxation in the paradoxes

For myself, in what I do, don't do, and in what I am, I know my business and I am completely on our paths with the correct forms. Yet I sometimes experience tension. Then I look at the paradoxical forces and know that there is a strained voltage arc somewhere. As if someone keeps holding his breath somewhere. Relaxation here will relax the entire system. Just like exhaling deeply, or letting out a sigh of relief. Paradoxes result in tension by definition. Dilemmas point to choosing between the two, and again by definition have a choking effect. By embracing the extremes and at the same time bringing them together through interaction, you keep relaxation in the paradoxes.

Below, without trying to be too thorough I distinguish seven paradoxical forces that are by definition at odds with each other. I will explain momentarily.

doing - being

entrepreneur - enterprise

us - them

intuition - intellect

preserve - innovate

prudence - spontaneity

zooming in -zooming out

The convictions we have may prevent paradoxes from interacting in a relaxed manner. In holding a particular conviction or assumption, we have become used to focusing on the extreme of a paradox. In the chapter *Paradox Innovation* I show how I approach limiting convictions. First a survey of paradoxical forces which interfere with doing business richly when they do not interact in a relaxed way, even if you are totally on your path.

## Doing - being

Scientifically, Paul de Blot, professor of business spirituality, sees the interaction between doing and being as the basis of spiritual business activities. *Doing* stands for achieving and measuring results, doing business effectively and efficiently—analyses, automation, mechanization, equality of people, realism. *Being* represents inspiration, dreaming, yearning, spirituality, essence, uniqueness of people, idealism. I meet entrepreneurs who are excellent dreamers, who have the best ideas, who, as in a movie, see before them everything they desire. And I meet entrepreneurs who slave away day and night, who go along with the delusion of the day, put out fires all day, work till deep into the night, and work even harder to make the results even better. The pitfall for the former group is that they never get around to realizing their ideals. The energy gets stuck. The pitfall for the latter group is that they get overwrought and burned out. The energy is exhausted. What both miss out on for doing business richly is the interaction between the two, like Yin Yang. Tao uses the term "doing by not doing" for this interaction. *Wu Wei*, doing by not doing, it is called in Chinese philosophy. Wu Wei is based on the idea that all nature is directed by an intelligence (TAO), and that you can tune in to that intelligence to receive guidance. If you do nothing, TAO will show you the way. An energy gets into motion that is undeniable and feels good. Do nothing, and everything will be done.

### ***The TAO of Pooh***

"How do you do that, Pooh?"

"How do I do what?" asked Pooh.

"Becoming so untroubled."

"Oh, I don't do much of one thing or another," he said.

"But all those things of yours are getting done anyway."

"They just happen sort of," he said.

"Wait a minute. That reminds of something from the 'Tao te Ching,'" I said, and grabbed a book.

"Here it is, chapter thirty-seven. In translation it's something like 'Tao does not act, but nothing is not done.'"

"Sounds like a riddle," said Pooh.

"It means that TAO does not intervene in things, doesn't force them, but lets them work it out in their own way, to arrive at results in a natural way. Everything that needs doing gets done then."

"Oh, yes," said Pooh.

"In Chinese, that principle would be called Wei Woe, 'doing without doing.' From Woe Wei comes Tzoe Jan, 'Itself So.' That means that things happen by themselves, spontaneously."

"Oh, yes," said Pooh.

From: Benjamin Hoff. (1994). *Tao van Poeh*. The Hague: Sirius En Siderius

It's a little bit like the lion. I remember traveling through Tanzania with my husband. Our one-year-old daughter was staying with Grandma and Grandpa at the time. Of course we went to spot wildlife with a driver. At the end of the trip, we felt a little more experienced. So, windows open, sunroof open. Our driver was always the first to see wild animals. And sure enough, he spotted a lion in a tree. On a branch, some three, four meters above ground. Before we had as much as spotted the lion, our driver chugged off the path and drove straight at the tree. I thought, He didn't go nuts, did he? You know where he stopped? Right under the branch of the tree the lion was lying on. My heart jumped into my throat. Out of sheer nervousness my husband, standing up, started filming the lion through the open roof with . . . the lens cover on. But we have the most beautiful movie: black picture and colorful sound. You can hear me hissing at the driver, "Gas, move!" When he didn't react, I hissed a

little louder. "Gas, now!" When he still didn't respond, I hissed in a panic, "Our daughter, home!" Eventually you can hear the motor and he chugged back to the path, peace itself. Nothing had happened. The lion was just sleeping. I associated lions with hunting, running, straight for the prey. *Doing*, therefore. Turns out that lions actually sleep some 13.5 hours a day! That's nearly twice as much as most people. And during the other 10.5 hours they are not constantly hunting either. Whereas we may be feverishly busy, lions "are" the better part of the day. They don't get moving until they really have to get moving. A beautiful interaction between doing and being. It has always stayed with me as a metaphor for doing and being. And as a metaphor for what enormous panic can be caused by a simple conviction.

When I did the training in doing business richly in Beirut, some Syrian entrepreneurs participated. One of the Syrian entrepreneurs said, among others, that he was always too busy and didn't have time for anything. I told him this story of the lion. He looked at me so happily that it almost surprised me. Then he told me his Syrian name and said, "You know what that means? It means lion!" It can't be a coincidence.

### Entrepreneur- enterprise

If everything is right, an enterprise is begun from the entrepreneur's heart. Entrepreneur and enterprise are still close together. As you get bigger, the paradoxical power can start kicking in. What it is, is that at the end of the day, as an entrepreneur you are always a fish in the water in your own business. Maybe you need things that are good for you, but which you think are bad for the business. For instance, it would be a good thing for me to take out some time and go on a trip around the world, but I need to be physically present in my business. That's what my staff and my clients want from me.

Because of the paradoxical tension field, entrepreneur and enterprise appear to be two different entities. The nice thing is that as soon as you cross over from doing to being, you can feel that everything is interconnected, the entrepreneur as a person as well as the enterprise as a business. When you return to your *being* level, where you and your business are one, you can ask yourself the question—what is actually important for me to do? Lots of entrepreneurs say that they get after things and people all day long. "If I don't do it, it doesn't get done." "If I don't check it one more time, it goes wrong." That sort of statement. Do you recognize them? What is often behind them is a deep longing for rest. But that is exactly the thing they can't do, because then everything goes to hell in a hand basket, they say. And they think, Maybe I should sell the business and just go do what I want, and at any rate do my thing without any other people. Then comes some romantic dream that is often

a countermove to what they are doing now. The pendulum then seeks the other extreme. But here comes the new paradox. "Then I first have to work hard to get maximal results so that I can get a better sale." But they are already working so hard, and the pendulum yet stays at the extreme of the enterprise.

You see, under all these tensions are convictions. This is impossible because, this must be done first, because, if I don't do this, then . . . etcetera.

**Questions>** Wherein is the paradoxical tension field between you as an entrepreneur and your business expressed? Are there things you don't do as a result? What are your assumptions/convictions?

### Preserve - innovate

"We have to innovate," they are shouting. And meanwhile people desperately cling to the old and the familiar. This is also rooted in convictions. Convictions have a limiting effect if they make the pendulum swing way over to one side. Innovating is hot. But if the focus is exclusively on innovation, you turn everything upside down and your business is no longer grounded. You lose the connection with the soul of your business. Also, by only preserving and protecting the old, you miss the boat.

Preserving means looking at where we came from and at what is essential and truly important to hold on to. Often we look at something or at a situation and say, this is where we stand now and this is where we want to go. Current situation and desired situation. Make a plan of action and get rolling. In doing so, we forget the original situation. The past affects where you are going. That goes for people, and it goes for businesses.

Where you come from determines where you are going. Where you are going refers to where you come from. Origin and future are inseparably connected. Previous experiences, learning moments, and convictions give direction to the future. Businesses also carry baggage from the past. This baggage affects the path to the future.

## *A new light on innovation*

Paul de Blot tells about research in which two new plants were planted. One was planted in artificial fertilizer. The other was planted in the soil of the old plant that had died. What happened? The seedling that was planted in the soil of the old plant grew better and faster than the plant in artificial fertilizer. The question is, What role did the old plant (origin) play in the development of the new plant (future)?

**Question>** What pearls from your past are valuable for integration into the new, so that the new can grow better?

### Intuition - intellect

You have a body but you are not a body. One of the first spiritual lessons I learned. We are energy. In the past, during physics lessons, I had a hard time imagining that my table, my chair, and my notebooks were filled with energy. As a matter of fact, I couldn't imagine it until I learned to use my intuition. To pay sincere attention to my intuition. With my intuition I can tune in to this energy. I get more information this way than I could know on a purely rational level. Then I knew that tables are indeed filled with energy. In doing business richly it is necessary to simultaneously embrace the contradictions in the intuitive approach and in the rational approach. Ratio or intellect centers on wanting to know through intellectual analysis, and knowing solutions. Intuition is about *being* with not knowing, tuning in to the larger whole, and thus obtain information. Although I am a sensitive person, I had strongly developed my head. Somewhere I had picked up the notion that whatever is not rationally explainable is nonsense, and can't be taken seriously. The advantage here is that I quickly get the hang of complex challenges and situations. I can analyze at high speed, and thinking up solutions is a favorite pastime. But it does mean hard work, doing everything with your head. And then if I didn't have a solution right away, I felt a slight panic—oh boy, I just don't know! Then I'd start thinking really hard, with my head. The first step in learning to use my intuition was for me the affirmation: I rely on my intuition. I gave myself an imaginary button on my upper thigh. In conversations with entrepreneurs, particularly when I was thinking to myself, help, I don't know, I pressed that button a little more. The gesture alone made me feel again the trust that there is something bigger than I, where the solutions already exist, and that this is entirely available to me. Something I used to be convinced was utter nonsense. But it worked. One way or another something often occurs to me that I then do or say, something that works great and that I then look at and think, how brilliant, I didn't know

I was that good! What a joy. Relying on my intuition for me had to do with breaking free from convictions that cosmic energy does not exist and that your own strength is all there is.



### Zooming in - zooming out

To do business richly you must embrace zooming in and zooming out. Putting everything under a magnifying glass and zooming in on all the details can guarantee that things are in apple-pie order. Looking at things from a distance to survey can help achieve all large goals and satisfy all interests. As you doubtlessly already sense—one can't do without the other. When you zoom in with a camera, the image of a stand-alone detail becomes sharper, while the rest is outside the image. When you zoom out you see more, but the separate details are less clear. Fortunately, a camera that is zoomed out can still be sharply focused on some particular thing. That is exactly the art of doing business richly. Do you by nature zoom out or do you zoom mostly in?

When I had just graduated and became an innovation adviser, I took detailed notes of all conversations with entrepreneurs. I filled sheets. Until I did a training. During a conversational exercise in that training I took lots of notes, as usual. "Why do you do that?" a trainer asked me. I answered, "Because I am not a good listener, and this way I still know the details later on." Dumb-founded, the trainer exclaimed, "But Désirée, you listen as well as anyone, of all people, you are a fantastic listener, I saw that from the first moment." Then it was my turn to be completely surprised. Somewhere along the way, long ago I had picked up the conviction that I did not listen well. That had made me keep zooming in desperately.

I challenge you to zoom out during a business conversation, with 60% of your attention on the large whole, and at the same time with the other 40% of your attention zoom in on the conversation. You can help yourself by being and staying very much aware of where you are with this. In doing so, you are, in fact, tuning in on the information from the cosmos. The conversation then literally takes place between you. The conversation is what you're zoomed in on, like a camera can. But you see more. You see the entire spectrum. You are open to seeing higher interests and higher goals. You quickly review what the influences of a particular choice are for the whole. There is room left to note what is not being said. Simultaneously embracing of these two extremes is essential to doing business richly.

### Us - them



An us-and-them attitude implies division, perhaps even struggle, power. Small businesses unite to present a stronger front to the big suppliers. Employees gather in a works council to be stronger against management. Those who are used to thinking in contrasts, see power, separation, threat, and such in us-and-them. Because everything is, in fact, energy, we are all connected and there is only a *we*. I remember quite well that the day after the disaster of 9/11—our first child was just a month old—I stood in line at the cash register with the baby stroller. In front of me stood a Muslim woman. And I felt it rising quickly, the feeling of anger, "What are 'you people' doing." The feeling was very much about us-and-them. Later I did training in India, Cameroon, Tunisia, Beirut, and there I experienced deep inside that "we are on earth at this moment, *we* is what there is, all there is, and we have to do it all together on this earth, now." We can't start fighting in little groups for our own cause. That does not serve the highest purpose of a better world. It was impressive for me to feel it so deeply.

That goes also for a business and for a business in its environment. I have myself chaired a foundation that organized a large congress. Separate committees were active in the congress that took responsibility for a part of the congress weekend. More than once I saw committees with the conviction, "We are responsible for this part of the congress, we are going for it and we think about how best we can pull this off, and that's how it is going to be." It is fantastic that people are so driven, and at the same time I typically saw those us-and-them extremes, and a complete zooming in. If I, as chair, then intervened from the bigger picture, that was seen as meddling. And before you know it the us-and-them feeling had free rein. That doesn't work well for anybody. Not until we had spoken with each other purely from the undercurrent, let go of our convictions, did we leave the us-and-them energy and were we in the *we* energy. Then the total energy could once again flow richly.

### Prudence - spontaneity

As an entrepreneur you always remember the start-up phase of your business. Most entrepreneurs will remember it as the puppy time. A time with a lot of dynamic—from all sides you saw opportunities, and you were crazy if you passed up any chances. Creativity flowed freely. Spontaneity prevailed over meticulous prudence. But then, as you grow, a moment comes where you feel a need for a framework, for finding direction, for vision, for structure, I summarize it as prudence. No running away with it like a madman, but careful enterprise. When caution gets out of control, you get boundaries, walls, information is held back, positions are being carefully maintained. When the burdens of prudence became too heavy, you saw the creative counter movement arise in the front-runners.



## *E-office*

I once ran into Ronald Hameeteman, and listened to his story in fascination. Ronald Hameeteman and Rutger Stekelenburg had started e-office in 1991. E-office develops human software solutions so that employees are supplied with all the necessary knowledge, information, and communication devices. Ronald and Rutger wanted to do it in a totally different way. They wanted to make maximum use of their employees' ability to think, and therefore they wanted to get rid of bothersome rules and the need to control. They wanted to put an end to macho behavior and share knowledge rather than hem it in. So they dispensed with all rules, abolished departments and functions, and disclosed all information to everybody. That went great. It was fun and exciting, challenging, all kinds of space for play, creativity, and spontaneity. Until the market suddenly crashed at the beginning of 2002. That's when the absence of careful forms of structures nearly became fatal for e-office. Everyone looked at Ronald and Rutger for guidance: "Just tell us, what are we going to do?"

Nearly a hundred people felt lost, didn't know what to do, and were scared, did not feel safe. Nobody knew where the expenses were. There were no reports, so there was nothing to manage or even to make choices about. They ended up introducing some structure after all. And teams. And objectives and targets something like: What are we going to do in the next few months, how much business are we going to have, and how are we going to go about it? They started an independent business with a manager at the head. After the crisis was over, Ronald thought over the most important lessons he had learned. What he saw was that the process had to be managed carefully, with as many routine actions as possible in the shortest possible time and at the least possible expense. If everybody sticks to the agreements, things will run smoothly. The people, however, have a need for quick and spontaneous response to the market and thinking of new things. In addition, they need a clearly delineated space in which to operate; they want a clear responsibility for a particular area and they need to know where that responsibility ends. Without all this, it becomes a dark, unknown forest to them. Within the boundaries of their space people spontaneously think of the most beautiful things. E-office knows the art of the Yin Yang game of spontaneity and prudence. Carefully constructed barriers such as hierarchy, functions, and departments disappeared again. During the good times this space for freedom and spontaneity work. In the bad times it turns out that in addition to freedom and spontaneity, prudence is also needed.

## Teamwork, playing together

We have seen seven paradoxes, which may hide many convictions. Convictions that can stir up the tension and get in the way of doing business richly. Those who are aware of their tension-packed paradoxes, often go to the other extreme. Eventually you realize that they are both necessary and you then find a way to make the two extremes work together.

In the following chapter I will show you my approach to freeing up the way to rise above the paradoxes.



**Question>** In which paradoxes do you experience relaxation, and in which paradoxes do you experience high tension?

doing - being  
entrepreneur - enterprise  
us - them  
intuition - intellect  
preserve - innovate  
prudence - spontaneity  
zooming in - zooming out



# Paradox innovation

## Chapter 15

Paradox innovation is the introduction of relaxation in the paradoxes. Tensions in paradoxes have to do with getting used to a preference for one of the two extremes. Old convictions are at the root of this. Convictions function on a different level than concrete reality, and serve to interpret and lead our perception of reality. It is known that convictions are very difficult to change through the typical rules of logical and rational thought. You get convictions from your environment, or you develop them yourself. Convictions may change in the course of your life. They can be very useful and they can be absolutely stymieing.

Paradox innovation is reexamining old convictions for validity, and couple them with new behavior. You examine by asking the right questions over and over. By asking the questions you get more insight and the choice to change your mind.



## *Flywheel*

I did a session with the employees of a merged company. The us-and-them feeling surfaced in convictions such as "They don't listen to us anyway," and "They should listen to us sometime." They glared at me. I asked them what that did to them. One person felt he was not being taken seriously; another felt excluded; yet another felt unappreciated. Someone indicated that he felt they didn't even see him. One thing was certain: no one liked the situation. and everyone wished things were different. I asked them to focus their attention inward, and calmly replay the film of the past little while. Is it really true that they never listen to you? With the emphasis on *really* and *never*. Can you be sure that it is really true that they never listen to you? A few little openings emerged. "Maybe between them they talk about our ideas," someone suggested. Someone else remembered that standing in line in the cafeteria he'd chatted a bit with a member of management who'd paid real attention. True, the conversation had not been about work, but still. Then I asked them, "How does it help you to hold on to that phrase 'They don't listen to us anyway'?" A few were startled at this question. Until someone said, "I have to be honest and admit that I feel that in this situation I get attention from others who feel bad for me, and that makes me secretly feel better." The circle became very quiet. There was tension in the air, and at the same time relaxation. I kept asking. "How do you treat others with the conviction that no one ever listens? And how do you treat the business, and especially, how do you treat yourself with this conviction?" Relaxation broke through. Someone said, "Actually, I am ashamed of myself, we behave like children, like victims. Where is our self-respect, and our respect for others? We all care about the business, just like management cares. Let's just see where we want to start the dialog with management, and invite them to a discussion circle." And that's what was done. A year later I still hear from management that they find it unbelievable what a flywheel was set into motion in that one session some time before.

## Approach to rising above paradoxes

The approach I use to rise above paradoxes is partially based on Byron Katie. I find this approach effective in diving below the surface of existing convictions. I run through the following questions:

1. How do I feel with this conviction? Is it worth the trouble to examine the conviction?
2. Is the conviction always true? Is it universally true? What contrary examples show that they are not always true? What do I learn from that?
3. What interest, need, reassurance, permission, or comfort does this conviction serve? For whom?
4. How do I treat myself, my business, and how do I treat others with this conviction?

5. How do I feel without this conviction? Is it worth the trouble to hold on to this conviction any longer?
6. What can I do or stop doing to give up the interest, need, reassurance, permission, or comfort?

What happens here is that space is being created. In something that was hermetically shut, space to move around can emerge. The first two questions alone brought relief to the group, as described above. As though people holding their breaths, with rage, with frustration, had sat there and were now slowly getting to where they could freely breathe again. Because convictions are so deep-rooted in certain patterns, it is often quite a process, with multiple repetitions of the above questions, before change comes. This is where relaxation begins. This is also where space begins for creativity to get to a new place where entrepreneur and enterprise once again have fruitful reciprocity. In the beginning, convictions will keep popping up in all kinds of other forms. But at the moment when you start recognizing the conviction and you can think, "Aha, there it is again: It's only a conviction," you have created space to move again to rise above the paradox to a relaxed form with the best of both worlds.

### Questions >

Are your convictions limiting ...

- ✓ My coworkers are not motivated.
- ✓ They don't want to learn.
- ✓ I have to do everything myself.
- ✓ I can do it a lot better/faster myself.
- ✓ I can't be a leader.
- ✓ I should/we should be able to solve that ourselves
- ✓ Part-time work just causes trouble.

... or strengthening?

- ✓ Everyone has incentives. I think it's a win-win situation.
- ✓ Learning is/can be made fun.
- ✓ With the right incentive, every individual is prepared to work.
- ✓ If the result we aim at is clear, everything works out.
- ✓ If someone else can do it, I can learn it.
- ✓ I don't have to know how to do everything.
- ✓ Part-time work offers new opportunities if I organize it well.





rise above  
the paradox  
to a relaxed  
form with  
the best of  
both worlds



Epilogue  
get to work!  
a case of inspiration  
acknowledgements

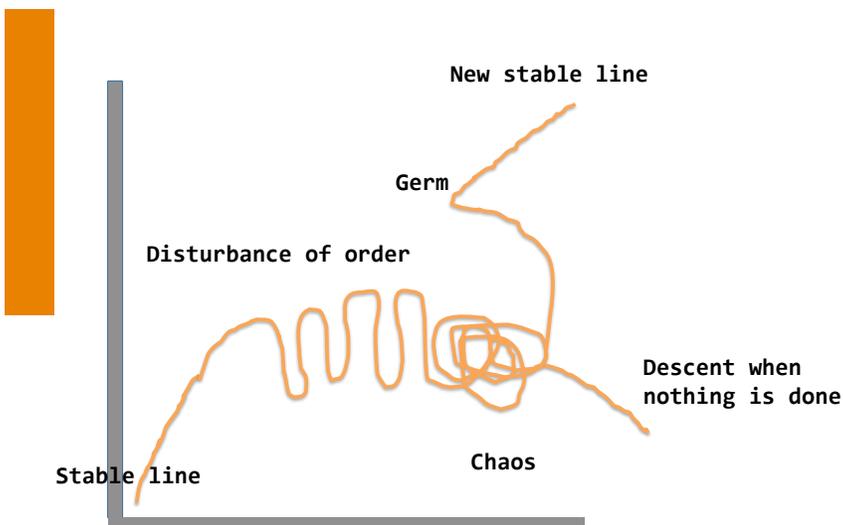
# Epilogue

Get to work!

I have a question for you. You've got to the end of the book, or perhaps you are sneaking a peek at the last pages of the book. The only moment there is, is now. My question is now: What is the reality of this moment? Where lies your biggest desire in doing business richly? And where, perhaps, lies your biggest confrontation in doing business richly?

The graph of Prigogine shows us that the seed of innovation lies in the moment when chaos is at its peak. That is the moment of not knowing. Complete chaos. If you do not acknowledge that moment, it will be a descending line. If you do acknowledge that moment, and are alert to what the future brings, innovation can germinate. Innovating before you hit bottom gives many rich results. So innovate on time.

Prigogine



Nothing stands in your way of doing business richly. Doing business richly is already there, for everyone, even for you. Ever see a sculptor work? The starting point is a big rock. By stone being removed, the work of art shows itself.

Dare trust in abundance: There is enough for everybody. Get up and start to walk: your path and that of your business will unfold itself as though on its own. Focus your attention on abundance and be thankful, dare play and experiment, be alert to what is coming to you and your business, and dare seize it. Doing business is a river of gifts, but you do have to see and grab the offered gifts, or they float right on by.

**Question>** What is your first small step on the way to doing business richly? Share your step with me and tell me something about your situation by contacting me at [desiree@doingbusinessrichly.com](mailto:desiree@doingbusinessrichly.com).



To inspire you to take that first step, I conclude this book with a case of two enterprising brothers and their business, nominated for the Herman Wijffels innovation prize.



## A case of inspiration

Once upon a time there were two sons from the Dutch poultry country. Seventy years before their grandfathers had started a business in packing eggs. Three times a week they visited eighty farmers and picked up eggs. In the egg-packing station eggs were sorted by weight and quality, packed, and then delivered to storekeepers. From generation to generation "Calimero" became bigger through takeovers. The business was a traditional family business, geared toward efficiency and volume; the prices with the farmers were the best prices, and on the way to market and consumer they didn't have to jump through hoops. The two sons had meanwhile become deputy directors. Eighty people were sorting and packing eggs. But the environment changed. Poultry businesses shrank, and distribution costs rose. The success formula no longer worked in a changed environment. A life-changing event took place in this entrepreneurs' family. The egg-packing station was sold. The two sons were on their own.

One son started working in IT. The other became an adviser for other egg-packing stations in marketing and product development of eggs. He also took over a poultry farm. The newest sorting machines were purchased. He introduced a brand-name egg, a corn-scratcher egg for Albert Heijn. And here he could put his commercial ideas to use.

Meanwhile, eggs were in their blood. Thus, from a garret, behind the computer, and from the hands of the IT son, came an information system for eggs: it delivered inventory control of sorted and unsorted eggs, sales information, and the system delivered the ability to trace eggs. "Which farmer does this egg come from?" was no longer a question but something they knew. The unsorted egg changed into a sorted egg with a destination. The commercial son knew this would make them a pretty penny. They applied for and received a patent on the new system. The system could be sold to egg-packing stations. In the Netherlands the brothers were still known as competitors from before, and they had a hard time getting established. So pretty quickly they looked across the border for opportunities. A Swiss egg-packing station was their first customer. The system had to be adjusted to the egg-sorting machines they were using there. It soon became clear that good relations with the suppliers of egg-sorting machines were crucial. Fortunately, they were still there from before. The news of the tracking and tracing system of eggs spread like wildfire among innovative egg-packing stations in Europe. The early customers from Italy gladly paid a visit to see this

novelty with their own eyes. Helped by the General Food Law of Brussels for food safety, they decided to purchase the system. The family was almost dizzy: it turned out that in their heart of hearts they had not truly said goodbye to their seventy-year, traditional egg-packing station, and all of a sudden this new information system had been invented that met with much enthusiasm abroad.

They told me about it rather laconically. But I saw that something crucial had been done: Space had been created for a farewell to the old and welcome to the new. At the trade level—the poultry business was sold—as well as on the awareness level: the sons realized that because of the family business, they had the egg trade in every fiber of their bodies. Not only the knowledge and experience, but also the very soul of the business had melted into their own souls. They were the egg business. That gave them the strength to decisively get up and *do*. They made the rounds of Europe to egg-packing stations that handled minimally a million and a half eggs per week, and were open to innovation. These customers were less critical of the cost-recovery time than the followers, who wanted to earn every euro back right now. In England, Ireland, Belgium, Austria, and Germany—everywhere they built up careful relations, and could welcome clients. With the sorting-machine suppliers also, and with the inspection authorities and banks they built up careful relationships. These then started recommending them. The Rabobank nominated the business for the Herman Wijffels prize.

Their *being* and *doing* are as beautifully integrated as Yin and Yang. That put the wind at their backs. But they had learned from the past: today's success formula is not necessarily tomorrow's success formula as the environment changes. They trusted their contemplative process and the establishment of a new course to me. Sucked into the success of their new business, they had less time for reflection. Mutual reflection on the personal entrepreneur's goals and the goals of the enterprise. Would my brother really rather sell the business, and if we keep growing, how do we grow? They were questions that popped up more and more regularly without their really taking the time to discuss matters between them.

We started out with an analysis of incentives, of both entrepreneurs. Incentives are deep-rooted, invisible motivators that see to it that people get moving as a matter of course, and start *doing* almost automatically. If that which has to be done businesswise has a natural fit with someone's inner driving forces, it's like a flywheel has been set into motion. If the entrepreneur's way of doing business has a natural fit with his incentives, the entrepreneur is helped along by the energy of the cosmos and of his fellow man. That's why I chose incentives as the starting point in this process of course innovation.

The IT brother's biggest incentive turned out to be the intellectual incentive, closely followed by the practical. The commercial son was nearly the same, but the practical incentive was the strongest, closely followed by the intellectual incentive.

In the dialogs that followed, it became clear to the entrepreneurs what this combination of practical and intellectual incentives meant to their business:

- ✓ In the search for knowledge, in their journey of discovery of the best tracking and tracing system, they invested time and money as wisely as possible in order to reach their goals.
- ✓ They keep looking for knowledge so they can work even more efficiently—working more efficiently themselves, and enabling the egg-packing stations to work more efficiently.
- ✓ Knowledge of systems and of the egg business is for them the means of generating economic security.
- ✓ Sometimes it is difficult to decide what comes first: the acquisition of ever more knowledge or the application of their existing knowledge in order to generate profit.
- ✓ The enterprising brothers are future-oriented pioneers. They like to build and renew.

This is where we found the important starting points for the formulation of a strategic base for their enterprise that connects with who the entrepreneurs really are. But before we did that, we first looked at their behavioral styles. Incentives determine why they do business. Behavioral style determines how they do business by nature.

At birth we have all come with natural style preferences in behavior, nurtured by upbringing. This is the behavior we show when we can be completely ourselves, the behavior of our "real self." This style will not soon really change. However, our current behavioral style in daily business may differ from this. For instance, because we are doing something we still want to learn, or because someone thinks it is a requirement in his work environment, or because we do business that doesn't suit us. An important difference between someone's natural behavior and his current behavior always takes energy. You have to more or less force yourself to show your daily behavior. The flywheel of doing business will therefore break into motion most forcefully when we can do business from our "real selves."

With both entrepreneurs we looked at how the four behavioral styles relate to one another, and how they relate in the current course of doing business. And of course, how the two entrepreneurs complement each other. The commercial entrepreneur of the two has an unusual combination in his behavior, which we see in his natural behavior as well as in his current, demonstrated behavior: a high S and a high D. Because these styles are so

completely different from each other they usually clash quickly, and we do not often see them represented in one individual. The power of these style combinations is that the entrepreneur excels in projects where endurance and tenacity are needed, and that he is at the same time quite capable of listening to opposite interests, and of negotiating.

The IT-driven brother is by nature decisive and energetic when confronted with challenge, and by nature initiates activities with help from other people, to achieve the desired, ambitious results. In the daily course of business we found, however, that he often works solo. And now he put his finger on a vague, nagging feeling: He missed sharing knowledge with other experts and collaborating with even better systems as a result. If he was going to give his all to choose a new course for the business, this was a factor that needed to be addressed in the new course. After an analysis of both brothers' being and doing, we were able to formulate the strategic base for their enterprise.

We see to it that we offer the best and most innovative tracking and tracing system for the "early adopters" of egg-packing stations, so that they can efficiently process large volumes of eggs. To this end we share knowledge with other experts and thus achieve high returns.

The brothers themselves had found the strategic base for the enterprise that they could give their all to as entrepreneurs. That turned out to free up time and space for unending inspiration. We subsequently used that inspiration in several sessions while examining, tasting, and also clearly analyzing and rationalizing their business environment. What moves have been made in the egg-packing stations, in retail, with egg product manufacturers, by consumers, by competitors, by egg-sorting-machine suppliers, and by legislative agencies? What ideas do we get from that? What new business can we now start doing? What business must we start doing? What things should we stop doing? We devoted more inspiring sessions to these matters. Gradually, in the space where we found ourselves wallpaper appeared full of options, opportunities, sharp confrontation, rough calculations, and at the same time this wallpaper reflected the strength and weakness of the business.

Eventually, I sent the entrepreneurs outside into nature. With one assignment: Don't talk to anybody, and name in thought everything you see with a noun, without value judgment. So just *tree, grass, bird*, and so forth. The purpose was to turn attention inward, to focus, and be open to cosmic energy. While they walked outside, I wrote a story. A story based on the so-called wallpaper that had come about during the past sessions. A story that offers entrepreneurs space to intuitively choose those options that are smart as business moves and richly satisfying on a human level.

When they got back they sat down quietly, staring at the trees as they let my story sink in. Spontaneously aided by seeing the form of a tree, which for them symbolized the "current" business, they arrived at a new form for the business. That's where the new image originated. That's where in quiet tempo the old and new puzzle pieces fell into place in a new puzzle, which formed the new course of the business.

They have exchanged and shared their own individual images with each other. From that exchange came spontaneously a new, third image. The image included a newly chosen form for the business through the introduction of a renewed concept, which businesswise works smart with the new environment, and brings rich human satisfaction. They knew it with every fiber of their beings: This is it.



## Acknowledgements

Thanks



when I was in Beirut for trainings (2010), I found my personal mission written here at the university

Since 2008 doing business richly® has crisscrossed the world like a ball. I have shared my vision of doing business richly in more than 15 countries with people of more than fifty different nationalities. And they have absorbed the vision and put it into practice. I am tremendously grateful that this has come onto my path. That I have been able to make a contribution to letting the world's riches and abundance flow and be seen.

And the ball rolls on. All sorts of wheels are in motion. There is so much demand for doing business richly—the reactions are overwhelming. It is sometimes touching to hear what doing business richly has meant to people and to businesses, and what current has started running for them. Sometimes I can hardly believe it myself, and stand and watch in wonder. Thanks to my clients and participants and JCI I look in the mirror myself, too, with every advice session and training. That is of great value. Thank you!

These experiences, my studies, and my work in the Netherlands and abroad, inspiring contracts and books constituted the sources of nourishment for my vision of doing business richly. An important part of this came onto my path through JCI, a worldwide organization for young, enterprising people with this higher objective: *be better*.

I thank Paul de Blot from my heart. Our meetings have been a great source of inspiration for me. I remember so well our first conversation, three years ago. I laid out my vision of doing business richly. I told about my plans for this book. With great confidence in my vision you immediately offered to write a foreword for the book.

My gratitude for two others who made a contribution to this book is great. Johan Bontje, you have allowed me to experience that I can have rock-solid confidence in my feelings. I am thankful that you have been willing to share your experience of doing business richly with me and with the readers of this book. Salem Samhoud, how special that we made contact. I thank you for sharing your wealth and everyone else's through this book.

Ben Verwaayen and Herman Wijffels, how striking and how to the point every word, every sentence, every utterance, time and again. Such were your sentences about doing business richly. Thanks!

Arthur, to me you are the world's best designer. How incredibly well you portray my heart and soul. I am very grateful to you. Bart, lots of thanks for seeking out the best possibilities for me to actually be able to feel this book in my hands.

Caroline, when we sat together, sparks of inspiration were flying! I thank you very much.

I conclude with my sincere gratitude for everything and everyone: my parents and friends, who were always interested in the progress of the book, and especially, of course, my Bert, my dearest and greatest fan! Thanks, thanks, thanks!



"We are inclined to pick up the pieces of a crisis, glue them all back together, and restore the old system. But we are on our way to a new era, which demands new solutions: doing business richly. Doing business that is economically and financially interesting as we implement new insights and possibilities in ecological and social/organizational areas."  
*Herman Wijffels — Professor of stability and social change, University of Utrecht, and former top man of Rabobank*

"Innovation is about a mix of breakthroughs and innovation of what already exists. Compare it to walking. You've got one foot firmly on the ground and the other floats in midair. That's how it is with innovating in a business. If you keep in touch with the undercurrent, you can do business richly."  
*Ben Verwaayen — CEO Alcatel Lucent and former top man of British Telecom*



MSc/drs. Désirée Murk-Scholten helps entrepreneurs to innovate and innovators to engage in enterprise. She has by now shared her vision of doing business richly® in India, Hungary, Cameroon, Tunisia, Lebanon, Denmark, Japan, Suriname, Curacao, Spain, Russia, Sweden, Belgium, Poland, Jordan and the Netherlands.

Doing business richly provides commercial and humane fulfillment. This is the first book about doing business and innovating from a higher awareness.



"Doing business richly requires daring, honesty, humility, and openness. If you are prepared to turn on the navigator heading onto new roads, this book offers the tools to reach that wealth."

*Johan Bontje — Boardroom consultant and former partner in Boer & Croon*

"It's about the unity of the undercurrent and the surface current, which complement and strengthen each other in their opposition. That's where the wealth lies in doing business richly."

*Paul de Blot — Professor of business spirituality, Business University Nyenrode*

"I find doing business richly so recognizable. For my business is successful. Especially because of the sum total of exchange of values between people, clients, and society. And I find Doing Business Richly so touching: this is the development businesses should respond to."

*Salem Samhoud — Founder & Samhoud, no 1 Great Place to Work of Europe 2010*