

From the Desk of Jeff Banning ~



2020 is actually 1940 all over again! Don't believe me, take a further read.

Culture, from the Latin "cultus" means care. What is the culture of your business, family, or surroundings?

We are in interesting times, so trying to understand what is going on in our world is harder than ever. Maybe a couple of books will help explain or maybe not.

The Culture Code by Daniel Coyle and Pendulum by Roy H. Williams & Michael R. Drew were two books I read while finally taking a vacation a couple of weeks ago.

The Culture Code was referred to me by Robert Pope. Robert and I have become friends over the past year and I really appreciate our conversations. In a lot of ways, the book describes relationships and creating as it says three Skills: **Building Safety, Sharing Vulnerability and Establishing Purpose**. I could write a long dissertation regarding these three items, but I suggest picking up a copy of the book, reading it on your Kindle or listening to it. You will not be disappointed.

The author provides many interesting examples of "belonging cues". This is part of the **Building Safety** aspect of the book. These cues that signal a relationship can totally transform the way people relate, how they feel and how they behave. They are about establishing relationships and conveying the fact that "I'm interested in you". How well do you do in this regard?

He goes on to summarize ideas for action, some of which are "overcommunicate your listening" – how often do you really truly listen to someone or are you trying to interrupt and get your two cents worth in the conversation; "spotlight your fallibility" – none of us are perfect and we should not hide our weaknesses, leaders need to create safety with those they are talking with; "embrace the messenger" – have you ever had to deliver bad news?; Overdo thank you sentiments; make sure everyone has a voice and allow everyone to participate and connect.

With **Sharing Vulnerability**, the author uses a great example of an airline pilot allowing someone subordinate to him to help in a really trying situation. When did you last allow someone to take command of a situation that maybe you didn't have control of? At some level, we intuitively know that vulnerability tends to spark cooperation and trust among people. Building habits of group vulnerability takes time, repetition, and willingness to feel pain in order to achieve gains. You need to approach this process with a plan.

He goes on to summarize ideas for action, some of which are making sure as a leader that you show vulnerability first and often – it is safe to tell the truth, that is not weakness and it is good to be forthcoming and honest; overcommunicate expectations; deliver negative stuff in person – email, phone calls, texts are not the way; listen; in conversation, resist the temptation to reflexively add value; as a leader, sometimes leaving the group so that they can solve the issue is a great way to allow the team to grow.

Establishing Purpose is about "Here is where we are" and "Here is where we want to go". This is important to the group. He summarizes the ideas of action such as – name and rank your priorities; be clear, very clear and constantly clear about your priorities – we often presume that everyone in the group see things the way we do; measure what really matters; focus on bar-setting behaviors.

I could go on in more detail, but I suggest purchasing this book and reading it and gleaning your own insights.

I have previously mentioned **Pendulum** and my friends and acquaintances probably get tired of me mentioning it, but I believe it is worth readdressing this concept which was penned in 2013. The book was actually written as an opportunity to understand how to market products, services or even careers. The concept of the book is that the fulcrum of the pendulum is basically a stable time in our history but as the pendulum swings up to the "Me" culture zenith, we have distinct characteristics of what we believe, how we act and who we think we are. It takes 20 years to get to the zenith of 90 degrees up and then swings down 90 degrees back to the fulcrum. This completes the "Me" cycle, 40 years.

The "We" cycle follows the same pattern but with different characteristics from the "Me" cycle. The entire Me/We cycle takes 80 years (and in this example the total travel time is 360 degrees with respect to the pendulum) and the entire cycle starts all over again, same beliefs, same order, etc. which continues historically over and over again.

So, think about it. We are actually living 1940 all over again today, as well as 1860 and 1780 and 1700, etc. Look up the history of these years and see what you might find that are similar to our past. What sort of similarities do you see? Are belief systems the same? Are issues similar? It is interesting thinking through this. Again, I suggest you pick up the book and take a read. You might be interested to see what was written in 2013 that is projected out as to happening in 2020. Again, I could go on and on about this book.

As I have said before, "Readers are Leaders"!! We are all leaders! Hone your skills.