Juno Consulting
StraightTalk Newsletter

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The Values Tsunami

The Boxing Day tsunami has brought into sharp focus a long-term trend of shifting values in western society and the expectations Australian society has of corporations today. It would have been inconceivable 10 years ago for the media and the prime minister to call on business, not wealthy individuals, to contribute substantially to the relief effort in cash donations.

The amazing fact is that corporate Australia has actually risen to the occasion and, one might argue illegally under current corporations law, donated millions of dollars. It is through the focal lens of high-profile events such as the tsunami appeal and the recent James Hardie inquiry that we recognise the seismic shift happening in the values of our society.

Although this values shift does not move at the speed of a tsunami, it has a similar force. This shift has been underway for some time now. The global consumer of the 1990s is morphing into the world citizen of the new millennium. We are shifting in increasing numbers from me, more and greed to we, enough and need. Holism, wellbeing and responsibilities are taking over centre stage from materialism, achievement and rights.

Because this process is slow and the previous values remain deeply engrained in large parts of the population, we tend to ignore much evidence of this shift which can be seen in the growing trend in downshifting, corporate social responsibility and the rise of the green vote.

Emerging Values

me	→	we
more	→	enough
materialism	→	holism
quantity	→	quality
greed	→	need
short term	→	long term
rights	→	responsibilities

The implications for corporations are going to be profound, dwarfing the Sarbanes-Oxley compliance costs that US companies complain so heavily about by orders of magnitude. Ultimately, the current voluntary regime of corporate social responsibility is going to be replaced by binding laws on how corporations will have to act on behalf and to the benefits of all stakeholders.

There are many factors that will contribute in bringing these changes about. Consumers demand that companies act responsibly and make their purchasing decisions accordingly. Employees take their cues from Generation Y and refuse to work a 60 hour week. Activists continue to draw attention to issues such as environmental pollution and product safety. The overall pace of change will continue to be slow, barring further accelerating events, such as the Enron-Andersen scandal.

Apart from the tsunami appeal, the corporate response to date has been mainly piecemeal and more public relations than substance. Even the largest Australian companies have no more than a handful staff charged with driving corporate social responsibility (CSR). Their budgets remain minute compared to budgets for sponsorship or PR. Only a small percentage of the top 1000 Australian companies publish a comprehensive social and environmental report.

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Directors' Message

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Welcome to the very first edition of our StraightTalk newsletter. Having just passed the third anniversary of our business, we want to use this newsletter as a means to keep in touch with all the people who are interested in our work and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in general.

Starting our own business was a great leap into the unknown for us and the first three years have been exciting and a great learning experience. We have certainly been confirmed in our belief that CSR is here to stay, albeit it is developing more slowly than we originally anticipated.

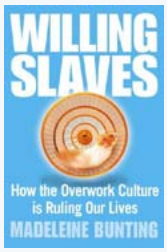
We hope that the recent focus on CSR in light of the James Hardie inquiry and the unexpectedly generous response of Australian companies to the tsunami are signs that 2005 is going to be a good year for all of us who believe that business has a larger responsibility to society than just generating profits for shareholders.

We are certainly looking forward to the next three years, continually developing Juno Consulting's products and services to meet current demand and to drive the future agenda of CSR in Australia.

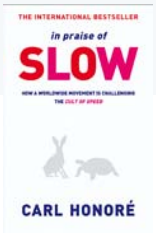
Happy New Year!
Lynn & Peter

Top Down - Bottom Up

According to ILO data, Australians today work the longest hours of employees in any developed country, 1855 hours a year and a staggering 480 hours (or 12 weeks!) longer than employees in Norway, the world's most productive economy (according to OECD data).



With 20% of Australians working more than 50 hours a week, much of the overwork culture can be blamed on professionals who either feel they need to work long hours to safeguard their career or choose to work long hours because they gain all their significance from work and are no longer capable of living a family oriented life.



Either way, the implications are disastrous not only for children and family life, but also for Australian business. Long working hours are a sure sign of low productivity and make companies less competitive. If as a manager I can get away with piling more work on less staff, I don't have to think about how to organise work better and how to give staff the environment to be more productive in.

We have heard this theme over and over in the last few years. While it is also considered fashionable to be seen as 'busy', we do believe that fundamentally most professionals would much prefer to have work-life balance and to derive enjoyment from their personal life and not just from work.

Companies will have to realise that they are leaving themselves open to potential litigation as stress and burnout give rise to illness, extended leave and accidents.

At the same time individuals must also take responsibility for themselves. Invest in their own emotional development to the point that they are able to put in place and enforce healthy boundaries in all their relationships, both business and personal. To help those who feel stuck and don't know how to get off or slow down the treadmill, we have developed our new Equilibrium Life Design Programme.

There are only 20 places for each seminar. To register, please go to our website at www.junoconsulting.com.au and click on the Events menu, or call us on (03) 9867 1788. Please don't hesitate to call if you would like more information or you can email us on info@junoconsulting.com.au

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IBM Community Impact Day

What a difference a day makes! If you applied your business skills in the community for just one day, what difference could you make? Over 70 volunteers from IBM Australia went to find out on November 24 last year. The day, jointly organised and facilitated by Juno Consulting and Maribyrnong City Council, as part of the IBM 'On Demand Community' initiative was a resounding success.

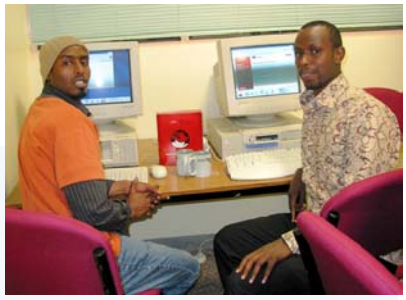
Eight local schools and 20 community organisations nominated 1-day projects ranging from IT training, strategic planning and IT network tuning to gardening and painting.

IBM volunteers relished the choice between using their business skills in a community that needs some extra support and enjoying a day outside with the paintbrush or garden hoe. The day also had some indirect benefits:

'This IBM Impact Day has given me a guideline for what I want to do when I retire . Having been in IT for the past 20 years, I'd forgotten how much can actually be done by pencil and paper. Being able to quickly and simply assimilate the needs of the staff and then put some element of automation in place enabled an easier working day. And after seeing the gratitude from the staff members that we helped, it's encouraged me to want to do more of the same.' Said Glenn Arkell, of IBM's Ballarat Regional Software solutions Centre. Glenn supported Centacare staff members in developing their administration and process management skills.

Whilst it took a lot of work organising the day, including briefing community groups, assisting them in defining projects and getting them in touch with the volunteer team leaders from IBM before the day, the rewards made it all worthwhile.

One of the recurring comments about the day was regarding the opportunity to meet people from a diverse range of backgrounds. That included working with community agency personnel, who in turn support some of the most vulnerable people in our society. IBM staff members also talked about being inspired by the optimism and determination of the many new Australian Citizens they met.



This included a Somali Women's Group who wanted a workshop about how an Incorporated Association works and how to create an effective committee of management. Similarly, three IBM staff members supported a group of young Sudanese men who are developing an Internet Café in partnership with the local public tenants association. The Café will provide access to computers and the internet for school students to do their homework.

Anita Francis, an IBM consultant based at Telstra, decided to volunteer at Annecto, an organisation working with clients with a disability. Annecto wanted Project Management training. '*It was fantastic. Such a great feeling to do something in my own way and have it received so well. Meeting new people, understanding a new paradigm, and the feeling of participating in something special was really rewarding.*'

Mark Engel normally spends his days delivering large software packages for corporate clients. On November 24 he joined Footscray Baptist Church training their staff in basic IT skills, such as Excel, Powerpoint and using the Internet. '*I enjoyed myself very much. First time I have done volunteer work and it was great to give something back. Also I take my IT skills for granted, but there are those out there who benefit from even a small piece of my experience. On a personal note, it has made me feel better about myself that I have been of use to*

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IBM Community Impact Day

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someone other than my family, friends and peers.'

After a stimulating and busy day everybody got together at Maribyrnong City Hall for a celebration. This gave people the opportunity to share stories about their projects and the results. Entertainment was provided by a Sudanese dance troop. From all the feedback this has been a fantastic way of bringing business and community together.

As part of the day, IBM also donated 27 computers and laptops to local s schools. Robert Were, Manager Family Services and Community Projects, Maribyrnong City Council, was delighted about support for the local community. *'This has been fantastic day for us. The feedback from the community groups and schools has been great and they are already asking when this will happen again. Council would like to help facilitate more of these events in 2005. It's been great working with IBM and Juno.'*

But How?

So what does it take to create a volunteering event for large numbers of staff? Without a dedicated staff person at council this would not have been possible.

Maribyrnong sent out 300 letters to schools and community organisations inviting them to submit projects. Juno Consulting conducted two briefing sessions for interested organisations; and assisted many in deciding on suitable projects and putting together the first draft of the logistics information.

On the IBM side, we had 9, 30 minute briefing sessions for interested employees and extensively used email and poster advertising to attract attention to the event.

Volunteers selected their projects with teams ranging from 1 to 7 people. For each team one person volunteered to be the team leader and got in touch with the community organisation or school to finalise the project requirements and logistics. For some projects a prior site visit was required, but most of the negotiation of expectations was done via email and over the phone.

Any other organisations that would like to support similar projects in Maribyrnong can contact:

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The Values Tsunami

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But the public pressure will continue to grow. The Grey Eye on Australia survey in 2004 found that 77%+ of respondents consider corporations as selfish, greedy and only concerned with profits. Although business has much more political influence than the public at large, politicians know that ultimately they ignore persistent trends at their own peril. They will be forced to act.

What will such legislative changes look like? Markets function best with clear and common constraints, creating a level playing field. Today, investing excessively into CSR might put a company at potential competitive disadvantage. No matter what the business case for CSR purportedly says, not all CSR investment is going to turn a profit. After all, CSR is the antithesis of externalising operating costs.

An educated guess is that the first step in legislation is likely to be mandatory social and environmental reporting. France and South Africa have taken the lead in this area, social reporting becoming a listing requirement on the stock exchange.

CSR reporting in itself will do little to change the public's cynical attitude towards corporations. Investors will need to act on the reported information. Here again the government can contribute by changing the laws governing the superannuation funds. If super funds are required to adopt a more long-term approach and take into account CSR indicators, the whole dynamic governing analysts and corporate investor relations is likely to change. Undoubtedly, a departure from 'pure' financial indicators would be a seismic shift comparable with the tsunami that swept public conscience and brought our morality back to the fore.

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