



FEBRUARY 2007 - LEADERSHIP LETTER #14

***Mind Set!* Reset your Thinking and See the Future
by John Naisbitt**

Hello All ...

This Leadership Letter is a result of a fascinating article I saw in the *Erickson Tribune* (newspaper) about John Naisbitt's latest book: ***Mind Set!***

In it, Naisbitt provides the **tools** he's used over the years as a noted futurist to help us discern what's happening more easily and clearly. It's **very** helpful!

My review/summary of John's fine book attempts to share with you some "tips and tidbits" that may be useful in your strategic thinking ...

I recently had the opportunity to chat with a couple of professional "futurists" while traveling. I was surprised to learn they had not seen or read Naisbitt's new book ... or ***Chindia*** (a great book on China and India that I'll review for you next month!).

Best wishes,

Mel

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Tips and Tidbits from:
MIND SET! RESET YOUR THINKING & SEE THE FUTURE
by John Naisbitt

ISBN-13: 978-0-06-113688-7

Harper Collins, 2006

John offers eleven **Mindsets** that can help you organize your personal life and business pursuits. They can also remove constraints and help you get the most out of the information you have as you look far ahead.

From there, author Naisbitt (of *Megatrends*) offers Part II: **Pictures** of the Future ... based on his analysis of the present and guided by the eleven mindsets of Part I.

PART I - MINDSETS TO HELP YOU SEE THE FUTURE

MINDSETS

WHAT THEY PROVIDE, GUIDE, OFFER:

[1] While many things change, most things remain constant.

Books, news media, magazines constantly hype that **everything** is changing. Not so. It is attention grabbing but not helpful.

Focus on what you think **will** change in your business; the clues are already there.

[2] The future is embedded in the present.

Newspapers (and journals) are the “first draft of history.” **Nothing** else comes close, not blogs, not TV, not cell phones.

The **important** items may not be on page 1. Example: Page 1 – Ford to lay off 30,000; back page – US Commerce Department announces 280,000 new jobs in February.

In the stream of time, the future is ... embedded in the past and the present. To anticipate what lies ahead ... we need to keep a distance and a clear eye.

MINDSETS

[3] Focus on the score of the game.

[4] Understand how powerful it is not to have to be right.

[5] See the future as a picture puzzle (evolving).

[6] Don't get so far ahead of the parade that people don't know you're in it.

[7] Resistance to change falls if benefits are real.

[8] Things that we expect to happen always happen more slowly.

WHAT THEY PROVIDE, GUIDE, OFFER:

In business, politics or private life, pride usually causes a gap between **facts** and words. Don't be misled. Always evaluate the actual facts and situations.

Strategic advisors, such as McKinsey & Co., analyze the numbers, and try to tell clients the **truth**. You should do the same for yourself.

The need to be "right" is culturally conditioned in us, by parents, teachers, bosses, even political parties!

Having to be "right" blinds us to facts we don't like, keeps us from learning, changing, growing, correcting, or questioning.

The "future" is a mish-mash of events and possibilities, causes and consequences, and surprises.

Their interconnections and interactions are important, hard to discern, certainly not linear, and often surprising.

Even the most talented leaders need **people** (the parade) to put a plan, idea or innovation into practice.

First of course, people need to understand it and believe in it. Most leaders err on the side of being too far ahead (and communicating too little).

No matter what they are told, people will perceive the benefits of change from their own experience.

Relating to people's experience is key to leaders' credibility, as well as really listening to the difficulties of changing.

From trains and planes, to pumps and engines, radio and TV, phones and computers, all innovations have taken a **relatively long** time to develop.

Development times have shortened in the 21st Century, but they still take longer than we expect!

MINDSETS

[9] You don't get results by solving problems but by exploiting opportunities.

[10] Don't add unless you subtract.

[11] Don't forget the ecology of technology.

WHAT THEY PROVIDE, GUIDE, OFFER:

“When you're looking for the shape of the future, look for and bet on the exploiters of opportunities, not the problem solvers.”

(I believe Peter Drucker said something like this even earlier, and though he may not have been the first ... he was surely correct ... *Mel*)

The corollary is ... Chance favors the **prepared** mind, person, team or company.

Too often in the business world it's ... add, add, add ... without examining where best to focus scarce resources.

(**Strategically**, nothing is more important than allocating resources where the return is best for the short and long term ... *Mel*)

Two of the most significant technologies (Internet and cell phones) are profound because they **connect people** and change the way(s) we **communicate**.

The rate of technologic change has vastly outstripped our social and cultural accommodation to it.

The real dysfunctions of technology need to be recognized and dealt with.

PART II - RESULTING “PICTURES” OF THE FUTURE

CULTURE: A **Visual** Culture is Taking Over the World.

- Imagination is giving way to the instant picture.
- Reading and reading ability are in decline in all segments of Americans.
- Visual **design** has become one of the most powerful forces, from pens to cars to computers to shoes to buildings to games.

ECONOMICS: From Nation-States to Economic Domains.

- ❑ The “borders” of countries are superceded by **economic domains**.
- ❑ Typical economic domains would include: automobile domains, financial services domains, oil and gas domains, etc.
- ❑ “Countries don’t create economies ... entrepreneurs and companies create and revitalize economies.” Governments need to provide helpful environments.
- ❑ Businesses need to **decentralize**, **share talent easily** and **outsource** to maximize success.

CHINA: The Periphery is the Center.

- The “world’s workshop” has gravitated from Britain to the USA, to Japan and Korea and is now China.
- We will also begin to see China developing and creating technologies ... and exporting them to us.
- Tsingtao isn’t just a great Chinese beer, it’s a beautiful city of 7 million, one of many. China has 166 cities over 1 million in size.
- There’s “ferocious competition” between cities and companies in China, including the competition of language/dialects.

EUROPE: Mutually Assured Decline.

- ❑ Europe’s tension between social welfare and economic supremacy is made worse by an unwillingness to compromise. This is compounded by 25 different country mindsets, and declining productivity, growth, innovation.
- ❑ The average European works only 70 percent of the time an American does, and expects much more in benefits and supports.
- ❑ Formerly poor countries (Hungary, Ireland, Slovakia, Estonia, Czech Republic) are doing well because they are attractive to businesses.

OUR EVOLUTIONARY ERA: Reservoir of Innovation.

- ✓ From the Fifth to the Fifteenth Century, China produced breakthroughs including: the compass, gun powder, paper and printing, ocean-going ships, porcelain, and water clocks.
- ✓ The Renaissance opened our minds 500 years ago. The Industrial Revolution followed that. Over 100 years ago, five profound discoveries occurred: electricity, telephony, automobiles, aviation and radio.
- ✓ We are still building on these breakthroughs ... slowly. Television began in the mid-Twentieth Century, seen as an extension of radio.
- ✓ More breakthroughs will arrive slowly. Perhaps driven by nanotechnology and genetic engineering and ...

OUTTAKES: Mindsets That Didn't Make the Cut

- **Look at what is rewarded and what is punished.** These can reveal a lot about people and companies!
- **A proposition doesn't have to be true; it just has to be interesting.** Such an idea can stimulate good thinking!
- **To appraise the viability of a society or a company, examine its ability to be self-correcting.** An essential capability.
- **Growth is regrouping at a higher level.** Growing requires changes in role, mission and/or structure.

***John Naisbitt's Mind Set! is easy to read and enjoy. He has so many excellent examples of his major points from Sports to Politics to Business!
Pick one up for yourself and your key team members.***

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