



## **AUGUST 2008 - LEADERSHIP LETTER #30**

# **THE GAME CHANGER**

### **Hello Again ...**

Our last letter ("**Some Helpful Planning Definitions**") was appreciated more than most. Here's a smattering of comments from readers ...

- *The most concise representation of strategic planning that I've ever come across.*
- *I like the simple definitions ...short and succinct.*
- *The explanation of "annual action agendas" is particularly helpful!*
- *They provide a clear delineation of the terms we often use interchangeably or without precision. I look forward to sharing them with our team for strategic planning.*

**This letter** is a brief review of **The Game Changer**, a thoughtful book on creating strategic advantage and value through **game-changing innovation**.

P&G's Lafley joins with consulting guru Ram Charan to share their experiences of this most important way of staying in the vanguard of any industry.

They also identify the five elements of the process, the "**how**" of changing the game for your business, so you provide more value for customers **and** your firm as well.

A **great book** because it shows more experience and less theory. Also great because it will help the USA preserve industry leadership through **innovation**.

I hope you enjoy it!

Don't forget that this and all past **Leadership Letters** can be found on our website at [www.henseyassociates.com](http://www.henseyassociates.com).

Regards,

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***THE GAME CHANGER:***  
**HOW YOU CAN DRIVE REVENUE & PROFIT GROWTH WITH INNOVATION**  
**A.G. Lafley and Ram Charan**  
**Crown Business, NY, 2008**                      **ISBN-13: 978-0307381736, \$27.50**

The authors begin with definitions of “**Game-Changer.**” Here are my versions of three of them:

- Visionary strategists who alter the game their business plays, or conceive an entirely new game.
- Leaders who understand that the customer or client—not the CEO—is the boss and a source of needed innovation.
- Breakers of commoditization who create differentiated and value-added brands, businesses and services through innovation.

Inspired by Lafley’s turnaround of P&G beginning in 2000, this book shows us the elements that create innovation as an **integrated management process.**

At the center is **customer-centric**, game-changing innovation.

Supporting that center are ...

- **Motivating purpose and values** that inspire people, give meaning to the work, and do more than contribute to the bottom line.
- **Stretching goals** that are few, clear, specific, well chosen, and achievable. (This reminds me: Drucker advises more than three goals = no goals.)
- **Choiceful strategies** that will lead to the goals, are required by the goals, and that will win **with** customers and **against** competitors.
- **Unique core strengths** that are used, built on, enhanced and integrated to create and sustain competitive advantages.
- **Enabling structures** that support innovation, including not only structure, but also processes and the behaviors of managers.

- **Consistent and reliable systems.** “Innovation is creative but not chaotic.” It is a well understood system for moving from concept to commercialization, with well defined criteria, milestones and measures.
- **Courageous and connected culture** that supports learning from customers, suppliers and one another as partners, avoiding silos, and being **really** close to customers.
- **Inspiring leaders** who support innovation with the risks it entails, and who know that innovation is a **team** sport.

All this brings to mind two things ...

For me, the essence of a really effective strategic plan is: mission/vision/values, a few well-chosen goals, smart strategies, and clear competitive edge(s). And all that on one piece of paper to help maintain focus.

At the planning retreat of Walker Parking Consultants a decade ago, then CEO Frank Transue invited three wise **client** CEO’s to come and speak their minds about WPC, before the planning. The positive results are still being felt today.

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