

CLIENT / CONTACT BULLETIN 8-29

Just in case it matters to you:

- THE LATEST IMMIGRATION P.C. ISSUE IN EUROPE IS ABOUT *FAMILY INBREEDING*. “In much of the world, ‘consanguineous marriage’ – in which the partners have the same ancestors – is not only accepted, but up to 50% of marriages are between cousins. This practice is now posing a social and legal problem in the United Kingdom, where millions of Arab immigrants practice a tradition that western societies consider genetically harmful, ...disgusting and dangerous.” However, the Political Correctness argument is that birth defects occur in only 4% of first-cousin marriages, versus much higher rates in late-year childbirth (“roughly double every three or four years after age 31 and for a woman who has a baby at 48, the risk of Down Syndrome alone is 9%”). Therefore, how can discriminatory restrictions against cousins marrying be fair, when no such health-risk restrictions apply to later-year birthing? [THE WEEK – May 30, 08]
- “YOUTH AND SKILL WILL WIN OUT EVERY TIME OVER AGE AND TREACHERY. True or false? False. Even the best and brightest are regularly eaten alive by politics, intrigue, and plotting. Organizational politics is an inescapable reality of corporate and public life.” In this context, *Strategic Planning* along with a program for *Strategic Execution* are critical to the potential for any business to achieve optimum results. Effective execution particularly encompasses managing ‘change’ since, once a company reaches “the tipping point of execution, there exist powerful vested interests that will resist impending changes. The more likely change becomes, the more fiercely and vocally these negative influencers – both internal and external – will fight to protect their positions, and their resistance can seriously damage and even derail the strategy execution process.” ‘Change Management’ is a specialty consultancy of DCG, which involves getting all key players to support strategic initiatives; we can help. [BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY – 2005]
- IT’S TRUE THAT FOR MOST ADULTS, “BRAINS DO DETERIORATE WITH AGE” – BUT NOT NECESSARILY BRAINPOWER. Research at Harvard on adults above age 60 show that “much of what occurs is actually a widening focus of attention that simply makes it more difficult to latch onto just one fact (like a name or phone number)... and that ‘distractibility’ is not, in fact, a bad thing – it may *increase* the amount of information available to the conscious mind...by enabling elders to ultimately know more about a situation, ...assess real impact, ...and be better problem solvers by transferring the information they’ve soaked up from one situation to another.” The word for “what results when the mind is able to assimilate data and put it in its proper place” is *wisdom*. [NEW YORK TIMES – May 20, 08]
- WHY IS LIFE SO HARD TO PREDICT? The mathematicians’ answer is that “life is a series of probability decisions which humans are not wired to understand... even though the outline of our lives is continually coaxed in new directions by a variety of random events that, along with our responses to them, determine our fate.” Research has shown that in dealing with ‘uncertainties’ different sides of our brains reach separate conclusions – the ‘logical’ left side searches for pattern, while the intuitive right side evaluates cause & effect. The left side generally wins the battle, so “random events often look like non-random events” and our decision process about *expected outcomes* usually ends up wrong. What’s missing is the realization that (a) events are random and (b) the possible outcome of each distinct event must be considered. Example: What is the probability that Heads will turn up in two coin tosses? Logical pattern approach is that there are three outcomes (twice, once, or neither), therefore probability is one-third. Actuality, if “thinking about the tosses in terms of possible *sequences* from two tosses (head/head, head/tail, tail/head, tail/tail), is that four possibilities make up the sample space,” and thus only a one-fourth chance exists. “A classic quandary.” [THE WEEK – June 6, 08]
- THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK: ***“Abstinence makes the church grow fondlers.”***
“For people launching new businesses, self-confidence is essential, but that trait is useful only when it’s based on a realistic assessment of the competition and other market conditions... More than 50% of small businesses fail because market entry decisions tend to be overoptimistic.”