

Thinking That Breaks Barriers

Our activities or behaviours are thoughts that are acted out. Our today is a manifestation of our thoughts in the past. This means we have the capacity to create our future in our thought realm. Our thoughts are the basis for our plans and how far we allow our thoughts to go determines the boundary of what we can conceive and bring to reality.

Emphasis is placed in the workplace for acquisition, engagement and retention of employees with intellectual capital that can be used by the organization to achieve continuous competitive edge and profitability. If intellectual capital is only applied using conventional wisdom it can only go as far as what has been discovered by man. An employee remains a valued and superior asset if she pushes continuously the boundary outward in her thinking process.

The conventional thinking process followed by an individual when confronted with two options to choose from is to compare and contrast, examine pros and cons and possibly choose the option that presents the lower cost or higher returns on investment of time and other resources. There is a "new" thinking process called integrative thinking. Roger Martin, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, Canada states:

"Integrative Thinking is the ability to constructively face the tensions of opposing models, and instead of choosing one at the expense of the other, generating a creative resolution of the tension in the form of a new model that contains elements of the individual models, but is superior to each."

It is stated that integrative thinking process is used by business leaders who have achieved tremendous success in the workplace. In conventional thinking process, options are seen as contradictory, opposing or mutually exclusive. A true test of a first-rate mind is the ability to hold two contradictory ideas at the same time, that is, use an integrative thinking process.

We have the "new" in quotes because it is not entirely new, it is just being recognized and publicized for people to know about it. We want to share with you an example of integrative thinking process that resulted in a decision in the Bible that preceded Jesus' birth that we just celebrated. Joseph thought he had two options when he found Mary pregnant. He could either disgrace her publicly or break the engagement quietly. Joseph decided on the latter option because he was a good, kind, just man who always did the right thing. Joseph was a conventional thinker as he was limited by culture and tradition he knew so well. He could only think of only two options that could get him out of the tight spot of having a betrothed Virgin Mary pregnant with a child that was not his own. But Joseph did not know there was a third option until God stepped into his situation. (Matt. 1:19-25)

Joseph was using conventional thinking process but the "third option" resulted from an integrative thinking process out of God's mind. The third option did not change the fact that the child is not Joseph's child. The third option established that Mary was loyal and

faithful to Joseph and did not engage in pre-marital sex. It provided an earthly father-figure who understood clearly his stewardship role and ensured prophecies of the manner and place of his birth were fulfilled.

How does a Christian move from being a conventional to an integrative thinker? The story shows that as humans we are limited by experience, culture, knowledge and skills that we have but our God is unlimited, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. God is Lord of Integrative Thinking. As a Christian you can bring God into your workplace by talking to God about every minute detail of your job for God to show you more options than you could ever have imagined or conceptualized. Be sure you are attentive to receive from God after you have spoken to Him, that is, make it a two-way talk.

When God is your partner at work, you will discover that there will be no more gaps between your aspirations and outcomes; errors are no longer prevalent in your work; you will have a clear understanding of links between many factors, their causes and effects; you will become more proactive than reactive; engage more in preventive rather than curative tasks; feeling out-of-control of outcomes will become a thing of the past; and you will feel more confident in accomplishing your tasks.

In closing, let us examine Roger Martin's statement:

"Successful entrepreneurs make excellent examples of implicit integrative thinkers. They create businesses by seeing things others don't see and fashioning business models to exploit these things. By seeing things others don't see, they can overcome tradeoffs others see as unavoidable. However, most struggle to explain what they did, and often think of it as unremarkable because their solution was so obvious to them. It is obvious when the picture is seen broadly and as a whole, rather than narrowly and in pieces."

It reads like a call for a Christian to draw close to God as the one who can see what others do not see and provide a way out where people say there is no way.

Miracles in the Bible testify to this nature of our God and the time of miracles is not over. Jer. 33:3 states

"Call to Me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, fenced in and hidden, which you do not know (do not distinguish and recognize, have knowledge of and understand)." (AMP)

If you choose to invite God into your work and workplace, 2010 will be a year of integrative thinking that will make you a superior and valued asset in your workplace. You will have the "third option" that will take you into your destiny. As you accept God's "third option" you will become the best God has purposed you to be.

Have a 2010 with many "third options" that you will courageously embrace that will do you a world of good.

By Rev. (Dr.) Lana Adeleye-Olusae



*Reaching The Next Higher Level +
Inspiring Your Voice*

16, Minnetonka Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2M 4J8

1 204 960 7056

www.liveitoutatwork.org
www.surefooting.org