

THE LAW OF SUCCESS 2.0

1) Why do you forecast our future? In this uncertain society, how do you find the meaning of it?

As the quantity of information at our fingertips increases, so too do the challenges of keeping up with analysis, pattern spotting and extracting useful information. At kjaer global we work with companies and organisations to map out what we call future scenarios. Often we will be working 5-10 or even 20 years ahead – considering the key issues emerging today that will influence people and our society in 2020 or 2030.

Working with future scenarios enables companies (and I work with many leading global brands such as Accenture, Nokia, O2 and Sony) in making better choices today for tomorrow about the direction of their brand, their values and their organisation itself. In order to create relevant future scenarios companies need to understand their customer's emotional landscape. They must consider the key drivers shaping our society today and also tap into the mindsets and values of the people they wish to reach, now and in the future.

It is important to note that I talk in terms of not one future but multiple future scenarios. The future doesn't just come in one shape or out of nowhere. We are active participants in shaping our world – in fact we make the future happen. In other words we make choices that directly influence the outcome of our own personal and professional lives, our communities and society. That is the most important aspect of what I do, and that is why working with Futures is both challenging and vitally important.

You say that we live in uncertain times. I agree, but they are also exciting and momentous times and I believe the quest for meaning is one of the key things we can extract from the position we are in today. Our world is changing rapidly, with the rise of New Economies and the rapid pace of Convergence Technology - value sets are shifting too. People in the developed economies have realised that money alone can't buy happiness and they now are looking elsewhere for meaning – seeking out unique experiences or personal development. We have moved into a state I call Emotional Consumption or Meaningful Consumption - choices and decisions are now based not on what a product or service can do for us, but on how it makes us feel.

2) How fast are consumers' trends changing today? And what is required to forecast them?

The speed of consumer trends depends on the trend and its scope – and here I would distinguish clearly between Macro and Micro trends. Macro trends are 5-10 years long-term society drivers - Micro trends have a shorter lifespan typically 1-3 years. In fact we don't deal with short-lived fads unless they are an indicator of something more important. Rather we look at local and global shifts and their underlying causes. We take into account the fact that trends may manifest in different ways according to geography and local cultural context, social and economic conditions.

In terms of the speed and reach of trends, New Economies and Glocalisation are making a major difference. With new powerhouse economies developing, we see New Communities developing linked not by geography or culture, but by shared value sets. In a hyper-connected society trends have the ability to reach further and move faster. It also means that grassroots movements and local concerns can have a truly global audience – all facilitated by social media.

With regards to what is required to forecast them we practise what I call 'whole brain thinking'. Left Brain = facts and analysis and Right Brain = the bigger picture and concept thinking. We must balance both in order to successfully spot and analyse what is truly important. This is the only route to create a truly multidimensional future vision.

Our method for this process is Trend Mapping – a shortcut developed to decode cultural contexts in society. It reveals the bigger picture and identifies challenges and opportunities that impact us now and in the future. A key tool to assist with this process and navigate the future is our Trend Atlas. This is a visual tool we developed that determines key scientific, social, emotional and spiritual trends in society. It provides a framework of key Macro and Micro trends we have selected and analysed as being important on a global level.

3) Can you tell me your perspective on the movement of global market for the next decade?

In terms of global markets, the rise of New Economies means the focus is already shifting. Globalisation and growing numbers of aspirational middle class consumers in Russia, Brazil, India and China are already having a profound impact on economies, markets and the future.

We clearly see the growth of new alliances that may exclude the traditional developed economies – for instance China and Africa – and this is already impacting on the way markets move and business is done.

Last but not least we must factor in the impact of technology in all areas of society, the way we do business and on the way we perceive the world. Geography and locality are no longer barriers to communication, community and free movement of information and ideas – or goods. By 2050 technology will have changed the world as we know it today.

4) When we say achieving success in terms of business, do you concern that products comes at first? Or consumers first?

People come first and last in my book! However good you think your product or service is, its true value is only measured in the way it is perceived and experienced by the end users. I think many companies are still far to slow to tap into what being consumer-centric actually means. Understanding how people or the end-user views your organisation is essential for survival in tomorrow's competitive landscape. As a leader you simply have to think from the outside in and feel from the inside out.

Here are three things that I think are going to make a huge impact on our consumer-driven economy in the coming decades.

Ethics: 'Be the change you want to see in the world' is the famous Gandhi quote that sums this up. He also said: There is enough in the world for everyone need, but not for everyone's greed. To be caring is no longer enough. To make a difference companies and corporations must demonstrate active sustainable actions and innovation as well as social responsibility. It's not enough to talk about it, it has to be demonstrated through actions. Organisations must make it part of the story of their brand. Regulation will drive this, so organisations need to wake up to the new norm and engage in meaningful dialogue with people to map out the best way forward. Ethics must become integral to internal and external culture, and to decision making.

Always On: Constantly bombarded with a flow of data, information and choice alongside contradictive media messages we run the of risk being overwhelmed. We want control and focus in our lives and are looking for freedom to enjoy the things that matters to us. Companies and organisations that find a way to manage the data deluge and help us navigate complexity will win our loyalty. Companies need to remember that people no longer just focus on product function they also want to experience the product emotion. There is already a huge shift from physical ownership to sharing of virtual services. Sharing (freeconomics), Co-Creation and Cloud Culture is being driven by the a generation used to free downloads and open source approaches. They want to be involved in the process of developing products and services - they demand dialogue and ownership!

Happiness: This is becoming a serious business as organisations and governments alike start to explore what makes people and society happy. This is not a frivolous issue because studies have shown that happy people work harder, live longer and engage well within society and communities. Alongside this we have a well-developed trend for Social Philanthropy – giving away is the new measure of wealth (think Gates and Buffet). If you can't give away money you give away time. Facilitating happiness is a challenge – but it's one that I think all companies and markets will begin to address in order to be people-focused. This is about creating a cultural legacy and connecting with people for the purpose of inspiring and enriching their lives.

5) You are also famous as a speaker, what is the key element to be a good speaker?

Thank you! I think I'll start from the obvious one to me, which is approaching what you are doing from a position of openness, interest and humility. I may be the speaker but I don't know all the answers – I may not even have considered all the questions. As a speaker my role is to share my views and vision of the future and interact with the people who have been kind enough to listen.

In fact I see myself as a future narrator. My mission is to inspire, inform and engage people for the purpose of empowering them. Once again I think we come back to the importance of addressing people in an authentic

manner. I always say: The art is to talk to people where they are - not from a platform above. It is also a two-way street – when I have a speaking engagement I count it a success if I have mutually been enriched and inspired – and challenged - by the questions and debates I have engaged in on the day.

We should all be open to new ideas and approaches – always. I approached any challenge with a mind that is open to everything but attached to nothing.

6) What is your definition of success?

Personally I think the criteria of success is very individual. For me there isn't just one but several – all in no particular order:

- 1) Believing in what you do and in the fact that you can make a difference to the world is an important driver for me.
- 2) Decide to make an effort every day in your life - striving always to take things to the next level - in whatever capacity you operate.
- 3) Have the freedom to make choices based on more meaning rather than just money, success and prestige.
- 4) Creating your personal route to happiness - daring to unleash you inner true potential – not being influenced by others limitations.
- 7) *Can you give me your advice to be successful in general sense?*

My view is that values and ethics are crucial – without them success at any level is a sham. I would add to that that success means approaching life and life's challenges in a spirit of openness and honesty. It also means facing the future in hope – seeing possibilities rather than threats on our journey ahead – and perhaps most important of all, making an honest attempt to leave a positive legacy behind you.