

Purpose Beyond Profit : Spiritual Values and a New Work Ethic

Statement Paper Submitted By

Daniel Schaubacher, Representative to European Institutions, EBBF, Brussels

« La grand erreur de notre temps, cela a été de pencher, je dis même de courber l'esprit des hommes vers la recherche du bien matériel. Il faut relever l'esprit de l'homme, le tourner vers la conscience, vers le beau, le juste, le vrai, le désintéressé et le grand. C'est là et seulement là que vous trouverez la paix de l'homme avec lui-même et par conséquent avec la société. »

Victor Hugo, 1802-1885

« We are economic animals, surviving in a market place... »

Jigmi Thinley, former Prime Minister of Bhutan, 2014

“Commerce is a heaven, whose sun is trustworthiness, piety and truthfulness. The most precious of all things... is trustworthiness.”

Bahá'u'lláh, founder of the Bahá'í Faith, 1817-1892

“What is needed, then, is a renewed, profound and broadened sense of responsibility on the part of all... it demands a transcendent vision of the person”

Pope Francis to World Economic Forum, 2014

In a matter of two or three generations, the peoples and nations of the world have been through a transformation which is unprecedented in known human history. The combined forces of globalization, deregulation and privatization, compounded with technological progress, have propelled the private sector to become the major agent of social change and innovation. With fading borders between Nation States, disarranged loyalties and values, and in the absence of effective global governance, our 'global village' is being confronted with persistent bewildering challenges. To name a few : stewardship of our planet Earth resources, education, life-long learning, cultural diversity, gender inequalities, extremes in wealth and poverty, health, water, hygiene, child mortality, terrorism and divisive conflicts, proliferation of arms, security, societal cyber impact, human rights, speculative financial engineering...

In the midst of this fast pace of change, business assumes a *global* strategy; aware of the marketplace, the producer listens to the diversified needs of *local* consumers and through an immense variety of products and services contributes to material prosperity. Gradually, the unity of humankind in all its diversity is becoming a pervasive societal principle. In an age of unprecedented transition, society is being rebuilt; an invisible unification process, while mindful of enriching cultural diversity, is sweeping through continents. In the words of Austrian-born, American author and management expert Peter Drucker :*“Every few hundred years in Western history, there occurs a sharp transformation... Within a few short decades, society rearranges itself – its world view, its basic values, its social and political structure; its arts; its key institutions... We are currently living through such a transformation.”*

About faculties and values leading to considerate action:

The definition of universal values vs. corporate, cultural, societal specific values has made great progress through numerous fora, as have incitations to observe basic rules, attitudes and behaviours primarily addressed to the business world (see [Appendix 1](#) : UN and EU Guidelines, Communications and Standards on CSR, (Corporate Social Responsibility), the Environment, Labor, Sustainability, Business and Human rights).

Enshrined in mankind’s various cultures, there are, however, values of a more profound, universal nature, appealing to the spiritual nature of human beings. To enumerate a few : trustworthiness, integrity, love, truthfulness, respect, justice, fairness, service, humility, stewardship, equanimity, peace, fortitude, courage, human dignity, citizenship. They constitute humanity’s spiritual heritage, a common golden rule; they can be found in the Holy Writings, or the sayings of philosophers throughout the history of mankind. Let us ponder on some of them:

- Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. (*Buddhism: Udana-Varga, 5:18, 6th Century BCE*)
- Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. (*Christianity: Matthew 7:12, 1st Century CE*)
- May I do to others as I would they should do unto me. (*Plato, 4th Century BCE*)

- Do not do unto others what you would not have them do to you. (*Confucianism: Analects, 15:23, 6th Century BCE*)
- Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you. (*Hinduism: Mahabharata 5:1517, 3rd Century BCE*)
- Lay not on any soul a load which ye would not wish to be laid upon you and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself. (*Bahá'í: Bahá'u'lláh, 19th Century CE*)
- No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother what he desires for himself. (*Islam: Muhammad, Sunnah, 6th Century CE*)
- In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self, and should therefore refrain from inflicting upon others such injury as would appear undesirable to us if inflicted upon ourselves. (*Jainism: Lord Mahvir, 24th Tirthankara, 5th Century, BCE*)
- What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. (*Judaism: Talmud, Shabbat 31a*)
- Do not condemn your brother until you have walked a mile in his moccasins. (*Native American: Unknown*)
- Don't create enmity with anyone as God is within everyone. (*Sikhism: Guro Arjan Devji 259, Guru Granth Shaib*)
- Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain and regard your neighbor's loss as your own loss. (*Taoism: Unknown*)
- Do not do unto others all that which is not well for oneself. (*Zoroastrianism: Dadistan-I-Dinik, 94:5, 5th Century BCE*)
- I am a citizen not of Athens nor of Greece, but of the world. (*Socrates*)

Many people have grown sceptical about mixing business and spirituality, even though the spiritual nature of human beings distinguishes man from other creatures. In the West, we live in a secular society, separating Church from State. We tend to shy off from religion, proselytizing, New Age cults. However, business can but gain from harnessing the power underlying all human competencies, in particular those inferred by our spiritual nature. The genius of humans is to use their consciousness, creative faculties, ability to conceive, plan, and make surge from the

unknown, realities which happen in this world. All human beings are born “spiritual” with this innate capacity, but it needs to be developed and practised continuously through education and exercise. Such inner skills are leading us to act in wisdom, with benevolence, compassion, solidarity, humility, understanding, and to acquire vision commuted into the reality of this world. The desire to connect in some way to the Supreme Reality, or the Intelligence which underlies the Universe has been for ever an innate need in the history of mankind. We cherish the desire to tap into a deeper meaning in our life – longing for transcendence. We continuously inquire about the nature, if not the intentions, of our true self or those of other people, of our environment and our future, especially when we, other people and social groups are dispirited. We long for empathy, love, loyalty and, in business, to render a genuine service and thus be competitive.

For many people, religion is a way to develop their spirituality. However, faith and spirituality should not be confused with religion. Beliefs and faith have to do with trustworthiness, loyalty, confidence, empathy, love, creativity, equanimity. Religions have taught us to develop tools to enhance our innate spirituality which are often used likewise by non practicing people. I will mention two : prayer or communion with God; and meditation. The Founder of Islam, Muhammad, speaks of “prayer as a ladder to ascend to Heaven”. When we isolate ourselves in a prayerful attitude, prayer can be likened to “a conversation with God”. It becomes the attitude reaching out to the Supreme Reality in the Creation, - an Intelligence which is unknowable to man, but may inspire his spirit. Meditation consists in a conversation with our inner self, a contemplative introspection, when we shift between our thoughts, analyze them, heeding and taking stock of advice gleaned from others, and arrive at a deliberate decision to facilitate action or take a calculated risk. Reducing stress, burn-out or anxiety is another benefit. Meditation, according to researchers, contributes to controlling one’s emotions, relaxing, managing one’s thoughts. In the words of Sue Howard and David Welbourn (*The Spirit at Work Phenomena*): “*Spirituality encompasses our ability to tap into our deepest resources, that part of ourselves which is unseen and mysterious, to develop our fullest potential*”.

The ‘Spiritual’ Workplace :

In Appendix 2, I have endeavored to enumerate some recently published scholarly works and essays which deal with a ‘spiritual’ workplace. This list is far from being exhaustive. At institutes of higher learning and business schools, research is being conducted and courses are being given on ethics, helping business people and students to be true to their convictions. Presentations, workshops and

courses are being offered to business people by voluntary groups (e.g. in Belgium by the network “Philosophie et Management” in cooperation with Solvay Business School; by the sponsor of the Business for Peace Conference : SPES (Spirituality in the Economy and Society), or by *ebbf*, a virtual network with members in some 60 countries dedicated to bringing ethical values, personal virtues and moral leadership into their workplaces - to name a few.)

In Western type societies, survival is no longer the objective of work. Ideally, in our information, knowledge-based societies, work is expected to provide a desirable sense of community and an environment in which one’s potential may be realized. Today, typically, management practices focus on “empowerment”, “job enrichment” or “positive reinforcement”. When focussed on service to others and society, work contributes to a meaningful life, within and outside the enterprise. Work ought to be regarded as a vehicle of human progress and, viewed under that angle, it is no longer an option, but a societal duty. Work assumes a sacred dimension when performed in the spirit of service to humanity. Thus, work can be regarded not only as a source of social and material growth and inclusion, but also of spiritual and personal growth. It becomes an instrument for reaching excellence, perfection and constant development. It basically is a social behaviour, leading to partnerships. When transparency, voluntary sharing, benevolence, participatory decision-making, non-adversarial consultation, team dynamics, or participation in profits and ownership are being applied within the enterprise and with its stakeholders’ community, in an orderly manner, work is a source of unity in diversity and prosperity. A harmonious partnership combining diversity of gender, origin, and ethnicity produces opportunities for enhanced creativity, new ideas leading to innovation, in particular when the enterprise makes full use of the faculties of women, such as caring, compassion, intuition, sensitivity, fortitude, arbitration, equanimity.

Management and marketing experts speak today of a “circular economy”, of “lean management”, of the role of stakeholders in applying principles of Corporate Social Responsibility, of the responsibility of executives in the concept of “Corporate Governance”. Successful global networks of social entrepreneurs, while eventually turning out a profit in their enterprise, adopt a business plan with social or environmental principal objectives. At the Stockholm UNESCO conference forum on enterprise, back in 1998, *ebbf* organized a “Global Dialogue on Microfinance and Human Development” which emphasized its spiritual dimensions. In 2011, in *Harvard Business Review*, Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer introduced a new inclusive business concept : “Creating Shared Value” (CSV) which is being applied throughout the supply chain by transnational

corporations such as Nestlé, Unilever, GE, Google, Novartis, to name a few. CSV rests on the premise that competitiveness of an enterprise and the well-being of the community are mutually dependent, thus integrating societal improvement into economic value. CSV will redefine value chains from the bottom of the pyramid, adopting plans for sound stewardship of natural resources while contributing to economic and social development. Critics longing for global social justice would contend that these management strategies extol unbridled capitalism and its practice of economic rationality, without allegedly paying adequate attention to the spiritual nature of human beings, and the actual needs of civil society at large. They assert that too often, corporate inner workings reflect intrigue and a war on talents, instead of encouraging collaborators to being one true self.

Developing a “spiritual” workplace is a paedagogical process entailing values-driven leadership and unity in action and in team work. It leads to a happy, collaborative environment, and opens up opportunities for personal growth. *Vision and Mission Statements* adopted by the enterprise may help collaborators to identify themselves with a specific *corporate culture*. Role models who exemplify “human” or “spiritual” qualities such as honesty, humility, truthfulness, can be helpful, too. “Soft” or intangible values combining perception faculties of the mind and of the heart contribute to the integrity of the enterprise. A holistic, detached view, taking into account the enrichment derived from diversity, will eventually foster collective intelligence which may lead to innovation.

Why should business people practice values ? Values facilitate operations by acting as a “lubricant”. Companies with effective values attract, retain, and motivate collaborators who are regarded as a knowledge-based human capital critical for success and survival. Values contribute to customers’ and stakeholders’ loyalty, thus providing an intangible insurance or security in a complex marketplace. When treated with respect, collaborators, suppliers, consumers and stakeholders constitute a desirable pool of ideas, of valuable feedback, assessments and information; they may become multipliers of the enterprise creative capacity. Teamwork is rendered more effective; performance, productivity and quality are monitored and improved through motivated collaborators who are any organization’s most precious asset.

In a statement first issued in 1996 “Emerging Values for a Global Economy”, *ebbf* identified seven values which it sees emerging as a global ethic in the 21st century :

- [ethical business practise](#)
- [social responsibility](#)
- [values based leadership](#)
- [sustainable development](#)
- [a new paradigm of work](#)
- [partnership between women and men in all fields of endeavour](#)
- [non-adversarial decision-making through consultation](#)

And *ebbf* concludes :

“Humanity is moving towards a common destiny. The world is shrinking as financial and commercial markets become borderless and information technology turn the Earth into what the late Canadian communications scholar Marshall McLuhan called a “global village.” Business, as the dominant institution in our society, with experience and resources and credibility unmatched by other institutions, has the responsibility to collaborate in improving the health of society. It also has a very direct interest in doing so, since a healthy business cannot exist in a sick society.”

Appendix 1: UN and EU Guidelines, Communications and Standards on CSR, (Corporate Social Responsibility), the Environment, Labor, Sustainability, Business and Human rights

Appendix 2: Some Books and Essays on Spirituality and Business

Paper submitted to the **Business for Peace Conference**, April 10-12, 2014, Ypres/Ieper, Belgium, by Daniel Schaubacher, 347/8 avenue Louise, B 1050 Brussels daniel.schaubacher@skynet.be
www.ebbf.org Tw @Dschaubacher LinkedIn Facebook Tel: Mob: 0032 478 87 29 29

February 27, 2014

UN and EU Guidelines, Communications and Standards on CSR, (Corporate Social Responsibility), the Environment, Labor, Sustainability, Business and Human rights

The following recent developments pertaining to the implementation on a voluntary basis by business entities in Europe and around the world of principles of conduct and good practices are of increased importance to professional business and NGO people and entities :

In October 2011, the European Commission issued a communication called “**A Renewed EU Strategy 2011-2014 for Corporate Social Responsibility**” : see here for document in different languages :



It states that to fully meet their social responsibility, enterprises “*should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical and human rights concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders*”.

The aim is both to enhance positive impacts – for example through the innovation of new products and services that are beneficial to society and enterprises themselves – and to minimise and prevent negative impacts.

In this communications, the Commission highlights:

- the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, <http://www.oecd.org/daf/internationalinvestment/guidelinesformultinationalenterprises/oecdguidelinesformultinationalenterprises.htm>
- the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact, <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/aboutthegc/thetenprinciples/index.html>
- the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, (see 2 below)
- the ILO Tri-partite Declaration of Principles on Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS_094386/lang--en/index.htm
- the ISO 26000 Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility. (see 3 below)

A recent development within EU institutions is that not only the Commission, but also the EU sovereign body, the European Council and its European External Action Service (see http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/index_en.htm) , and the European Parliament have taken an active interest in pursuing the objectives set in the CSR communication and other international body statements.

1. **Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights – Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework**

These principles – the culmination of six years of work by the UN Special Representative on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, Prof. John Ruggie, have been endorsed by the Human Rights Council in June 2011. They describe foundational and operational principles as a) a State duty to protect human rights; b) a corporate responsibility; c) and provide access to remedy when these principles were to be violated or not observed. Companies and organizations who have subscribed to the UN Global Compact www.unglobalcompact.org pay particular and more directly attention to the implementation of these principles. ebbf is a member of the UN Global Compact. On the work of the UN on these Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights see : <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Pages/BusinessIndex.aspx> See also the site SHIFT, managed by Australian attorney Rachel Davis who was strategy and policy advisor to the UN Special Advisor on “The Responsibility to Protect” and a legal advisor to Prof. John Ruggie, the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Business and Human Rights : www.shiftproject.org SHIFT acts as an independent, non profit center, based in New York, for business and human rights practice.

2. **ISO 26000** : is gradually becoming the main standard on social responsibility. Basically, ISO 26000 provides guidance on how businesses and organizations can operate in a socially responsible way. This means acting in an ethical and transparent way that contributes to the health and welfare of society. For a video clip, go to <http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/iso26000.htm> . ISO 26000:2010 provides guidance rather than requirements, **so it cannot be certified to unlike some other well-known ISO standards**. Instead, it helps clarify what social responsibility is, helps businesses and organizations translate principles into effective actions and shares best practices relating to social responsibility, globally. It is aimed at all types of organizations regardless of their activity, size or location. For ordering the standards, go to http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail?csnumber=42546

Note : The use of ISO 26000 is actively promoted by management consultants and certified public accountancy firms, especially to transnational corporations, even though a great number of corporations have been using for many years the excellent sustainability guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative - <https://www.globalreporting.org/Pages/default.aspx> – and the reporting guidelines of the UN Global Compact - <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/> -(The Global Reporting Initiative has entered a strategic alliance with the UN Global Compact back in 2006 already !). The Global Compact monitoring approach suits especially Small and Medium Size Enterprises. Civil society, consumer organizations and whistleblowers are increasingly lobbying for EU and international organizations to take effective measures among others through regulation and legislation (see e.g. www.corporatejustice.org).

No formal decision has been taken by the business ethics network www.ebbf.org for observing or adopting one set of guidelines in particular. However, ebbf has consistently encouraged over the last 22 years its relatively large audience of members and contacts in some 70 countries to voluntarily study and adhere to basic ethical conduct and apply due diligence in good business practices. see e.g. : www.ebbf.org – Knowledge Centre and Publications. Most ebbf members and experts regard the implementation of such principles in a business environment as an obligation dictated by their sense of values and CSR as part of the corporate culture. Culture cannot be regulated; it must be part of a constant voluntary monitoring and educational effort. It is, therefore, highly desirable that the younger generation of students in business administration, accountancy, business law, business engineers, bankers, and the like – the future business leaders – be trained at the earliest stage possible through well researched case studies in implementing good business practices. Likewise, life-long training in such practices and emulation through peer and intergenerational exchanges are highly desirable within the corporate world, in particular through well conceived human resource programs.

Daniel Schaubacher, Representative to European Institutions, EBBF, 347/8 avenue Louise
B 1050 Brussels, Belgium, Tel: 02 649 99 28 Mob : 0478 87 29 29, ebbf@skynet.be Tw: @DSchaubacher
Visit www.ebbf.org { mindful people { meaningful work {

Appendix 2:

Some Books and Essays on Spirituality and Business

Richard Barrett : *Liberating the Corporate Soul - Building a Visionary Organization / & The Values-Driven Organization* Butterworth Heinemann, Woburn, MA, USA, 1998 ISBN 0-7506-7071-1

See for listings below: <http://astore.amazon.com/eurobahabusif-20> :

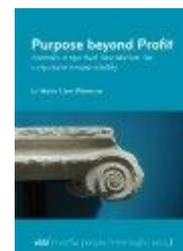
ebbf publications



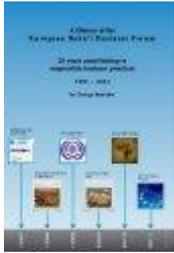
[The promise of Social Innovation: enterpris...](#)
by François Couillard



[In search of a new work ethic](#)
by George Starcher



[Purpose beyond profit - towards a spiritual...](#)
by Marjo Lips-Wiersma



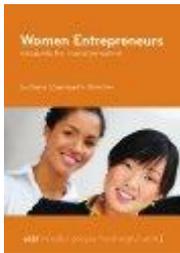
[A History of ebbf - european bahá'í...](#)
by George Starcher



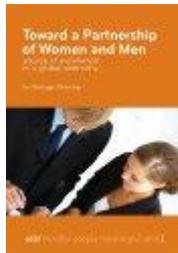
[United Consultation - A fresh look at parti...](#)
by Don Plunkett



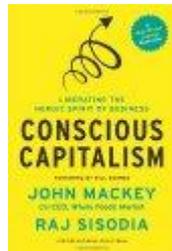
[On Corruption and Bribery - fighting to res...](#)
by Jean-Pierre Méan



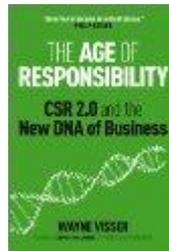
[Women Entrepreneurs - catalysts for transfo...](#)
by Diane Chamberlin Starcher



[Toward a Partnership of Women and Men - Sou...](#)
by George Starcher



[Conscious Capitalism: Liberating the Heroic...](#)
by John Mackey
\$20.34



[The Age of Responsibility: CSR 2.0 and the ...](#)
by Wayne Visser
\$29.17

Sue Howard and David Welbourn : *The Spirit at Work Phenomenon*; Azure, London, UK 2004 ISBN 1-902694-29-5

Philippe de Woot : *Responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise - Faut-il enchaîner Prométhée ?*, Economica, Paris , 2004 ISBN 2-7178-4937-8

Hazel Henderson : *Building a Win-Win World – Life Beyond Global Economic Warfare*, Berrett-Koehler Publ., San Francisco, CA, 1996 ISBN 1-57675-027-2

Dorothy Marcic : *Managing With the Wisdom of Love - Uncovering Virtue in People and Organizations*, Jossey-Bass Pub., San Francisco, CA, 1997 ISBN 0-7879-0173-3

Luc de Brabandère & Anne Mikolajczak : *Le plaisir des idées – Devenir créatif*, Dunod, Paris 2002 – ISBN 9-782100-064489

Laszlo Zsolnay (Editor) : *Spirituality and Ethics in Management*, Springer, Berlin , 2004, ISBN 1-4020-2364-2

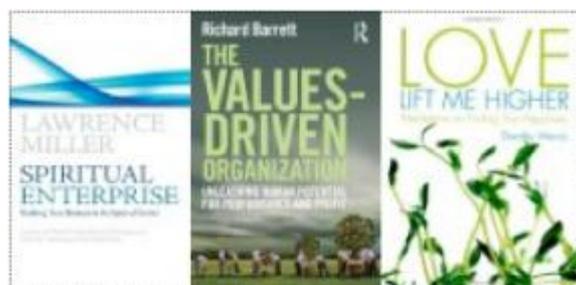
Peter Senge – C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski : *Presence - Human Purpose and the Field of the Future*, Cambridge, MA, 2004

Lawrence Miller : *Spiritual Enterprise, Building your business in the spirit of service* George Ronald, Oxford

Dorothy Marcic : *Love Lift Me Higher: Meditations on Finding True Happiness*

***ebbf* also recommends these books written by *ebbf* members :**

[click to visit the *ebbf* store on Amazon](#)



Non-exhaustive list submitted with the usual disclaimer by Daniel Schaubacher, *ebbf* representative, 347/8 avenue Louise, B 1050 Brussels