

Editorial: *Honoring building organizational resilience and driving value, impacting positively on society, showing respect*



In our last issue, considering the significant challenges faced today, we made reference to: the humanocratic management model making possible to change an organization as fast as the world around it (solving customers' new problems, and making organizations more resilient, adaptable and inventive); the customer science concept (as the fusion between digital technology, AI, and behavioral science); the difference (needing to be removed) between value perception by marketers (their own perception) and customers (customers' own perception), and the challenge of increasing the perceived value which is influencing the believed value (Purcarea, 2020). Recent lessons to learn were brought to our attention by other significant approaches, such as: given the speed at which business is changing during the current unprecedented pandemic there is always a next horizon of learning, valorizing opportunities like virtual reality, adaptive learning, user-generated content etc. (Hilton Segel, 2021); in order to thrive during the current unprecedented pandemic it is necessary to pay constant attention and nurture your partnership, ensuring its health check by evaluating periodically the critical areas shown in the figure below (Agrawal, Rinaudo and Brown, 2021); while building organizational resilience and driving value organizations must prepare to address the skill gaps aggravated by automation and digitization, mapping talent to value, reskilling and upskilling talent, increasing employee engagement in transformational efforts, in higher customers' trust, becoming more human, impacting positively on society (Komm, et al. 2021); last but not least, it is also necessary to avoid both seeing spurious correlations (which are closely similar without being a relation between them) in customer behavior statistics (for instance), and trying developing

elucidations for patterns which aren't there, being essential to test these elucidations (looking at different hypothesis from another perspective) with regard to the cause of the identified patterns (Shaw, C., 2021).



Figure no. 1: A thorough partnership health check helps evaluate six critical areas

Source: Agrawal, A., Rinaudo, E. K., Brown, S., 2021. Ensuring the health of your business partnerships. [pdf] McKinsey & Company, Strategy & Corporate Finance Practice, January, p. 5 (work cited)

At the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2002-2003 we were very pleased to receive a new invitation from the distinguished Founder and Rector of the Romanian-American University (RAU), Professor Ion Smedescu, the central topic of discussion being “Leading the RAU Customer Experience”, the reputed interlocutor considering that we should pay special attention to the correlation between two approaches adopted by the distinguished Professor of Marketing Leonard L. Berry (and his co-authors):

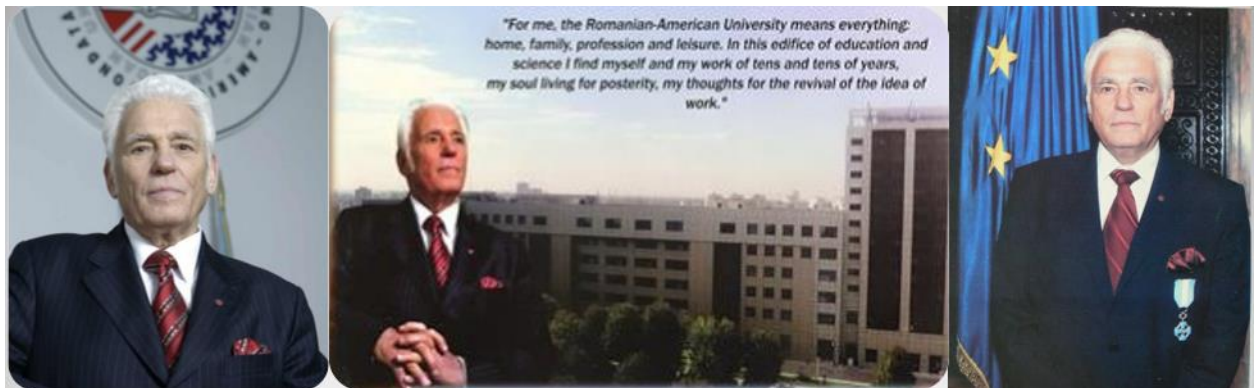
- (A) “Business strategies centered on the holistic design and delivery of total customer experiences consistently create superior customer value. Holistic experiences begin and end long before and after actual transactions... We have identified three fundamental principles...: Fuse experiential breadth and depth. Experiential breadth refers to the sequence of experiences customers have in interacting with an organization... Use mechanics and humanics to improve function. In some cases, humanics and mechanics clues can be introduced to enhance goods or service functionality... Connect emotionally. Organizations with effective experience management systems understand and respond to the emotional needs of their customers. They orchestrate a series of clues designed to provoke positive emotional reactions, such as joy, awe, interest, affection, and trust” (Haeckel, Carbone and Berry, 2003);

- (B) “The Mayo Clinic know how to send the right signals... It’s called “evidence management”, an organized, explicit approach to presenting customers with coherent, honest evidence of your abilities... If a Mayo doctor can’t answer a question and needs to bring someone else onto a team, she freely admits it to the patient... Mayo also supports teamwork with its use of technology... Remote teamwork through voice of virtual interaction is just as common as in-person teamwork ...” (Berry and Bendapudi, 2003).

Looking back to that valuable meeting with the RAU Founder and Rector (happy coincidence, Professor Ion Smedescu has been accompanied at that 2003 meeting by his young Marketing teaching assistant – who has prepared the challenging agenda for the meeting – who now is the RAU Rector, Professor Costel Negricea), we are also recalling that we highlighted:

- Ten years ago, how important it is to seek and promote the capacity to realize what is of value in our life, right thinking about people, better understanding what must be adjusted and what mustn't, speeding-up the imperative adaptation to the shifting perspectives on knowledge itself, by working in concert to sharing, applying and even creating knowledge, and contributing to influence the change processes (Purcarea, 2011);

- Five years ago, in an article entitled << *If the Founder gave us the “text” (1991-2008), now it’s time to supply the “commentary” on it with friends and the academic family* >>, starting from the strategic intuition of Professor Ion Smedescu in what concerns building a new road while walking on this road, both thinking in multiple time frames, and anticipating the discontinuities (Purcarea, 2016). Indeed, Professor Ion Smedescu has enhanced capabilities while looking ahead, constantly challenging priorities and inspiring the entire academic family, empathizing with students, identifying and developing talent, learning to adapt and effectively address changes in the relevant market demand or competition. He did actively seek to understand broader trends outside RAU, reflecting RAU values and principles in the key managerial processes, stimulating innovation and preventing generational barriers by engaging younger generations in formulating RAU policy and organizational development, managing to create RAU value and enduring through time with patience, and moving on.



The universal wisdom gives us the reasons to remind again the well-known words of Professor Ion Smedescu: *“For me, the Romanian-American University is everything: my home, my profession and my spare time. This establishment of education and science is a mirror of me and of my work for tens of years, my eternal soul, and my idea for the renewal of the concept of work”*. And as we all are aware of our brain’s ability to preserve or alter our memories (which are transformed each time we revisit them), allow us to reconfirm the constant effort of Professor Ion Smedescu to shape minds and characters, bringing year by year to all of us renewed trust, hope, inspiration, and a real sense of belonging to the academic life. His strong commitment and

dedication to provide a quality education, and to share the necessary love of learning and for RAU has been truly recognized by RAU students as a cornerstone of effective management inviting to see (in today's terms) the next horizon of learning, valorizing opportunities.

RAU Founder and Rector used to give this 2001 quote from the above-mentioned Professor of Marketing Leonard L. Berry: "Solve your customers' problems and treat them with respect, showing them what the Great Aretha Franklin sang about, respect". Professor Ion Smedescu also used to remember that he learned from his Great Teachers (he was a student of the "Christian love Theologian" Father Staniloaie, and he mentioned Father Staniloaie speaking of the misterious beauty of a wonderful landscape and the necessity of the conscious sense of the ordinance, of the beauty, in order to perform a task the right way, in joyful communion) that there is always the need for moderation (as a rational attitude towards pleasure), courage (as a rational attitude towards pain), justice (as respect towards the man) and the feeling of justice, of lawfulness, education meaning first of all respect.

The distinguished Founder and Rector of the Romanian-American University, Professor Ion Smedescu was a Leader devoted to "Leading the RAU Customer Experience". And leaders – as recently demonstrated by McKinsey's representatives – "*can inspire their communities with a more resilient future state that allows them to see beyond the pandemic to focus on improving the well-being of individuals and society through inspired learning, growth, and change. By implementing an ambitious set of projects to inspire the entire team, foster new areas of growth, and change the university's trajectory, these institutions can continue to influence and impact generations of learners and their communities*" (Boggs, et al. 2021).¹

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