

Editorial: At the Confluence of Disruptive Technologies and Leadership by Collaboration and Correct Consensus, Combining ICT/AI with Human Intelligence/Values



In our last HMM issue we brought to our skilled readers' attention valuable recommendations for marketers, such as to use multiple metrics in significant programs' performance measurement when trying to keep in equilibrium several competing performance dimensions, and rebuild their organizations for AI, by discovering their best way to use AI, and doing a better customer-centric work based on a digital and AI-driven transformation strategy put into practice (Purcarea, 2023). According to McKinsey & Company (2023), a business transformation has as its high-level orchestrator a Chief Transformation Officer (CTO, who can be a Responder, a Revitalizer or a Reinventor, but not only these types) making decisions (about priorities, investments, talent, and operations) based on the mandate (and authority) received from the CEO. While in the opinion of Professor Victor Greu (2023): "... now, any improvement/ solution should include a more comprehensive/holistic approach, which inherently will consider in model/equation more complicate and changing "actors" / factors, but unfortunately more of them contain more uncertainty – a crucial feature of actuality and future... Analyzing and eventually mitigating (part of) uncertainty, including ICT advances help, where AI has an increasing role, it is also approached by Eric Heim (in 'Knowing When You Don't Know: Engineering AI Systems in an Uncertain World', 2021), where the known problems of uncertainty are transferred at the level of AI/ML, but, for facing ML concrete limitations, a principle solution for the AI/ML model confidence improvement is to add reference data in order

to calibrate the uncertainty, as, in a deeper domain/approach (a deeper learning), we have to choose/identify those added reference data, among the alternate or closed probabilities of events (contingencies). Finally, finding the most probable scenarios/events, in every ICT/AI/ML application case or system, is not only a complex problem of modelling, but, **since the human nature and human decisions are largely implied, we consider that harmonizing and synchronizing all relevant data/actions is paramount for the best results at Earth scale and we have to notice the importance of every little step on such long and winding road, which could be reached by timely analyses and combining ICT/AI with human intelligence/values**”.

Recently, BCG experts (Seppä et al., 2024) highlighted the current companies’ always active transformation mode to continue reinvention, boards’ role within today’s difficult business environment (considering various factors such as cost pressure, high interest rates, geopolitical disruptions, new technology, evolving customer preferences etc.) being to undertake adequate measures to ensure companies’ needed competitive position by more frequently, actively, and detailed engagement with the management team (see figure below). On the other hand, let’s remember that according to McKinsey’s experts (Boudet, et al., 2023), resilient marketers’ role is seen as essential during uncertain times, by diagnosing, setting a goal, crafting a plan, and unifying the C-suite, acting decisively on that basis, a key to companies’ long-term growth being considered to invest in marketing. McKinsey’s research also demonstrated that in order to capture the incremental sales potential of marketing-led growth (Brodherson et al., 2023), marketing can be repositioned at the core of organizations’ growth engine, the conviction in modern marketing being built by CEOs and CMOs working jointly, and the impact of a better marketing measurement framework for growth being ensured by CEOs, CFOs and CMOs working together.

Boards Have Critical Responsibilities During All Phases of a Transformation



Figure no. 1: Boards have critical responsibilities during all phases of transformation

Source: Seppä, T., Klemmer, D.C., Ramachandran, R. and Abreu, J., 2024. Boards Can Make or Break a Transformation, Boston Consulting Group, February 20, 2024, p. 3 (Work cited)

Revisiting their globally embraced book “CEO Excellence” (Publisher: Scribner, March 15, 2022), Dewar, Keller and Malhotra (2024), remembered the six roles of a CEO (set the direction, align your organization on that direction, mobilize your leaders to deliver on that direction, work with your board, connect with a group of stakeholders, manage your personal effectiveness), widely comprehended by starting from seeing concrete patterns, identifying the role of a courageous and daring mindset in separating the best from the rest, leading with rigor and discipline by collaboration and consensus, considering dynamics, the needed help by the board to help their business, and stakeholders’ motivations, being accountable and adding good value in a volatile world, factoring differences in certain countries. It is significant that the above-mentioned tree authors were invited to be guest lecturers at the reputed Wharton, Stanford, Harvard, and INSEAD business schools.

It is interesting to note that in the same period of time we received an e-mail through LinkedIn from a LinkedIn ‘Top Voice’ & influencer Customer Experience & Marketing, Colin Shaw (2024), regarding a challenging article entitled “*Overcoming Gridlock in decision making: Unraveling the Paradox of False Consensus*”. He concluded his remarks by saying as follows: “*The Abilene Paradox often happens because everyone is going along to get along... So, to avoid finding oneself on the road to Abilene at work, leadership needs to get comfortable with not knowing what to do at all times. Also, learning to create an environment where the team can discuss solutions together rather than mindlessly following the leader is crucial. Finally, leadership must draw out the input of all the team members, not just the loudest voices in the room*”. And as John F. Kennedy said: “*Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other*”.

Coming back to BCG experts (MacDonald et al., 2024), it is worth mentioning the converging technology trends (*Emotional intelligence – EQ-X / Emotional quotient – EQ; Agent-to-Agent CX; Generative user interface – GenUI; XR+AI; Screenless CX*) recently identified by them and which are ready to move so as to transform CX, consequently, in order to build their companies’ competitive advantage, leaders being recommended to consider some top priorities (think big, start building, embrace the unknown, be mindful, and follow the frictions).

Allow us to end by making reference to some reflections recently expressed by the global thought leader Hamilton Mann (2024), in the European Business Review, on the concept of artificial integrity (AI future benefitting of a critical framework proposed by this new introduced concept): “*In this age of swift technological advancement, the philosophy of artificial integrity provides a guiding light, ensuring that our navigation through the AI-powered matrix of the world not only celebrates the synergy of human and machine but also protects the human ethos at the heart of true innovation. In introducing artificial integrity to the discourse, we set out to explore the potential transformation of tasks, jobs, and the collective workforce across industries*

and, importantly, how the confluence of AI and human destiny can be guided with vision, accountability, and a deep-seated dedication to the values that are quintessentially human”.

So, let us think carefully ahead, considering the above-mentioned valuable ideas, developing critical thinking and making better judgements based on evidence and reasoning!

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