

A Different Mind Set for Business

by
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Daniel H. Pink, in his intriguing new book, *A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age*, says, "The new era we are entering will be characterized by 'right brain' processes as opposed to the 'left brain' functioning of the more technical information age we're exiting. These days, left-brain functioning is being done more efficiently and effectively by computers."

"Right-directed thinking," as Pink calls it, is uniquely human and is about design and interpersonal relationship. My marketing friends have pointed out that what this means for business is that relationship is taking center stage. Design is really about our relationships to concepts. Businesses that flourish in this new era will be all about relationships to concepts and to other people.

We've long known that healthy personal lives are about right-brain functioning, although we don't usually think of it this way. Right-directed thinking is inclined toward empathy, play and meaning, in other words, relationship -- and in our personal lives, nothing is more important than our relationships with family and friends.

So for the first time in American life, we are encouraged to be relational at work as well as at home because it's what works best in both settings. No longer does the employee have to put on a different hat at work from the one they wear at home. No longer can we explain non-relational work decisions as "just business" because non-relational decisions at work are just as misguided and self-defeating as non-relational decisions at home. No longer is success at work about being primarily numbers-focused and making "hard-nosed" decisions while success at home is about being "soft hearted." No longer can we afford to live in duplicity. We must *lead as we live and live as we lead*.

And this change requires not a new way of thinking, for that is left-brain oriented, but a new way of "seeing", a change of heart and soul. This is a change in "how" we see. With new sight, new vision, new perspective, eyes of the heart. And, of course, how we see determines "what" we see.

Seeing with left-brain perspective is about analyzing and managing, it's about numbers and circumstances. Seeing with the right brain is about relationship, it's about engaging and influencing those around us whether at home or at work. And finally, how we see determines what we see and what we see determines what we "will" do. Our actions change because we see our world differently.

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Years ago, I read that when you leave home for work, you should never leave your heart behind. The advice given at that time was that if your job required you to do so then you ought to consider changing jobs. But today this advice is more than a matter of your work settings preference -- it actually has to do with becoming and remaining a cutting-edge professional in this new Conceptual Age. This change will determine who flounders and who flourishes at work, at home and in life.

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