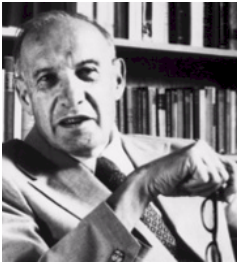


Summaries of the top 12 essays



1st
Place

The Silver Lining of the Cloud: Managing Cloud Computing for a More Equitable Knowledge Society

Florian Ramseger



We are witnessing a tectonic shift towards a new era of mobile computing, where computing power, software and data are located in the so-called “cloud”, to be accessed via the internet – at any time and from anywhere in the world.

But this is not just a new era of information technology. This is the coming-of-age of the Post-Capitalist Society that Peter Drucker foresaw many years ago. Drucker predicted that knowledge would replace capital as the defining factor of production; he predicted that we would be living in what he called a “knowledge society”.

While Peter Drucker recognized that information technology plays an important part in this process, he could not have known what exactly the IT tools of the knowledge worker will look like. Today, we can see a little farther. In this essay it is argued that cloud computing will revolutionize the way we work and thus galvanize the transition towards this new society: it will help create information-based markets, it will facilitate teamwork, and it will liberate the knowledge worker.

The impact of this technological revolution on society will, however, not be the same everywhere. Only those who leapfrog to the opportunity frontier will experience the benefits; only those with access to the cloud can participate in the knowledge society. The good news is that our generation’s opportunity to close the so-called “digital divide” has never been better than before. Software applications accessed via the internet, which lend themselves to “bottom-of-the-pyramid” pricing models, and end devices that become leaner as computing power shifts to the cloud both will make computing more affordable for the poor. What is more challenging is providing the infrastructure – fixed-line and mobile internet networks – that connects the two. However, if we meet this challenge and manage the transition to the new age of knowledge well, we can make ours a better and more equitable world.

2nd
Place

Peter F. Drucker 2.0: It’s not about transferring Peter F. Drucker’s concepts to the future. The future is what Peter F. Drucker already meant

Hermann Arnold



The term “2.0” first became famous with “web 2.0.” It was perceived as a completely new way of using the web. However, in its essence web 2.0 is nothing other than the late breakthrough of the original ideas of the web. This happens likewise to the ideas, concepts and methods of Peter F. Drucker.

The benefit of web 2.0 in the context of this article is not only to give a nice analogy illustrating the ultimate breakthrough of Peter F. Drucker’s work (only the penetration of modern information and communication technology make his concepts of

management applicable to their fullest extent), but also to help us to understand how Drucker's concepts are propagated by modern technology.

Management in general – and especially in the knowledge economy – is still a young discipline, something Peter F. Drucker often put emphasis on. The benchmark of management is the increase of productivity. Being at the beginning of this journey, we try to apply successful concepts of the past to the challenges of the future. We use scientific management methods to manage knowledge work and knowledge workers. We try to make the management of knowledge workers more efficient.

What soon becomes obvious is that solely increasing efficiency is not the right thing to do. It is comparable to simply transferring print brochures to online websites without exploiting the full potential of the web. As Drucker pointed out oftentimes, the productivity of knowledge work largely depends on doing the right things. And there is no shortcut for thinking through one's own contribution.

At the beginning of the last century only a few could imagine that an efficient shoemaker making twenty shoes per month would be doing a thousand shoes per month at the end of the same century. This and other productivity gains became possible with the right methods and tools. With the evolvement of web technologies transactional costs have decreased dramatically. In order to fully take advantage of this situation, big corporations and organizations will have to organize themselves more along market mechanisms and individual interactions instead of pre-defined processes and structures. In such an organization the intermediary middle management becomes obsolete. Aggregating information from the bottom, dispersing decisions from the top and all other kinds of transactional work are no longer necessary in the way they were done when information and communication technologies were not available.

The insights of Peter F. Drucker put the prevalent understanding of leadership upside-down. Employees have to define their work, their tasks, their responsibility, their contribution, the quality of their work, and have to control themselves. Managers enable and support them doing this most important work.

With the new technologies and the growing predominance of knowledge work it is even possible to put the whole concept of a corporation upside down. Why should a small group of very smart people at the top of a company solely govern where to go, what strategies to follow and what actions to take, rather than capitalizing on the aggregated wisdom of employees, who know their customers and products best?

We are just at the beginning of a promising journey, not away from Drucker's proven concepts, but towards applying them more broadly.



Our Failing Society: Social Work as a Knowledge Profession and the Privatization of Public Problem-Solving

Eleanor Murphy



When the national press branded social work a “failing profession” in the aftermath of the Baby Peter case in 2008, what nobody considered was that perhaps the reality was far worse. Perhaps social work is not a failing profession; perhaps ours is a failing society.

Social change, and the resulting problems of a society in transition, presents perhaps the most important and most urgently needed opportunity for innovation today. The way we attempt to manage, monitor and

support families through social change must be radically rethought.

The idea that management is a key function in modern society is fundamental, but can social change ever actually be “managed”? If to manage is to control, then no. Social change is a product of our times, it’s the result of our changing environment, economy and population – it’s the way we respond as human beings to what we experience around us. If our economy becomes weaker, the resulting social change may be embodied by a growing ethos of “thrift” and of collective “hard work through hard times”, echoed by a drive for re-skilling and seeking new forms of income generation. On the other hand, the resulting social change may be towards an ethos of worklessness and the acceptance of benefit dependency as the social norm.

Clearly, the former type of social change would be preferable to the latter, but can we “manage” and steer this change? With workers vilified in the press and national vacancy rates soaring, social work is far from a glamorous career choice. In most local authorities, staff stress levels and turnover in front line teams are high and rising, and large proportions of locum and international workers are used to plug the gap between demand and supply. Resources are tight, need is rising, and the current system for the education and training of practitioners appears inconsistent, at times inadequate.

The result is a profession where staff often appear to lack the vital analytical and communication skills required in order to effectively calculate and manage risk and promote safeguarding. In such a profession, the need for innovation is clear, whilst the capacity to absorb such innovation is, in places, lacking. The missing piece in the puzzle is the management card. Traditionally, social work managers are practitioners first, managers second – the management role is an add-on to the traditional social work task. Without any formally recognized national progression route or career structure, such as exists in other professions like teaching and nursing, the training of social work managers is inconsistent nationally. The result is a lack of the management capacity for innovation in a profession where innovation is very much needed.

As Peter Drucker pointed out, “increasingly, the success – indeed, the survival – of every business will depend on the quality of its knowledge workforce”. Social work managers often fail to recognize that social workers are knowledge workers, and to create an environment where their “knowledge workers” are able to work most effectively, and it’s literally a matter of life and death.



Striking a Balance – Fostering Corporate Entrepreneurship

Chhavi Bhandari



“Grow smarter or die”. That’s the stark choice faced by large corporations today.

The twenty-first century atmosphere can be characterized in terms of a new competitive landscape that encompasses increasing risk, decreased ability to forecast, fluid firm and industry boundaries, new structural forms, and an innovative managerial mindset.

In today’s global marketplace where the only constant is change, continuing change, inevitable change; corporate entrepreneurship (CE) appeals to both corporations as well as individual employees. The intrapreneurial spirit in companies helps to not only boost their bottom lines, but also send them in profitable new directions by turning employees into in-house entrepreneurs. Managers of today need to identify ways and

means to promote an entrepreneurial culture in their organizations and at the same time retain individuals with high calibre.

Corporate entrepreneurship is not just a faddish and vacuous concept; it is a vital function of complex adaptive systems. Many world class organizations are already involved in this unique practice and many more are joining the bandwagon. A crucial underpinning to the suggestions in the essay is that a right balance must be found between change and continuity by making corporate entrepreneurship a strategic, mission-driven and institutionalized activity.



Empower Teachers, Transform the World

Misti Burmeister



Big and realistic change happens every day in classrooms across the nation and the world. Behind every successful businessperson, artist and entrepreneur stands a teacher who inspired and believed in the impressionable child that person was and gave him or her the confidence to be great.

Peter Drucker once said "Teaching is the only major occupation of man for which we have not yet developed tools that make an average person capable of competence and performance. In teaching we rely on the 'naturals' the ones who somehow know how to teach."

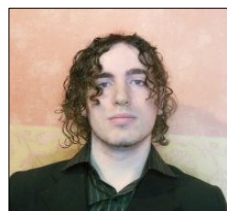
But we cannot rely solely on the rare natural teachers, not if we want to institute a shift in our world. With the proper leadership model training, we can help every teacher find their own unique ways of empowering students. Cultivating true teacher-leaders will create walking, talking, teaching self-confidence machines. Today's youth are aching for someone to recognize their worth and bring out the best in them. Our world is aching for the youth to recognize their worth.

We need them to stop roaming around in ditches and instead know that they are capable of climbing mountains to reach the peaks of their potential.



Informational Pluralism Continuity and Change: Balancing Innovation and Time-Tested Practices

Gonzalo Sebastián Huertas



Gonzalo Sebastián Huertas provides a brief analysis on some organizational aspects of management that, in his opinion, fail to deliver.

Huertas reasons that current management practices are laid out with an out-of-fashion social order in mind, ignoring two of the most important social changes in recent history: Information (or informational) society and pluralism.

In investigating this, he lays out a map of the current trends traversing our institutions: the pressing effects of information society, the introduction of knowledge work, the expansion of corporate affairs to every area of the globe, the downfall of the nation-state, and the fragmentation of society according to the growth of pluralism.

In order to reflect these changes, an urgent reform in management practices and procedures must be adopted. This reform must focus on the undeniable importance of knowledge management, and is equally important for businesses, governmental branches, and public service providers.



Organizations, Climate Change and Weather Extremes: Resilience to Ecological Discontinuities

Martina K. Linnenluecke



Impacts from human-induced climate change are expected to pose significant challenges for organizations and industries, particularly for those in vulnerable sectors and locations.

Martina Linnenluecke argues that the challenge for management today is to not only develop sustainable businesses that are compatible with the current economic reality, but to also develop resilient businesses that are able to deal with a vastly more unpredictable environment and ecological discontinuities.

While organizations may be able to successfully undergo steady adaptations to gradual climate change, they might not be able to handle discontinuities that go beyond this gradual trend. One of the challenges raised in this essay is that climate change and changes in patterns of extreme weather events have traditionally not been included in the strategic management processes of many organizations, particularly if they cannot be utilized in a meaningful way in daily organizational practice.



Whose Innovation? The Challenge of Managing Social Innovation in the Aid Industry

Christopher Maclay

Peter Drucker taught us that innovation involves more than an idea. It needs to be an idea which is relevant; a good idea which genuinely responds to a need.

Looking outside the business sphere, the need for innovation is great, but the ability of users to innovate is not. US\$2.3 trillion has been spent by the global North on international aid in the last five decades. Nevertheless, close to half of the world's population still live in poverty. Unless we can inject the spirit of innovation into this industry, the poor people we try to help will continue to remain poor.

Maclay examines the challenge of fostering social innovation in an environment poorly primed to produce it; that is, the aid industry in the global South. To solve the problem of extreme poverty, we need some very creative solutions. But to encourage innovation in this space what needs to change?



Solving the central problem(s) of Economics

Ian Choo



The challenges facing the 21st century are in some ways a continuation of the problems that have plagued the human condition since the beginning of time; in other ways, they will be vastly different from the ones faced by the times preceding it.

Drucker foresaw that the Information Revolution – which is essentially a Knowledge Revolution – would cause a reconfiguration of the politics, economics and social fabric of global society as sweeping as the impact of Luther’s printing press, or the steam engine to the Industrial Revolution. The way things are made are constantly changing because of applications of knowledge – technology, processes, design – and this is making the role of the knowledge worker simultaneously much more valued, but much more uncertain.

Despite the multitude of discourse that can be done at the systemic level about the new dynamics of the world, the Knowledge Revolution, its opportunities and its challenges ultimately has to be understood as a juncture which puts the importance of the individual back in the centre of society.



Leveraging our Country’s Problems to Become Great Social Innovators of Our Time

Sarah Green



We are graduating at one of the toughest times in our country’s history and we are running into problems that our previous generations did not have.

A recent *Business Week* article puts it best when they lay out the facts: “Bright, eager – and unwanted. While unemployment is ravaging just about every part of the global workforce, the most enduring harm is being done to young people who can’t grab onto the first rung of the career ladder.”

Over two years ago, Barack Obama, President of the United States said, “change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek”. Graduating from College in a time where our economy has been destroyed has given me the educational platform, the experience, and above all, the passion and opportunity to make this happen.

Entrepreneurship and small business development is key to changing the course of where our economy is headed. Innovation, creativity, and the entrepreneurial mindset are what will make the ultimate difference. The key to the future of our country and the development of countries around the world is to channel funds into the hands of those who will build businesses that identify and address the problems and take advantage of the opportunities in today’s economy.

11th
Place

A Three-Pronged Strategy for Achieving Effortless Organizational Transformation

Prasath P

The importance of change in maintaining the vitality of organizations has been so well enunciated by modern business thinkers that it can now be considered common knowledge.

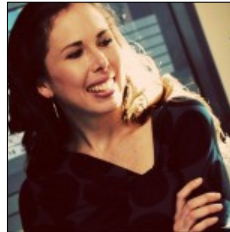
The need for change can be surmised as, 'It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory' – Edwards Deming. What follows almost immediately, however, is the pain that radical change entails the organization and its divisions to undergo at all levels right down to the individual.

This essay first describes three techniques to achieve this desired end state and then amalgamates these three approaches to prescribe an integrated three-pronged strategy for achieving effortless organizational transformation. Integrated application of this three-pronged strategy would lead to organizational transformation that is effortless and in line with the needs of the ever-changing business environment.

12th
Place

Wielding the Meeting: How the manager's tool can advance tomorrow

Joanna Stanberry



The humorous mock-paper The Onion once featured a title, "48-Hour Internet Outage Plunges Nation Into Productivity." Peter Drucker would have appreciated the statement.

Organizations today face many threats: terrorism, bankruptcy, fickle and cash-strapped consumers, rising health care costs and taxes. Yet in his prolific writings Drucker often considered an older and more subtle enemy – distraction. Today distraction takes many forms, be it bottomless e-mail inboxes, titillating blogrolls, or the chat boxes that "ping" us with our colleague's latest crisis. Meetings, however, continue to intrude forcefully into attempts to make knowledge work effective.

Drucker provided some time-tested practices for addressing these challenges. But how can we build on these? How can we use (but not abuse) new technologies to innovate practice? Where can we build in new knowledge to question and adjust these practices?

"Time," Drucker declared, "is the only resource we cannot multiply..."
