



Facilitating Community Vitality and Growth

By Mark D. Sauter, author, *Bringing Meaning into Monday™*

*"This time, like all times, is a very good one, if
we know what to do with it."*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

In today's interconnected and dynamic marketplace, communities and organizations require more adaptive and resilient people. People who are skilled at reconciling differences, dealing with variation and finding creative solutions buried amongst diverse viewpoints. Sustainable success is no longer the result of inbreeding, but of welcoming relationships with people who share dissimilar – even opposing – worldviews, beliefs and practices. To facilitate this, communities and institutions must be capable of establishing cooperative networks in order to deal with today's social realities – shifting provincial thinking toward more integrative and co-creative thinking.

As Thomas Freidman suggests in *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, a flatter world necessitates a more collaborative response. Short- and long-term results will improve as people find new ways to leverage knowledge and resources. Achieving balance between their individual agendas and the priorities and shared interests of the greater good.

From numerous angles Freidman shows how advances in market democracy, information technologies, telecommunications and outsourcing continue to shrink the world. Previously untapped synergies are surfacing due to both improved information access and the ability to share knowledge and resources. Freidman cites how twenty years ago Americans would have never imagined their global dominance in basketball, as measured every four years in the Olympics, would evaporate like it did. He uses this as an example of how the U.S. fell asleep at the wheel; the rest of the world has caught up, even in some respects surpassed the United States. While he does not address it directly, another reason for the decline of U.S. basketball dominance could be the focus and mentality of many U.S. players. The game, due to TV dollars, endorsements and free agent contracts, has become

'everybody looking out for himself.' While American players focused on refining their individual skills (skills and statistics that make them personally more marketable) the rest of the world focused on the game of basketball and how to play as a *team*.

Bringing Meaning into Monday™

Today's organizational leaders are being challenged to revisit historic practices and beliefs, seeking ways to speed decision making and increase empowerment and innovation. *Bringing Meaning into Monday* provides them with a process to achieve this – *applying* timeless concepts to existing priorities, projects or teams.

Greater meaning develops from a shared or higher purpose that aligns individual agendas with shared priorities – priorities focused on delivering value to others. To achieve this, **BEST** leaders *consciously* enable it to occur. They build trust and accountability by establishing a sense of shared purpose, which reduces internal silos and local obstacles. This in turn, allows them to sstreamline decisions and services and better tap the continual influx of diverse talent, replacing low-value activities and antiquated beliefs and practices.

While directed at improving the quality of life, *Bringing Meaning into Monday™* also improves the essence of life – emotionally connecting people by increasing their awareness of how they individually and collectively contribute to organizational or community success.

Mark D. Sauter is the founder and president of GTP Associates, Inc. With over 25 years of business leadership experience, Mark's work, while with Dow Corning Corporation, was profiled in, *Value Based Marketing for Bottom-Line Success* – McGraw-Hill, 2003. In 2009, Mark released his book entitled *Bringing Meaning Into Monday™: A Sustainable Approach to Bottom Line Success*. Additional information is available at www.gtpassociates.com