
The pursuit of immortality: a new approach beyond the competitiveness paradigm

M.J. Xavier

Academy for Management Excellence, Chennai, India

S. Ramachander

Academy for Management Excellence, Chennai, India

Keywords

Competitive strategy,
Competitive advantage, Values,
Value analysis

Abstract

Discusses the death of inter-firm and intra-firm competition as we know it and propose an approach beyond competition – “the pursuit of immortality”. Our digital age offers immense and unprecedented opportunities to bring forth the latent potential of organizations, by allowing individual employees scope for the expression of their capacity for learning and creativity. To help in this process, recommends that companies revive and imbibe pre-industrial society value systems that allowed the free expression of what we call the “divinity” instincts in individuals while maintaining focus and coordination through the use of information technology. Proposes a 3ems path to immortality: embarkation, emulation and emancipation. Companies and individuals should quickly get over the first two phases and get on to the emancipation phase where they concentrate on setting their own standards rather than frittering away their energy in outsmarting competition.

We only have one life! We have to fill it! After all, we want to leave something behind!
(Kundera, 1991).

Our obsession with competition is reaching vulgar proportions with even countries getting assessed using a competitiveness index. This has been so deeply ingrained in our system that gaining competitive advantage is seen as the “be all and end all” mission of individuals, businesses and nations. We are told that competition is the prime mover of progress and that it is mainly responsible for keeping the prices low and ensuring that customers get better value for money and so on.

However, competition has its own limitations. It is understood differently by different people. While the dictionary meaning clearly points to rivalry between two parties for supremacy, a contest for some honor, prize or advantage, or a struggle among organisms for resources (food, space, etc.), the colloquial and the business use points to different interpretations. For example, when someone says that he/she is competing with herself, it means that he/she is trying to improve his/her performance. Similarly, in business, competition is used synonymously with achieving excellence, reaching a benchmark or achieving a target. Additionally, the focus on competition in strategy formulation has varied over a period of time. In this article we examine the changing face of competition and propose a new approach beyond the competitiveness paradigm.

buyers and sellers who could not independently affect the price in a market and therefore resulted in optimizing benefits for all concerned. In other words, what came to be known as the classical school of economics saw competition as the final arbiter and “enlightened self-interest” as an insurance against the exploitation of any member of the economic system by anyone else. Unfortunately, the element of enlightenment has since rapidly fallen by the wayside. Self-interest has predominated to such an extent that during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it resulted in the emergence of “robber baron” style entrepreneurship.

Somewhere along the road to corporate wealth creation, competition has become an end in itself. Yet, to be competitive has two distinct meanings – one is to have a combative, fighting frame of mind as in “she is a very competitive person”, the other is where one has what it takes to stand an external evaluation, e.g. by the customer or end user. One says “our prices, delivery schedules and quality have always remained competitive”. The interesting difference is one of an attitude of mind, the stance, as it were. The latter sense is one that acknowledges the superiority of the consumer as the final arbiter. This trend started in the early 1960s when the consumer movement activists such as Carson (1962) and Packard (1951) started criticizing the manipulative tricks employed by businesses, exposing the waste makers and destroyers of the environment.

Then came the severe competition from Japan and the newly industrialized countries. Hence, in the 1980s the emphasis shifted to competitive advantage and offering better value to the customer than what the competitors could offer. Mergers, acquisitions and takeovers intended to gain size; advantage also became fashionable. This is evident from the following definitions. According to Ohme (1982) the job

The changing face of competition

Since the industrial revolution era when the theory of perfect competition was formally enunciated, the world has come a long way. Perfect competition assumed innumerable

of a strategist is “to achieve superior performance, relative to competition”, in the key factors for success of business. Porter (1985) defines strategy as “a central vehicle for achieving competitive advantage”. He defines competitive strategy as the search for a favorable competitive position in an industry, the fundamental arena in which competition occurs. Competitive strategy aims to establish a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine competitive advantage.

In the 1990s the trend became more complex, with companies facing unprecedented uncertainties. Global competition, stunning technological breakthroughs, deregulation, shifting consumer tastes and volatile foreign exchange markets have made the life of the planners miserable. Before the ink dries on a long-term plan document, the rules of the game change. Hence the shift from matching the capability to opportunities or coping ability in a turbulent environment. Day (1990) calls this adaptive planning. In the era of globalization, individual companies do not possess all the skills and technology required to exploit the global market. Again, as a coping mechanism, companies are shifting in the direction of strategic alliances and joint ventures to compete on a global scale. There is thus a clear shift from direct competition to collaboration.

In the last decade of this century both corporate strategy and marketing strategy thinkers, as well as consultants, are rediscovering the need to “reshape the industry”. Authors such as Hamel and Prahalad (1995) have since extolled the virtues of having the necessary industry foresight to alter the shape and definition of the industry itself. In other words, changing the rules of the game and therefore playing a different game has become one of the significant ways of carrying on business successfully. Bookshops that considered other booksellers as their competitors must be at a loss to understand the new phenomenon of Amazon.com. Benetton, Levi's and National Bicycle are often quoted as case studies of flexible manufacturing and logistics, changing the very meaning of competing, via “mass customization”.

The blurring of traditional industry boundaries due to technological advances, globalization, and deregulation are shattering the conventional competitive strategies which are based on fixed categories of players (suppliers, competing firms and customers). A supplier of office equipment to a major office supplies chain can also compete with its customer by

directly selling to the end-customers. Microsoft has joined hands with Ford to sell automobiles on the Internet, thereby blurring the borderline between auto companies and computer companies. MCI has joined hands with Sprint to fight AT&T, thereby blurring the lines separating competitors.

While inter-firm competition as we know it is not prevalent any more, intra-firm competition has also been severely restricted. Business process re-engineering (Hammer and Champy, 1993) and TQM techniques have enabled companies to shift the attention from functions to processes, thereby seeking to minimise inter-functional conflicts. As the need for coping with environmental turbulence is very high, companies have to become learning organizations (Senge, 1990; Argyris and Schon, 1978). In times of drastic change, it is the learners who will inherit the future. Every business in some sense must become a knowledge-based business. This is possible only when the hierarchies are broken down and every employee is seen as a thinker in addition to being a doer. Consequently, the command-control model is being replaced by horizontal and non-hierarchical models, such as the network and virtual forms of organization.

Ghoshal and Bartlett (1998) suggest a new model of an individualized corporation based on a more liberating set of assumptions about human capability and individual motivation. They suggest that we go beyond the inverted pyramid structure to an integrated network of entrepreneurial activities. The primary task of management lies in releasing the entrepreneurial hostages on the front-line organization and transforming middle- and senior-level managers into developmental coaches. Ultimately, the organization should stretch the individual entrepreneurs to become the best they can be and to create an open, trusting and collaborative environment that facilitates boundaryless behavior. When the boundaries between levels and ranks of people are made more permeable, position becomes less relevant than competence.

Though we have moved out of the traditional industry paradigms, the word “competition” still continues to haunt the business management literature. Even while suggesting a new way of visualizing business strategies, Hamel and Prahalad (1995) call it *Competing for the Future*. It is clearly the hangover of the second-wave models that continues to cloud our thinking. Just as we discarded the paradigms of the agrarian society as we entered the industrial age, we

need to discard the competitiveness paradigm as we are becoming an inter-connected society with all-pervasive information networks. In this article we suggest a new approach by looking at the models of pre-industrial days.

Back to basics

In every walk of life, we see a marked preference for things of the past; be it medicine, agriculture, astrology, architecture (*Feng shui*), or arts and crafts (Abrahamson *et al.*, 1998). There is also a backlash against the mindless exploitation of nature in the guise of scientific developments, which has landed us in severe ecological problems. Witness the most recent emergence of resistance to genetically modified foods (*The Economist*, 1999). While our forefathers believed in living in sync with nature, the industrial revolution taught us how to conquer nature. We are now paying the increasingly heavy price for considering humanity as overlords of nature rather than an intrinsic part of it. The industrial age had to discard the knowledge and wisdom of our forefathers, developed over several thousands of years, as it did not fit with the new norms. With the advent of the information age, we see the revival of interest in the ancient wisdom for solving modern problems.

Even marketing is marching ahead in reverse to revive the ancient practices with the use of modern technology. Peppers and Rogers (1993) have the following comments to offer about this new trend:

Technology has brought us back to an old fashioned way of doing business by making it possible to remember relationships with individual customers – sometimes millions of them – one at a time, just as shop owners and craftspeople did with their few hundred customers 150 years ago.

Though there is a widespread belief that increased competition has greatly enhanced the quality of products and services, the industrial age is yet to surpass the ancient arts and crafts. The fact remains that the industrial revolution is yet to deliver muslin type of cloth that was hand-woven by the Bengal weavers from the ninth century to the nineteenth century. The IKEAs cannot match the décor and finish of the furniture made during the pre-industrial days, nor can Cartier surpass the artistic jewelry designs of the past. (A visit to any good art museum like the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art or to the silk

weavers of Benares, India, will prove these points.)

It is evident that the so-called competitive spirit could not have produced the architectural marvels like the Tajmahal in India or the Egyptian pyramids. Leonardo da Vinci surely would not have created the *Mona Lisa* in order to enter into a contest. Neither Galileo nor Euclid worked in a competitive environment to produce their epoch-making discoveries. We can extend the same logic to the great contributors to the arts and literature as well.

The ancient Chola and Pallava Dynasties of India (ninth and tenth centuries AD) have left behind bronzes acclaimed as the finest achievement among the metal sculptures in the world. They embody grace and precision that bring together in one composite whole the artist's imagination, the poet's sensibility and the craftsman's skill. A famous anecdote about a sculptor who worked for a Chola King goes as follows. During one of his routine visits to a new temple site atop a hill, the King found that the work was almost complete and wanted the consecration of the temple to be fixed for the coming month, to coincide with the Queen's birthday. The sculptor politely declined the King's request, stating that he still had a lot of work to be done at the back of the temple, facing the hill. The King retorted that no one was going to climb the hill to see the back of the temple, whereupon the sculptor replied that the Gods and angels would. He was building "a temple fit for the Gods", not just the human king.

We are not suggesting a mindless romanticizing of the past. Not everything made in the past was of excellent quality. Nor do we say that there were no comparisons or conflicts. The tragedy of our times is that, in embracing the competitive spirit, we seem to have lost the pride in craftsmanship and the pursuit of quality workmanship as an end in itself – the value of a job well done for its own sake. How can we get that spirit back into our corporations?

From excellence to immortality

All those people in the examples cited, who have left their indelible mark on the human race, did not do so primarily to prove a point to their competitors. Excellence in a competitive environment points to doing better than the competition and doing more of the "same thing". If anything has to make a difference to the human race, then it has to be something more than the excellence as defined for a competitive environment, something more fundamental than excelling

a rival. The ancients, nonetheless, were people who primarily did not have a mass mentality. They made full use of their individuality and their originality – unpolluted by the world's views. They were driven to create their masterpieces more by a desire to leave behind something beyond time, i.e. immortal.

Ours has been referred to as “I, me, mine” generation. Most people become so very entangled in the bondage of the family and work that they feel helplessness in terms of understanding the true meaning of their coming to this world. A few people manage to free themselves from the bondage and progress further to making a contribution to society. It is this fundamental desire to overcome the fear of death and a spiritual journey towards immortality that really brings out the best in the people. In this case one has no competitive benchmarks, only an inner drive to leave an indelible mark on everything that one does.

Visionary to divinery

We call a person a visionary if he is able to think and plan far ahead of his fellowmen to achieve something significant to a wider community over a period of time. This time frame is limited to four or five years for a politician. It extends to ten or 15 years in the case of business leaders. These are people seeking their rewards in their current birth itself. The people who are working for attaining immortality, in contrast, do not have a time frame at all. Their concern is with the generations to come, who might enjoy and appreciate their work. For such people, we propose the term “divineries”. They have divine qualities and they build eternal beauty into whatever they create.

Who can be a divinery? Anyone can become a divinery, provided he/she is able to free himself/herself of the bondages of this world and enjoy doing anything that he/she does. It is an accepted fact that the quality of workmanship that we had in gold ornaments or household utensils in the past cannot be found today. The reason is that the artisans of the earlier era considered themselves as creators and not appendages to a manufacturing process. The goldsmith, iron-smith and the carpenter in India are known as *viswakarmas*, meaning creators of the universe. Extending the same notion, the potters, weavers and the cobblers are also creators. So too poets, artists and architects. The craftsman seeks rhythm in his life, color in his composition and harmony in his form in order to protect an object which has a

function and at the same time provides visual pleasure.

The mind works very differently when one has to fight competition as opposed to when one is on a creative mode. A visionary does something to get the appreciation of others while a divinery works for fulfillment of something beyond the narrowly defined self. In fact competition, while it may raise blood pressure and the flow of adrenaline temporarily, can also kill creativity. The mind gets so obsessed with overcoming competition that it fails to bring the sacred dimension to the action. The religious philosopher J. Krishnamurti (Jayakar, 1996) has the following comments to offer on competition and creativity. “One is everlastingly comparing oneself with another, with what one is, with what one should be, with someone who is more fortunate. This comparison really kills. Comparison is degrading, it perverts one's outlook. And on comparison one is brought up. All our education is based on it and so is our culture. So there is everlasting struggle to be something other than what one is. The understanding of what one is uncovers creativeness, but comparison breeds competitiveness, ruthlessness, ambition, which we think brings about progress. Progress has only led so far to more ruthless wars and misery than the world has ever known. To bring up children without comparison is true education.”

According to Pfeffer (1998), that people work for money is a myth. The primary motive of work is self-expression and having fun. It is reported that companies like Xerox go out of their way to promote on-the-job relationships by holding social events for employees. In terms of getting the best out of people, behavioral scientists put forward several theories like Theory X, Y and Z, then the emphasis shifted from motivation to empowerment. Currently the shift is towards the liberation of employees by making them intrapreneurs. Developments in IT have made it possible to work from anywhere including home. This is akin to the pre-industrial days when skilled artisans and craftsmen worked for themselves and the work came to their house.

Mitroff and Denton (1999), in their article on spirituality in the workplace, say: ... the separation of elements was a necessary strategy at earlier stages of human evolution. Art, science, and religion had to separate from each other to develop into more mature forms. A characteristic of earlier stages of human development is that critical elements are so merged together that they have no separate identity. Thus, for development, the key elements need to be separate. However, at

our current stage of human development, we face a new challenge. We have gone too far in separating the key elements. We need to integrate spirituality into management.

While the approaches differ, there is convergence in the thinking that we need to have a more integrated, humane and value-based approach to face the problems of the future. What we are recommending is that individuals and organizations get out of the comparative and competitive mode as quickly as possible and move on to build a better society based on the complementary advantage of the skills of its members. We must move, in other words, from fragmentary analysis to a holistic synthesis in our entire approach to work and the workplace.

From competitive advantage to complementary advantage

When you are engaged in a task that is divine to you, you do not want to destroy anybody. Your motive is not to outsmart the competition, but to live in harmony with everything – both animate and inanimate – around you. The advantage that you seek is complementary in nature and not competitive as in the current business world. The ancient world operated on complementary advantage where people tried to complement each other's skills to achieve societal objectives. Similarly, competition in the workplace among colleagues kills the very purpose for which the organization was founded. If people start working against each other, how can the overall objective of the organization be achieved?

Moore (1996) prefers to use the term co-evolution, in place of competition. He looks at businesses as ecosystems where there are complementary forms of evolution that play vital roles. It basically refers to working together to create a better future for all members of the system. Extending the same logic a little further, it makes immense sense for multinationals and global corporations to develop the bottom of the pyramid to sustain their businesses in the long run. After all, a good restaurant in a falling neighborhood is likely to die. Co-evolution has great significance among different technologies, in order for new industries, products and customer benefits to emerge. The co-evolution of fibre optics, telephony, satellites, computing speed and the Internet have enormous benefits to modern society.

The book *Limits to Competition* (The Group of Lisbon, 1996) explores the question of

whether free market competition can indeed deliver the full range of needs for sustainable development. We are not against comparisons *per se*, but wish to check the un mindful exploitation of the weak by the strong in the guise of free market. What is at stake is the future of our civilization, which is currently witnessing crass materialism and mindless escalating violence. This tragic trend can be reversed only by organizational emphasis on "goodness" through complementary advantage.

The three concepts discussed above (excellence to immortality; visionary to divinity; and competitive advantage to complementary advantage) should be taken together to go beyond the competitive mode, as shown in Figure 1. Otherwise the tendency will be to compare people like Hitler and Alexander as models of immortality. These are people remembered not for what they left behind but for the lives that they have taken away and the massive destruction caused to human society. Our proposition of immortality is leaving behind something that has eternal value or public good. This is possible only when the leader turns divinity and uses the complementary advantage of the skills of his/her people to create products and services of enduring and eternal value.

We do recognize that in the current world context competition cannot be eliminated totally. All that we are saying is that competition is for the conformists. It only helps one to benchmark against others who have achieved a certain level of success and work towards attaining the same level of success or surpassing it marginally. Break-through innovations call for a different set of parameters. If you are already on top of the world in your chosen field, you have no benchmarks to surpass. Then the motivation has to be something beyond self and more divine in nature, leading towards immortality. Sergi Babuka, the legendary pole-vaulter, may have used a competitive model to get his first Olympic gold medal. His subsequent exploits were aimed at only bettering his own records.

The 3ems path to immortality

We propose here a framework of a universal path to immortality that can be applied to individuals, companies or countries (see Figure 2). We have identified three distinctive phases in the life of an individual or a company that we call embarkation, emulation, and emancipation. In the embarkation stage, one sets sail without a clear idea about the destination. This phase

is characterized by the struggle for survival and one often engages in a random walk, trying to get a foot-hold on something. One may try out different things at this stage which we call the “primitive creativity”. At this stage there is no fear of failure and all that matters is survival. This may turn out to be a short period for some companies/ individuals and others may end up spending their entire life in the struggle for survival. Mortality rates for upstarts are pretty high at this stage.

An interesting example can be found in 3M history. Though the company was founded in 1902, it would taste success only by 1916. “Years of struggle ensued until the company could master quality production and a supply chain. New investors were attracted to 3M, such as Lucius Ordway, who moved the company to St Paul in 1910. Early technical and marketing innovations began to produce success and, in 1916, the company paid its first dividend – 6 cents a share”. (Source: <http://www.mmm.com/profile/looking/history.html>)

A breakthrough or a resounding success in any one of the random attempts in the embarkation stage will launch the individual or the company into the emulation phase. At

this stage, comparisons and competition become inevitable. In a way, good benchmarking and setting the right targets help the company/individual to channel energies towards achieving a higher level of success. Not all will be successful in their pursuits, as indicated by paths A, B, C, and D in Figure 2. Some companies will be bought up by a predatory competitor. Moreover, people rarely set one single long-term goal for their entire life. Each success normally leads to the revision of the target. For example, a company that has reached prominence in a local market may strive to reach leadership at the national level and subsequently at the global level, each time benchmarking itself against a different company. Throughout this stage, the company will be in a catch-up mode, trying to chase higher and higher targets.

The only limitation of this approach, whether for companies or people, is that you are constantly trying to be something or somebody other than yourself. One can end up wasting an entire life trying to emulate others. The earlier one feels contented with the success obtained through the competitive route, the better it is for the individual or the company. Otherwise, it can lead to the path of self-destruction. This is evident from the fact that the mortality rate of companies is on the rise. According to Geus (1997), by 1983, one-third of the 1970 *Fortune* 500 companies had been acquired or broken into pieces, or had merged with other companies. He goes on to say, “The high corporate mortality rate seems unnatural. . . If this species were *Homo Sapiens*, we could rightly say that it was still in the Neanderthal age – that it had not yet realized its potential. Neanderthals had an average life expectancy of approximately 30 years, but biologically speaking, the human species has a maximum life expectancy of 100 years or more. . . . Mounting evidence suggests that corporations fail because their policies and practices are based too heavily on the thinking and the language of economics.”

A feeling of fullness and a confidence in one’s own capabilities and competencies combined with a compelling desire to do something to satisfy oneself, is that which launches the individual into the emancipation phase. Up to this stage the entire life is spent in trying to prove one’s own capabilities to others. In the emancipation phase, one wants to prove the purpose of one’s life. It is not necessary for an individual to reach the top of the world to launch himself into emancipation mode. For example, there were certainly many people who were much wealthier than Alfred Nobel,

Figure 1
New paradigm beyond competition

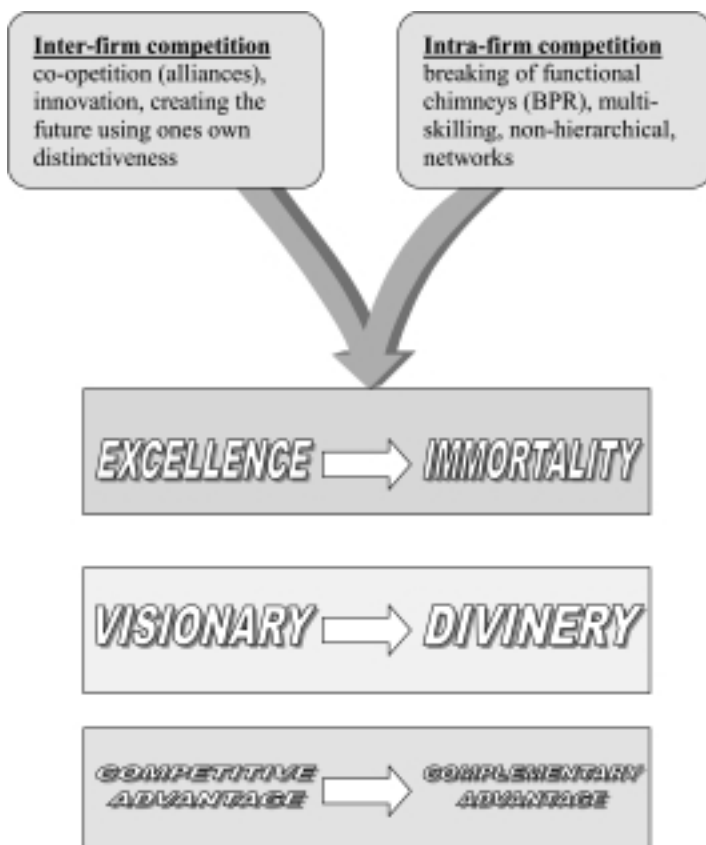
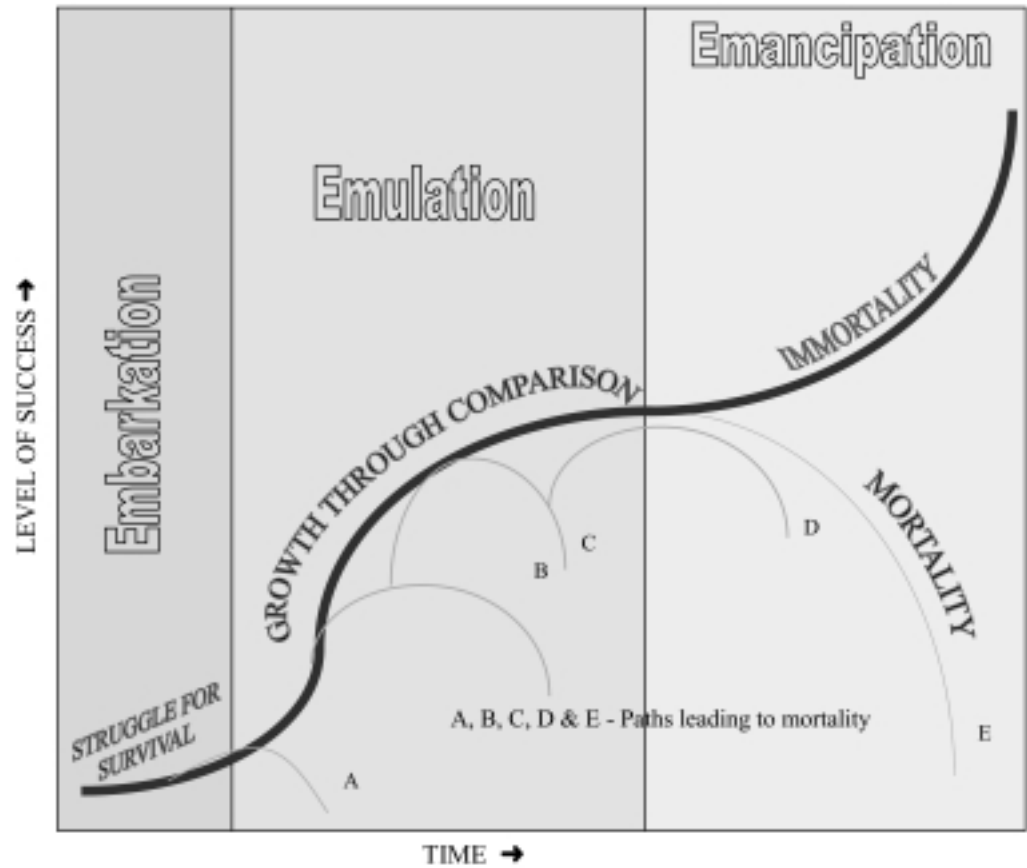


Figure 2
 The 3ems path to immortality



about whom we know very little now. However, Alfred Nobel chose something different from other wealthy people of his times and concentrated on satisfying a unique goal for all humanity, which has made him immortal. Companies that benchmarked against the best and used “strategic intent” (Hamel and Prahalad, 1989) to beat the global leaders do experience difficulty in defining their next move on reaching global leadership. Similarly, the post cold war era has left the USA with no other country against which to benchmark its performance. It is at this juncture that we need leaders who are themselves in the “emancipation phase”, who can guide their followers to higher levels of prosperity and high quality of life by allowing scope for the expression of their individuality.

The mind operates in a fundamentally different way in the three different phases. The differences in the three phases are summarized in Table I. First of all, the time horizons are very different. In the embarkation stage it is the struggle for survival on a day to day basis. In the emulation phase the emphasis shifts to a long-term approach, whereas the time

horizon approaches infinity in the emancipation phase. The CEO at the embarkation phase has to be an ordinary man helping the company to overcome day-to-day problems rather than a dreamer who will not pay attention to immediate needs for survival. At the emulation phase, the CEO should be a visionary who sets benchmarks and deadlines and enables the company to rise to those standards. In order to launch the company into the emancipation phase, the CEO should be a divinity who is able to rise above petty comparisons and uses the complementary advantage of the skills of his/her people to create new standards and new highs never seen before.

The approach to quality also varies from phase to phase; embarkation will be concerned with meeting the minimum specifications, emulation strives to reach benchmarks and emancipation sets its own quality standards. Creativity at the embarkation stage is called primitive creativity, as the cost of failure at this stage may not be high and people may try out different things in their struggle for survival. In the emulation stage, the scope for creativity is much less as efforts are

Table I

Differences between the three phases of the 3ems model

Criterion	Embarkation	Emulation	Emancipation
Time horizon	Day to day	Long-term	Infinity
Type of CEO	Ordinary	Visionary	Divinery
Quality	Meet specifications	Excel expectations	Set new standards
Creativity	High	Medium	High
Ethics	Low/medium	Medium	High
Benefit sought	Gratification	Thrill	Eternal bliss

channeled to beat competition, which means doing more of the same thing rather than trying to do something different. At the emulation stage creativity reaches its peak, as one is fully immersed in what he or she is doing without any fear of comparison or competition.

The ethical standards can be low to medium at the survival or embarkation stage, for obvious reasons. It is likely to be medium in the emulation stage, as the pursuit of gaining competitive advantage by hook or crook itself is of questionable ethics. Of course, companies/individuals in the emulation stage try to operate within the legal framework to avoid any serious problems that could derail their pursuits. At the emancipation stage ethics reaches its highest level, as one is in a divine stage and has no comparisons or competitive benchmarks to be cracked. The benefit sought in the embarkation stage is immediate gratification, the thrill of beating something or somebody in the emulation phase and "eternal bliss" in the emancipation phase.

It is worth emphasizing that the 3ems curve should not be confused with the product life cycle curve. What we are advocating is that one should launch oneself into the third phase as quickly as possible to escape mortality. Mother Teresa, too, faced the struggle for survival when she was expelled from the convent where she served, and went on to start her own society to serve the poor. She quickly was able to launch herself into the emancipation phase, which has made her immortal. Not all are as lucky as Mother Teresa. Many times we keep climbing any ladder that comes in our way and only after reaching the top we realize that the ladder is leaning against the wrong wall.

We are living in an information age that offers immense opportunities for companies to exploit the latent potential of individual employees by allowing them scope for the expression of their individuality. After all, every individual wants to leave something behind and attain immortality. What we recommend is that companies revive and

absorb the pre-industrial society value systems that allowed the free expression of divinity instincts in individuals in the form of arts and crafts, and at the same time maintain focus and co-ordination through the use of information technology. Once again it is the remarkably innovative 3M company which has shown the way. This global corporation allows its technical staff to spend 15 per cent of their time in projects of their choice. This has helped the company tap the potential of its employees in terms of creating new and innovative products like Post-It notepads. Companies would do well to get out of the rat race and concentrate on setting their own standards rather than frittering away their energies in outsmarting competition. In the ultimate analysis, it is more important to make this world a better place to live than to make it a better battleground for competition.

References

- Abrahamson, V., Meehan, M. and Samuel, L. (1998), *The Future Ain't What It Used to Be*, Riverhead Books, A division of Penguin Putnam, New York, NY.
- Argyris, C. and Schon, D. (1978), *Organizational Learning: A Theory-in-Action Perspective*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Carson, R. (1962), *Silent Spring*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA.
- Day, G.S. (1990), *Market Driven Strategy*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- (The) Economist (1999), "Food for thought", *The Economist*, 19 June.
- Geus, A. de (1997), "The living company", *Harvard Business Review*, March-April, pp. 51-9.
- Ghoshal, S. and Bartlett, C.A. (1998), *The Individualized Corporation: A Fundamentally New Approach to Management*, Harper Business, New York, NY.
- (The) Group of Lisbon (1996), *Limits to Competition*, The MIT Press.
- Hamel, G. and Prahalad, C.K. (1989), "Strategic intent", *Harvard Business Review*, May-June pp. 63-76.
- Hamel, G. and Prahalad, C.K. (1995), *Competing for the Future*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.

- Hammer, M. and Champy, J. (1993), *Reengineering the Corporation: A Manifesto for Business Revolution*, Harper Business, New York, NY.
- Jayakar, P. (1996), *Krishnamurti, A Biography*, Penguin, New York, NY, Reprint edition, pp. 255-6.
- Kundera, M. (1991), *Immortality*, (translated from Czech by Peter Kussi), Faber and Faber, London.
- Mitroff, I.I. and Denton, E.A. (1999), "A study of spirituality in the workplace", *Sloan Management Review*, Summer pp. 83-92.
- Moore, J.F. (1996), *The Death of Competition: Leadership and Strategy in the Age of Business Ecosystems*, HarperCollins New York, NY.
- Ohmae, K. (1982), *The Mind of the Strategist*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.
- Packard, V. (1957), *The Hidden Persuaders*, Longmans, Green.
- Peppers, D. and Rogers, M. (1993), *The One to One Future*, Doubleday, New York, NY.
- Pfeffer, J. (1998), "Six dangerous myths about pay", *Harvard Business Review*, (May-June).
- Porter, M.E. (1985), *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- Senge, P.M. (1990), *The Fifth Discipline The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Doubleday, New York, NY.

Application questions

- 1 "Companies would do well to get out of the rat race and concentrate on setting their own standards rather than frittering away their energies in outsmarting competition". Discuss, with particular reference to your own company.
- 2 Describe how your company could follow the "3ems" path to immortality