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What Does A Robotic Future Really Look Like?

P06 | Tips on Improving Customer Experience

P10 | Do Great Leaders Focus on Profit or Purpose?



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



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Dear Business Link Readers,

As summer draws to an end, new chapters are set to begin. Back to school and a rapidly approaching Q4 signal big changes to come. To help you prepare for these typically busy times, we are excited to share with you some of the most exciting updates, stories, and tips coming from the world of business, entrepreneurship and charity.

With our 40 Under 40 event returning to Hamilton this October, we will be celebrating another 40 outstanding business leaders in Hamilton.

We value the stories of entrepreneurs giving back to their community. A group of young journalists, mentored by Business Link, interviewed an entrepreneur and activist whose mission is to reduce the impact of poverty on orphaned youths. We believe you'll find her story as inspiring as we did!

Business Link is also remaining true to its roots by continuing to provide tips and tricks from real professionals to help your business thrive. Master the basics of achieving a healthy mindset and critical analysis skills with leadership expert Tim Arnold and sales training expert Jeff Mowatt.

Yours in Business
Marilyn Tian, M.B.A.
President & Co-Publisher
Business Link Media Group



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TIPS ON IMPROVING

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

by Jeff Mowatt



Jeff Mowatt is the author of the best-selling business books, *Becoming a Service Icon in 90 Minutes a Month* and *Influence with Ease*. He heads his own training company and has written and produced 13 self-study coaching tools. His *Influence with Ease* ® column has been syndicated and featured in over 200 business and on-line publications.

BOOSTING THE BUSINESS WHEN THE ECONOMY IS SLOW

Question yourself: What are two words that will become increasingly important to customers over the next decade? According to the marketing guru Frank Luntz, the answer is “hassle free.”

Customers are fed up with being forced to jump through hoops. Yet in a slow economy, companies are actually becoming more difficult for customers to do business with—before, during and after purchases. In order to know if your organization is creating these unnecessary hassles for your customers, take this mini quiz. Then consider using the accompanying tips that I talk about in my customer service seminars and speeches.



CUSTOMERS ARRIVING BEFORE THE DOORS OPEN

Do you force your customers to wait outside your establishment until the exact moment you officially open? Worse, do you rush them out the door or refuse anyone from entering as closing time approaches? Have you ever noticed customers standing outside a business, pointing at their wrists towards store employees, trying to compare what time is actually right?

Fortunately, there is a helpful tip on avoiding this hassle that I learned at a convention, where I was the opening keynote speaker and the presenter was Roly Morris, CEO of Krispy Kreme operations in Canada. Morris explained that his organization has a practice called “ten-before ten-after”... meaning they are open for business (includes answering to phone calls) ten-minutes before they are open, and they remain open ten-minutes after posted closing time. Of course, the company must pay employees for the staggered times, but the good-will and added revenues that can generate will make one rule—that is as simple as twenty-minutes of company time—a worthwhile investment.

WHEN CUSTOMERS MAKE THE DECISION TO BUY

Are your customers faced with too many choices? It's fine to have a large selection to attract customers, but forcing customers to make too many decisions creates stress and buying resistance. As products and services become more complex, customers are increasingly afraid of making the wrong decision. Fortunately, your employees can reduce this customer stress while boosting your revenues using the rule of three. Here's how it works:

If you offer your customers only two choices,

they may simply opt for the less expensive. However, using the rule of three, your employees would consider all the products and services you offer and narrow them to the top three most suitable for that customer. Interestingly, if you offer three choices from least to most expensive, customers will typically choose the middle option. That means that offering three choices not only helps your customer make easier buying decisions... It also helps steer them away from choosing the cheapest item. Less hassle, more buying. Everybody wins.



WHEN A PROBLEM ARISES

Can your customers return products to your location, or are they expected to have kept the original packaging and ship it to the manufacturer? Do they face a huge waiting line at the 'customer service' desk that's understaffed and over-grumped? Do you give customers any compensation or even an apology for the inconvenience of having to return a defective product?

Some managers appear to believe that making dissatisfied customers run a gauntlet discourages product returns. It discourages your customers from returning. If you plan on keeping customers over the long term, you know that sooner or later they're likely to have a problem. That's an opportunity for you to demonstrate that you are indeed different from your competitors.

So how did your company do in this quiz? For most organizations there are at least some opportunities to reduce the hassle factor for customers. The good news is these types of adjustments to customer service are simple. They reduce complexity and bureaucracy. Our corporate clients report that the payoff is worth it in terms of strengthened customer loyalty, increased spending per customer, and enhanced team spirit. Not bad for simply making the customers' buying experience hassle free.



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DO GREAT LEADERS FOCUS ON PROFIT OR PURPOSE?

by Tim Arnold

Simon Sinek's iconic book, Start with Why, argues that leaders and organizations need to focus on their perspective of "why"—in essence the firm's purpose and impact they are uniquely called to make in this world. Sinek explains that this is how your business can attract and retain great talent, gain a competitive advantage, and move all workplace engagement to the next level.

Some popular organizations, such as The Body Shop and Tom's Shoes, had once inspired me; they seemed so clear and committed to their purpose, mission and why. But here's the downfall, they all ended up going bankrupt or selling out.

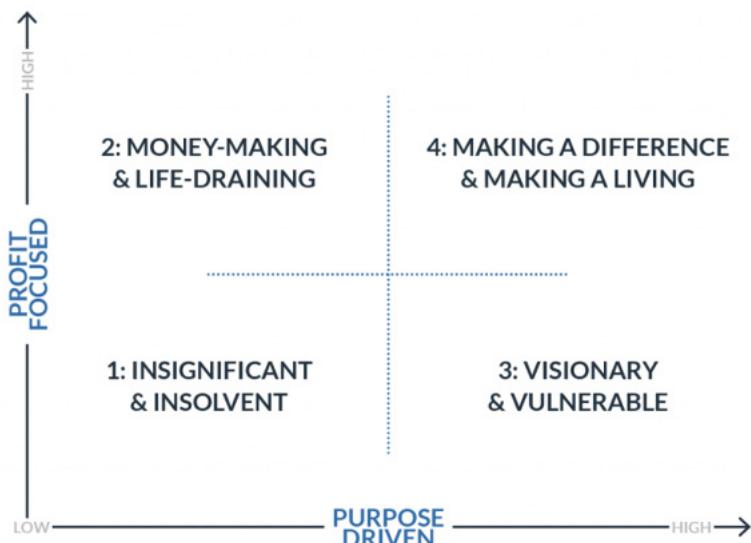
So you need to ask yourself this question, "Will you operate a purpose-driven business while being an industry leader?" Your answer to that should be YES...if you choose to pursue profit and purpose as a packaged deal.

Attention to profit maximization will lead a company in the direction of growth, opportunities, and industry competition. However, if you focus too much on profit-to the neglect of your main purpose-you will steer away customers' engagement, and may leave employees feeling as though they are a "cog in a wheel."

Focusing on purpose allows your business to be a source for "good in the world," and it attracts and retains great people, who take real ownership. But again if you have a strong focus on the purpose while neglecting company profits, the sustainability of your business becomes jeopardized, jobs will be eliminated, and opportunities start to disappear.

Profit and purpose work best when they are utilized together!





How effective are you at focusing on both profit AND purpose? Think about the company's last fiscal year...I bet you've been hanging out in one of these four places:

Regardless of where you currently position yourself, the goal is to spend more time in quadrant four; to make a living AND to make a difference.

Remember, finding healthy tension between profit and purpose does not happen by chance, it happens by choice.

Leaders and organizations who choose both profit and purpose, gain that competitive advantage by attracting the utmost of customers.

AN ACTIVITY FOR YOUR TEAM

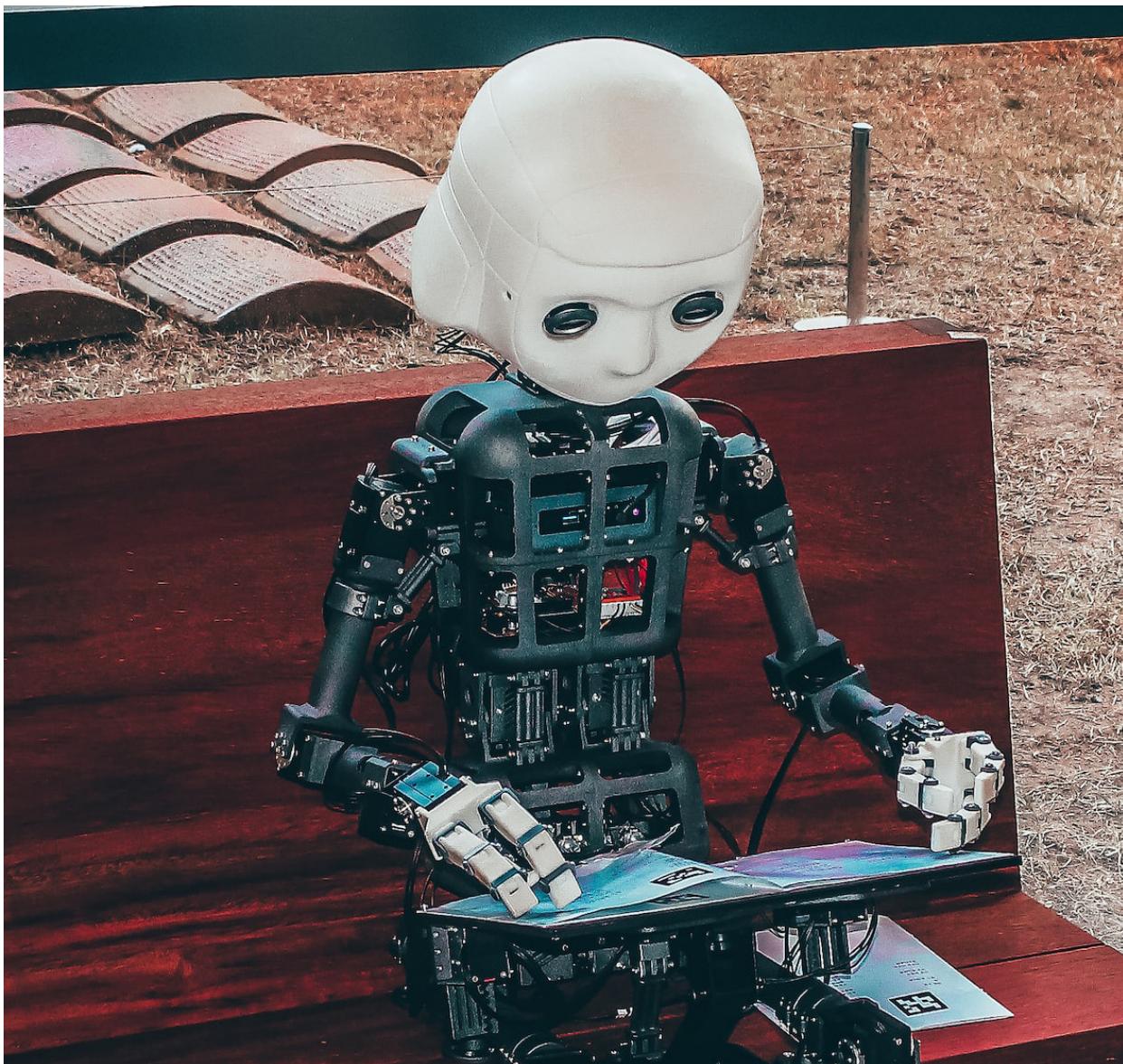
Engage your team in this conversation so that you are aligned and committed to getting all the positive results of both profit and purpose.

- *Start by reading this article.*
- *Work through these worksheets at your next meeting or event. This can be done in-person or virtually.*
- *Tap into the power of healthy tension between making a living and making a difference.*



About Tim Arnold

Tim Arnold has spent over two decades helping clients, including The United Nations, Royal Bank of Canada, and Compassion International, manage their complexity, increase resilience, and receive results. As a sought-after speaker and consultant, Tim assists leaders around the globe to unleash their superpower of thinking in an “either/or” world.



WHAT DOES A ROBOTIC FUTURE REALLY LOOK LIKE?

By Ashwin Balakrishnan

If you have watched any of the countless robo-centric Science Fiction movies that have emerged over the last few decades, you may be familiar with the cult classic film by James Cameron, *The Terminator*. You may also feel some anxiety when envisioning a world where robots become a little too good at what they do. Real world organizations such as Google-owned Boston Dynamics are doing little to calm these fears, as they demonstrate terrifyingly advanced machines which are evolving at an unimaginable rate.

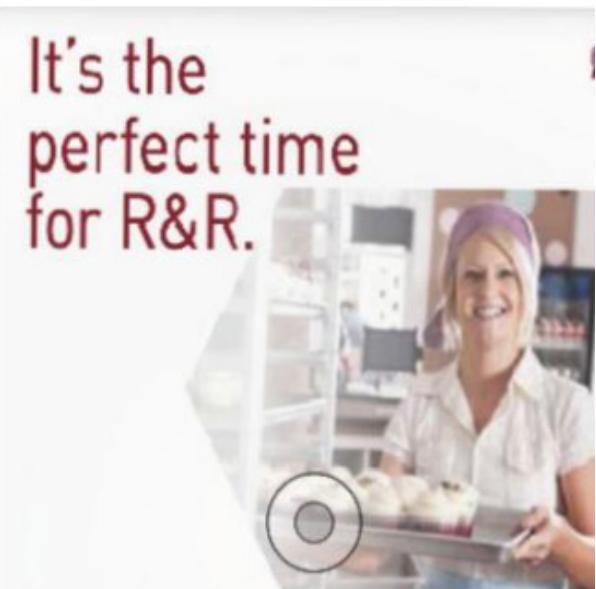
An individual's fear of a world enslaved by robots is not entirely unreasonable, however; it is far more likely that robotics will continue to aid and benefit the human population than it will negatively impact us. Rather than focusing only on the "dystopian future" outcome, we should explore the equally exciting opportunities which robotic adoption might introduce.

WHAT EXACTLY DO WE MEAN BY ROBOT?

Traditionally speaking, a robot is defined as "any automatically operated machine that replaces human effort," although science fiction media has altered the common perception to look more humanoid. Interestingly this definition also states that "it may not resemble human beings in appearance or perform functions in a humanlike manner". Non-human resemblance is the critical portion of this definition, for this one reason alone:

The human body isn't efficient to begin with, so we shouldn't be using it as a reference for design.

Objectively speaking, the raw strength, speed, or versatility of the human body is not what al-



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The human body isn't efficient to begin with, so we shouldn't be using it as a reference for design.

lowed our species to thrive; it was our mindset. More specifically, the ability to problem solve and adapt to various conditions is what separates humans from any other species to emerge from



the planet's intricate ecosystem. Simply put, we are the sum of our intelligence.

When designing and creating the complex mechanisms of which a robotic system consists, the common goal is the production of a system which performs task(s) more efficiently when compared with human effort, and create a safer environment for the human worker. There is typically little-to-no value associated with recreating an existing form factor which is widely available, especially when robots can be specialized to perform specific tasks

with the highest degree of effectiveness. This is why "humanoid" robots have not reached mainstream popularity, contrary to the widely held assumption that robotic technology simply hasn't "matured" enough to reach the mainstream consumer.

More specifically, robots don't look like humans because there's no reason for them to. Since we already have an effective humanoid figure provided by mother nature, it makes more sense to design robotic systems around specific tasks, allowing us to extend our capabilities beyond the

traditional limitations of the human body.

In 1913, Henry Ford, Founder of Ford Motors, was evidently aware of the additional functionality which robotics could provide (well before they were a common factor sight). In addition to introducing the conveyor-belt system for transporting parts around the manufacturing facility, Ford also made commonplace the use of robotics for stamping, noting that machines could stamp "much more quickly than even the fastest human worker could."

Ford deemed that robotic machines were faster and more efficient than humans at certain tasks, but were still limited in their ability to perform





more than one task at a time. Rather than replacing the Ford manufacturing staff entirely, robotic engineering was used to enhance employment safety, all while improving the overall product output for the company. According to Motor1, following the introduction of robotic factory assistance, factory employers received an equivalent to a salary of about \$130 USD per day when adjusted for inflation in 2022.

Ford understood that they were building products designed for people, therefore human oversight was still necessary to ensure that the final product resembles something a real person would appreciate.

Today, the company Ford Motor stands by the example that was set by their founder in the early 1900's. In an interview with Ford Authority, Gary Johnson chief of manufacturing and labor at Ford Motors stated, "We'll always need the human touch, with humans getting in the vehicle and doing certain things."

A future of robot-human interdependence seems increasingly more likely with each passing day; however, this future appears to be materializing in a very different way than society may have previously envisioned.

Contrary to assumptions that robots would take on a humanoid figure or replace humans in the workplace entirely, a future of specialized machines with human governed logic is more likely. Overtime, it became apparent that products and services created for people, require oversight and control from real people. One may argue that the incapability of a robotic system to ever fully grasp the intangible qualities of the "human touch" will prevent robots from replacing human labour in whole. Robots will likely exist as an extension of the human desire to

improve, rather than serving as a replacement for the very same ingenuity which brought them to be.

Instead of fearing a future of coexistence or replacement by machines, I choose to accept robots as a positive byproduct of human evolution. Combinations of human creativity and adaptability with the precision, consistency, and impartiality of robotics, allows for a symbiotic relation of sorts.

I truly believe robotics can assist in filling the gaps of human capability.

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PHILANTHROPY FOR AMERICAN WITH FAMILIES ADOPTED CHINESE ORPHANS

An Interview with Mrs. Luo Xin

Conducted by: Angel Zhou, Carinne Zhou, and Jerry

Written by: Angel Zhou and Carinne Zhou

In 1984, Luo Xin officially made history as one of the first students in China to major in sociology at Peking University, during a time where sociology was still thought of as mainly a “Western” practice. Her interest in sociology and social psychology led her into a career working for a government research

facility. While working for the government, she was also devoting her time learning about social issues. Following a nine year dedication to her research position, Luoxin moved to the United States, where she proudly started up a family business.



Luo Xin and three other volunteers visited the Tracy Worrell family who adopted a few Chinese orphans

One of her most notable achievements may be her facilitation of connections between Chinese and American families, and ultimately aiding American families who take on the responsibility of adopting orphaned Chinese youth.

During Luo Xin's time spent studying social psychology, she was also required to conduct research for her job with the Chinese Government. This research revealed to her the various issues faced by many of the Chinese people. This realization of the gross social inequality and disparity of wealth led her on a path of positive influence, inspiring her to make an impact on the lives of those suffering from poverty.

Upon arriving in America, she was fortunate to meet a group of adopted orphans and their new families. These American families adopted numerous Chinese children who contend

with serious diseases or injuries, and provide them with the opportunities to live a happier and healthier life. These families looked beyond the often polarizing expenses associated with raising a child, and took on every one of the associated expenses, treating each child as their own blood.

"It's not just about money, either. You have to devote your entire life to them." Luo Xin said during the interview. "It was unbelievable"

She couldn't believe that they could persevere through such a challenge. She wanted to do something for them.

FAMILIES

This is what led Luo Xin to organize a Christmas fundraising campaign to combat the issue head-on. Witnessing the expressions of pure happiness when the children received Christmas gifts from strangers was touching, so much so that she began to write several articles about her experience. Her goal:

To let more people know about these families.

She couldn't help all of them by herself, but she knew that with the right team, they could make a difference together.

"There are many people around the world who need help, and the adopted families are not the only ones. We can't help everyone, but we can try our best to educate people about the poverty being experienced, and the life changing decisions which parents are making when they adopt children from backgrounds of poverty. When people come together, it forms a larger power, and that power that can change the world.

This is how we can make the world a better place.

“
My goal is to
let more people
know about
these families.
”



Photo of Luo Xin



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