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COF – Seminar  
6 - 8 February 2014  
Villa Romana, Firenze

Evidence, Perception and Concepts –  
about how to learn from what is  
happening, how to make it happen in  
a responsible way

Firenze, March 2014

## SUMMARIES OF THE WORKSHOPS

The seminar program comprises four talks presented by international experts and four workshops on open questions conducted by the speakers themselves and a provocateur.

Hans-Martin Buhlmann, president of the Club of Florence, proposed to use the outputs of the workshops to draft a question to ask to Bill Clinton on the occasion of his keynote speech at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Investor Forum in Amsterdam on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

### LEARNING - A MATTER OF KNOWLEDGE?

*With Marie-Ange Andrieux and Stephanie Schwedhelm*

#### **Introduction**

Knowledge is a combination of different learning processes (like experience, practice, training, self-training, try by errors...) which lead us to build up a knowledge capital, which helps us (i) to face responsibilities and manage risks and (ii) to innovate in both one's personal and professional life, thus allowing us to gain wisdom, confidence and trust.

As a consequence, knowledge is the product of learning, but knowledge can also feed learning in a virtuous circle of interdependencies.

#### **1 - Use of knowledge**

Knowledge can be individual or collective. There are different sources of knowledge. It is necessary to make it live, to put it in comparison. It has to be assessed. Knowledge can enhance or facilitate:

- change management,
- balance between different stakeholders' interests
- revising of the business model
- implementation of governance principles (behaviors vs compliance)
- resilience to change aversion

#### **2 - Conditions to knowledge by learning**

To succeed in the process, we need:

- interest in other people and empathy (to start the process)
- discipline, concentration, focusing,
- innovation in different fields and tools of learning,
- curiosity and openness
- asking questions, capacity to challenge and to accept to be challenged

- acceptance to change oneself in depth because learning CAN change a person and change a company
- creation of a system where people CAN share the learning through collective platforms
- ability to capitalize on one's KL (to make the process performant, efficient)

### **3. Utility value of learning and knowledge**

Learning has a value of use:

- to understand the environment (understanding of “causes and effects” chain, taking into account stakeholders' concern) because a good diagnosis leads to a good solution, mainly through collective intelligence,
- to facilitate “how to do” and “how to be”
- to put in place solutions in a sustainable way: to create long term performance with appropriate risk management, which supposes to have a vision of the future or the capacity to adapt to the future,
- to change paradigms, to reinvent things,
- to change behaviors
- to develop trust, confidence and values
- to understand how to think so as to have self confidence in one's capacity to adapt to change
- to transfer knowledge from one generation to the others including transferring virtue

### **Reflection**

As a conclusion, is knowledge a matter of learning or the inverse?

### **Question to Bill Clinton:**

What would be the core knowledge for a future sustainable world?

## **LEARNING – A MATTER OF VISION?**

*With Wayne Cowan and Martin Davila*

### **Introduction:**

I have a dream – Martin Luther King, his vision had an impact on our lives.

### **1 – Effects of a crisis**

There is a general crisis with the pillars of our current society (social, political, economic) that produces a sensible lack of vision

### **2 – Building blocks for vision**

Vision should be based on 3 building blocks:

Trust, Knowledge and Clarity not Competitiveness.

### **3 – Incubator for visions**

We need to build trust for vision to breed.

### **4 – Vision in companies**

Vision needs to start at the top of corporate life and work its way down through all the layers

### **5 - Quote**

Wayne's Grandfather: "Don't worry about making mistakes as that's how memories are made"

### **Reflection**

Are we allowing our youth the opportunity to express their vision and grow with the corporate culture not based only on competitiveness?

**Question to Bill Clinton:** Are we developing or putting the foundations for leaders with vision?

## **LEARNING – A MATTER OF RESPONSIBILITY?**

*With Marco Ghetti and Claudia Schneckenburger*

### **Introduction**

Learning is a matter of responsibility and responsibility is a result of learning

### **Reflections:**

Why do we have the responsibility to learn?

How can we raise up responsibility?

What will be the balance between efficiency and risks?

How do we recognize if we behave in a responsible way?

For whom are we responsible to learn?

Is there a virtuous circle between learning and responsibility?

Can responsibility be outsourced?

**Question to Bill Clinton:** What can societies do to implement a culture of sustainable responsibility?

## LEARNING – A MATTER OF CREATIVITY?

*With Christian Arnezeder and Patrick Schneckenburger*

### Introduction

“I never made one of my discoveries through a process of rational thinking”, Albert Einstein

### 1 – Questions around a definition of creativity

- is it about change?
- is it producing or expressing?
- is it by definition linked to something “new”?
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### 2 – Humus for creativity

- pressure due to an actual need (“Not macht erfinderisch”)
- room for individual freedom of expression (see also kids)
- fortuity
- vision / goal / competition (a train between Lyon and Paris that has to transport people faster than a plane)
- lack of rational solutions
- need of adaptation (see also examples in nature)

### 3 – Creativity and learning

- creativity is a necessary condition for learning
- exploring is exciting and motivates learning
- creativity reveals something about a person and his ability to learn and viceversa

### Reflections

Does creativity need efforts? Is it comparable to work?

What comes first: learning or creativity?

Is the interaction of learning and creativity the motor of any process?

Is creativity learnable?

**Question to Bill Clinton:** Is creativity a sine qua non for a sustainable preparation of the future and if yes, what can societies do to enhance it?

## FINAL QUESTION FOR BILL CLINTON SENT BY THE CLUB OF FLORENCE ON THE 14<sup>th</sup> OF FEBRUARY 2014:

"At a gathering of minds at the Club of Florence, we reflected on the indispensable conditions for creating the knowledge necessary to generate a sustainable future. We concluded that once a clear Vision of the Future has been established, this would lead to the generation of ideas and knowledge to support it, if learning and knowledge-sharing is encouraged. For this to happen, there has to exist an environment of Trust, which in turn requires a Culture of Justice. In a world where trust in our institutions is as low as never before in living memory, and a general perception of social injustice prevails, how can society reverse the trend and inspire creativity in the interest of the public good once more? **Especially considering the responsibility for invested equity by actually using the legal tools, instead of outsourcing duties and obligations?"**

As requested, the question was sent to the organization committee of the International Investor Forum **before** the event. Unfortunately Bill Clinton didn't take it into consideration during his keynote in Amsterdam. May be next time...