



"DISCOVERING THE FUTURE"
The Business of Paradigms
Featuring Joel Barker

KEY LEARNING POINTS

A. Two Questions to Ponder

1. Why do we resist "change?"
2. What prevents us from seeing and accepting new ideas?

B. What is a "Paradigm?"

- A **pattern** or a **model**
- A set of **regulations** that can:
 - establish boundaries
 - provide "rules for success" by solving problems within these boundaries

C. Paradigms act as **filters** that screen data as it comes to us

D. Data does not always match our expectations created by our paradigms

(Reference = "The Structure of Scientific Revolution" by Thomas Kuhn)

D. Paradigms filter incoming experiences and data. We accept the data that fits our Paradigms and **we ignore the rest** = The "Paradigm Effect"

Every time we run into something that is beyond the boundaries of our Paradigm, **we just won't get it!!!**

E. The "Going Back to Zero" Rule

- When a Paradigm shifts, everything goes back to zero
- Your past success guarantees nothing in the future if the rules change

F. Paradigms dramatically affect our judgments and decision-making by influencing our perceptions.

G. Paradigms are a two-edged sword

- One way -- cuts the information that agrees with it into very fine precise detail
- Other way -- cuts you away from data that runs counter to the paradigm. In other words, you see best what you are supposed to see. You see poorly or **not at all** that data that does not fit the paradigm.

H. Observations about Paradigms

1. Paradigms are common
2. Paradigms can be useful – they can show us what is important and what is not. They can show us important problems and then give us rules to help solve them by focusing our attention.
3. Sometimes your Paradigm can become the Paradigm, the only way to do something.....and when you are confronted with an **alternative** idea, you reject it out of hand.
 - This leads to a disorder called “**Paradigm Paralysis,**” a terminal disease of certainty. Some organizations and some people are destroyed by it.
 - “**Those who say it cannot be done should get out of the way of those who are doing it.**”
4. People who create new Paradigms are **usually** “outsiders,” not part of the established paradigm community. Since they are not invested in the old Paradigm, they have nothing to lose by creating the new one.
5. Practitioners who choose to change to the new Paradigm early in its development are “Paradigm Pioneers.” They are **courageous** and they normally **trust their own judgment**.
6. **We can choose to change our Paradigms!!!**

- I. A “Paradigm Shift” Question = What today is impossible to do in your business but, if it could be done, would **fundamentally change what you do**?
- J. Finally, the future will be full of people coming around blind corners yelling things at you.
- If you have “Paradigm Flexibility,” you will be hearing **opportunities**, but
 - if you have “Paradigm Paralysis,” what you will be hearing will sound like threats.

The choice is entirely yours !!!!!!!

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