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Dear Reader,

Rise and shine, and greetings!

Rita McGrath leads this edition with her cover story on the early warnings of a fading competitive advantage, saying that a dramatic fall from grace isn't the norm, and that it can take years before the alarm bells announcing impending doom start to ring. She goes on to provide a number of telltale signs that astute managers should be sensitized to, and warns that even when the evidence suggests otherwise, we continue to invest time and resources into a business that is flat-lining or even going into decline.

Robert Glazer dwells on The Surprising Connection Between Cost-Cutting and Improved Business Performance, and recommends evaluating people, projects, and products that are either not achieving the necessary outcomes, are depleting critical resources, or are causing the organization to lose focus.

Next up is **Geoffrey James** providing us with 9 Speaking Habits That Make You Sound Smarter In today's competitive business world where it's not enough to be smart, and you must be able to sway others to agree with you.

Darius Foroux follows up with advice to Waste a Few Hours so You Don't Waste Years, and advocates against the 'hustle culture' where one needs to be busy every minute. Having that time and space to think allows us to step back and look at the bigger picture.

Back-of-the-book we have our regularly scheduled column Nature Calling for Action Stations! And this time we discuss the scary phenomenon of Geo-engineering that involves spraying sulfur into the stratosphere and blocking the Sun to counter climate change. It is a branch of speculative technology that promises to counteract and even reverse global warming by altering Earth's atmosphere as the world continues to fall short of the Paris Agreement goals and the costs of climate change continue to mount.

More later and have a great year, proving wrong the prophets of doom and gloom 😊

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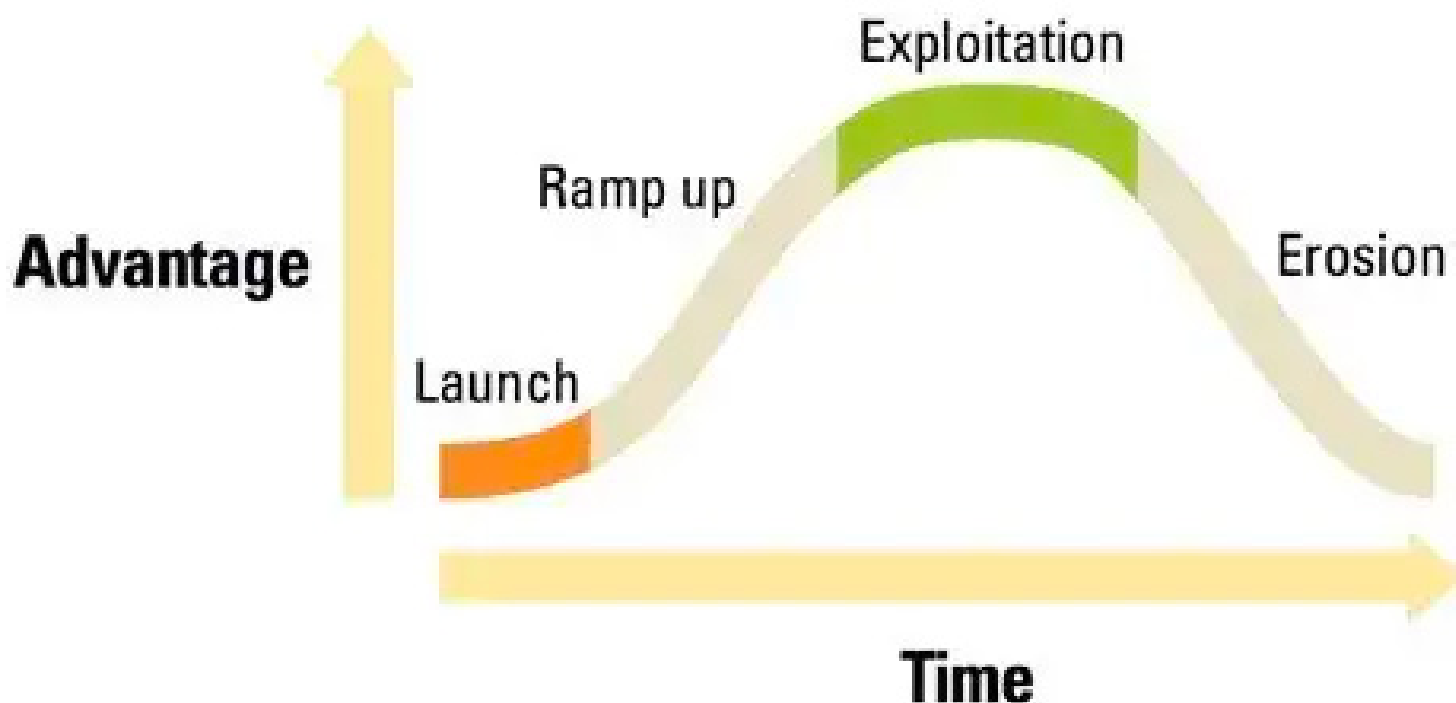


Nature Calling for ACTION STATIONS!

Adil Ahmad | 4 min read

Early warnings of a fading competitive advantage

As the world begins to open up and I'm [back on the speaking circuit](#), a question I get asked again and again is how one can tell when a once-robust competitive advantage is starting to show its age. Here's how you can diagnose it.



Source: <https://vivifychangepcatalyst.wordpress.com/2014/07/26/transient-advantage-confirmation-bias-and-innovation/>

By Rita McGrath | 7 min read

The traditional strategy prescription

Find a competitive advantage, throw up entry barriers like crazy and defend that advantage with full throated energy. That's been the strategy prescription for years, and sometimes it can provide a useful perspective on how to compete (for one of my favorite perspectives on this kind of competition, see [George Stalk's book Hardball](#) and our [Friday Fireside chat](#)).

But a dramatic fall from grace isn't the norm. More often, what happens is a slower, barely noticeable fading away of what was once a formidable franchise. It can take years before the alarm bells announcing impending doom start to ring.

Take Revlon, the glamorous company that Ronald Perelman bought in 1985. It [ushered in an era on Wall Street](#) of junk bonds, hostile takeovers and a sea change in how deals are done. Over the years, the company gradually

seemed to lose its relevance (despite kudos for its CEO, Debbie Perelman). The firm went bankrupt in 2022, losing out to a whole host of factors — less interest in buying cosmetics in drugstores, the rise of celebrity brands, the growth of dedicated retailers like Ulta Beauty and a failure to center in many of the conversations of the moment. This is a far cry from the [Revlon of the 1980's](#) which featured supermodels, photography by Richard Avedon and one of the best tag lines ever “the most unforgettable women in the world wear Revlon.”

The thing is, by the time bad news shows up in your numbers, it is usually way too late to avoid a turnaround at best, or a bankruptcy and restructuring at worst. And nobody in their right mind goes into these things thinking they are going to be easy ([see this piece](#) on the human factors that make transformation a long-odds story).

So, ask whether there is evidence of any of the following to structure an honest assessment of how things are really going.

I don't buy my own company's products or services

In an ideal world, employees are the most enthusiastic ambassadors for a company's brand. So if they aren't literally bought in, that's an early warning that something about the “job” they want to get done isn't happening at your organization. It's even worse if your people are hiding the fact that competitors are doing a better job than you are, because that can create a real blind spot.

We are investing at the same levels or even more and not getting margins or growth in return

It's been called [“escalation of commitment to a failing course of action”](#) and it's very human. Even when the evidence suggests otherwise, we continue to invest time and resources into a business that is flat-lining or even going into decline.

Customers are finding cheaper or simpler solutions that are “good enough”

It is incredibly common in business to overshoot what customers really need — to put too much tech, too many features, too much ‘stuff’ into your offerings and expect customers to pay more. At some point, they stop being interested in more of the same. That's one reason why Dollar Shave Club's [hilarious on-line ad went viral](#). “Stop paying for shave tech you don't need” struck a real chord.

Competition is emerging from places we didn't expect

A trap of thinking of your competition in terms of industry is that it can create blind spots about ‘competitors’ who emerge from places you weren't paying attention to. For instance, makers of traditional products such as thermostats are finding their roles in their ecosystems dislodged by the entrance of new players, often from tech, seeking to create voice-operated controls or even whole smart home hubs enabled by technology.

Customers are no longer excited about what we have to offer

Customers can be a pain — what was [once an exciting shiny new object](#) eventually

becomes taken for granted, something all competitors in a field need to offer. Or new technologies offer up a better solution — for instance, streaming content has replaced content stored on physical devices like CD's and DVD's for many users, though not all!

We are not considered a top place to work by the people we would like to hire

The reality is that top talent is smart enough to go where they feel the best opportunities are, and will shun places that they feel are a waste of time. This is one reason why companies so often fail to attract the talent they would like, and are [confused as to the best way](#) to get those people in the door.

Some of our very best people are leaving

This is a major red flag that things are not progressing in a positive way! While its inevitable that there will be some churn if your organization is going through a major change, if you're losing the people you were counting on to get you through it, that's dangerous. AT&T's acquisition of Time Warner was doomed in part because the key executives the company was counting on left en masse.

Our stock is perpetually undervalued

Any publicly traded company can go through bad patches, particularly in the midst of a wrenching change or reorganization. But if this goes on for quarter after quarter, year after year, it doesn't take a genius to recognize that investors will eventually run out of patience. Our concept of the [Imagination](#)

[Premium is a useful idea here.](#)

Our technical people (scientists and engineers, for instance) are predicting that a new technology will change our business

In a sad irony, most of the time when a business is facing an existential shift — an inflection point — people within the company clearly understood what the challenge would bring. Unfortunately, they are often not party to significant strategic decisions and their warnings go un-heeded.

We are not being targeted by headhunters for talent

Ironically, when headhunters are circling your organization to try to poach talent, [that is a good thing](#). It's an even better thing if they are not successful!

The growth trajectory has slowed or reversed

Slowing growth is often a harbinger of long-term problems. As I have long said about Facebook parent Meta, their dubious business practices, lack of transparency and basic ubiquity would eventually undo what was undeniably a successful business model.

Very few innovations have made it successfully to market in the last two years

This issue is one of the dirty little secrets of being very successful. In light of high

performance in the base business, it can be all too easy for new businesses to be starved of oxygen and never see the light of day. Nokia's prescient invention of a device very like today's table computers is a cautionary tale — risk averse senior management didn't see the need to commercialize it.

The company is cutting back on benefits or pushing more risk to employees

This is often a sign that company leaders are starting to get concerned about cash flow or long-term expenses. It's a sure way to get tossed off the various [“best companies to work for”](#) lists, and indicates that company management has elected to focus on matters other than their people — which is often an early warning of problems to come.

Management is denying the importance of potential bad news

Richard Tedlow, a business historian, defines denial as “the unwillingness to see or admit a truth that ought to be apparent and is in fact apparent to many others.” In his book, *Denial*, Tedlow cites many examples of leadership reluctance to face the truth, including Henry Ford's insistence that customers wouldn't be interested in cars colored other than black. And a recent study found that the longer a Board waits to take decisive action on an underperforming CEO, the harder it is for the company to recover.

Using this idea

The more of these indicators you see, the more likely it is that your business is on the cusp or

well into the [erosion phase of a competitive advantage](#). This is a signal that you need to stop whatever you're doing and take a hard-nosed look at the health of your business. By the time the trouble is obvious to everyone, the inflection point has passed and it's too late.

Here's an application idea: Get a few people together from different parts of your business — not the usual suspects. What you want here is diversity of experience and exposure. Download and print out the handy-dandy diagnostic version of the questions described above (NOTE waiting to find out where best to post for downloading). Then take each question and go through the evaluation and answers as honestly as you can. My rule of thumb is that if your team checks “agree” for 5 or more of these thirteen indicators, you urgently need a strategy rethink because the early warning signs are there.

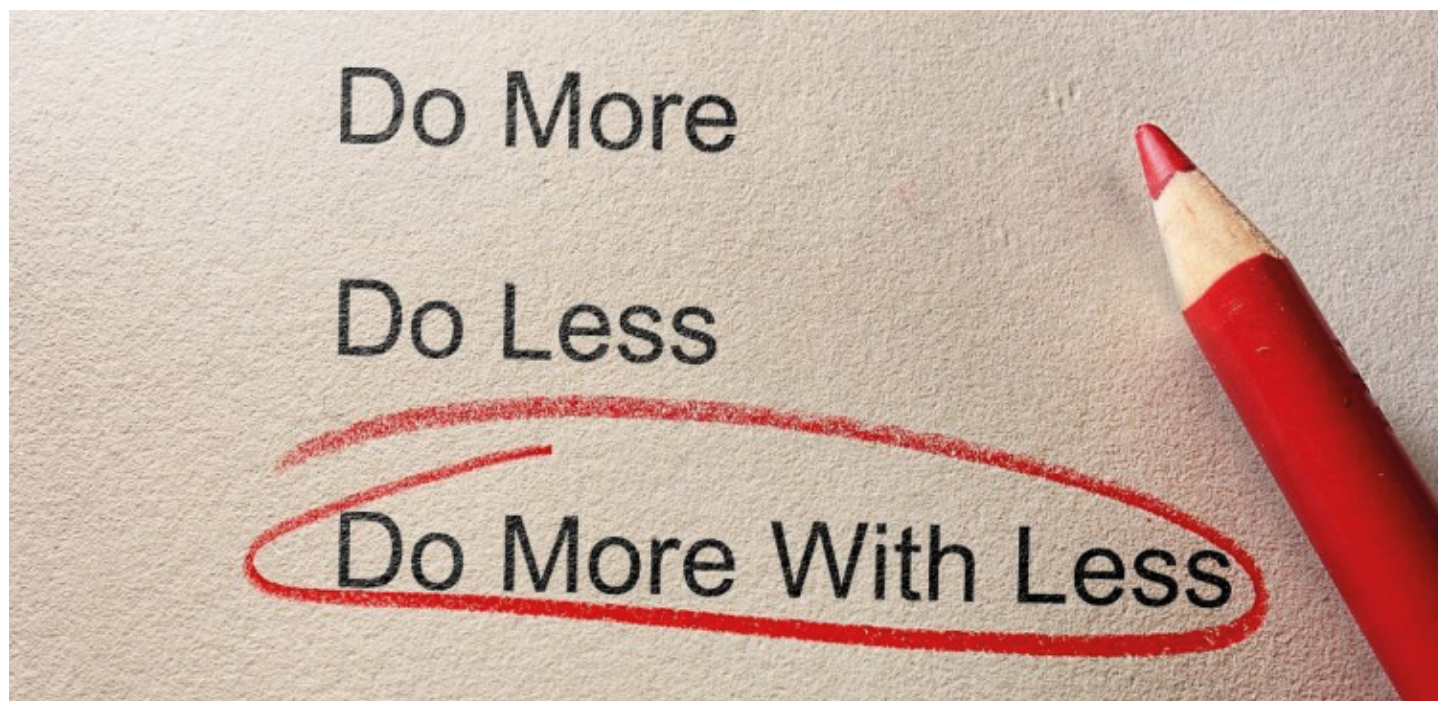
Have the results, they aren't great, and you'd like to mobilize the organization? Some options: I work directly with senior leadership teams through speaking and workshops, which can be custom designed.

You might also want to consider sending one or more people to my Columbia Business School course [“Leading Strategic Growth and Change.”](#) And over at my sister company, Valize, we have a wealth of experience and tools to build sustainable growth capability.

It's December — time to get 2023 set for success!

Source:

<https://rgmcgrath.medium.com/early-warnings-of-a-fading-competitive-advantage-b04c15f1df38>



The Surprising Connection Between Cost-Cutting and Improved Business Performance

By Robert Glazer | 4 min read

A few weeks back, I wrote about how many organizations are experiencing a [paradigm shift](#) that's changed their focus from growth to sustainability and profitability. After years of throwing money at every problem and opportunity, leaders are suddenly forced to take a step back and consider objectively what is working and not working on their teams and in their organizations.

This means evaluating people, projects, and products that are either not achieving the necessary outcomes, are depleting critical resources, or are causing the organization to [lose focus](#). And, in many cases, the decisions have significant effects on people in the organization.

As hard as these choices can be, the reality is that ignoring something that is not working almost always just prolongs the inevitable

and makes the end result more painful. It's not what you do, it's how you do it. We always have the option to [be kind and supportive](#) when making important decisions that impact others.

Over the past few months, I have talked to many leaders who made those difficult decisions to cut back, often for the first time. Consistently, I've heard from these leaders that, to their surprise, performance has improved beyond expectations after these tough choices. At face value, this seems somewhat counterintuitive. For example, one would never expect removing hundreds of employee hours, or significant resources, to produce a better outcome. Likewise, it seems illogical that a team would be happier when they have fewer resources to do the work.

And yet, these counterintuitive outcomes happen often. There are a few key reasons

that may explain this phenomenon.

Culture & Performance: Some employees have a [toxic effect](#) on a company's culture, regardless of their job performance, especially if they are leading teams. Similarly, for each employee who has been visibly struggling or underperforming in their job for a while, there has likely been a ripple effect or relaxing of standards for others. Both of these scenarios almost never fix themselves, and proactively addressing them often creates a classic case of addition by subtraction.

Busy & Productive: There is a fundamental difference between [being busy](#) and being productive. And few things harm an organization more than cases where people are very busy working on a product or service that is not gaining market traction, is losing money, or is draining resources from other parts of the organization. This is where being objective is critical; performance improves noticeably when resources and people are redirected to priorities that deliver positive outcomes for the company.

Cost of Complexity: Over the years, I have seen our organization, and so many others, make the case for adding additional resources with the promise of more scale and capacity. However, all too often, those promised outcomes never materialize, despite the added costs. The reason is that adding complexity has a hidden cost; as we add more people, processes, and systems, it often requires more people and systems to get the same things done. The reality is that sometimes a five-person team can get something done better and more efficiently than a 10-person team. I recently saw [this article](#) about hugely impactful companies with small teams that demonstrates how less can be more.

The reality is that our current environment is forcing organizations to make hard decisions they probably should have made earlier.

Great leadership means thinking about the challenges above before they become too hard to fix. A strong leader should regularly and proactively address at least the bottom 10 percent of customers, initiatives and employees on a performance basis.

Many employees are understandably nervous in this environment of cost cutting and efficiency. I recently had a discussion with Liz Wiseman on a soon-to-be-released Elevate Podcast episode where she shared some findings from the research from her book [Impact Players](#), where she researched the shared qualities of the most valuable employees. Here are some crucial highlights:

- While others do their job, Impact Players figure out how to support the most important priorities.
- While others wait for direction, Impact Players step up and lead.
- While others escalate problems, Impact Players move things across the finish line.
- While others attempt to minimize change, Impact Players learn and adapt to change.

The concept of less is more is not new, but it has become a renewed focus for leaders and organizations today. How can you make sure you are being a productive impact player, and not just busy?

Source:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/surprising-connection-between-cost-cutting-improved-business-glazer/>

9 Speaking Habits That Make You Sound Smarter

In today's competitive business world, it's not enough to be smart. You must be able to sway others to agree with you.



Source: Getty Images

By Geoffrey James | 5 min read

There are four kinds of speakers in the business world:

1. The incoherent, who meander, use tons of jargon, and talk of things interesting mostly to themselves.
2. The coherent, who can verbally communicate facts and opinions but seldom say anything memorable.
3. The articulate, who speak succinctly and clearly but whose words are seldom persuasive.
4. The eloquent, who use language and body language to win the hearts and

minds of their listeners.

Eloquent people sound smart, regardless of how intelligent they are. The opposite is true as well. Smart people who are incoherent (like some engineers I've known) often come off as if they're of limited intelligence.

Fortunately, eloquence is a skill that can be taught, practiced, and mastered. Here are nine easily mastered techniques to quickly make yourself more eloquent and smarter sounding.

1. Stand or sit with spine straight but relaxed.

Eloquence is more than just how you use language. It's also how you use your body language. The position of your back is the foundation of your body language and therefore the root of your eloquence.

Slumping communicates a lack of confidence in yourself and your words. The other extreme, a ramrod straight back, says "fight or flight." A straight but relaxed spine puts you in a mental and physical state from which words flow smoothly and easily.

2. Keep your chin up.

The position of your head is just as important as the position of your spine, a fact reflected in many common expressions. To "hold your head high," for example, is to show pride and determination. To be "downcast" means you're already beaten down.

An upright head is essential for eloquence for physiological reasons as well. A tense neck (inevitable if your head is facing

down) tends to strangle your words, preventing you from speaking clearly.

3. Focus on your listeners.

Eloquence is meaningful only if people are listening to you, and they won't listen if you're thinking about something else or if your eyes are wandering all over the place. Attention is mere speechifying.

Two special cases: Avoid glancing sideways; it makes you seem dishonest (shifty-eyed). If you must check your notes, use your eyes to look downward without nodding your head.

4. Speak loudly enough to be heard.

For maximum eloquence, speak loudly enough so people farthest from you can hear but not so loudly that it's uncomfortable for those in front.

If you're unsure of your volume, ask somebody in the back if they can hear you clearly. If they answer yes, say "How about this?" in a voice slightly less loud. If they answer no, crank your voice up a notch.

However, never raise your voice to a yell. Yelling makes you sound insane rather than eloquent. If you find yourself in that position, either ask for a microphone or request that people move closer.

5. Buttress words with appropriate gestures.

Use your hands to emphasize key points. The easy way to learn this skill is to watch how celebrities and popular public

speakers use gestures as they speak. Note how their hand movements seem to “emerge” from their words.

If you're not actively using a gesture, keep your hands still. Fiddling with your glasses, rattling your papers, scratching yourself, and so forth will distract the audience from your message and “cancel out” your eloquence.

6. Strategically position your body.

Add power to your words by moving your body appropriately. For example, if you're speaking to a group from a stage, you might move from one spot to another to signal that you're introducing a new idea.

Similarly, when sitting at the conference table, incline forward slightly when you want to emphasize a point. Reorient your sitting position when you move from one subject or concept to another.

7. Use vivid words that everyone understands.

Cliches (especially biz-blab) are the opposite of eloquence. Use unexpected but common words or phrases that illustrate points in a memorable manner. Example: “common as houseflies” rather than “dime a dozen.”

Also avoid words that your audience might not understand. Using fancy words makes you sound snobby, not smart. If you absolutely must introduce a term unfamiliar to the audience, define it in plain language.

8. Speak at different speeds.

Speaking at a single speed quickly turns whatever you're saying into a monotonous drone. Instead, slow down and speed up depending upon the importance of what you're communicating at the time.

If you're summarizing or going over background, speak more quickly than when you're providing new information. When you're describing introducing an important concept, slow down to give listeners time to absorb it.

9. Use pauses to create emphasis.

Silence isn't just golden; it's also the crowning glory of eloquence. For example, a slight pause before you're about to say something important create suspense. It leads your audience to “hang on your every word.”

Similarly, a pause after you've said something important emphasizes its importance and gives listeners a moment to reflect on its importance. A perfect example of the eloquence that comes with pausing is [Martin Luther King's “I Have a Dream” speech](#).

Source:

<https://www.inc.com/geoffrey-james/9-speaking-habits-that-make-you-sound-smarter.html>

Waste a Few Hours, so You Don't Waste Years

What are you doing this evening?

By **Darius Foroux** | 4 min read

Being productive doesn't mean utilizing every waking minute to do productive things. That's why I don't like "hustle culture." I don't need to be busy every minute.

Sometimes, spending a day doing various things around the house, maybe taking walk or doing some reading, can actually be more useful. These moments help us examine our lives.

But high achievers and ambitious people often have a problem with doing nothing. They feel like they need to be productive every single minute. So they get busy with minor things.

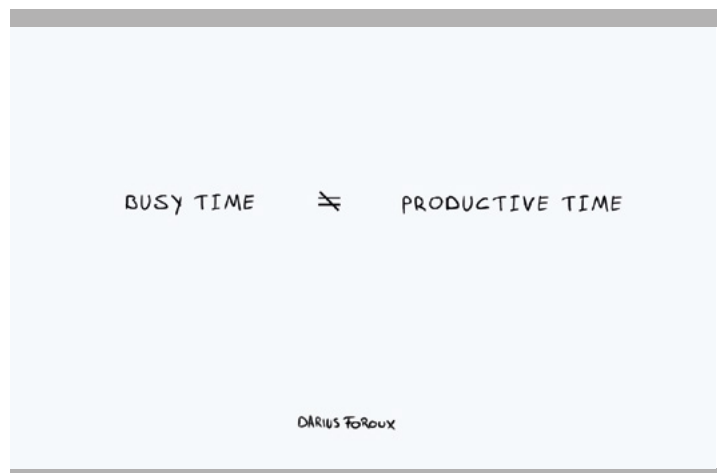
For example, when highly productive entrepreneurs have spare time, it's not unusual to see them making minor improvements to their business. They optimize their websites, clean up their brick-and-mortar shops, do more research on their industry, and so forth.

It's great to have the desire to improve yourself and your career. But you also don't want to be too extreme with busywork.

In his commencement speech at the University of Southern California, the billionaire Charlie Munger said that the one quality he especially admired about his business partner, Warren Buffett, was Buffett's ability to be a lifelong learner.

"If you take Warren Buffett and watched him with a time clock, I would say half of all the time he spends is sitting on his ass and reading."

Having that time and space to think allows us to step back and look at the bigger picture. As the platitude goes; work on your business, not (only) in



your business.

Good vs bad waste

Doing something that helps us, in the long run, is actually not a waste of time when you think about it. So how do you "waste" your time wisely?

Avoid spending too much time on social media. We both know that's not good for you. It's also a good opportunity to switch from being a consumer to a creator. As a creator, you want to spend time making something. At the same time, you can also discover new insights and inspiration.

Some time ago, I was talking to a friend who asked me for some book recommendations. He said he wanted something to read, but had no specific topic in mind. Which is also why he didn't know what to search for.

I suggested he check out a local bookstore instead. And he can pick whatever got his interest. He ended up spending half a day in the bookstore, browsing various books.

And that's how he discovered his passion for trail running: When he read the book, *The White Spider* by Heinrich Harrer. (Harrer was an Austrian

mountaineer. The film, 7 Years in Tibet, was based on Harrer's autobiographical book of the same name). The book inspired him to join mountain hiking groups on the weekends. And from there, he upgraded into doing trail marathons.

The next time you're low on energy, or you feel like you're on autopilot, or you're stuck on something, you can try to focus on bigger fundamentals in your life or career.

- Instead of worrying about the next email or social media post, take the time to read a few good books. Your next business idea or design inspiration just might come from that.
- If you're working on a new diet, this could mean not worrying so much about that Saturday night you went out drinking with friends. Instead, focus on the 20 other meals you'll be taking throughout the week. The impact of those other meals is much more significant.
- For creative writers (or those who use the written word to persuade people to act), you can spend a day strolling or talking to other people, or even watching a documentary. Personally, I've seen that stepping away from writing for a short while can improve my ideas.

Killing time with intention

While writing my latest book on investing and stoicism, I did some research on the investor Mohnish Pabrai, founder of Pabrai Funds and author of The Dhando Investor. He is well known for having spent more than \$650,000 to have lunch with Warren Buffett. And for trying to run an empty calendar.

I've observed that Pabrai has stoic tendencies with his investments. He manages his emotions when it comes to investment decisions. And he sticks to his plans, whether the market is up or down. He adopted what Buffett said about investing being a no-called-strike game.

"The stock market is a no-called-strike game. You don't

have to swing at everything—you can wait for your pitch. The problem when you are a money manager is that your fans keep yelling, 'Swing, you bum!'"

When it comes to achieving things, people often think about action. But as Buffett said, it's also about waiting for the right pitch.

While other people busy themselves scampering through thousands of companies to invest in, Pabrai simply sits back when he can't find a company that he knows for sure will increase his profits tenfold. He doesn't concern himself with opportunities that might only bring moderate margins.

The mathematical statistician Nassim Taleb, author of Fooled by Randomness, a book about the randomness of success and failure, once observed:

"The only measure of success is how much time you have to kill."

Successful individuals understand that personal energy is limited. So it's important that we only spend our energy and time on things that matter most.

So what does this mean in daily life? It's all about being aware that it's okay to kill time. **I call this: Killing time with intention.**

That's because if you waste time deliberately, then it's not a waste. You did it with intent. And the intent is to enjoy your life.

To be productive in the long term. And not to kill yourself by overworking for a few years and then burning out for an even longer time.

So, what are you doing this evening? Nothing?

Source:

<https://dariusforoux.medium.com/waste-a-few-hours-so-you-dont-waste-years-9cf6d334e586>

NATURE Calling For ACTION STATIONS! GEOENGINEERING

Spraying Sulfur into the Stratosphere & Blocking the Sun to Counter Climate Change



Spencer Bokat-Lindell has raised the specter of Man once again fiddling in the exclusive domain of the Creator by attempting to block the sun in order to counter climate change (NYT 17-1-23). Once a taboo idea thought too dangerous to research, geo-engineering is becoming more main stream, he says. However, he adds, no proponents of geo-engineering research champion it as a substitute for transitioning away from fossil fuels, but merely as a measure to buy the world a bit more time to do so.

Speculative technology

Quite recently a two-person start-up company by the name of Make Sunset claimed that it had launched weather balloons filled with reflective sulfur particles into the sky somewhere over the coast of Baja California, a first of its kind field test of a climate

“Carbon removal through direct air capture is typically considered a safe and elegant form of geo-engineering, but the technology is nascent, inherently slow and prohibitively expensive. Sulfur aerosol injection would be relatively cheap and easy to deploy immediately at a planetary scale and cost as little as \$2 billion per year”

- Spencer Bokat-Lindell (Staff Editor, NYT)

intervention known as geo-engineering which is a branch of speculative technology that promises to counteract and even reverse global warming by altering Earth's atmosphere as the world continues to fall short of the Paris Agreement goals and the costs of climate change continue to mount.

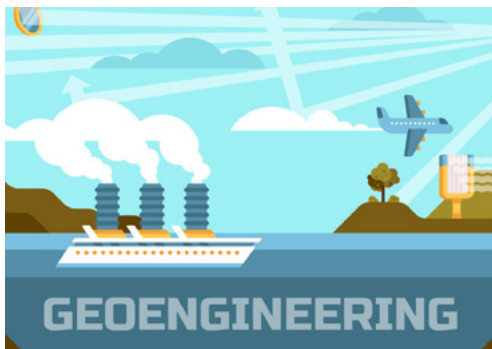
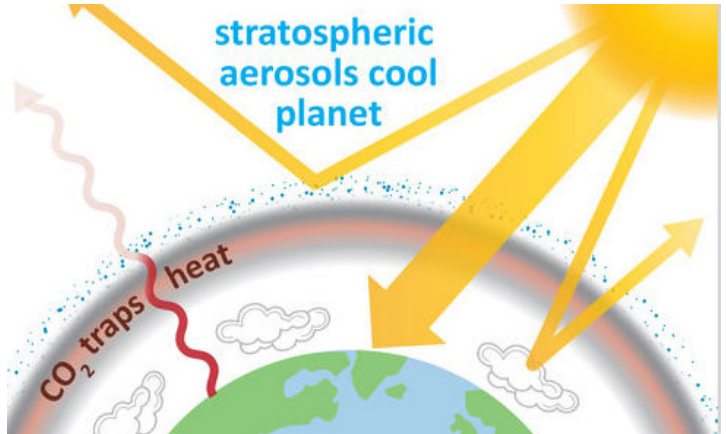
Carbon removal through direct air capture is typically considered a safe and elegant form of geo-engineering, but the technology is nascent, inherently slow and prohibitively expensive, suited only for those industries that are hard to decarbonize like aviation. Sulfur aerosol injection, on the other hand, would be relatively cheap and easy to deploy immediately at a planetary scale and cost as little as \$2 billion per year.

Its proponents point out that because carbon dioxide persists in the environment for thousands of years, eliminating carbon emissions would only prevent the world from heating up further; it wouldn't cool the world back down, at least not for anyone alive today. Even if the world managed to decarbonize by 2050, extreme weather events and sea level rise would pose a greater threat than they do now for many centuries to come.

Emissions cuts alone = dangerous fantasy

Emissions cuts are necessary, wrote David Keith, a professor of applied physics and public policy at Harvard,





in The Times in 2021. “But pretending that climate change can be solved with emissions cuts alone is a dangerous fantasy. If you want to reduce risks from the emissions already in the atmosphere, whether that’s to prevent

“Pretending that climate change can be solved with emissions cuts alone is a dangerous fantasy. If you want to reduce risks from the emissions already in the atmosphere you must look to carbon removal, solar geo-engineering and local adaptation”

- David Keith (professor of applied physics & public policy, Harvard University)

forest fires in Algeria, heat waves in British Columbia or floods in Germany, you must look to carbon removal, solar geo-engineering and local adaptation.”

Spraying sulfur into the stratosphere might bring down the Earth’s temperature but it could also turn the sky white, change weather patterns, increase the spread of malaria, deplete the ozone layer and alter the light that plants need to grow. Some regions might suffer while others benefit, creating the potential for conflict.

Indo-Pak flashpoint

“Imagine if India started pumping sulfur into the atmosphere only to see a huge drought hit Pakistan,” Bill McKibben wrote in The New Yorker. “Two nuclear powers already at odds, with one convinced that the other is harming

“There will be a point when it has to be either geo-engineering or total destruction”

- Anote Tong (former president of Kiribati)

its people.” Also, it could detract from efforts to transition away from fossil fuels if it were perceived as an insurance policy against climate change, and individuals might put off taking steps to reduce their carbon footprints. Parties with a large stake in the fossil fuel industry might lobby for pumping sulfur into the air as an alternative to keeping oil and gas in the ground. Make Sunsets, the start-up, is already selling “cooling credits” as carbon offsets.

Civilizational addiction

The cooling effect of sulfur lasts for only about one to two years. If humanity became dependent on aerosol injection as a substitute for de-carbonization rather than a compliment, it could become a kind of civilizational addiction impossible to safely stop. It would have to be continued without fail year after year for 1000 years or more lest the termination shock from cessation

“Imagine if India started pumping sulfur into the atmosphere only to see a huge drought hit Pakistan. Two nuclear powers already at odds, with one convinced that the other is harming its people”

- Bill McKibben (author of The End of Nature)

of the intervention unleash pent-up global warming that would fry the planet in a matter of decades, according to Raymond Pierrehumbert, an Oxford physicist.

Many people are beginning to feel that global warming may reach a point where the world becomes desperate enough to try blocking

the sun with sulfur. Given how cheap it would be, relatively speaking, a rogue country or billionaire just might do so unilaterally with or without knowledge of the potential consequences.

Some countries, particularly less developed and low-lying ones, may be closer to crossing that theoretical threshold than others. Anote Tong, a former president of Kiribati, a Pacific island nation on the frontlines of sea level rise, told The New Yorker that there will be a point when it has to be either geo-engineering or total destruction. Analyze that, Greta Thunberg.

“Climate protection is not a crime”

– Greta Thunberg

Gung-ho Greta

Meanwhile, Luetzerath, a village in western Germany, is in the news as thousands of climate activists marched in a large-scale protest against its demolition to make way for the Garzweiler open-cast coal mine extension operated by energy firm RWE and one of the largest in Europe. Gung-ho Greta Thunberg marched at the front of the procession accompanied by a brass band, and there were some violent clashes with the police (The News-on-Sunday, 15-1-23).

Energy giant RWE has permission for the expansion under a compromise agreement signed with the federal government led by Social Democrat Chancellor Olaf Scholz, and has agreed to stop producing electricity with coal in western Germany by 2030, eight years earlier than previously planned. The struggle over Luetzerath comes as Germany has restarted mothballed coal power plants amid an energy crisis triggered by the Russian invasion of Ukraine (Dawn 9-1-23).

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