Creating an Island of Stability in an Ocean of Change

Alice M. Fairhurst
Career Development Coordinator
Jet Propulsion Laboratory
California Institute of Technology

Consortium of Small Liberal Arts Colleges

Friday, October 21, 1994
THE PARADIGM SHIFT

MECHANIC AL AGE

Standardization
Replaceable Parts
Hierarchies
Defined Structures

INFORMATION AGE

Customization
Unique Abilities
Networks
Flexible Connections

A. M. Fairhurst, p. 1
Oct. 21, 1994   JPL
THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS

MECHANICAL AGE
(Predictable Environment)

/RESPONSIBILITY
Positionally Defined

AUTHORITY
Delegated from Above

DECISION-MAKING
Positionally Defined
May Seek Advisement from Others

INFORMATION AGE
(Dynamic Environment)

Personal Empowerment
Contextual or Changing

Seek Buy-in from Others
Group involvement - Research & Advise

A. M. Fairhurst, p. 2
Oct. 21, 1994 JPL
LIVING WITH PARADOX

Do More  Spend Less
Centralize  Decentralize
Downsize  Value People
Maintain  Experiment
Take Risks  Be Right
Act Short Term  Think Long Term
Individualize  Institutionalize
Change  Stabilize
Internal Focus  External Focus
PARADOX SOLUTIONS #1

Leaving the world of either/or thinking......

Both/and thinking.....

Best-of-both thinking.....

Expand the concept 'n time and/or space.....

Neither/nor neither.....

Adapted from Peter Stroh and Wynne W. Miller's "Learning to Thrive on Paradox"
PARADOX SOLUTIONS #2

Be sure to do ALL of the following....

Gather the FACTS

Brainstorm the POSSIBILITIES

Assess the possible CONSEQUENCES

Consider the IMPACT ON PEOPLE

Adapted from the Zig Zag Model of Jungian Functions
WORKING WITHIN YOUR INSTITUTION

What is the purpose of the institution?

...as seen by the Board of Trustees

...as seen by the Administration

...as seen by the Faculty

...as seen by the Students

...as seen by Academic Counseling

...as seen by Career Counseling

Are there conflicts in the PERSPECTIVES?

Is there a shared VISION?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT</th>
<th>JOB MARKET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts Generalist OR</td>
<td>Ability to Perform AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Specialist</td>
<td>Adapt to Job Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impatient to Make an</td>
<td>Pay Your Dues; Wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Your Turn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youthful Idealism</td>
<td>Experience Untested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire Meaningful Work</td>
<td>Opportunities Tied to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bottom Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want High Salary</td>
<td>Cost-Cutting Trends/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Downsizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree = Finished with</td>
<td>Keep Skills Current;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Lifelong Learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPLYING THE FOUR STRATEGIES OF CAREER MANAGEMENT

STABLE OR GROWTH TIMES

Up the Ladder
Power
Achievement

Steady State
Expertise
Security

CHANGING OR DOWNSIZING TIMES

Spiral
Growth
Creativity

Transitory
Variety
Independence

Adapted from the Driver-Brousseau Career Concepts Model

A. M. Fairhurst, p. 8
Oct. 21, 1994 JPL
BALANCING COMPETING SOCIAL ARCHETYPES

SECURITY ISSUES

**ORPHAN**
- Pessimistic
- Anticipates Problems

**INNOCENT**
- Optimistic
- Oblivious to Change

SELF-ACTUALIZATION ISSUES

**DESTROYER**
- Cleans House for Efficiency
- Oblivious to Human Cost

**CREATOR**
- Creates New Forms
- Always Has to Be New

Adapted from Carol S. Pearson’s *Awakening the Hero Within*
CREATING YOUR ISLAND OF STABILITY’??’
IN AN OCEAN OF CHANGE

● Know the different ASSUMPTIONS between the:
  Mechanical Age                                      Information Age.

● Apply different STYLES OF THINKING:
  both/and or best-of-both                           neither/nor
  expand the concept in time and/or space

● Do a COMPLETE CHECK when problem-solving:
  gather facts                                      brainstorm possibilities
  assess consequences                               consider impact on people

● Review differing PERSPECTIVES to find the shared VISION

● Be able to apply the FOUR STRATEGIES of career management

● Seek to BALANCE conflicting issues and archetypes.
SELECTED READINGS


