

In Search of Kiwi EXCELLENCE

1. We are in the midst of unprecedented (“exponential”) change—at once exciting and frightening. And wholly independent of geographic location.
2. The principal role of the state is to provide for the betterment and development of its citizens—**PEOPLE FIRST.**
3. Businesses—small/large/one at a time—are **THE** engine of national human capital development. (AND must necessarily act accordingly.)
4. **PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST ...** maximizes mid- to long-term growth and financial success for businesses of every size and flavor. (PPF is NOT a “soft” idea/strategy. It is the ... ultimate “hard” idea/strategy. *In Search of Excellence*: “Hard is soft. Soft is hard.”)
5. Putting people first means by definition that ... **SUPERB/MIND-BLOWING TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT IS INVESTMENT PRIORITY #1.**
- 5A. “Insane” commitment to training and development is effectively guaranteed (!) to mitigate if not reverse “brain drain.” (Make NZ a net top-talent attractor via ... “**GUARANTEED**” **EXCELLENCE IN HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT.** Why not?)
6. Education requires almost a 180-degree reversal—age 4 to 84. Creativity is long-term national resource #1—and schools (all around the world) are “excellent” at mercilessly destroying creativity and its handmaiden, entrepreneurial instinct. (NOBODY ... is “doing it right”—which in and of itself presents an enormous opportunity!)
- 6A. The new technologies must be unabashedly AND relentlessly AND creatively AND audaciously applied to education—age 4 to 84. (Beware the tenacity of the descendents of Ned Ludd!)
- 6B. A significant share of the VERY best and VERY brightest of our university graduates must be radically (BIG incentives) induced to do “national service” as teachers for a limited period of time. (Remember: “Exponential” change—youth is imperative in our teacher corps.)
7. Giant companies are long-term ... **LOSERS.** (The evidence is ... **UNEQUIVOCAL.**
- 7A. Which is to say **UNEQUIVOCALLY**: The strength of a nation in general, and the likes of NZ in particular, is its **MITTELSTAND ...** smallish to middle-sized specialist superstars committed to ... “**OUTRAGEOUSLY HIGH VALUE ADDED.**”
- 7B. New-tech allows locals following any path to be global to an unprecedented degree—i.e., “micro-multinationals.”
- 7B1. “Social business” is a buzzphrase that turns out to be “the real thing.” Radical social engagement practices are changing the definitions everything from “organizing” to “financing” to “service/customer experience” to “marketing” ... to the essence of the brand itself.
- 7C. There are no industry limitations to “Mittelstand-ing”: **ANYTHING** is fair game, not just the likes of software/bio-tech.
- 7D. “Commodity” is a [DISASTROUS] state-of-mind. With determination and an unwavering commitment to innovation and excellence ... **ANYTHING** can be **DRAMATICALLY** differentiated.
- 7E. Listen to Steve Jobs/BMW: Embrace terms such as “Insanely Great” and “Radically Thrilling.” (Which can apply to a supply chain system as well as a scintillating product.)
- 7F. Public sector-ites: Dramatic improvements in support for ease-of-doing-business can be accomplished w/o legislation; government agencies are invariably their own worst enemies.
8. An effective economy, long-term, is built upon: (1) No-holds-barred human capital development. And: (2) **RELENTLESS EXPERIMENTATION.** (“Ready. FIRE. Aim.” “Fail. Forward. Fast.”)
- 8A. Many/most “eggs in one or two baskets” (products, partners) is a perilous strategy in general and ... **LITERALLY INSANE ...** in tumultuous times. [Hint: these are “tumultuous times” of “exponential” change.]
9. A failure to fully take advantage of the talents and energy of **WOMEN** is a sign of ... **STAGGERING ECONOMIC IGNORANCE.**
- 9A. Women are the premier purchasers of ... **EVERYTHING.** Men are incapable of designing products for women. Women tend to be significantly better leaders in the emerging, less hierarchical world. **COMPANIES WITH BALANCED F-M LEADERSHIP TEAMS PERFORM DRAMATICALLY BETTER [FINANCIALLY, ETC.] THAN M-DOMINATED INSTITUTIONS.**
10. **READ. READ. READ. READ. READ. READ. READ. READ.**
11. **EXCELLENCE** is a state of mind. If not **EXCELLENCE ...** why the hell bother to get up in the morning?
12. “**WOW**” is a state of mind. If not **WOW ...** why the hell bother to get up in the morning?
13. New Zealand **IS** special. New Zealand **IS** different. Short-term economic panaceas should not stand in the way of a strategy based upon “**Insanely-High-Value-Added-The-Kiwi-Way.**” Timidity is a loser’s approach amidst exponential change.