

Sustainability in a Product/Service Promotion Model Based on A Spiritual Approach Through a Guided Meditation Technique in Latin-American CEOs

Enrique Reig,

Research Director,
Bernardo Quintana Institute, Mexico.

Bernardo Quintana-Kawage,

President,
Bernardo Quintana Institute, Mexico.

José Llovera,

Researcher,
Bernardo Quintana Institute, Mexico.

Isaac Jauli,

Former Researcher,
Theosophical Society Adyar, India.

Eloy García,

Professor,
Instituto de Empresa, Madrid.

Sharon Aiza-Engel,

Researcher,
Bernardo Quintana Institute, Mexico.

Jorge Díaz,

Organizational Private Consultant,
Chile.

ABSTRACT

In the current investigation, a guided meditation technique was designed to reach the spiritual aspect of the inner consciousness in order to receive its influence and by being able to think according to sustainable patterns. During the meditation and through a marketing process, participants selected the best options of products or services which fit their spiritual concerns. In the end, participants discovered ways to do business by taking care of the environment and by being able to feel joy due to the approach they had with their inner spiritual aspect.

Keywords: Meditation, Spiritual Approach, Sustainability, Marketing.

INTRODUCTION:

The conventional goal of marketing is to convince consumers to buy products and services. Consumers usually have different degrees of convincement. The marketing specialist studies ways to increase the desires and disposition to purchase. In many cases, there are cognitive manipulations in the consumer's mind.

How can we apply a model to respect the consumer's mind and at the same time be able to sell products and services?

PRODUCT/SERVICE PROMOTION MODELS: MARKETING "ADVANCES":

Marketing as a science of selling is developing new ways to convince customers to buy products and services. There are environmental necessities which are covered through time: improve relations between the private sector, governmental organizations and NGOs by using marketing techniques. Also, explore the evolution of the relation between the consumers and their favorite brands by calculating the return of the investment in marketing. Harrison, D. E., & Hair, J. F. (2017) report how advanced technology is enabling direct sellers to

create and maintain relationships. Méndez Suárez, M., & Estevez, M. (2016) calculate the return on marketing investment (ROMI) as a metric of profitability and the calculation of economic value added of marketing (EVAM) as a metric of shareholders' value creation. Darío Fernández-Ledesma, J., & Duque, S. (2017) study how direct innovation process into a management model. Saboo, A. R., Kumar, V., & Park, I. (2016) studied the interesting variations in the evolution of consumer–brand relationship; and Barroso-Méndez, M. J., Galera-Casquet, C., & Valero-Amaro, V. (2015) Proposed the Relationship Marketing Theory as a tool to improve the outcomes in relations between private sector firms and NGOs.

There's an attempt to sell spirituality as a product. Kaur, G. (2016) mentioned that the increasing volatility in economies, with other factors such as prolonged recession, and consequent dissatisfaction with consumerism has put a question mark over the meaning of life. It's interesting that this author considered the relation between all of those disappointments with the meaning of life. He also proposes a conceptual model through an innovative concept of technology for the depolarization of data for a customized spiritual fulfillment experience for a profitable relational model. This means technology applied to the depolarization of data to obtain a spiritual experience. We really have to reflect on what we do and what we call spirituality.

As it is evident that there's a wrong pattern of people applying the wrong use of technology to everything including spirituality. For this reason, it's important to define the limits of the technology. Spiritual concerns are part of the decision-making in each individual, not a product to manipulate or sell.

Foxall, G. R. (2015) on the other hand, mentioned that the theory of the marketing firm shows how organizations respond to consumer behavior by studying and managing the consumers' behavior by setting scope and pattern of convenient reinforcement. Then, they affirm, the desirable environment-impacting consumption and corporate attempts to reverse its impact can therefore be, at least theoretically, understood in operant terms.

It is necessary to work in the profound reflection of the costumers and teach them how to connect with their spiritual part. Otherwise the consumers will be considered animals capable to react by stimulation and desirable reinforcement. Singh, S., Vrontis, D., & Thrassou, A. (2011) realized how some consumers react positively to environmental care. In their research, they found a clear purchase pattern that favors gasoline brands perceived to be the most environmentally friendly, in fact, to a degree that consumers are willing to drive a long way to locate their favorite gasoline stations. Kang, M. (2013) applied the concept of value proximity to examine its effects on people's attitudes towards an organization. To do so, this study adopted the notion of conceptual fluency to examine the moderating role of personal values, such as pro-environment versus pro-development. The key finding of this study is that individual public company attitudes are significantly enhanced by the degree of value proximity in organizational messages.

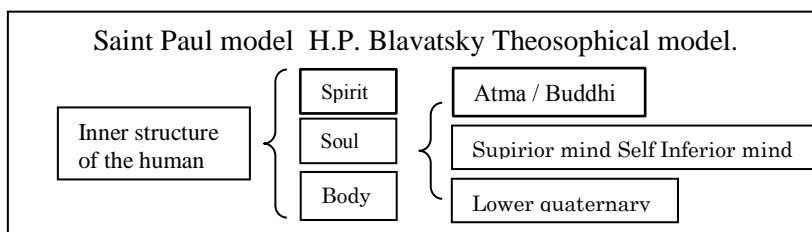
SPIRITUAL APPROACH:

The Inner Structure of the Human Being

*May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through.
 May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 Saint Paul 1 Thessalonians 5:23*

In this quote, Saint Paul is describing the inner structure of the human being: spirit, soul and body. From subtle (spirit) to dense (body) human being, there is a continuum of spirit and matter. H.P. Blavatsky¹ described, based in the Advaita model, how the inner structure is very similar to Saint Paul: Spirit (Atma), first recipient of spirit (Buddhi), Mind (divided into superior and inferior) and the lower dense part called inferior quaternary. In the center of the mind we can find the self, the thinker, the decision maker.

Comparison Between Saint Paul's Model and Theosophical Model of Inner Structure



¹ The Key to Theosophy is an 1889 book by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

The section in the middle combines a) superior mind oriented to spirit, b) lower mind oriented to physical body and c) thinker. It is a bridge with one driver which the ancient Greeks called "auriga" charioteer, driver of the winged car that is pulled by two horses: one that tends to go down and another one that tends to go up. The decisions made by the coachman will depend on the person's status during their life on the physical level.

The spirit inspires the person towards the common good, towards unity, solidarity, beauty, nature, truth, happiness. On the other hand, the body with the personal ego pushes the person to the division, the excessive possession, the egoism, the dispossession, the physical pleasure. In the middle we find the self. In the end, the self will decide persuaded by those two forces creating loving unity or enmity division.

Sustainability², as an inspirational value, is oriented to the superior mind. Unmerciful exploitation of physical resources is oriented to lower mind. Marketing could deceive us into assuming that it sells sustainability when it sells exploitation in the fund. Everything will depend on the advertising strategy and the generated message.

It is necessary to create a model which guarantees that person is related to the superior mind and that truly achieves a sustainable vision, ideas and strategy to command.

Model for Leaders to Reach the Superior Mind with Sustainable Ideas

The inner garden is where the unit of life is contacted, and feeling as part of the totality is enjoyed internally by being oriented towards the superior mind. We only have to facilitate it for people to get to that place. The technique to achieve this is guided meditation. The spiritual place is there and we facilitate the connection. We call this part: Connection with true sustainability through a guided meditation. After this, in the same meditation, we ask participants to find products and services compatible with the interior garden oriented to sustainability. Subsequently, they must choose the best by discernment. Discernment is a superior mind quality. After this, they have to transform these ideas into products and services while visualizing the promotion technique respecting the people's inner minds. Finally, they will visualize the positive effects in sellers, consumers, environment, future generations and so on.

METHOD:

Participants:

A sample of 30 CEOs from Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Chile and Colombia was selected. Ages between 32 to 47 years old, all with MBA studies, all working in private sector firms. All of them were selected by email as they were former students from different universities in Latin American countries.

Instrument and Procedure:

A meditative-induced practice was developed partially based on Jacobson's technique³. It was combined with guided meditation which was developed by Reig and Jauli (2006). After the relaxation starts, the participants have to visualize their inner structure: The bridge Antakarana⁴, the lower animal part as a stone bridge, and the spiritual side form white clouds. After this, the participants need to distinguish between the superior divine mind staying in the part of bridge with the white clouds, and the inferior part stays in bridge full of mud and rocks. In the middle, they need to visualize a person in position to choose different scenarios: superior, neutral and inferior. After this, participants imagine that the mud and rocks fall into a river and they form an image that resembles a transparent egg⁵ which involves the thinker and the superior mind. After this, the leader asks them to create a model of sustainable promotion of products and services. Then, they imagine the first chain of consequences of the election, and then the second chain of consequences. This means the consequences of the consequences. In the last part of this meditation, they need to answer the following questions:

Are all of those images good for the stakeholders? Are those ideas realizable? Do you feel pleased imagining scenarios that are good, even for the physical environment?

² The United Nations Millennium Declaration identified principles and treaties on sustainable development, including economic development, social development and environmental protection it continued using three domains: economics, environment and social sustainability. In Businesses: The owners directives and employees being asked to create long-term practices that do more to respect the environment, the well-being of employees and the prospects of future generations. Meanwhile, these same businesses are also expected to improve profitability, fund innovation and increase market share for current stakeholders.

³ Jacobson, E. (1938). *Progressive relaxation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

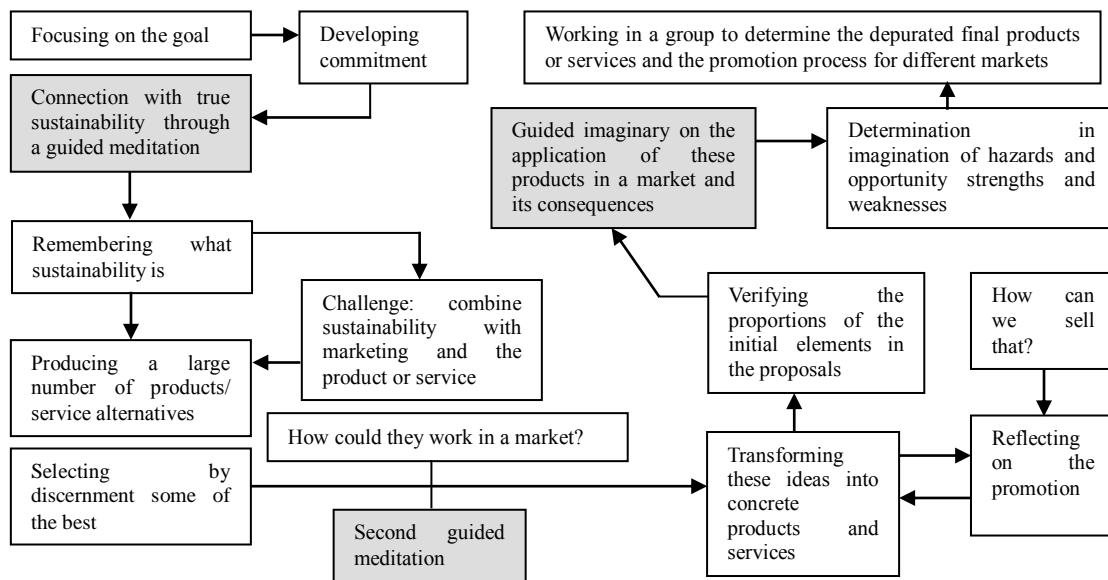
Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is a method of deep muscle relaxation, based on the premise that muscle tension is the body's psychological response to anxiety-provoking thoughts and that muscle relaxation blocks anxiety

⁴ The Sanskrit Antakarana language term ('antár:' internal organ ', and karaṇa:' cause ') represents the metaphysical heart, which the Hindus believe to be the site of the soul, mind and true intelligence.

⁵ The Egg is a powerful universal symbol representing the primordial source from which the Deity and the materials for the creation of the cosmos come into existence. It is an image frequently found in the cosmogonies of many cultures and civilizations, including the Maya, Hindu, Chinese, Egyptian, Greek, and many others. In the case of meditation the egg permit the creation of a space of interaction between the thinker and his superior mind.

All of participants experiment different degrees of satisfaction with the images. After the participants were back from the meditative stage, they wrote a set of person-environment-firm purposes for the next 5 years as CEOs in double side expressions. First, they draw the image of the future (progression), and after this they wrote in reverse as if they were already in the year 2022 and now they must tell what was happening while the goals were being achieved. For example, we are in September of 2022 and I want to write a diary specifying what has happened. The first steps we took as a firm at the end of 2017 were... the obstacles we had were the following... the way we were able to dodge them was..., so let's go to 2018 where we find ourselves with advancements of the goals, and so on, successively. We share with them a recording with the technique of meditation and we ask that before strategically planning, they would symbolically join the higher mind and let their imagination flow to see scenarios.

The meditative process is explained in the following schema:



CONCLUSIONS:

Wayne Dyer mentioned this about the meditation technique: A great hallmark of mental wellness is the ability to be in the present moment, fully and with no thoughts of being elsewhere. The meditation is very important to be calm and think correctly choosing the best possible scenario for all. Obviously, the interest in the firm goals are important for CEOs, but the possibility to find goals capable to embrace social and environmental goals is possible only if thinkers are situated in the superior mind.

Many times, the CEOs and other social actors diminish their responsibility by using euphemisms as self-indulgence. Edward de Bono (2017) mentioned that when speaking about the limitations of leaders, the solution is to be education. They (the leaders) don't have good education, they don't prepare people, they were formed in traditional education and they don't encourage people to replace them.

There is a combination of ignorance, fear and indulgence in our leaders. They are afraid of making mistakes, of losing prestige, of losing popularity. They are not afraid of affecting the environment or another person if that is seen well by the strong part of society. We need them to lose fear and a solution is to move them to the upper mind just because there is no fear there. Fear belongs to the mutable or lower structure. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry⁶ mentioned the following phrase: People have forgotten this truth, the fox said. "But you mustn't forget it. You become responsible forever for what you've tamed. You're responsible for your rose. We have to reflect on what it means to be responsible when we have affected something. Sigmund Freud⁷ mentioned: Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility.

The process of contacting the higher mind will allow the CEOs to generate better scenarios that could be combined with the notions of sustainability. It is not easy, but is possible.

Initially, there were 38 aspirants to participate but 8 could not follow the procedure, they were lost in the

⁶ I Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, in *The Little Prince*
⁷ Sigmund Freud, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*

process. The remaining 30 participants could do the exercise. They all expressed that they felt very well. 5 of them questioned that the company demands of its directors could interfere with the results. Through a brief blog, the rest of the participants explained that this was not viable and that in any case the shareholders should also do the exercise.

The idea of a better world was well received by everyone.

This type of research is a possibility to help the CEOs to deepen themselves to design better scenarios for everyone. We recommend further research and applications for this system or similar ones in order to improve the achievements of our young leaders.

REFERENCES:

- Barroso-Méndez, M. J., Galera-Casquet, C., & Valero-Amaro, V. (2015). Proposal of a social alliance success model from a relationship marketing perspective: A meta-analytical study of the theoretical foundations. *Business Research Quarterly*, 18(3), 188-203.
- Darío Fernández-Ledesma, J., & Duque, S. (2017). Representative variables of marketing and trading based innovation management model. *Dyna*, 84(200), 351-355.
- De Bono, Edward (2017). *Interview Good or bad hombres: Leaders' dilemmas*. in the book *Anti-euphemistic reasoning on leaders' decision making*. Editor Enrique Reig. Moldova: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Foxall, G. R. (2015). Consumer Behavior Analysis and the Marketing Firm: Bilateral Contingency in the Context of Environmental Concern. *Journal Of Organizational Behavior Management*, 35(1/2), 44-69.
- Harrison, D. E., & Hair, J. F. (2017). The Use of Technology in Direct-Selling Marketing Channels: Digital Avenues for Dynamic Growth. *Journal Of Marketing Channels*, 24(1/2), 39-50.
- Kang, M. (2013). When an Organizational Message Resonates With Personal Values of Publics: Implications for Strategic Communication Management. *Atlantic Journal Of Communication*, 21(4), 185-199.
- Kaur, G. (2016). Customer Interface in Spiritual Tourism via "Synaptic CRM Gap": An Integrative Technology-Based Conceptual Model for Relationship Marketing. *Journal Of Relationship Marketing*, 15(4), 326-343.
- Méndez Suárez, M., & Estevez, M. (2016). Calculation of marketing ROI in marketing mix models, from ROMI, to marketing-created value for shareholders, EVAM. *Universia Business Review*, (52), 18-45
- Reig, E. and Jauli, i. (2006). *Codigos del Proyecto humano* (human project codes) Barcelona: Romanya Valls imprint.
- Saboo, A. R., Kumar, V., & Park, I. (2016). Using Big Data to Model Time-Varying Effects for Marketing Resource (Re)Allocation. *MIS Quarterly*, 40(4), 911-940.
- Singh, S., Vrontis, D., & Thrassou, A. (2011). Green Marketing and Consumer Behavior: The Case of Gasoline Products. *Journal Of Transnational Management*, 16(2), 84-10.
