

What Counts is Not Always Counted. Education in the Post Industrial Era

Yehuda Kahane¹

The focus on economic motivation in the industrial era made us start the post-industrial with dramatic exposure to immense environmental and societal risks. The Post-industrial era represents a new paradigm and is led by a more complex and multidimensional metrics, where the economic motivation is escorted by additional targets. In the Paris Agreement (December 2015) The United Nations has proposed a new set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ALL member countries in committed to reach the goals by the end of 2030.

Clearly, one of the major challenges in the paradigm shift is education, as there is a need to prepare the people to operate in this new, unrecognized, world. **SDG 4 is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"**². We like to suggest at least two important elements that did not get ample attention in SDG 4, and suggest feasible and practical solutions. One relates to a "bottom – up" approach and the second represents "top-down" approach:

a. The bottom-up educational challenge relates to the urgent need to alleviate the level of human discourse, with the purpose of quickly enabling the world population to become a more trusting and co-operative society. What distinguishes human beings from other creatures is the ability to speak and thereby to build large scale projects. The speaking ability is controlled by two different mechanisms: One is based on ancient parts of the brain that mainly preserve the survival instincts of the insects, reptiles, birds and animals. These parts are mainly unconscious and react instinctively and rapidly. They are often un-friendly, and invite aggressive responses. The second mechanism is generated by the frontal lobe of the neo-cortex. Only human beings are equipped with a developed frontal lobe. This part is reacting somewhat slower, as it reflects a conscious decision that considers alternatives. These reactions are usually conscious, friendly and co-operative.

There is a natural built in "switch" in the brain that transfers control between the ancient parts and the neo-cortex. Since the firsts are instinctive and rapid, the switch remains most of the time attuned to these primitive and unfriendly parts. For the last 10-15 years, the development of addictive smartphones and IT is accelerating our reactions and that leaves the switch in the undesired position most of the time. This has caused a rapid deterioration in level of human discourse, as reflected in the political arenas as well as in daily behavior.

My partners, Dr. Weinbach, Dr. Korenman and I are developing a technology to quickly teach people at all ages to control the switch. We are adjusting it to be able to reach masses of people, and to measure objectively their achievements. We shall present

¹ Prof. Emeritus, Coller Business and the Porter School of Environmental Studies, Tel Aviv University, Israel. WAAS Fellow. kahane@tau.ac.il

² <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sdg-goal-4>

results at another session in the conference, and show how this can be done quickly with reasonable budgets. We hope to be able to affect quickly the ability of people to co-operate on the huge challenges we face. This is expected to lead to a more secure and trusting society. This is essential for handling all other SDGs. A desired side effect could be an improvement of the general health level, as an active neo cortex helps in maintaining our health.

b. As part of the "top-down" approach there is a need to prepare top management to deal with the immense challenges that come with the need to reach the SDGs by the end of 2030. The SDG's require huge global annual investments of \$ Trillions, to build the necessary infrastructure. These huge amounts are by far larger than the amounts that political leaders and large organizations are used to deal with. A trillion is a 1000 times larger than a billion. In other words, we have to deal with a much larger number of much larger projects. During the second Future Education conference in Rome we showed where these amounts can come from³. But it has to be escorted by the yet missing managerial tools and skills to handle such missions. Furthermore, in order to have such projects operational by the end of 2030, a large number of preliminary missions have to be accomplished (budgets, preliminary design, decisions about locations, licenses, locating the right staff, etc.). All this must be done soon, say, by the end of 2020. That is the reason why we coined several years ago the slogan "From \$B to \$T by 2020". This slogan, especially its first part, had been adopted by many key people in politics and business. The second part is hard to swallow... as we have only about 800 days left to the end of 2020! Not reaching this interim goal on time, will mean that we have a high chance of missing the deadline!

It seems that the most efficient way to reach the goal is by first training the leading consulting firms and the large accounting firms, with the help of the elder business mentors who know how to make a transformation happen quickly, and then to join forces in preparing the leaders and executives. This requires a well-coordinated global educational effort. In the paper we shall show how this can be done quickly.

³ Yehuda Kahane, "Education: An Essential Tool for Reaching the UN SDGs by 2030" Proceedings – Future Education, Rome, November 2017 pp. 147-149 <http://worldacademy.org/conferences/rome-2017>