

Premise of Enterprise Relativity

“Relativity teaches us the connection between the different descriptions of one and the same reality.” – Albert Einstein

As in world of physics, the world of business raises as many questions as answers. By taking notice of the laws of physics, perhaps, we can see the parallel within the world of business. The physical world in which we live and the business world in which we work may not be all that conceptually different.

The key parallel of this comparison is Einstein’s Theory of Relativity. As stated by Einstein, “Relativity teaches us the connection between the different descriptions of one and the same reality.” “His [Einstein] way of approaching physics was to find connections between things which had been viewed as separate,” String Theorist Greene has stated, “His ultimate goal was to find a connection between all of nature’s forces.” This same logic can be applied to organizations.

Fundamentally, every organization is the same. Regardless of industry or market every organization provides a product or service whether for profit or not for profit. Every organization is also is comprised of the same basic elements. They can be viewed in the same broad perspectives and understood from the same primary dimensions.

From this underlying phenomenon, we derive the idea of ‘Enterprise Relativity.’ At the core of an organization are its people, business, and technology. Understanding Enterprise Relativity is about changing the way we lead an organization, conduct its business, and manage its technology. The essence of Enterprise Relativity is merely recognizing, assessing, and managing the relevancies, relationships, congruencies, and contradictions that exist within every organization. Through these it becomes apparent that there are different perceived realities of the one and same underlying phenomenon that exists in every organization.

Because organizations operate in an uncertain, complex, and dynamic environment where risk, challenges, and change abound we as humans can only see a single frame of reference, where we are forced to see reality from a single vantage point as an observer. Based on the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a vantage is a place or situation providing a comprehensive view or commanding perspective. It is also it described as a position or place that allows one a wide or favorable overall view of a scene or situation. From this vantage an individual can be the narrator in a story, close to or far from the action. They can see the past, describe the present, or look into the future.

Through this single vantage we establish a frame of reference. Combine that with another vantage point we reestablish a new frame of reference. Converge these disparate realities into one frame of reference and we gain the advantage of seeing a more accurate and complete picture. A whole new frame of reference unfolds with greater insight into the event that would have been otherwise lost.

In the political action-thriller, Vantage Point, the film dramatizes an assassination attempt on the President of the United States as seen from eight different points of view. The essence of the film demonstrates that our perception of what is happening at the time is based on our vantage point.

The decisions we make, how we communicate, and resolve conflicts are based on how we perceive and process the information we capture within our own frame of reference while not always being aware of what others are seeing and understanding relative to the same event. As the film unfolds, we as an outside observer see eight different vantage points converge into a single frame of reference. This frame of reference now makes clear of how the assassination attempt played out in more comprehensive, cohesive way.

Relative to an enterprise one can examine the factors of why an enterprise such as Southwest is extraordinarily successful from multiple vantage points. There are those who may attribute the success of Southwest to its single model plane and the route structure of its point-to-point business model. Some may attribute Southwest's success to the factors of fast turnaround, high productivity, and low costs. Others may attribute it to its culture of a Warrior Spirit, Servant's Heart, and Fun-LUVing Attitude.

Perhaps, the success of Southwest is because of its single model plane and the route structure of its point-to-point model can reduce the cost of large parts inventory and maintenance and airport fees. Additionally, to achieve high productivity would mean effective and efficient business capabilities that are consistently executed by its employees and partners. Combined with the ability to fully execute the strategy and deliver on its capabilities with a culture and workplace climate conducive to highly productive employees and symbiotic stakeholder relationships that provide the right incentives to bring everyone together to make it happen. Perhaps, this is why Southwest is so successful in an extremely competitive market

To fully appreciate and understand the success factors of Southwest would require taking a relative perspective rather than a reductionist one. If we approach the success of Southwest in terms of relativity, we can see the connection between the different perspectives of the one and same reality of success. By performing a synthesis rather than an analysis we can derive a more accurate and complete picture of Southwest's success. It is simply not plausible to reduce it to a single reason or dimension, but is relative in the fact there exists an epicenter of multiple dimensions that Southwest has tapped into that accounts for its success.

This, in essence, defines 'Enterprise Relativity.' – Simatec