



## Is TINA in Your Future?

### 1.) Quick Quote To Consider

"Always frame conflict as a clash of ideas, not persons." Robert Kegan

### 2.) Is Tina In Your Future?

Business seems to be stuck in neutral these days. Perhaps that's because it's hard to know what actions to take when you're not sure what the future holds. At one time, we thought we could predict the trajectory of economic trends. Today the economic numbers seem to contradict one another. Are we out or stuck in a recession? Or, are we headed for a double-dip recession? Unemployment remains high, while productivity gains are up.

Add to the confusing economic environment the fear of another terrorist attack on our own soil and a possible war in the Middle East along with higher oil prices. How do you know what actions to take to keep your organization viable and successful?

### Scenario Planning

Thirty years ago, Royal Dutch/Shell introduced the concept of scenario planning. Peter Schwartz shared this process in his book *The Art of the Long View*. "Managers invent and then consider, in depth, varied stories of equally plausible futures. The stories are carefully researched, full of relevant detail, oriented toward real-life decisions and designed (one hopes) to bring future surprises and unexpected leaps of understanding... The point is not to pick one preferred future and hope for it to come to pass... Rather the point is to make strategic decisions that will be sound for all plausible futures."

With scenario planning, Shell foresaw the possibility of OPEC drastically raising oil prices and creating a crisis. When it came about in 1973, Shell was prepared to respond and became the most profitable of the oil companies.

### Meet TINA

In the 1990s, Shell discovered a shortcoming in its scenario planning process. It was caught off guard with political events in Africa and negative publicity on its environmental policies. There was a realization that there were some forces occurring that appeared irresistible and inevitable: Globalization. Liberalization. Technology. Scenario planning needed to be revised to take these forces into account; hence, the birth of TINA:

There  
Is  
No  
Alternative

In *Fast Company's* July 2002 issue, it shares the impact of TINA on Shell's scenario planning evolution. Scenario planning was no longer just about what future would evolve and how to be prepared for it, but what actions to take to be able to react to these inevitabilities. Two different options were created in reacting to the three inevitable forces



(Globalization, Liberalization. Technology). Shell chose one option and started preparing for it by changing its direction and reorganizing. TINA enabled Shell to see another possibility.

### **Discovering TINA**

Are there any forces in your business that are inevitable? Where is TINA hiding in your industry or organization? Here are some tips to discovering her\*:

**T:** Tackle it yourself. "Draw inspiration from the outside world, but don't ask someone else to give you the answers... only you know your business," says Ged Davis, VP of Global Business Environment (GBE is Shell's scenario unit).

**I:** Isolate certainties. "Form a team to determine the critical issues facing your business... What are the uncertainties? What are the predetermined elements? Then rank them from predetermined to least certain," continues Davis.

**N:** Name it. "If you have a genuine insight, something that you think is very powerful, give it a name, an acronym, or an image. Find the simplest, most powerful way to communicate it." In other words, create your own TINA.

**A:** Act on it. "The whole point of scenarios is to trigger a debate about strategy. Scenarios make no sense in the absence of a specific strategic problem," says Roger Rainbow, retired head of GBE.

\*From [www.fastcompany.com/keyword/tina60](http://www.fastcompany.com/keyword/tina60).

Are you ready to meet TINA? Although it appears there is a lot of uncertainty in the world, there may be less than you think. By considering TINA, it may enable you to take actions you hadn't considered.

Take your organization out of neutral and let TINA put your organization into drive.

If this idea intrigues you and you would like to explore it further at a retreat or workshop, please call Karen at 301.990.6331.