

Conscious Capitalism

BY GARY DOUGLAS | APRIL 1, 2014 | [COMMENT](#)



There has been a lot of discussion of late regarding the term “conscious capitalism” or conscious business. What exactly does this mean?

To be conscious means to be aware and opening up to a place of more awareness, more consciousness and more possibility. I don't consider capitalism wrong. Capitalism, in and of itself, is value neutral. It is neither good nor bad. Capitalism can be a source for good and generate great benefit to many when it is based on consciousness. On the other hand, it can be irresponsible and destructive to planet Earth if it is based on anti-consciousness and greed. Anti-conscious capitalism has done a whole lot to take from the Earth and consume the Earth, but not a whole lot to contribute to it.

The thing is, there is nothing wrong with capitalism and the willingness to make money. Business and capitalism are the greatest creators of value in the world. But they need to focus on sustainability instead of just thinking about short-term financial benefits. At the moment, too much capitalism tends to be about enriching the few at the expense of the many. It has been done from anti-consciousness, from greed, exploitation, selfishness and interest only in maximizing profits.

The norm is business done with the view to maximize profits for shareholders and owners. That is not even questioned. It is decreed in business schools and an edict in many organizations, especially publicly traded companies. When capitalism only focuses on the short term of what they can actually create for themselves, instead of sustainable reality for the world, they deny themselves a sustainable future. And profit, capitalism, sustainable reality and sustainable

future are not mutually exclusive! Whole Food Markets is a living example of this.

By sustainable, I'm not talking about just merely surviving. I am talking about something that actually grows into something that is truly greater. Unless businesses begin to embrace conscious capitalism and function from the point of view that they can create more in the world for everybody else, then all of our resources will be used up. They will not create a sustainable reality or a sustainable planet. When businesses function from consciousness, they become stewards of the earth, not using and abusing it the way many do now. If capitalism works in consciousness, then each business is an integral part of contribution to another.

Right now, the buzz words for people doing any kind of professional and personal development work are consciousness and change. The reality is that 99 percent of the people who are talking about consciousness don't have a definition for it. For me, consciousness is the ability to be present in your life in every moment, without judgment of you or anyone else. It is the ability to receive everything, reject nothing, and create everything you desire in life — greater than what you currently have, and more than what you can imagine. Consciousness is the opportunity to eliminate all the created walls of separation. From consciousness you can change all things.

Conscious capitalism is the integration between awareness and capitalism. Being conscious is an experience of expanding your awareness beyond its present limits. It is a state of flexible awareness, with no fixed points of view. If people get more conscious, they won't destroy the Earth the way they are doing right now. As business leaders grow in consciousness and awareness, so do the organizations they lead. Conscious leaders transform organizations. Period!

Conscious capitalism presents enormous opportunities, especially for business. It creates sustainable economies, a sustainable future for people and the planet, creates a greater change in the world, as well as improving business performance.

Businesses can introduce conscious capitalism in the following three ways:

- **Terminate Short-Term Thinking** – Business leaders have to be willing to look at the changes that are going to occur on planet Earth. To generate a sustainable future on this planet, businesses are going to have to recognize that there are going to be a lot of changes on this Earth over the next 10-15 years and stop buying that short-term thinking is valuable and real. They have to be willing to look at what would happen beyond today. Not just what they want to create today, but what they will be creating tomorrow. If businesses are functioning from using and abusing to get what they want, the end result will be that the world will not be livable.

Organizations and capitalism have got to find a way to change that. Business leaders have to embrace conscious capitalism knowing full well that they have to take full responsibility for what they create and how they create it. Most businesses don't look at the consequences of the choices that they create and how the choices actually affect the planet. Business leaders have been trained to focus on short-term shareholder value instead of asking, "If I create this, what will the world be like in 50 years? 100 years? 500 years?" The butterfly effect is real, and every choice you make in business has an effect long into the future. Business leaders need to look at everything that their business creates and figure out what are the things that are possible that they haven't considered. And this, in itself, creates strategic advantage for them and their customers.

Are you willing to create a new reality on planet Earth? It's about what you choose and the questions you ask that create the reality that will change everything here in a heartbeat. Every choice you make determines what your future can be. So when you make a choice, recognize what limitations are being generated with that choice.

- **Focus on Sustainability** – Sustainability is not about survival. Sustainability is that which will create and generate more choice and more possibilities. Although it may seem unimaginable, the best way to maximize profits over the long-term is to make a sustainable future the primary goal of the business. When you start functioning from generating a sustainable future, you start following the energy of what is going to create more possibility in your business, and what is actually going to generate more in the world.

One very powerful way in which you can accomplish this is through “doing no damage.” If you create your life and your business from doing no damage, you are taking care of the planet and making sure it continues. Be aware of what your choices will create. If you consume the planet, eventually the planet must implode in one way or another. We are pushing our reality to a level of obscurity and destruction that is coming close to where there may be no other choice other than implosion.

If your target is to create a world that is sustainable, a world that continues to grow and expand beyond what currently is, what do you need to do, or be, different? It's about asking questions to create new and different awareness around what will grow a sustainable reality, sustainable economy and sustainable world. We have to stop creating our future from the past approach of “using the world up” and start introducing different choices. This is not about coming to conclusions, but about you being aware of what is, what will be by the choices you make, and questions you can ask that will create a different reality – doing no damage and still making money.

- **Value Everyone** – When businesses operate with consciousness and awareness beyond profits and create everything according to what will create more for everyone, everything that's destructive on this planet would be largely eliminated. Performance is elevated and the entire system flourishes. Everyone wins. Remember, business is not a zero-sum game.

Organize your business according to what will create more for everyone – you, your team, your suppliers, your shareholders. When you value and acknowledge every contribution, you create more for everyone, rather than more competition.

When your priority is to make money and to create a sustainable universe, sustainable reality and sustainable future, you don't just function purely on the purpose of creating money. You look from the question, “Okay, what would get created if we do this?” And “How can everyone benefit by what we choose?” You have to be willing to look at what you can be or do differently every day and ask, “What can I be or do differently with my business...and what can I be or do differently today to create a different reality right away?”

When you are in the question, you can create something different. Consciousness is the greatest gift we can give each other in business and in life, as, in the face of consciousness, many unconscious and anti-conscious business practices must cease to exist.

The Bottom Line

Conscious capitalism, in my view, is a form of capitalism that is driven by businesses that not only think about the short-term financial benefits, but also about building longer-term sustainable businesses that create economic, environmental and social value, that have a positive impact on society. This means ensuring that generosity of spirit and a conscious way of doing business are at the heart of all aspects of business operations. It must be ingrained into business strategy and practices. And it starts with you.

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about Gary Douglas

Gary Douglas is the Founder of Access Consciousness®, which has now grown to 49 countries with over 2000 facilitators worldwide. Access Consciousness® started 25 years ago and Gary has developed techniques using a simple set of tools that allows people to create dynamic changes in every area of their life using questioning and body awareness. Prior to creating Access Consciousness® Gary Douglas was a successful realtor in Santa Barbara, CA, and also completed a psychology degree. He has written several books on the subjects of money,

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