

Governing Energy

New Truths

Volume 6 Number 4—February 23, 2017

According to the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), “All Truth passes through three stages. First, it is Ridiculed. Second, it is Violently Opposed. Third, it is accepted as being Self-Evident.”ⁱ

Some may see this human trait as *resistance to change*. It can be widely observed in societal transitions, technology adoption and in our personal lives as well. One can argue that the shale oil transformation and the role of OPEC is approaching Schopenhauer’s third stage.ⁱⁱ

Internet “Dog Years” and Michael Dell’s “Speed of the Internet” are clichés most have hear as metaphors to explain the rapid change digital technologies enable. Smart devices and Internet of Things are two trends widely accepted examples of this.

However, not all transformations are successful. Some readers may remember “New Coke.” Launched in 1985, it never got past violent opposition. Coco Cola apparently missed one key ingredient of consumer buying habits—emotion.

Coke lovers had a passionate relationship with the beverage and no amount of focus group testing uncovered this fact.ⁱⁱⁱ Seems that more recently we have seen issues with the validity and reliability of the polling processes.^{iv}

A quick Google search will reveal a number of brand, product, political and other attempts to change to a new normal or (ground) truth that also failed. This is not surprising as it takes a lot of energy to arrive at Schopenhauer’s third stage.

Facing ridicule can be personally challenging or even humiliating. Strong, organized opposition is also a tough nut to crack. Finally, things that are one day seemingly self-evident may still face informed/uninformed resistance.

Regardless whether your agenda is a new product launch, new customer acquisition or even social change, one must sustain energy to assure this new Truth is sustained and self-evidence to all. One could make a case that the original Coke formula remains self-evident.

How is Your Organization Making Your Truth Self-Evident?

About the Author

Dr. [Scott M. Shemwell](#) has over 30 years technical and executive management experience primarily in the energy sector. He is the author of six books and has written extensively about the field of operations. Shemwell is the Managing Director of The Rapid Response Institute, a firm that focuses on providing its

customers with solutions enabling Operational Excellence and regulatory compliance management. He has studied cultural interactions for more than 30 years—his dissertation; *Cross Cultural Negotiations Between Japanese and American Businessmen: A Systems Analysis (Exploratory Study)* is an early peer reviewed manuscript addressing the systemic structure of social relationships.

End Notes

ⁱ https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/arthur_schopenhauer.html

ⁱⁱ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-common-between-stone-age-future-oil-gas-industry-timur-naukenov>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1913612_1913610,00.html

^{iv} <https://www.relevantinsights.com/validity-and-reliability/>