

Governing Energy



The Old Order Changeth Yielding to Chaos

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Begging forgiveness from Tennyson, the title of this edition paraphrases the passing of King Arthur from the *Idylls of the King*—“The old order changeth, yielding place to new.”ⁱ This month, this author attended the last Energy Advisors meeting of the former Houston Technology Center (now known as Houston Exponential).ⁱⁱ

There are many changes afoot in the Houston metropolitan entrepreneur community just as there are in similar communities worldwide. One could argue that the changes taking place at HX eliminated the need for volunteer mentors since the former Client companies (startups) were advised that the acceleration model of the past two decades was canceled as it did not fit in their new business model.

These Client companies were advised to look to one or more of the other local accelerators and one suspects most will find appropriate homes. Moreover, additional substantial resources are available to them and that local capability is growing quickly.

Tennyson’s perspective on change is that something must die for new to arrive. Practitioners of conventional Change Management often hold a similar view, and sometimes for those caught up in this process it often feels akin to the death of years of effort.

However, there is an alternative perspective. One that is well documented and understood. The construct, Self-Organization is rooted in the mathematics of complex systems, i.e., human behavior.

The Weeds

Many readers are familiar with Chaos Theory. It focuses on the behavior of dynamic systems that are sensitive to “initial conditions.”ⁱⁱⁱ For example, similar weather conditions offshore Africa in the summer may become major hurricanes destroying billions in property while others fizzle and die.

Self-Organized Criticality (SOC) in physics is another property of complex systems. Defined—when a critical point is reached additional controls are not needed for said system effectively manages its criticality, i.e., economics.^{iv}

The research on these theories and others suggest that dynamic, complex human behavior systems consisting of independent actors can rapidly consolidate into functional, successful and measurable solutions. It does appear that there is considerable energy and talent in the primordial accelerator/innovator Houston soup at this time, thus meeting the hypotheses of these and similar theories.

Clarity

During times of Disruption, such as the process unfolding described herein, self-organizing is one outcome for various economic actors, i.e., advisors. Examples where a small group of individuals known to each other dramatically impact their sectors include Compaq Computer Corp.^v

The old order of change may no longer exist. Certainly, a deterministic change management process (if it ever existed) is a thing of the past. In periods of disruption when a so-called critical mass of independent agents is available, the likelihood of some portions creating one or more new opportunities from the old order is high.

A case can be made that the Houston entrepreneurial community is at that cusp. Our Structural Dynamics model suggests that outcomes may be much different than conventional wisdom expects.^{vi}

Seeming Chaos may replace the old established order. One contemporary example is the “critical mass” or self-sustaining behavior across the public sector of bonuses paid to US corporate employees after the passage of US tax reform in December 2017.

This was unexpected. Perhaps an example of the self-organization of independent organizations following a disruptive event.

Stay tuned! Actions are already underway by some former HTC mentors to self-organize. Who knows what will emerge.

Have You Asked, “How Can My Organization Capitalize on Self-Organizing Processes during Times of Sector Disruption?”

Free [Economic Value Proposition Matrix](#) version 2.0 (Realize the value of your investment)
Also, checkout our [YouTube Channel](#)

Additional details are available from the author.

About the Author

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End Notes

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- ⁱ <http://www.bartleby.com/246/392.html>
 - ⁱⁱ <http://houstonexponential.org/>
 - ⁱⁱⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaos_theory
 - ^{iv} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-organized_criticality
 - ^v <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compaq>
 - ^{vi} [Structural Dynamics:Foundation of Next Generation Management Science](#)