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Dear David,

Great to have you back for another stroll through my thinking on a host of matters.

The **Self-Development** column addresses an organizational matter involving structure. But there's an important message contained therein. Check it out.

In the **Elephant in the Room** column I share a recent exchange I had with a fellow professor who made some very false claims in a public setting. I set the record straight with him -- and with you.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I explore the notion of the smile and its impact on those around us.

And, as always, in the **World of Words** column you gain a new word which I hope will become second nature to you, as you continue to build your power of expression.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Structure

*"Every company has two organizational structures:
The formal one is written on the charts;
the other is the everyday relationship
of the men and women in the organization"*
Harold Geneen

One of the things that management consultants like to focus on when conducting any sort of organizational analysis is structure. The structure of an enterprise determines so many things. Let's take a few non-business examples to illustrate the importance of structure.

The structure of your home determines so much. For example, the number of bathrooms, the number and size of the bedrooms, whether there is an office, how the kitchen is laid out, whether there is a swimming pool in the backyard, whether

there is a basement, and how many cars can fit into the garage all impact what can go on in that home. The number of bathrooms impact availability and convenience, not only for residents, but for guests as well. The number and size of bedrooms determine whether the kids get their own room or whether they must share their space. The presence of an office might accommodate privacy, or the presence of a library. The swimming pool will not only impact costs (for maintenance) but entertainment options.

The physical structure of biological entities (humans, cheetahs, elephants, bats, pandas, and dolphins) govern what they are capable of doing. Men can't fly, but bats can. Elephants can't run 75 MPH but Cheetahs can. Dolphins have a special capability similar to what we think of as radar. Pandas lack this.

In terms of organizational life, how businesses are structured matters. And while there are many ways to design the structure of a team or an organization (and you can read about

them in any basic business fundamentals textbook) I simply wish to point out something I learned from my reading of Peter Senge many years ago. In his seminal work, [*The Fifth Discipline*](#), Senge points out that structure influences behavior.



If Senge is correct, and I believe he is, then you can impact the behavior of the people on your team if you change the structure. Let's look at some examples, all of which have their own unique pros and cons.

Let's imagine a team consisting of R&D professionals. There is a Director over R&D, a Manager over R&D who reports to the Director, and a dozen or more individual contributors. If the Director has his office in the same exact area as the Manager and that Manager's direct reports, there is a very high likelihood that the rank and file employees will bypass their Manager and go straight to the Director every time there is a problem they wish to get solved -- precisely because the Director has more clout than the Manager. This may be good from the standpoint of having the Director plugged in to what is happening. But it alienates the Manager and will have an adverse impact on his/her performance and morale. An easy solution is to have the Manager in a separate area with his/her team. That will make the end-runs less common.

Let's imagine a structural situation that allows for employees to work from home one day per week. Unless there are tight structural controls around accountability, there is a very good chance such employees will be less productive. The temptation to nap, get some yard work done, play computer games, watch TV,

listen to Talk Radio, or run errands is just too great for too many people. Allow your structure to include clear follow through on results will go a long way to curtailing being taken advantage of.

Finally, building a reward system into one's structure does some great things. Let's imagine you want your people to be obsessed with innovation, even innovation for innovation's sake. You would do well to build in a rewards structure to influence such behavior. When people see that things are structured in such a way that rewards (in the form of recognition, awards, cash, or other perks) are dispensed on any instances of innovation, word will get around and people's behavior will change accordingly.

Always remember: *Structure influences behavior.*

The Elephant in the Room

Trump Derangement Syndrome and the Academy

Most non-Leftists understand instinctively or via direct experience that what I am referring to collectively as "The Academy" (i.e., colleges and universities) are really no longer institutions of higher learning, but Left-wing propaganda machines. There are many reasons for this.

For starters, studies show conclusively that within college and university faculties, Democrats outnumber Republicans 10 to 1 [according to one study](#).

In that same study, it was discovered that at almost 40% of colleges surveyed, there was [not even one faculty member](#) that identified as a Republican.

At the college where I teach, I know of only one other conservative besides myself. This other professor, beloved by both students and colleagues, once confided in me that she was a conservative but that she dared not let that get out lest she be ostracized. I understand her concerns. About every two or three semesters, a Leftist student



radical that happens to find him- or herself in my class reports me to the administration with the intent to have me fired from teaching. My crime? I'm not a Leftist. You may think I am exaggerating. I assure you I am very serious.

As an example of the kind of indoctrination that takes place at my campus, I bring to your attention a panel discussion that was held just last week by the Political Science Club. I attended this panel, sitting among the students in the audience.

On the panel were 5 professors from the PolySci department. I did not personally know any of them, but it soon became apparent that 4 of the 5 were strongly Left-Wing, one in particular, whom I will call Dr. M, was rabidly so. Dr. M, who doubles as a gay rights activist, dominated the discussions, talked over the other panelists, consistently spoke beyond his allocated time limits, and disagreed with some of the other panelists for not being sufficiently "progressive" by saying, "Of course, Professor So-and-So is wrong and I am right," and that sort of theatrical posturing. Clearly, the students in attendance found him entertaining and he received an occasional smattering of applause for his mannerisms.

At one point, when the question had to do with the Mueller Report, Dr. M said to the students, "I have read much, though not all, of the Mueller Report. There was definitely collusion between the Russians and the Trump Administration." He didn't provide any evidence of that, but it was clear that the point he wished to make to these impressionable students had been made.

Unfortunately for Dr. M, I also have read the Mueller Report. And while I raised my hand to offer some counter-arguments, I was never called upon. So the following day I wrote to Dr. M via email. Here is the content of that first message:

Hello Professor M:

I attended yesterday's panel and had some questions for you.

During your remarks about the Mueller Report, you mentioned you had read the report (not all of it), and in the next breath you said "There was definitely collusion between the Russians and the Trump campaign" (or something along those lines.)

First, did I accurately capture what you said?

Second, is your assertion that there was collusion between the Trump campaign and the Russians something you derived from your reading of the Mueller Report? Or did you draw that assertion from somewhere else?

Third, if you derived that assertion from your reading of the Mueller Report, I find that a rather striking assertion, inasmuch as the Attorney General claims in his summary of the Mueller Report that Mueller found no evidence of collusion between the Russians and the Trump campaign. So my question would be: Based on what you have read in the Mueller Report thus far, can you cite a specific example of collusion?

All the best,

L. Ara Norwood

About two hours later, I received the following reply:

It's true that I haven't read the entire Mueller Report. Based on reporting from multiple sources (and the report itself), there are many levels of connection between the Trump Campaign and the Russian government/contractors. There are many such examples in the report (in Volume 1)--look through it for yourself. If you want one example, the campaign manager Paul Manafort was handing GOP polling data on swing states to someone known to work indirectly for the Russian government. I have to wonder why that is--political scientists use such data to predict how to win in such places. But if you read through Volume 1, there are many such examples.

As to what the Attorney General said publicly, all I can say is that his statements do not comport with what people from the Mueller team have said about it, nor are his statements in line with what the report actually says. The Mueller report doesn't say there was no evidence of collusion, just that there wasn't enough evidence to charge members of the Trump campaign under criminal conspiracy statutes. That's not the same thing. Also, Volume II of the report explicitly points out where there is evidence of obstruction of justice on multiple counts. Again, I would say you should read it for yourself.

Dr. M

About two hours after that, I sent the following response to Dr. M:

Dr. M:

Thank you for your reply.

In response to my question about collusion between the Trump Campaign and Russia, you cited Paul Manafort handing GOP polling data on certain swing states (specifically Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) to someone known to work indirectly for the Russian Government. You are undoubtedly referring to Konstantin Kilimnik who was working to provide more Russian influence in eastern Ukraine. And it's true, Mr. Manafort did intend to share internal polling data with Mr. Kilimnik for reasons that remain murky.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Kilimnik insists he has no ties whatsoever to Russian intel, and also insists he "never got any in-depth polling data." Of course, even if he is telling the truth with that latter statement, he could be using weasel words, in that perhaps he received polling data that was simply not in-depth, whatever that might mean. He certainly also insists he did not pass along any polling data to other parties tied to the Russian government (translation: Oleg Deripaska, who is a Russian billionaire.)

What I find material in this is Mueller knows about all of this, yet he did NOT conclude that this constituted collusion in any manner which could influence the 2016 election. And if it is the smoking gun you seemed to be claiming yesterday, why is it that the media, which certainly isn't camouflaging their animus towards the President, is not blasting that across the front page of every newspaper in the country? (Now, in your defense, I will acknowledge that portions of this matter in

the Mueller report are heavily redacted, so one cannot be absolutely certain what the report says about this.) And of course, President Trump himself claims, in written responses to questions from Mr. Mueller, that he knew nothing about it. But who knows?

The bottom line, at least for me, is that it strikes me as a bit irresponsible to opine, unconditionally, that there was "definitely" collusion, and that it is in the Mueller report. Mueller does not say that. Neither does his report. That's your conclusion. Not the report's. Had you offered it as simply your strong opinion, that would be another matter.

Re. your statement that the AG's public summation of the Mueller report does not comport with what people from the Mueller team have said about it, my reply is: So what? Clearly, Mueller's team was largely composed of anti-Trump partisans (e.g., Lisa Page, Peter Strzok, we don't know who else.) To deny that there are actors predisposed to harm the President is to deny reality. Of course, there are actors on the opposite side as well (as you stated yesterday rather eloquently.)

And finally, as to your final comment that the AG's statements do not reflect what the Mueller Report actually describes, if that were the case, don't you think there would be an iron-clad backlash against Barr? I'm not talking about whining, foaming-at-the-mouth partisan vitriol absent evidence and analysis. I am talking about iron-clad, irrefutable, non-opinionated examples. Today we do not have those. I know it is early in the process. Perhaps they may surface in time, especially post-redaction.

But in the meantime, I was a little surprised you were less circumspect in the panel than you were. This is not a closed case. My concern with the panel is that impressionable students likely left the room believing otherwise.

Respectfully,

L. Ara Norwood

Predictably, I never heard back from Dr. M. Had he replied and continued insisting that the Mueller Report does, in fact, claim there was collusion between the Trump Campaign and the Russians, it would have been an easy check-mate for me, as I would have quoted the following three passages from the actual Mueller Report:

Page 4: The investigation did not identify evidence that any U.S. persons conspired or coordinated with the IRA (Internet Research Agency based out of St. Petersburg).

Page 5: The investigation did not establish that members of the Trump Campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities.

Page 9: While the investigation identified numerous links between individuals with ties to the Russian government and individuals associated with the Trump Campaign, the evidence was not sufficient to

support criminal charges. Among other things, the evidence was not sufficient to charge any Campaign official as an unregistered agent of the Russian government or other Russian principal. . . Further, the evidence was not sufficient to charge that any member of the Trump Campaign conspired with representatives of the Russian government to interfere in the 2016 election.

What we learn from this is that Trump Derangement Syndrome affects far too many on the Left, especially in academia and the media, and causes them to say things that are demonstrably false. It also poisons the mind of an uninformed and gullible public all too eager to pucker up and drink from the teat of the Left-wing milk supply. Leftists do not value truth or facts. They believe what they wish to be the truth, not what actually is the truth. And as a result, masses embrace the erroneous.

I am not the least bit surprised that Dr. M suddenly bowed out of our exchange. I am only surprised he did not end it with the shrill sounds of profanity, name-calling, and insults, a break with the trends for most Leftists.

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

Check out [my website](#) for tools to help you with your career, your presentations, and other matters.

Shameless Plug

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So you have trouble with job interviews? You get nervous? You feel unprepared? You get psyched out? I understand. And that is why I am pleased to alert you to my eBook: ***Your Interview Roadmap***. At over 12,000 words and with six appendices, this guide book will open your eyes to what really goes on in the world of interviewing from both sides of the table, and will prepare job seekers to hit it out of the park 80% of the time. (OK, more like 90%, but I prefer to be understated.)

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If you've done poorly in job interviews in the past, you can turn it around. The answers are there. Take action!



From Ara's Journal

The Power of the Smile

Recently, while in Starbucks, I was in the process of throwing a straw wrapper in the nearby trash receptacle when I made eye-contact with a professional-looking woman who was busy working. She looked up at me and I at her and I smiled at her. It seemed like the courteous thing to do. She did not smile back, but quickly looked away. Not receiving a smile in return might have been off-putting to some. Not to me. I knew, instinctively, that while a smile can have numerous meanings and connotations, I decided I would not hesitate to offer a smile to others as often as occasion would permit, for in doing so with the right intentions, I might be spreading warmth in this otherwise dreary world.



It's interesting to reflect on this thing called the smile. It strikes me as significant that there are a myriad of messages that could be conveyed by a smile. For instance:

- Smiling could be the reflexive reaction upon hearing good news, as one anticipates the positive things that seem to be forthcoming.
- Smiling could convey kindness.
- Smiling could convey love, warmth, or joy.
- Smiling could be the first sign that something is perceived as humorous. (Isn't it interesting that a smile always accompanies laughter?)
- Smiling could convey friendliness, as in welcoming someone.
- Smiling could also, in unfortunate circumstances, be sadistic and ominous, portending something evil or violent. This is a perverse use of the smile.
- Smiling can sometimes be a reaction to mask deep, personal hurt, as in trying to put on a brave face.

- Strangely, some smiles are the result of sadness.

The power of the smile has captured the imagination of many a songwriter. Louis Armstrong recorded a classic hit, "When You're Smiling" back in 1929, with the message that when you're smiling, the whole world smiles with you. Barry Manilow scored with his 1978 hit "I Can't Smile Without You." A few years before that, Hall & Oates wrote "Sara Smile." Gloria Estafan's "I See Your Smile" reminds of the yearning importance of the smile. British pop-group Shakatak's "Perfect Smile" makes it impossible not to smile while listening to it. Both Michael Bubl  and Josh Groban resurrected a classic tune called "Smile" (written by Charlie Chaplin) in very different versions, each highlighting the fact that the smile is a symbol of our common humanity.

Smiles can be disarming, and can affect the mood for the better. I remember years ago, moments before I was about to begin a college course I was teaching, a student -- a middle-aged woman -- caught my attention. She was staring at me intently, and as soon as our eyes met, she conveyed a message to me by gesturing subtly. The message to me was: "Smile!" I presume I looked just a bit too serious. But I took her advice and I smiled to the class as a whole. It changed the climate in that classroom. It made everyone relax. And it made them ready and open to learning.

Conversely, when one cannot find reason to smile, it darkens their world and all who enter it.

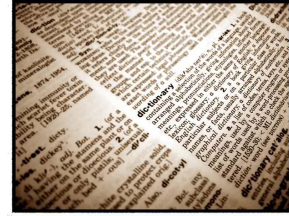
A few short years ago I was privileged to chair my high school's 40-year reunion. I decided to make it a big event, and I was determined also to locate every single one of our 425 graduating classmates. I didn't find them all, but I found upwards of 80% of them. One of those I found was a lady named Beth. I had virtually no interaction with Beth during our high school years, but I vividly recall seeing Beth at our 20-year reunion. At that time she was the most vivacious young lady in the room, exuding happiness and joy and positivity. She was a dynamic force to be reckoned with, and she simply beamed, with a radiant smile that was captivating! I had never forgotten her demeanor, and so I was very excited when, after several unanswered phone calls, she picked up the phone. I began to tell her about our 40-year reunion. She made it clear she wasn't the least bit interested. She sounded bitter. That resulted in a brief email exchange. Each of her emails to me were more bitter and angrier than the previous. Her last email message to me contained some profanity, as she really told me off. I wrote to her one last time to express my sorrow for her current state of affairs, and let her know that if she ever needed a friend, I was always there for her. I closed my message with these words: "I hope you find your smile again."

And I hope all of us, myself included, find our smile again and again and again.

Building Your Power of Expression

Vacillate, n.

Pronunciation: vā-sə-lāt



Meaning: To vacillate is to waver between different opinions or actions. It is to be indecisive. Think "wishy-washy."

Usage:

- *I had, for a time, vacillated between teaching and journalism.*
- *They vacillated for so long that Heidi's team jumped in and made the decision for them.*
- *I am ready to make a firm decision; the days of vacillating are over.*

New subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" should have been sent out to you already. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

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