ABOUT THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE

The input of trainers, facilitators and consultants becomes the foundation for the support materials we prepare for the DISCOVERING THE FUTURE series. With THE BUSINESS OF PARADIGMS for example, we heard from many trainers who offered their ideas, exercises and discussion questions for us to share with others. The “tested” input of trainers helped us prepare the Master Trainer’s Manual (over 100 pages of group exercises, master visuals and suggestions on leading discussion) and the Discussion Guide (a 30 page guide which includes many discussion topics) that can be used by any industry, public or private organizations. We’d appreciate your input now as we strive to create useful comprehensive support materials for THE POWER OF VISION. We’ve set up a network for this joint project. Call 1-800-328-3789. Ask for me. Throughout the preparation of the ancillary materials, I’ll listen to how you use the program, learn what benefits your organization is experiencing as a result of using the program and hear your suggestions for discussion questions and exercises.

Joan M. Fluelling
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION
- About this Discussion Guide  
  1
- About Joel Barker  
  2
- About "THE POWER OF VISION"  
  3
- Benefits of "THE POWER OF VISION"  
  4
- Suggestion for Leading Discussions  
  5

## TOPIC 1
- The Role of Vision in our Lives  
  7

## TOPIC 2
- The Power of Vision at a National Level  
  9

## TOPIC 3
- Vision and Children  
  10

## TOPIC 4
- The Power of Vision  
  11

## TOPIC 5
- Vision In Organizations  
  12

## TOPIC 6
- Where do we Get our Images of the Future?  
  15

## CONCLUSION  
  16

## ORDER INFORMATION  
  17
ABOUT JOEL BARKER

Joel Arthur Barker, President of Infinity Limited, Inc., is one of the world’s most influential speakers on organizational processes and the future. Mr. Barker is an author and lecturer, and president of Infinity Limited Inc., an internationally-known consulting firm that invented the concept of Strategic Exploration. He has studied the concept of innovation and anticipation for over a decade. He has worked with Fortune 500 companies worldwide, helping them to improve their ability to identify new ideas and innovations early enough to take advantage of them. He is widely regarded as a master teacher of tools and techniques designed to help people discover the future.
ABOUT “THE POWER OF VISION”

“The Power of Vision” is the second videocassette in the “Discovering the Future” series.

According to host Joel Arthur Barker, almost all successful individuals and organizations have one thing in common: The power and depth of their vision of the future. Compelling goals and a positive, meaningful vision of the future provides purpose and direction in the present.

In “Discovering the Future: The Power of Vision,” Mr. Barker shows us how a positive vision of the future is essential for providing meaning and direction to the present. He demonstrates how a meaningful vision empowers us to solve problems and accomplish goals. Through examples, he emphasizes how visions of the future affect organizations, nations and individuals, adult and children alike.

This 30 minute program filmed on location in Eastern and Western Europe and throughout the United States is designed to complement “The Business of Paradigms.”
BENEFITS OF "THE POWER OF VISION"

"Discovering the Future: The Power of Vision" helps viewers understand how a powerful, positive vision of the future can empower individuals and organizations. Applications are as varied as the organizations using the program, but some common benefits defined by the users are as follows:

- Gives insight to building or improving an organizational vision.
- Clarifies the concept of vision – what it is and what it isn't.
- Illustrates how thinking about the future gives meaning to the present.
- Demonstrates the positive power a meaningful vision can have within an organization.
- Provides a "common language" with which vision can be discussed.
- Stresses the importance and strength of the vision community.
- Shows us that each of us has the ability to shape our own future.
SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADING DISCUSSION

This manual further develops many of the ideas set forth in the program and presents discussion exercises which will assist participants to explore these ideas. This manual is a step-by-step guide to use when leading group discussion on “Discovering the Future: The Power of Vision.”

Because the future, for some, is especially threatening, we encourage you to be sensitive to those feelings. We’ve prepared general suggestions for facilitating to help you prepare for your discussion groups. Please take a moment to read through these.

Reduce Tension
As soon as everyone is assembled go over what you will present to them so that they all know what is to come. Be informal and reassuring. Create a climate of trust. The atmosphere is important, because only if people feel comfortable will they venture into new territory. Phrase the problems you hope to deal with in the form of questions whenever possible.

Encourage Discussion
Address the group rather than individuals; in other words, avoid singling anyone out. Give everyone a chance to speak. Speak of “us” and “we” rather than “you” and “I.” Watch out for hidden agendas, yours or others. Control dominating speakers. Avoid criticizing anyone’s remarks. Bounce your own opinions off the group in the form of questions.

Listen Carefully
Concentrate on what each person says while they are speaking. Don’t get emotionally involved. Formulate your reply only after someone has finished making a statement. Listen carefully when someone proposes something that is contrary to your opinions, because this behavior is the essence of dealing with new paradigms. Keep off tangents, but be receptive to off-beat solutions and dissenting opinion.
Ask “What If?” Questions
A good way to keep the discussion moving is to ask “What if?” Such a question allows the imagination to come into play. Ask “How might?” rather than “How should?” questions. Explore Alternatives.

One of the principle benefits of the “Discovering the Future” series is the way it can open people up to new or unusual solutions. Be sure to listen for these kinds of ideas. Don’t dismiss anything. If discussion tapers off or if the group gets solution minded, encourage more alternatives. Listen for ideas that might lead to new topics.

Be Enthusiastic and Involved
It will help you, prior to leading this discussion, to have taken notes on the film. Jot down what intrigued you and connect it with your organization. Although examples for the discussions and exercises are offered in this guide, you may prefer to come up with some of your own — They’ll often be the ones that you use the best as they are the most meaningful to you.

Be Flexible
There is an order to the exercises in the discussion questions, but it can be revised. Each exercise takes about fifteen minutes, but if a good discussion gets going you may be hesitant to hurry the group on to the next exercise. Please feel free to do what you will with these exercises. They should be seen as starting points, as good strong suggestions, but not as the only way to lead a discussion. Be selective about which ones you use if you have a limited amount of time. If you are using the program to focus on a specific issue in your organization, pick out the exercises that will best do this.

Room Setup
Many different sizes of groups can use this program so take into consideration what size group you’re working with when determining the room size. But try to use a room where you can be together as a large group to see the program and discuss the exercises, yet at the same time accommodate the group breaking down into smaller units. A large flip chart will be needed. There should also be a writing surface for everyone.
5. Joel Barker said, "Our visions of the future are the most powerful motivators for human change."

How do you react to this statement? Do you agree or disagree? Are there some personal examples you would like to share with the group?

What does vision mean in the context of our personal lives? For our families? In our careers? Within our organizations? What are the likely results of having a meaningful vision in each of these situations?
TOPIC 2
The Power of Vision at a National Level

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Nations rise and fall with their visions of their future. Fred Polak's research suggests that this has been true since the dawn of recorded history, and that great accomplishments are always preceded by great visions.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Ask your group to describe our nation's own vision of the future. In what ways have we in the U.S. agreed to grow and change in the future? What are our common aims, be they governmental, social or economic?

   If the group has difficulty coming up with ideas, ask them what they think the significance is of this? If your group is interested in exploring this further, you might ask the group to think about times during which the U.S. DID have a significant vision of its future, and what we as a nation were able to accomplish. How might another such vision be initiated? What groups would need to become involved? What is the power in many individuals coming to share a common goal? How could your organization contribute?

2. Have your group name examples of countries in the modern world with a profound vision of their future. Can you describe their vision?

   Can you think of countries that do not appear to have a vision of their future? What makes you think this?

3. Much of Europe has embarked on a powerful new vision of its future — The vision of a United Europe. Ask your group to see if they can think of 5 or 10 characteristics of that vision (examples: Common currency; Free trade zone; The elimination of tariffs and barriers; Common economic strategy, etc. How is it that we know their future better than we know ours? Does this indicate a powerful vision?

4. Ask the group to think of examples of countries that changed or developed a vision during our life time. How did their new vision change them? How did it impact our opinion of them as a nation? Did they succeed in doing what they set out to do?
TOPIC 3
Vision and Children

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
Many people relate to the power of vision as they remember their own childhood, or as reflect on the importance of vision to children. Benjamin Singer's work, "The Future Focused Role Image" reinforces that the key and most important differentiator between successful and unsuccessful students was this: The successful students shared a profound and positive vision of their own future.

DISCUSSION POINTS
1. Can you remember a period in your own childhood when a vision played a significant part? How did it affect your focus? How did it direct your activities and games or affect your friends? Do you recall a friend who had a powerful vision?
2. Can you remember an individual from your childhood that played a key role in helping you to envision your future? How did that individual inspire you?
3. What can you do to help your children to exercise their ability to create a vision?

CONCLUDING REMARKS
Remember that vision — especially children's vision — may change frequently. The power of a child's vision, with the support of the community, can help overcome history and economics to motivate a child to achieve extraordinary results.

Help your child explore the kind of actions that might be required to make their dreams a reality. Teach children that the difference between those who have vision and those who merely dream is that those with vision are taking real actions to get themselves closer to their destinations. Help them explore their vision. And watch them as they become more focused, more committed, more energized, more willing to do and learn.
TOPIC 4
The Power of Vision

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

For many, the portion of the film that narrates Victor Frankl's experiences at Auschwitz is emotionally moving. For others it is uncomfortable, difficult.

A key point to reinforce during discussion of this portion of the film is that the conditions for survival in a concentration camp were deplorable beyond description. One's survival was seemingly at the mercy of evil, ruthless and arbitrary forces. Millions of good and innocent people were purposely destroyed. Yet, Frankl became convinced that Vision was important — especially under the nightmare of the Holocaust. Frankl's point involved only the survivors of the Holocaust: For many, survival was beyond personal and individual control. But, for others, it was their responsibilities to their future that empowered them to continue and survive.

Viktor Frankl believed that "it is always important to have something yet to do in life." He became convinced that this was a key to his own survival and the survival of others during the horrors of his internment at the Nazi concentration camps during WWII.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Can you think of other examples in which having something important to do — having a future focus — contributed to survival or heroic achievements?

2. It takes great courage to hold on to a vision in the face of seemingly insurmountable adversity. That is why the vision must be something of great significance. What visions are important to participants in the group.

3. Have the group imagine themselves a decade ago. As they looked forward to today, what were their visions of what they hoped to accomplish. Did they accomplish them? Are they still working on achieving them? Or did their visions change? If so, why?
TOPIC 5
Vision in Organizations

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
In the film, Mr. Barker explains what makes a good vision. Each of his four points are addressed here. But first, remember Mr. Barker's statement of what vision is NOT: Vision can never be expressed in numbers — return of investment, return on equity and net assets, increased profitability. Those numbers are only a consequence of a vision yet to be defined.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Leadership Initiated
In the film, Mr. Barker states that visions must be initiated by leaders — that it is the role of leaders to take the input of the entire vision community, focus it and bring it into a coherent, powerful vision.

Leaders are not only dispensers of knowledge. Rather, they are interacting with the outside world. Leaders listen. Leaders see a connection between today and tomorrow. Leaders show you what the vision will look like once you get there. Mr. Barker's definition of a leader is "a person who you will follow to a place that you wouldn't go by yourself." Leaders do not always have to be the "official" leaders, they can be situational ones.

According to Barker, the difference between a visionary and a leader is that visionaries may have great visions but a leader is able to get people to follow — to act on the visions. Barker also notes the difference between managers and leaders — Managers make a vision work once you get it in place; leaders get you there. Managers manage within paradigms; leaders lead between paradigms.

1. Do you agree that visions need to be developed by leaders? Where else do you think visions could come from?
2. Have the group list some situational leaders from their organization. Why are they leaders?
3. What would the result be of a leader who is cut off from the outside world?
4. How do visions of non-leaders work in organizations?

**Shared and Supported**
Barker states that the visions of the leaders must be shared with their team, and that the team must agree to support it. That sharing and support creates the vision community. The vision, through agreement and understanding, gives direction to the decision-making of today.

1. Why must a vision be shared? Why must the vision community agree to support it?
2. Have you ever had a vision imposed on you by someone who was not committed to supporting it? What happened?

**Comprehensive and Detailed**
If a vision is too general, it isn't really a vision. A vision must be detailed enough that it can capture people's imagination and harness their creativity. Let's look at a few incomplete organizational visions:
- We want to be #1 in our marketplace.
- We want to have quality.
- We want a good return on our investment.
- What would be the difficulty of reacting to a vision such as these?

**Positive and Inspiring**
According to Barker, a vision must be positive and inspiring. A vision must challenge everyone to stretch their skills.
Can a vision be negative? Yes, according to Viktor Frankl. But negative visions are never as powerful as positive ones. In "Man's Search for Meaning," Viktor Frankl talks about what happened to people in Auschwitz when they had a vision of vengeance. Vengeance is a poor motivator. After the war was over and their vengeance had been exacted they had nothing left to do.

1. Why should a vision be positive and inspiring? What must leaders include in the vision statement to motivate and inspire the vision community?
TOPIC 6
Where do we Get our Images of the Future?

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This is an interesting topic — while not mentioned in the film, many groups find it leads to very empowering discussions.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Mr. Barker has led literally hundreds of discussions about vision. When he asks individuals to identify sources that provide us with our images of the future, Mr. Barker’s experience has been that sources mentioned typically can be classified into one of three groups; 1) family and friends; 2) leaders (political, religious, etc.) and 3) the media.

1. Ask the group to list all the sources they can think of that provide us with our images of the future. List these on a board. (Can the group’s suggested sources be categorized as one of the three group’s mentioned above?)

2. Think about the kinds of images that each of these groups presents of the future.

3. Have the group think about three continents — North America, Europe and Asia. Ask the group to hypothesize which of these three sources of visions appear to be most important for each of the three continents. (Note: Mr. Barker’s experience has been as follows Asia — Family and Friends; Europe — Leaders; North America — The Media.)

4. What types of visions do we get from the media? Does the media inspire us to want to live in the future? Does the media present positive images?

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is up to us to have positive inspiring visions of our future, as we rarely get them from the media. The role of our families, leaders and organizations are crucial.
CONCLUSION

As Mr. Barker demonstrates in the program, thinking about and planning the future isn't just a luxury for the rich and famous; it is a tool of great power for anyone providing it is properly used. Vision empowers each one of us. The three scholars highlighted in the program, Victor Frankl, Benjamin Singer and Fred Polak, agreed that having a vision of the future is perhaps the most forceful motivator for change that human beings possess.

It is the role of vision to determine your destination. Leader initiated. Shared and supported. Comprehensive and detailed. Positive and inspiring. When you get all those put together, you've got your vision community. And once you have the vision community, now you are empowered.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

To locate the works of the three scholars, or the writings of Loren Eiseley, please contact your local bookstore. We gratefully acknowledge the works of:

Viktor Frankl
"Man's Search for Meaning"
Beacon Press

Benjamin Singer
"The Future Focused Role Image"
in "Learning for Tomorrow"
Edited by Alvin Toffler
Random House Publishing

Frederick Polak
"The Image of the Future"
Elsevier Scientific Publishing Company

Loren Eiseley
"The Star Thrower" from
"The Unexpected Universe"
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
ORDER INFORMATION

To order any of the DISCOVERING THE FUTURE materials, simply use one of our four convenient ordering methods:

1. **Call TOLL FREE 1-800-328-3789.** Our representatives can help you between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Central Time. Our representatives are knowledgeable about our complete line of films and products, and can help you select the program most suited to your needs. They can answer questions about quantity discounts, warranty replacement and special edit customizing. We can ship your order within 24 hours!

2. **Complete and mail the POSTAGE FREE order form.** Be sure to indicate which film you’re interested in. If you are renting or previewing the program(s), note the date(s) you wish to use them. Be sure to order the ancillary materials you want — see page for a complete description. All sale orders will be shipped within 24 hours, but please allow seven to ten days for delivery when using the Business Reply card.

3. **FAX us your order!** Our 24 hour FAX number is 1-612-890-0505. Include the following information: your name, company name, bill and ship to addresses, phone number, products and prices. Be sure to indicate the date(s) you wish to use the program(s). One of our representatives will call you as soon as we receive your fax order, so you can be sure your order is being processed immediately! Again, we can have your order shipped in 24 hours!

4. **Contact your training media distributor.** (If your distributor is not licensed to distribute our programs, simply call us direct.)