

# ***Doing Business In the New Age***

An Astrological perspective  
on the changes in modern society  
& how this affects the way we do business

by  
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# Introduction

Have you noticed that the world is changing? Not only is it changing but the rate of change is increasing. Is there something significant happening? If so, what does this mean for my business?

For those able to ride the wave of change this is an exciting time. If you can't there's a good chance you will be swept away or dumped by this wave of change (a very unpleasant experience that anyone who has been underneath a "dumper" at Bondi Beach will tell you!).

My intention here is to give an overview of the changes happening in the world and show there is a purpose behind it. As such I have avoided going into a great deal of technical detail about what constitutes an astrological age. (For background information into what the Ages are see Appendix A – The Astrological Ages).

The objective of this booklet is not to provide a series of pat answers and solutions to the issues raised. Your business is unique. As such the solutions that you can come up with are unique. Should you want some help with this, the Aviel coaching programs are designed to make this happen for you.

# The Changing Paradigm

## *The Age of Pisces*

For the past 2000 years the Vernal Equinox has been moving through Pisces and so we have been in the Age of Pisces. Astrologically Pisces represents the principle of self-sacrifice and martyrdom. Jesus epitomised this.

Throughout this period the overriding paradigm has been that the individual has no significance other than their contribution to society. Kennedy stated this in his famous quote "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country". Many of the "isms" that the world has seen over this period epitomised this attitude – Communism, Capitalism, Catholicism (with its history of the Crusades, the Inquisition...) etc.

Each Age can be sub-divided by the astrological signs. Hence we can have the Aries part of the Piscean Age (the beginning), moving into the Taurean phase, the Gemini phase and so on. We are now in the Piscean phase of the Piscean Age which further heightens the principle of self sacrifice and martyrdom mentioned above. So we are finding that suicide terrorism has become more common. As we move out of this stage this form of activity will decline.

## ***The Age of Aquarius***

At the same time as we are in the Piscean part of the Piscean Age, we are also in the Aries part of the Aquarian Age. Fire signs (like Aries) represent ideas – we have all heard of a “bright spark” or the “spark of an idea”. Aries is about initiating or seeding of ideas.

Aries also represents leaders (of a sort). Unfortunately Aries-type leaders are more interested in being at the front of the flock rather than in true leadership and so we find the paucity of true leaders in the world at present. The world is being run by politicians and CEOs rather than by statesmen. As this true leadership is more a Leo trait (the sign opposite/complementary to Aquarius), this will develop more as we get further into the Aquarian age.

The underlying principle of Aquarius is the development of the individual. The role of society is to support the individual in their self-actualisation. In many ways this is responsible for the increase in litigation and the perception that people no longer take responsibility for their own actions. If I do something stupid (like put a container of very hot coffee in my lap at a drive-through McDonalds and scald myself) then it is the responsibility of the restaurant that sold me the coffee rather than my own actions. There are many, many cases of this type of situation ending up in the courts and people receiving huge payouts. We now find legislation coming in around the world to put limits on the size of these payouts and the types of things for which people can sue. The pendulum has swung to the extreme and we are now seeing a more balanced view develop.

Also, Aquarius represents technology and the growth of spirituality (as opposed to religion).

## How Does This Affect My Business?

The Piscean business paradigm is the so-called Newtonian model of business; dominated by efficiency and obedience, command and control, organisations and people as parts in a machine. Due, in part, to the influence of the findings of quantum physics and evolutionary biology, this view is now shifting to one of business as a living organism.

“We and the companies we work for are ‘bundles of potential’, as Margaret Wheatley describes it – creative, in motion, in relationship, self-organising, networked, and decentralised. There is an inexorable movement in the direction of wholeness and an acknowledgement of interdependence – business as a community and a community within a community, reflecting a more integrated process of personal and institutional transformation.”<sup>1</sup> This is a very Aquarian perspective.

Your business interacts with a number of elements:

- Staff – even if you are a sole trader your business has staff. It’s just that you are the only staff member
- Clients/customers
- Suppliers
- Local community
- Global community

Let’s look at each of these elements and see what changes need to be made for your business to succeed in the New Age.

## **Staff**

Generally the single most costly part of any business is its staff. Hence it's vital to the ongoing stability and success of the business to find effective ways to recruit and keep staff.

Many business owners today are baby boomers. They grew up in an environment where you got your academic qualifications; end of school, technical college, University etc and started a job. Advancement was generally via recognition of ability and progression within the same organisation to higher roles until in early middle age there was the plan to become a partner or senior manager. In those days, if you worked for more than five businesses in your working life you were likely to be considered unstable.

Today, people in their early-mid twenties or so (Generation/Gen X) and those around 30 years of age (Generation/Gen Y) have very different views of career progress. Their intention is to be in senior management by the end of their 20's. Generally, they will stay with a business for an average of up to two years before moving on. Career advancement now is by changing companies and moving up, rather than progressing internally. While the baby-boomers viewed stability and loyalty as important traits, these generations look more favourably on self-reliance and ambition.

We see here the difference between Pisces and Aquarius. The Piscean mindset (represented by baby-boomers) was based around loyalty to your employer. This came from their parents who

went through the Great Depression, World Wars etc and were inculcated with the mindset of don't rock the boat, do what you are told, fit in etc.

Gen X & Y are much more Aquarian in their outlook. The company is there for my benefit and so what can I get out of it? As soon as there is nothing there for me any more I move on. While this sounds harsh and disloyal to the older business owner, they must come to understand the underlying drivers and find ways to accommodate this mindset.

Gen X & Y have grown up in a very different world to the one in which their parents grew up. The rate at which knowledge is being accumulated is rapidly increasing. It is estimated that the full extent of human knowledge doubled in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Now it is doubling every 10 years and the rate is increasing. Many of the jobs and professions that exist today were not even thought of 50 years ago. We can't even begin to imagine many of the jobs that our children and grandchildren will have!

It is less than 40 years since the advent of the home computer and the mobile phone. These two items alone have had a huge impact on the way we live our lives in the First World and are having significant effects on Second and Third World countries. An associate of mine recently returned from a trip to India where she was stunned by the level of poverty and hunger while at the same time there are poles everywhere that you can plug into for high speed broadband internet access.

Economic theory used to talk about an impossible scenario in which there was perfect communication. Today we have exactly that – you can just about talk to anyone, anywhere at any time – instantly.

Hence these younger generations require a level of stimulation that was inconceivable to their parents. They have grown up in world which has included the availability of constant stimulation; television, video, DVD, radio, playstations, video games, internet etc. Hence they have a low threshold for boredom as they are accustomed to the frenetic activity as it appears in these media. Often this generation can be participating in more than one of these activities at a time - the pace of the working world is so much more boring!

In a more positive light these people have an insatiable desire to learn and to achieve new things and to experience much more within a shorter time frame. In the right environment this can be harnessed to achieve a positive result for both the staff member and the business.

If we are to employ members of these generations then we must find ways to respond to this need. Job roles must become much broader and diversified. Training needs to be extended to meet the need for constant learning and seeking new experiences. The borders between work and play are becoming blurred and so we find a thriving industry around corporate team-building activities and corporate participation in more & more extreme activities.

For the small business owner, employing these new generations can be very threatening. They don't understand the mentality and approach of their younger staff and don't necessarily

comprehend yet what can be done to keep these staff interested and motivated. Even if they understood some of the ways to retain these staff as described above they may feel they may not have the funds to compete with the large corporations in being able to provide more training and team-building activities etc.

Many business owners still tend to recruit (or long for!) older workers who they see as more stable and to avoid these issues. However, within the next 10-15 years this is going to become more difficult. Inevitably business will be forced to adapt and provide appropriate means to nurture their younger staff. This is especially important in light of the high cost of losing staff; cost of replacing them (e.g. ads, recruitment agencies), information lost to the business and time taken in training staff into the role. Greater investment in staff retention will more than be offset by the reduction in money lost through staff turnover.

## ***Clients and Customers***

As well as our staff having different requirements and expectations so do our clients and customers.

In this area there are a number of factors that need to be looked at:

- How do you get a customer?
- How do you keep your customer?
- How do set your prices?

The Aquarian Age with its focus on and development of technology, has had a huge impact on how we find and keep customers. Also, more and more we hear about people looking for a “soul experience”. When you are dealing with your customers keep this in mind.

### **How do you get a customer?**

Getting a customer is about your marketing. Brad Sugars (“Instant Cashflow”) makes the point that we buy a customer – that’s what our marketing budget achieves.

What does it cost you to get a customer? What is the most effective use of your marketing budget (in time and money) to get the best return?

Previously there was a limited range of options for contacting potential customers which developed over several hundred years:

- Street signage (passing traffic)
- Networking (word of mouth)

Next came the use of printed ads and so we had:

- Newspapers
- Magazines

More recently the electronic media became more prevalent:

- Radio
- TV

In these last two categories, this could be as broad as country-wide or as local as a suburb. However, the point is that you were generally talking to people with a similar cultural background, similar experiences and similar expectations.

With the advent of the internet and other forms of world-wide instant communication all that has changed. Now your customers can be anywhere in the world, operating in different time zones and different languages.

Not only do you have the ability to provide your goods and services to virtually anyone in the world, you are competing with every other supplier of your goods and services in the world. A

clear example of this is the enormous percentage of goods which we use that are now made in Asian countries such as China. Another is the provision of services as anyone who has called a helpdesk for assistance with most products these days will have spoken with someone usually in India or Malaysia.

The point here is that you have to interact differently with the marketplace than you did previously. With the advent of a world-wide marketplace, customers or clients can shop or deal with your business anytime of the day or night and so you need to be able to be available at the time that suits them or have a facility for doing so. Instances such as centralised accounts departments for world-wide operations and teleconferencing mean that people are working not only across the globe but across all time zones as well. I heard recently about a colleague who did business with a world-wide liquor supplier. They needed to discuss an accounts query and dialled the local 1300 number. It transpired that they were speaking to a person in Budapest! That person was worked night shifts in order to be available for such a call from Australia!

Because clients and customers can easily find out about you and your competitors via the internet as well as other previously existing means they are much better educated about what is available and they have higher expectations of quality, service and professionalism. Although the internet is a powerful marketing tool and essential these days for initial 'comparison shopping' for products and services, word of mouth and a personal recommendation still have tremendous weight. And they cost less!

## How do you keep your customer?

Once you have the customer how do you get them to keep coming back? As with employees, loyalty can no longer be relied upon. Many businesses address this using loyalty programs or cards e.g. frequent flyer programs or buy five coffees and get the sixth one free etc.

You also need to ensure that the experience of doing business with you is such that the customer or client will want to repeat it. This is dependant on them getting their needs met in a way that satisfies them. As mentioned above, people are looking for a "soul experience". Your interaction with them must satisfy more than just the utilitarian need.

If your product or service is not accessible or if the service is not professional, with the competition now available, your customer will not return or recommend you. While you may have the best mousetrap in the world, if it is hard to get, or your customer waits ten minutes on the phone, repeat business will be unlikely.

If you are selling throughout the world you need to have strategies in place to deal with those customers effectively and professionally. This may be a centralised operation working 24 hours per day or may be an internet-based operation with the appropriate acknowledgement emails which ensures that the customer feels 'heard'. Eventually, though, it may always be best to have a system in place where an actual conversation can take place. Nothing really beats human interaction!

## ***How do you set your prices?***

Setting your prices is a difficult area for most businesses. Previously you only had to walk down the street to find out what your competitors were selling similar products for. Now you have to compete with the entire world!

If you are selling a service this can be particularly challenging. One alternative is to use the KPI or performance bonus method as used in corporate environments. In this case, a baseline is set and performance above that baseline is rewarded. In many professions now we are seeing the 'fee for success' method of payment for example debt collectors, recruitment consultants and lawyers in certain cases.

In cases such as medicine or natural therapies this theory can be applied. For the healing professions whose purpose is to keep you healthy, payment could be linked to one's wellness. Practitioners and clients could then focus on maintaining health rather than dealing with illness. Indeed, under this model, the practitioner would not be paid if the client was ill.

This new model could be applied to anyone in a consulting or service role. That service should be providing a measurable benefit which can then be rewarded.

Clearly this strategy could work well for service providers. What creative ideas could you come up with for approaching your pricing in a new way?

## ***Suppliers***

As with customers and clients, the Aquarian Age and its technological focus has had major impact here also.

Not only do you have the ability to sell your goods and services to a worldwide market you are now able to get your requirements in the same marketplace. Your local supplier is charging too much? You can now get what you need from elsewhere within Australia or overseas. Transport and logistics have now also improved so that is certainly more possible than in the past.

As with the customer experience your supplier now needs to provide you with the best possible experience as you have the ability to look on the internet for an alternative quite easily too!

Be willing to look around. Use Google and other search engines to find out who can provide what you need.

Remember, you are the customer or client of your supplier – expect the great level of service from your suppliers that you provide to your customers.

## ***Community – Local & Global***

The corporate world is becoming much more aware (generally through market pressures) of the need for the so-called “triple bottom line” practices – addressing economic, environmental and social concerns.

One of the elements coming out of this process is CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility. This first appeared in the 1970’s with a focus on the environment but has now broadened to cover many areas of involvement with the broader community.

In the shift from the Piscean to the Aquarian Age, business is being made more accountable for their actions. The advent of instant worldwide publicity has certainly helped in this regard! Whether it’s tobacco companies, oil spills, employee’s rights or corporate failures, businesses are more susceptible than ever to the voice of the people. More business people seem to be going to gaol these days than ever before!

These days CSR can be enacted with regard to environmental issues (‘being green’) or to areas such as corporate philanthropy. We are now seeing many more companies sponsoring or being associated with charitable or community events either locally, nationally or internationally and many larger organisations have formed their own charitable trusts.

As well as the traditional view of community, there is now the emerging virtual world! The virtual space called “Second Life” has taken on an existence of its own. A woman living in Canada has a team of people in China who spend their time doing property development in this virtual space. She is now touted as the first virtual millionaire. Also there was recently a court case of a woman claiming she was raped in the virtual world. This environment is now spilling into the ‘real’ world.

What impact is your business having in these communities – local, global or virtual?

## What Next?

This e-book is intended to get you thinking in a new paradigm and in a new way about your business.

If you'd like to take this further and apply these concepts to growing or launching your business, please contact us at Aviel. Our coaching programs are individually tailored to you and your unique business.

### ***Contact Details:***

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# Appendix A - The Astrological Ages

## *What is an Age?*

The Spring (or Vernal) Equinox is the day on which the Sun crosses the celestial equator moving in a northerly direction. This normally occurs around March 21 and astrologically this defines the first point of Aries. Due to the Earth's wobble (the equator is at an angle of  $23.5^{\circ}$  to a line drawn directly to the Sun) a line drawn through the North & South Poles of the Earth and extended out into space points to a slightly different point each year. This point has been moving backwards through the astronomical signs of the Zodiac and is called the Precession of the Equinox.

A few thousand years ago, when the system of Western astrology was being defined the Spring Equinox corresponded to a point in the astronomical constellation of Aries and so the relationship between the astronomical constellations and the signs of the Zodiac was established.

Because astrologers use the Spring Equinox to define the signs of the Zodiac rather than the astronomical constellations this has caused considerable conflict and misunderstanding between astronomers and astrologers for some time.

Due to this wobble the position of the Sun relative to the background constellation on the date of the Equinox has been moving backwards through the constellations. So, while the Sun was in Aries this was the Age of Aries, while in Pisces – the Age of Pisces and so on.

For a detailed description of this process see Dr Shepherd Simpson's material on <http://www.geocities.com/astrologyages/astrologicalage.htm>.

The general understanding is that a complete cycle takes 25,920 years. This is called a Great Cycle. Dividing this by 12 (the signs of the Zodiac) gives an approximate period for each age as 2160 years.

### ***The Changeover***

The borderline between two ages is called the Cusp. For many people this occurs on a specific date and time – there are many views on when this is and so if you are interested I refer you back to Google.

For me the changeover between the Ages is an overlapping period.

Each Age can be divided into sub-Ages so we have the Aries part of the Aquarian Age overlapping the Piscean part of the Piscean Age.

Aries represents the spark of a new idea. It is also characterised by a desire to be “head of the flock” and so we see an upsurge in New Age ideas and attitudes.

At the same time we have very pure Pisces

## ***Biblical References***

The Old Testament starts with the creation of the world and gives a very brief overview of world history until the appearance of Abraham. According to the Hebrew calendar Abraham was born in 1948 (2007 is 5767 in the Hebrew calendar). One of the pivotal events in the Old Testament is the sacrifice of Isaac (Abraham's son). While Isaac had been prepared as a sacrifice (at the request of G-d) he was saved at the last minute. Abraham found a ram caught by its horns and sacrificed it in place of his son Isaac. The ram is the symbol for the sign Aries and this is the first instance in the Bible of a ram being used for a sacrifice.

This is the initial act of the Age of Aries. Aries is a fire sign and we find that burnt offerings were the standard form of thanksgiving, seeking divine forgiveness etc throughout the biblical period (until the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in the year 70AD.)

Some 400 years after the Binding of Isaac, the Exodus from Egypt is recorded in the Bible. After the divine revelation at Mt Sinai the Children of Israel sin by building a Golden Calf. Moses' destruction of this idol, burning it, sprinkling the ashes on the water and forcing the people to drink the water is the final act of the Age of Taurus – whose symbol is the Bull.

We see here an overlap between the beginning of the Age of Aries and the end of the Age of Taurus.

Let us now move forward a couple of thousand years. Jesus came at the beginning of the Age of Pisces. Pisces is a water sign and its symbol is the fish. Jesus told his followers "to be fishers of

men". A common symbol used in Christianity is the fish. Also, baptism (the immersion in water) is a very important ritual in Christianity.

It is interesting to note that the sign opposite is also prominent during any age. The opposite sign to Aries is Libra and that for Pisces is Virgo. Again we see very strong parallels with the biblical symbolism in the Old & New Testaments. The symbol for Libra is the scales – normally associated with the Scales of Justice. The Old Testament has a very strong focus into Justice and the Rule of Law. In fact the Hebrew name for the Five Books of Moses (the basis of the entire Bible) is the Torah which means Law.

The opposite sign to Pisces is Virgo – the Virgin. We clearly see this in the story of the Virgin Mary (Jesus' mother). Another symbol connected to Virgo is wheat and bread. The story of Jesus feeding the people with fishes & loaves is clearly an astrological reference.

The point of this is that at the change of each Age we have had major events of a spiritual/religious nature. At the beginning of the Age of Aries the Old Testament was laid down. At the beginning of the Age of Pisces the New Testament was written. Now that we are at the beginning of the Age of Aquarius we are in a period of Biblical significance – what will come out of this one?

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<sup>1</sup> The 2007 Shift Report: Evidence of a World Transforming. Section III: Institutional Transformation. The Institute of Noetic Sciences