

1. Shanghai's future as a connected, smart city

Bob Moritz

Shanghai has begun its journey on an exciting new path to becoming a truly smart city. By using the Internet and related technologies to the full, it aims to be a center of technological innovation that is important in economic and cultural transformation. While there are many challenges and opportunities, I would like to focus on three areas that are great opportunities for Shanghai. They are: improved health, smart business, and mobility supported by connectivity.

Healthy living is of great importance if a city is to prosper. Shanghai plans to take the lead in advancing tech-led healthcare in China. Connectivity is going to play a big part in this. It will cause great changes in existing health planning through much better coordinated management of patient care. Improving electronic medical records (EMR) is one example of this. By introducing a complete EMR system based on more effective collection and use of data, providers can own more information than ever before. This helps the individual to focus on preventive action to protect health conditions from getting worse.

New technologies are leading to new ways of thinking. Investments in areas like the credit system, e-transactions, clearing and tax are designed to take connectivity in financial services to a whole new level. Fintech is perhaps the best illustration of this improvement. It has attracted many companies in Shanghai and is already changing the traditional value chain.

As a famous financial center with strong assets and a large number of talented people, Shanghai is well qualified to make the most of Fintech. An important condition for success is the ability to meet customer needs ever more precisely and deliver great experiences. The responsibility is on financial services firms to offer truly customer-oriented services if they hope to serve a rising new group of clients and continue to keep their old customers.

Entirely at ease with social media, the young people of Shanghai are adopting new ways of living powered by mobile technology. Mobile phone maps, navigation and online

riding services make it easier than ever to get around town. At the same time, environmental monitoring is becoming more consistent. This is reinforcing the efforts to lower emissions and helping to make commitments to targets more realistic than ever.

Education services are increasing greatly through an incredible range of websites and apps, supporting learning for all ages, as well as connecting teachers, administrators and parents. You can now learn about almost anything, anywhere. The limitations to people's potential that were hard to overcome now seem a memory of a long time ago.

We believe that the changes Shanghai is experiencing today will help it become one of the world's truly smart cities for others to follow.

(463 words)

2. Where are all the plumbers?

For the past few days I've spent most of the time making a little stool for Emily. I like the whole process of writing but when I get back there in my workshop, I notice that I'm quite happy.

I don't understand why more people don't get their satisfaction from working with their hands. Somehow, a hundred or more years ago something strange happened in this country. Americans began to think that people who worked with their hands were not as smart as those who worked with their brains. The carpenters, the plumbers, the mechanics, and the farmers were put in a social class below the bankers, the salesmen, and the doctors. The jobs that required people to work with their hands were generally lower-paying jobs and the people who took them had less education.

Another strange thing has happened in recent years. It's almost as though the working people who really know how to do something other than make money are striking back at the white-collar society. In all but the executive jobs, the blue-collar workers are making as much as or more than the teachers, the accountants and the office clerks.

The apprentice carpenters are making more than the young people starting out as bank clerks. Master craftsmen are making \$60,000 a year and many are making double that. In most large cities, automobile mechanics charge \$45 an hour. A mechanic working in the service department of a car dealer in Los Angeles or New York can make \$60,000 a year. All this has happened, in part at least, because the fathers who were plumbers made enough money to send their children to college so they wouldn't have to be plumbers.

In England, a child's future is determined at an early age when the child is put either in a school that gives a classical education or one that puts emphasis on learning a trade. The people who work with their hands as well as their brains still aren't likely to belong to

the local country club. The mechanic at the car dealer's may make more money than the car salesman, but the salesman belongs to the club and the mechanic doesn't.

It's hard to explain why we don't have enough people who do things well with their hands. You can only say that it's because of some confused sense of values we have that makes us think it is better to sell houses as a salesman than it is to build them as a carpenter.

To further confuse the matter, when anyone who works mostly with his brain, as I do, does something with his hands, as when I make a piece of furniture, friends give high praise. So, why is it that the people who do it professionally, and far better than I, aren't in the country club?

My point is that considering how enjoyable it is to work with your hands and how much money you can make in those jobs, it is curious that more young people coming out of school aren't learning a trade instead of becoming salesmen.

(515 words)

3. Red Adair, troubleshooter extraordinary

Red Adair, who was famous for putting out dangerous oil well fires around the world, is one of the most extraordinary troubleshooters to have ever lived.

Born in Houston, Texas in 1915, Paul Neal Adair was one of eight children of a very poor family. Paul got the name Red Adair because of his bright red hair. This color became his trademark. He wore red clothes and red boots, drove a red car, and his team used red trucks and red equipment.

In 1938, Red Adair got his first oil-related job with the Otis Pressure Control Company. After World War Two, he was employed by Myron Kinley who, at the time, was the world leader in putting out oil well fires. He worked with Myron Kinley for 14 years. In 1959, Adair set up his own company.

During his 36 years in business, Red Adair and his crew troubleshot more than 2000 fires all over the world. Some were on land; others were on oil platforms at sea. Adair developed modern methods and special equipment to help extinguish oil well fires, and was known for being fearless, calm and safe. None of his workers were ever killed while working. They were the "best in the business."

One of Red Adair's most dangerous jobs was in 1962. He and his men put out a natural gas fire in the Sahara Desert in Algeria. The fire, which had been burning for six months, was so big that American astronaut John Glenn could see it from space and the sand around it had melted into glass. It was called the "Devil's Cigarette Lighter."

Adair's work was so extraordinary that in 1968, Hollywood made an action film called *Hellfighters*. Actor John Wayne played an oil well troubleshooter whose life was similar to

Adair's. Adair served as an advisor to Wayne. The two men became close friends. Adair said one of the best honors in the world was to have John Wayne play him in a movie.

In 1988, Adair troubleshooted what was possibly the world's worst ocean accident. It was at the Piper Alpha oil platform in the North Sea. 167 men were killed when the oil rig exploded after a gas leak. The problem was that not only did Adair have to stop the fire, but there were winds blowing at more than 120 kilometers an hour, and the sea was at least 20 meters high.

In March of 1991, Red Adair went to Kuwait to put out about 700 Kuwaiti fires following the Persian Gulf War. His efforts saved millions of liters of oil, and helped prevent an environmental tragedy.

Red Adair spent his 76th birthday in Kuwait working side by side with his men. When asked when he might retire, he said: "Retire? I do not know what that word means." However, he finally retired three years later and died at the age of 89 on August 7th, 2004. Many Americans remember Red Adair as a very brave man, who risked his own life to help others.

(506 words)

4. Attitude is everything

Jerry was always in a good mood and had something positive to say. When someone asked him how he was doing, he would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!"

I was curious about this guy, so one day I asked Jerry, "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all the time. How do you do it?"

Jerry replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, 'Jerry, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood.' I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it. I choose to learn from it. Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life."

"Life is all about choices. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people will affect your mood. You choose to be in a good or bad mood. How you live your life is your own choice." I reflected on what Jerry said.

Soon I left the restaurant industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but often thought about him when I made a choice in my life. Several years later, I heard that Jerry was shot and badly wounded in a robbery when robbers came in through the back door that Jerry had left open. Luckily, Jerry was found quickly and rushed to the local hospital. After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Jerry was released from the hospital. I saw

Jerry about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied, “If I were any better, I’d be twins. Want to see my scars?”

I declined to see his wounds, but did ask him what had gone through his mind as the robbery took place. “The first thing that went through my mind was that I should have locked the back door,” Jerry replied.

“Weren’t you scared?” I asked. Jerry continued, “The paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they took me into the emergency room and I saw the expressions of the doctors, I got really scared. In their eyes, I read, ‘He’s a dead man.’”

“I knew I needed to take action.” “What did you do?” I asked. “Well, a nurse shouted questions at me, asking if I was allergic to anything,” said Jerry. “I replied, ‘Yes.’ The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I yelled, ‘Bullets!’”

“Over their laughter, I told them, ‘Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead.’” Jerry lived, thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully. Attitude, after all, is everything.

(511 words)

5. There’s a lot more to life than a job

Reading a survey report on first year college students, I recalled the regret, “If only I knew then what I know now.”

The survey showed what I had already learned from my own students: if it (whatever it may be) won’t compute and you can’t drink it, smoke it or spend it, then “it” has little value.

According to the survey based on answers from over 188,000 students, today’s college students are “more materialistic and less idealistic.” The students’ major objective “is to be financially well off. Less important than ever is developing a meaningful philosophy of life.” So today the most popular course is not literature or history, but accounting or business. That is not a surprise. A friend of mine, a saleswoman, was making twice the salary of college teachers during her first year on the job.

“I’ll tell them what they can do with their (music, history, literature, etc.),” she was fond of saying. Actually, I’m proud of the young lady, not her attitude but her success. But why can’t we educate people for life as well as for a career? I believe we can. In a time of increasing specialization, we need to know what is truly important in life more than ever.

This is where age and maturity would play an important role. Most people, somewhere between the ages of 30 and 50, finally realize that they wish they would do more than serve a company or whatever. Most of us finally come to understand that the quality of life is not

completely determined by money. Sure, everyone wants to be financially comfortable, but we also want to feel we understand the world beyond the limit of our jobs.

If it is a fact that the meaning of life does not become clear until middle age, is it then not the duty of the schools to prepare the students for the day when the truth does come to them?

It is true that we all need a career, a successful one if possible. It is also true that the human world has collected a huge amount of knowledge in fields different from our own. And we are better for our understanding of these other contributions. It is equally true that, in studying the wisdom of others, we learn how to think. More importantly, perhaps, education teaches us to see the connections between things, and to see beyond our immediate needs.

But the most important thing is that we improve our moral sense in studying the wisdom of all ages. I once saw a cartoon which pictures a group of businessmen looking confused as they sit around a conference table; one of them is talking on the intercom: "Miss Baxter, could you please send in someone who can tell right from wrong?"

That is what education really ought to be about. Let us hope that our teachers answer students' cries for career education, but at the same time let us make sure that students are prepared for life. There is a lot more to life than a job.

(511 words)

6. From hero to zero

In January 2008, hours after saving his plane from crashing at Heathrow Airport, Captain Peter Burkill was being praised as a hero. Only days later, when reports appeared in the press accusing him of freezing at the controls, he became a villain. How did this extraordinary transformation come about?

Peter Burkill was the pilot on flight 38 from Hong Kong and ultimately responsible for the lives of its 152 passengers. Seconds before landing, two of the plane's engines failed. With the plane losing height fast, Burkill let his copilot John Coward take the controls while he himself adjusted the wing flaps to help the plane reach the runway. His risky decision worked. The plane missed some houses and landed heavily on the grass just short of the runway. After skidding for a few hundred feet, it miraculously came to a stop without turning over. The passengers escaped without serious injury.

However, this was not the version of events that began to circulate among British Airways staff in the following days, whether because they just liked to gossip or felt Burkill was incompetent. Word went around that rather than taking control of the plane, Burkill had

frozen. Worse, it was reported that he had failed to issue a mayday call and had not evacuated the passengers correctly.

Some newspapers, sensing a chance to sell more copies, picked up the story, claiming that John Coward was the real hero. They published details of Burkill's colorful past, painting a picture of a well-paid pilot who had lived the life of a playboy, and had let down his crew and passengers. Worse still for Burkill, it wasn't even his word against theirs. British Airways banned him from speaking about the events until the full investigation by the Air Accidents Investigations Branch (AAIB) was complete.

Overnight, Burkill's life changed. Before the accident, he had had everything: a great job, a beautiful home, a loving family, and the respect of his colleagues. Now he felt betrayed and desperate. The stress put enormous pressure on his family. He begged the company to issue a statement to clear his name, but they refused, clearly anxious to avoid bad publicity in case the official investigation found Burkill guilty. Even when they published their own internal report in May 2008, clearing him of any wrongdoing, it was only read by the senior management. No word of it reached his close colleagues, and rumors circulated that crew members were afraid to fly with him. He wrote to BA's chief executive asking for help, but got no reply.

The official AAIB report, the result of a completely independent inquiry, was finally published in February 2009. It concluded that ice had formed in the fuel system during the approach to Heathrow, cutting the fuel supply to the engines. The actions of the crew had saved the lives of all on board, it said, in particular Captain Burkill's split-second decision to reduce the flap setting.

The pilots and thirteen cabin crew were awarded the British Airways Safety Medal and the story of Peter Burkill the hero once again made the headlines.

(515 words)

7. Edge kids and influencers

Whatever New Yorker Katy Benson wears, other people notice. It might be something she made herself, or an odd combination of things she has put together. Sometimes her friends say: "It looks strange, but it is OK on you." Other times, they cannot wait to copy her clothing style.

Clothing manufacturers in America know that these creative "cutting-edge" kids like Katy are wearing today what millions of others will want to wear tomorrow.

There are over 40 million potential customers in the 15 to 24 age group and they spend an average of \$8,750 each! A lot of that money is spent on clothes. But fashions change quickly. Manufacturers have to design, produce and ship the right product to the stores at

the right time. To have their help with this difficult job, manufacturers often invite “Edge” kids like Katy to come and discuss new products and fashions. These teenagers do not have to buy anything. They are paid for their opinions. They are very helpful in deciding the fashion a company should and should not manufacture.

“Influencers” are another important group. They do not invent new trends, but they are quick to adopt the ones they see and like in the shops. They have status among their friends, and their choice of clothing quickly becomes the choice of others, while the things they don’t choose never become mainstream.

Sam Oleksi is an influencer. He constantly looks for things that are new, and he shops everywhere. People see and copy his choice of clothing. But by the time they do that, Sam is wearing something else.

Megan Martin, a 14-year-old from Manchester, is also an influencer. Like many 14 year-old girls, she loves shopping. But she doesn’t shop in the local shopping center: the brands come to her. “A lot of manufacturers send me make-up, jewelry and clothes,” she says. Megan is one of a growing number of “video makers.” She makes videos and posts them on the Internet to show off her latest purchases. This trend is becoming very profitable, both for the influencers and for the manufacturers. One Australian shoe company paid Cheryl Gale, another video maker, \$600 and gave her three pairs of \$180 shoes in exchange for a nine-minute Internet video. “We tripled our sales as a direct result,” says its co-founder Jules Manson.

Age doesn’t have anything to do with how good the influencers or video makers are. Tami Goodins started to be an influencer at the age of 13. Now 15, Tami has already been invited to Fashion Week events. She has been interviewed by fashion designers, appeared on the cover of a fashion magazine, and more importantly, she has influenced a complete fashion collection. Young Tami is now a valuable asset for all fashion-related brands. If she wears a certain item, many young girls will buy it.

Edge kids and influencers make up fewer than one in five of their generation, but their importance is far greater than their numbers. It is they who largely decide what will soon be worn by the other 80%.

(509 words)

8. Ice road truckers

Could you spend three months driving a truck in sub-zero conditions with only short periods of sleep for days on end? Could you drive a truck across a two-inch-thick sheet of compressed ice?

There is a popular TV series about working on the ice roads of Canada's far north. It is called *Ice Road Truckers* and it's all about the men and women who are brave enough to transport goods across the northern regions that only have access roads for part of the year. This is because the "roadways" are made of ice that stretches for many miles across nothing but open, frozen lakes. The supplies and materials that these truckers bring are always essential to the working of these areas, whether it's oil, food and medical supplies or building materials and machinery for industry.

Driving on the ice roads isn't a job that every truck driver can do. It takes nerves of steel and more than a little madness to get out there and travel across miles and miles of frozen emptiness. Most drivers who try this sort of work turn around the first time they hear the ice cracking under the huge weight of their trucks. Others make it across the frozen ice to their destination but decide the stress is not worth the money, although the money is great.

Even the slightest mistake or fault in the road could cost a driver their life. The trucks all travel in convoys at a slow and steady pace. If a truck has to stop for any length of time, a major disaster could occur, because the ice is not able to take the pressure of a heavy weight in one spot for long. If a truck breaks down, it is a race against time to get moving again. If a truck does break through the ice and sinks, the driver has less than a minute to get out of the icy water before he dies.

One of the worst sights an ice road trucker can see on his journey across the emptiness of the ice road is the front of a big truck, half submerged in the ice and frozen in place. The driver obviously tried to get across the ice road too quickly or at the wrong time of the season. That is why constant checking of the ice is so important to the safety of the trucks and their drivers. The information from these checks can tell the drivers how fast they can travel and what distance they must maintain from each other on any given part of the ice road.

Dianne Rowland, wife of an ice road trucker, was perfectly happy to let her husband disappear into the great white north for a couple of months every year, trucking goods and equipment to and from the mines in the Arctic Circle, until she saw the first episode of *Ice Road Truckers*. Five minutes after the documentary started, she said she would not let him go back.

(500 words)