**ARI STRATEGIC PLANNING 2015**

1. **Agenda Questions:** As for me, I’m not interested in a routine confirmation and tweak planning sessions. I.e., we do more or less of what we are already doing. Yaron wrote on 7/6/2015, we need “to expand current programs and bring new ones online… essential to changing the culture.” I’m not sure this is true.

I want to question everything; re-think everything; then stop or continue with minimum, moderate, or maximum effort.

What will exist in 10 or 15 years that will make a real difference? Number of Objectivist intellectuals? …of Objectivists? …of fans? …of AR books sold? …of books sold? Conferences? Speaking tours? Campus courses completed? TV appearances? Radio show? Policy briefings? Books on healthcare, education, equality? What numbers of what do we want to exist in 10-15 years?

Above all, I want to set a clear, aggressive, specific goal(s) that will lead to a **substantive, measurable result** – 100,000 students active on Campus? 15,000 Objectivists? 1,000 professors teaching Objectivism?

Really, the question is: **What will be the BIG result by 2025/2030**? – a clear, specific, measureable, significant, **BIG GOAL(S), and a clear-cut means of achieving it/them.**

Also, at the end, the real commitment to the plan, even, hopefully, excitement.

1. **1st Question?** I think we need to first answer the question: **“What is our product?” before we can set a big goal.** After all, we will be seeking to produce and market our product(s).
2. **Fundamentality:** As you know, a fundamental is: Something which everything else in a system is built upon, by which the whole is supported, or from which each addition is derived and without which, therefore, the whole construction would collapse. (IL 72R, Glossary). I want to think through what is primary/fundamental and what is consequential/an effect. E.g., attendance at OCON is a consequence, as is awareness of Ayn Rand.
3. **Who is CB?** CB is a Board member, major contributor, and planning team member. I’d like to be viewed primarily as a planning team member and not a Board member or contributor (although that’s going to be a challenge). It’s not who is right and it’s not about me. It is about what is right and what is going to get the job done. We have come a very long way, but I have a sense (and perhaps others do too) of not coming far enough. How can we make a real difference in the shortest possible time?
4. **Blank Slate:** I’m wondering if we should go back and think about everything; start with a blank slate: *If we were not doing any of our current programs today, would we start them?* If we had $10+ million to invest, how would we invest it?
5. **Criticism:** I’m going to be critical. I’m going to question everything, tear things apart, but only in this room. Then, we’ll put them back together in the most advantageous way.
6. **Disagreement:** Disagreement is good. Argument is good. But, of course, it’s always respectful. “If everyone is agreeing, no one is thinking.” — General George S. Patton
7. **Strategy:** The general question is: What are the few, key, right things to do? Expansion of that is: What are the few, key, right things to do that will produce the most significant results? This breaks down to: What are the right things? What results? What is significant? The Prometheus Process answers: The few, key, right things are the Centers of Gravity (what are the CoGs?). The significant results are contained in the Future Picture and “desired effects”, which are the results of each main Center of Gravity. Then, Measures of Merit for each.
8. **Planning:** Planning can be messy. We are dealing with partial information, inadequate forecasts, insufficient measurements, and at times it can feel like we are grasping at straws. We don’t have enough time, we don’t have enough facts, and we need to make decisions and judgments without a comfortable level of certainty – we are dealing with possibilities, sometimes probabilities. Often the planning is “our best judgment” given what is known and also what is not known.

Planning can be confused and confusing. What appears simple can become complex and (hopefully) the complex can be reduced to the simple.

Planning is not comfortable; we deal with insufficient information, unknowns and quite a bit of speculation and guesses. Add to all of this that people have different ideas and will disagree. We need to ask the tough questions and confront things which may be unpleasant.

1. **Thinking:** Planning is thinking. Planning is a thoughtful process which creates a vision/goal and then identifies means to achieve it. Good planning can become a self-fulfilling prophesy. Planning is the first crucial activity of management. Without planning there can be no management. *Managers manage a plan*. Managers, staff and organize a plan. A plan leads everything; a plan drives everything. Good planning can make the difference between success and failure.
2. **Marketing:** Is it really all about marketing? Is that’s what is really going to make the difference? Will using the framework, the principles, the language of marketing (modified language for our use) really be the powerful tool that I believe it can be? Is it true that marketing is the means of achieving the results wanted, and without marketing we cannot achieve results?
3. **Products:** Marketing begins with products. OCON is a product: its length, its main sessions, its panels, its lunches, its dinners – all of these make up the OCON product.
4. **Campus** is a product. It comprises short and long courses, and all of the other stuff that goes with it. Campus is based on/in the digital strategy. The digital strategy will support and broadly promote Campus courses. Campus can also be used as a product to raise badly-needed contributions.
5. **Objectivists** are a product of our education/manufacturing process. One of Onkar’s important products is Objectivists. Can Campus produce Objectivists?
6. **Books** are obvious products and there are other products.
7. What is our **main product**; what is our real product? The answer I’ve come up with today is **Objectivists** (of all kinds—not “ideas” as I’d thought before). That seems obvious. We want and need new intellectuals.
8. **Measurements:** At the end of planning I want to see a clear system of measurement – an improvement and clarification of the existing measurements.
9. **A fund-raising machine** which would remove the reliance away from me.
10. **Campus Pricing:**

**D-R-A-F-T**

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1. **Programs:** I think we should review each of our current programs and ask questions of each: Should we stop it? Increase or decrease our efforts – minimum effort, maximum effort, or moderate effort?
2. **Symbiosis Strategy:** Our resources are relatively pitiful (I don’t mean that as a criticism; just as a reality); therefore, I believe the Symbiosis Strategy needs to be thought about very seriously and **greatly expanded**. (I’ll create a table/form.)

I think the Symbiosis Strategy is a major Center of Gravity and; therefore, **it needs to be given a lot of thought and resources**.

1. **Thinking about:** What about Leonard? John Allison? Potential schisms? Educating people in Objectivism? Campus? Succession for Yaron? Succession for Jeri? Yaron’s job? —Is and should be? Israel? Relocating ARI? Lots to think about – the symbol for this is (T).
2. **Questions:** We have limited time and cannot answer all of our questions; there are just too many. We should simply not answer some questions and others could be assigned to thinking teams or to individuals.
3. **Success:** Obviously success is extremely important; however, success can be and frequently is taken for granted. We need to identify what is successful and decide whether we will (or will not) exploit it and to what level of effort (minimum, moderate or maximum). For instance, *Atlas Shrugged* is 50% of all books sold! That’s a huge success! … Peikoff’s tapes/courses? … VOS sales?

One-third of all Campus courses are being taken outside of the United States. That is a success. It appears that Israel and Europe could be very successful and perhaps other countries too. Is our international program becoming successful?

We need to ask the question: What is working; what is being successful? And then answer, well, what are we going to do about it?

1. **Exponential growth:** Let’s give some thought about how we might grow exponentially – at least we should give it thought.
2. **Money pits:** Do we have any money pits? For instance, where are we pouring in money for little results? Any staff not worth their salary? (This will be difficult….)
3. **Delimitation:** We cannot do everything. If we try to do many things, we will not do anything well. If we focus (with the realistic understanding of our resources), we may achieve a few things very well.
4. **Books:** Which books would we rather have sold: Peter’s *Defense of Selfishness*; *How We Know;* *Fossil Fuels; Capitalist Manifesto; Free Market Revolution; Fountainhead; Atlas Shrugged; Virtue of Selfishness*? How many are we selling of each? What is successful? What should we put resources into? How?
5. **Measurements:** The right measurements are crucial. I think we need to spend more time thinking through our Measures of Merit and putting our measurements in a hierarchy.
6. **Musts:** No question, I think we **must**:
7. Have a more powerful fundraising machine;
8. Educate people in Objectivism (What do we need to do? Others do? Educate in what? To what level?);
9. Use marketing;
10. Identify success and decide… exploit it.
11. **Questioning Approach:** Should we use the questioning approach on anything? If so, on what? (See the attached table.)
12. **Objectivist professors:** How many Objectivist professors do we have – Tara, Brad, BB&T professors (what is their quality and status?), others? – how many do we have and how many would we like to have?
13. **Concentration:** Focus and concentration is critical. Perhaps one of our greatest problems is attempting to do too much. See the 2011 Strategic Planning PowerPoint, at slide 15. How much of that has really been achieved?
14. **Achievements:** In the internal scope we need to identify what has been achieved fully, in part, and not at all or even failed.
15. **Campus:** The last time I could see success and I was excited was when we were envisioning Campus to be reaching hundreds of thousands of people and having a great many actually studying, repeat studying, Objectivism. I thought that Campus would do it. Will it do it?
16. **Arrogance:** Should we stop knocking allies and friends? Stop the criticism. Should we focus on validating, encouraging, cooperating, educating and persuading? Help our potential allies understand. (I’m writing an essay on this.)

This applies to Cato and John, IHS, the Bill of Rights Institute, and our other possible “strategic partners” with the Symbiosis Strategy.

1. **Marketing Talent:** Should we recruit and talk to marketing experts, not necessarily in our meeting, but by telephone conference between sessions or during the sessions? For instance, having Kevin Gentry at our fundraising meeting was informative and helpful.

There’s lots more, but enough! We’ll be discussing….

One more thing: I will be sending you only some more stuff. You may want to share this and the other stuff with others.

Carl B. Barney

Planning Team Member

**Attachment:** Questioning Approach FORM