



The Culture Compass

The Seeds of Strategy

The Culture Compass program outlines and explores that in history, and across diverse cultures, there is both an ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ framework and strategic mechanism at work that informs everything we undertake and even life itself.

This cultural framework provides a template for strategic or developmental need, especially for organisations and teams forging a shared strategic vision.

The Culture Compass is also a way of clarifying our personal, individual cultural talent in conjunction with our backstory and prevailing cultural influences and challenges.

‘The Seeds of Strategy’ is presented by Brisbane based festival director and community cultural program manager Sebastian Flynn, as part of the ‘Culture Compass’ enterprise. The program has developed from Sebastian’s career over 20 years in the multicultural arts arena:

Director - Queensland Multicultural Festival - 2006-2009

Managing Director and CEO National Folk Festival Canberra 2010-2013

Manager Major Events - Multicultural Australia (MA) 2013-2019.

Sebastian was the Chair of Subud International Cultural Association (SICA) from 2010-2014. Sebastian presented the Culture Compass program at the Subud World Congress in Freiburg Germany in 2018.

During his work with the NGO Multicultural Australia (MA) in Brisbane, Sebastian received an invitation to attend the International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL) in Vancouver. The program was primarily looking at what was described by the IIMHL as a 'paradigm shift from a clinical to a cultural approach to mental wellbeing', through acknowledging and respecting the value of diversity and cultural practice.

The Culture Compass program was originally based on helping refugees and those displaced by diaspora and was encouraged by Sebastian's attendance at the IIMHL. The Culture Compass program has adopted both historical and contemporary cultural frameworks to provide a clarity of vision.

The Culture Compass program, based on more recent experience, now has a broader application for people in all areas of life and differing environments, backgrounds, and organisations, aiming to forge their creative direction amidst what can often be a radically shifting socio-political and cultural scenario.

The Culture Compass is not designed to reduce or ameliorate change and challenge but to provide a sense of cohesive structure prior to strategic development. In this way, the Culture Compass can provide an effective exploration and analysis of an organisation, a group, or an individual, whether for professional or personal strategic purposes.

As part of his exploration of forms of process, Sebastian encountered structural framework examples in diverse cultural history that are so rich in description and symbolism as to provide perfect vehicles for reinterpretation into contemporary thought and strategic action.

The Culture Compass now points the way towards providing an essential historical cosmological structure for the design and delivery of any project, endeavour and even of life itself.

Salamah Pope (RIP) in her work as an anthropologist, did much to preserve and establish the theory of processual structures and patterns. In her doctorate work, *'The Pattern of the World'*, Salamah expressed a wish before she passed away, for someone to continue this valuable work. It is Sebastian's hope and aim that the Culture Compass can help to support Salamah's brave vision. Bapak told Salamah that her work was important for connecting the inner with the outer as a 'Filsafat' or philosophy.

Examples of historical and contemporary frameworks and their respective interpretation:

Sufi Historical Cultural Framework:

ZAT - SIFAT - ASMA - AF'AL

(Sufi Dictum) (1100 AD)

Zat - Intention accompanied by life force

Sifat - Our Direction as human service

Asma - Our Effort - our creative work

Af'al - Our Achievement - our result

Etruscan Historical Cultural Framework

Tramontana Levante Ostro Ponente Another rich example of a historical framework is that of the Etruscans - 4C BCE:

Tramontana - refers to the source or initial impulse for action and creativity - but also of how in this lifetime, we never get 360 degrees of clarity. Translates to *'That Which Lies Over the Mountains'* or Story.

Levante - 'From where the Sun Rises'. Conditions of Service, Vision

Ostro - Forging a tangible structure or visible model'

Ponente - 'Where the Sun Sets' - Strategy

This kind of rich language and symbolism makes for in-depth parallels to be drawn in creating a clear picture of our contemporary situation and environment, providing food for thought and invaluable detail in the Culture Compass. From the above, one can also draw from the interpretation and translation of the acronyms IDEA (Intention, Direction, Effort, Achievement) and Story, Service, Structure, Strategy.

The Culture Compass program uses the structure and symbolism of the compass as a metaphor for life cycles - much like the Medicine Wheel is to the First Nations Americans, or the Mandala to the Tibetan Buddhists, or the Four Directional Winds of the Mediterranean to the Etruscans of the 4th Century BCE, or the Four Functions of Human Consciousness to CG Jung, or Zat Sifat Asma Af'al to the Sufis of the 7th Century - representing four essential strategic stages in the process of any undertaking and for life itself.

The Culture Compass program uses highly effective juxtapositions of these fourfold dictums with contemporary interpretations and applications to create a uniquely clear and concise approach to contemporary strategising.

CHAOS or Jigsaw Puzzle Theory -

Another highly significant fourfold framework is 'Chaos' or 'Jigsaw Puzzle' theory. Chaos or Jigsaw Puzzle theory is a good example of how achieving a strategic goal is not 'the end' but the portal into a new and more refined form of chaos - and the 'processual' start of another cycle of life/change. Its structural basis is in the model of a jigsaw - 1. chaos, 2. separation, 3. union, 4. order. 4.1 etc (new chaos). Life continues in a state of flux - known as the creative advance!

This brief overview of the Seeds of Strategy program gives just a couple of examples of historical frameworks juxtaposed with contemporary. The aim is to provide sufficient rich detail, colour and diverse

interpretation to enable a clear analysis of individual and collective strategic progress to date and the provision of a clear interpretation. *'The Seeds of Strategy'* is aimed at organisations, groups and individuals, as a program of both collective and individual analysis and change.

NB. I have travelled across the world to deliver this program in widely diverse situations. I look forward to working with organisations to help them to explore their future strategic approach and creativity.

Prominent engagements & past & recent Culture Compass programs:

Brisbane City Council

Queensland Multicultural Festival

National Folk Festival Canberra CEO

Canberra Capital Tourism - study visit to Smithsonian Institution

Washington DC and New York

Iranian Refugee Program Rockhampton

Queensland University of Technology, Leadership Program

International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL)

Federal Dept of Services, Senior Management Training (Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane). Suncorp Staff Training

Tribomont Facilitation Centre, Belgium

BASARA Youth Camp Kalimantan Indonesia

Subud World Congress, Freiburg Germany

Culture Compass Programs Lewes UK

Olsztynek, Poland, and Santiago de Chile

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Subud International Cultural Association
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