



## WHY POS, WHY NOW?

*Comments by Richard (Rick) Cotton, Ph.D. Student, Boston College, on the morning of December 6<sup>th</sup> before conference participants began the morning breakout.*

"I don't mean to be melodramatic . . . but the world is hurting and it needs our help. I'd like to spend the next couple of minutes sharing some points, some observations, and a kind of call to action that seems to fit with our times.

The other day, riding in with the driver from Detroit Metro, I asked him, 'What would be the impact if the Big Three did not get bailed out?' He said quite starkly, 'It would all be over for us' as though Detroit and the region would cease to exist as we know it. He felt strongly that things would change dramatically and perhaps permanently, for the worse.

My second observation builds on this sentiment. I have not been on the Earth all that long, but in my 30-odd years - and I've heard others express almost the same exact sentiment during this conference - I, my family, friends, and others, have not felt such economic and financial insecurity as we are feeling right now. To further illustrate the point, when I flew out of Providence airport in Rhode Island on a mid-day flight, the airport was completely dead. Maybe you had a similar experience. No line at the counter and no line at security. It was a ghost town - good for travelling but kind of scary and unnerving in other ways.

Third, I'd like to share something I learned from a presentation by Jean Bartunek in a session yesterday. Jean and her colleagues were looking at the 'Implications for Management' sections of a set of AMJ articles and they found that in fully one-third of the articles, there was no such section even included. In the other two-thirds, this section of the paper was typically vague or general, not very actionable, and often little more than a summary of the main points of the article.

Lastly, I want to share an observation from last night's field trip to Zingerman's. In reflecting on the experience, I've since come to realize that Zingerman's exudes POS to such an extent, that I've yet to assimilate it all . . . The point I want to share is that towards the end of his Q&A, Ari Weinzweig said something in his inimitable, Yogi Berra-esque way that really resonated. He said, 'If you want to change the world, you've got to go out and do something.'

Putting these points together, I think we can do more to share our own and others' important POS research findings to help those around us. So tomorrow or next week, whether you are teaching a class of MBAs who can go back to their organizations and implement change, or working on an R&R where you can sharpen up the implications for management, whether you are interacting with your family and friends, your department colleagues, or helping out in your community - try to take some of the powerful findings you've learned from POS and this conference and seek to apply them. Because, now more than ever, the world needs POS. Thank you."