

Workshop, or Vanishing Point

All these facts have a proud scientific unimportance – like walking backwards.

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To begin this conversation, never ask: why a workshop? If you want to perform a good role, forget the blue sky outside, the fine breeze brightening the foliage of the garden across, perhaps deriving from remote fields or unthinkable glaciers. Leaving such things aside is essential. There are places where signs of childhood aren't welcome.

Take notice: the hotel lounge is not only cold due to the air conditioner. The same inclement and rough sun that scorches the pedestrians on the viaduct barely tinges the tinted windows or the tasteless carpet inside. Everything here is made to distance life, beyond the granite of the walls. The room is aseptic, ideal for events of this nature. The light doesn't excite any voice. After all, what would be of this occasion if that old grey-haired man sitting on the second row were to suddenly begin to hum an old nursery rhyme? If the decadent madam at his side, with trembling hands and lips, were to admit never having overcome the disqualification suffered in the Miss Spring competition? It is necessary to stay miles away from that, including what is being said by the corporation consultant at the opening of the meeting.

One should concentrate only, let's say, at the luminous point that escapes from the video projector. Having a vanishing point is a matter of survival. The beautiful earrings from the hotel assistant or the little gold bracelet embracing her ankle aren't a good fit since they can sound improper. Most importantly, when choosing a good vanishing point, one must be certain of its neutrality. An acceptable specimen must not evoke any memory, not inciting us to want to lie on the grass, or, say, ride the continent on a bicycle; its cold geometry must be an antidote for the two most terrible evils: smirk or sleep – two curses that torment the life of whoever accepts to participate in a workshop.

Concentrate, for instance, on the voice of the speaker, and how his exposition defends the fast pace of today's age. We have heard that one before. "Before, it was still possible to revise our learning," says he, "if you are not willing to update your skills, you are out." You've heard this n times.

In a lecture given a while ago, this same consultant repeated the same remarks in full. In the last ten years, this lecture hasn't changed one bit, what leads us to conclude that, if the market was indeed serious, this repeater would have been out, duly unemployed. Now, on the contrary, if he indeed updated his skills during this time, he hid his gold with perfection. And just the same, should be fired. Mr. Déjà Vu doesn't even sound like a bad person. Considering his exceptional case, he could pass as a weekend buddy after a couple of pints. But you can't take someone that prays the same hymn for over a decade seriously. And later hear him say we all need to become products, guiltless, and profit from this condition. Our real battle, instead, will be against the shelf: we can't be the only one left there. Each one must find their best-selling strategy. We need to have expertise, good image, and disposition to innovate as indispensable items.

Here is the moment when, without a good vanishing point, everything will be lost. You may begin to think that to be a product, not long ago, was unsexy. God, to be compared to an object was once a crime. You may be haunted by the memory of the firm's accountant, whose great responsibility was to mediate the company's relationship with the fired employees. Quiet and honest, the man was called the Executioner in the hallways, him, also, unforgivingly included in the list of high salary cutbacks. His wife didn't have a job, and as it goes, the situation of his four children became critical. They were taken out of private schools, extra courses, and included in the public health system, finally joining the list of rights and advantages of 90% of the population. After years of struggle with financial difficulties, his wife's depression, and the children's sorrow, our Executioner left his family and jumped out of his apartment window. "I don't know if I will be back for dinner," the note written in the back of the phone bill said, six months due. Thus, how having a good vanishing point is fundamental to avoid these memories.

Listen to the consultant until the end, without the one change in your semblant. Occasionally, make a head nod, an eyebrows motion, to remind others of your interest. You can take note of the most popular jargons, updating your private dictionary: goal as opportunity, lack of performance as gap, proactive vision as like morphine, etc. It is important not to blend the names since the concepts remain the same. Any mix-up can be fatal. Next winter, new ciphers will be added, and to be update will make all the big difference, trust me.

Remind yourself of taking advantage of the snack breaks, and that workshop never lasts more than a week. Not entirely bad, right? If such thought sounds too much for you, firm your gaze on the vanishing point and try hard not to whistle the Fifth of Beethoven.