

Objectivity

Introduction to Objectivity

Part One

Reality and the Marketplace

Introduction

“If you engage for long in the study of how human beings relate to one another, especially through the use of language, you are bound to be struck by the importance of “transactions.” – Jerome Bruner

Human beings transact to care for their Conditions of Life. Some conditions are obvious and must be tended to constantly if we are to survive, while others become more important to us at different stages in our life.

The programs of Influence Ecology focus on the conditions of Money, Career and Work; conditions which have expanded and continue to evolve as *serious concerns* for most adults in our modern age. These conditions rely on one’s ability to coexist with others through mutual exchange of goods and services (transaction) which occur in the social construct known as the marketplace.

To avoid the threats of modern life and to ensure our basic needs are taken care of, we must tend to the condition *Money*. To go beyond mere survival and be able to freely enjoy the comforts modern life has to offer, we must be able to transact *effectively* and *consistently* - over a long enough period of time to generate a surplus of Money. This surplus (wealth) is an *effect* that can be predictably and recurrently *caused* through the strict adherence and application of the fundamentals of transaction.

When we refer to *cause and effect* we are referencing the causal relationship among “things” or “entities” that exists in a knowable world. Every cause has an effect of some kind. “Things” as we discovered at a very early age, act in definite ways. This represents the implicit knowledge of causality. The “law of causality” states this relationship explicitly. The validation rests on two points: the fact that action is *action of an entity*; and the law of identity, *a thing is itself* (A is A).

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Every entity has a nature; it is specific, non-contradictory, limited; it has certain attributes and no others. Such an entity must act *in accordance with its nature*. In any given set of circumstances, therefore, there is only one action possible to an entity, the action expressive of its identity. This is the action it will take, the action that is *caused* and necessitated by its nature. Cause and effect, therefore, is a universal law of reality. Every action has a cause, the cause is the nature of the entity which acts; and the same cause leads to the same effect – the same entity, under the same circumstances, will perform the same action. The law of causality, as you will come to learn in this series, is a corollary to the axioms on which Objectivity is grounded. To be objective is to adhere to the law of causality.

This series is intended to offer a general introduction to Objectivist epistemology as a foundation to our study of Objectivity. Additionally, it is intended to inspire continued thinking and study on the topic, but it is not offered as a recommendation for or against the virtues of an Objectivist philosophy in any other Condition(s) of Life outside of those specific to the fulfillment of marketplace transactions.

In this issue we will attempt to contextualize and define Objectivity and introduce the importance of why an Objective view of reality is essential to the fulfillment of marketplace transactions.

Objectivity and Subjectivity

The axioms on which Objectivity are based originate with the philosophy of Aristotle. His philosophy and teachings have enabled the West to achieve the advanced state of civilization we know today. He set in motion a relentless pursuit for truth; the causal relationships among events, which has led to the advancement of mankind over more than 2000 years.

Objectivity, simply defined means – independent of consciousness; reality (the world) exists outside of, or independent of human consciousness. The most basic assumption is that there is a knowable and real world consisting of entities structured according to their properties and relations. Categorization of these entities is based on their properties. The ‘real world’ is fully and correctly structured so that it can be modeled. This view is based on the *primacy of existence*.

A non-objective view means that one holds reality as dependent upon human consciousness; that reality (the world) does not exist independent of human consciousness, and is unknowable. The structure of the reality (the world) is created in the mind through interaction with the world and based on interpretations, or inspired in the mind, delivered by other ‘unknowable’ forces. This view is based on the *primacy of consciousness*.

As we will demonstrate, it is important to recognize the difference between these two predominant views as both views can clearly be identified as we move through transactions and examine transactional behavior. For our purposes, we shall organize these views into two categories: Objective views and Subjective views. Any philosophy, theory, concept, etc that accepts the primacy of consciousness over the primacy of existence is categorized as ‘subjective’. Any that considers the primacy of existence over the primacy of consciousness we consider ‘objective’.

Objectivity

An objective view of reality is simply stated as: *existence exist*. Resting on the early Greek formulation of the same (stated as, *what is – is*) the objectivist view holds that '*there is something*'. This is the foundation on which everything else rests and must be accepted before one can discuss what one knows or how one knows it – first, *there must be something, and one must grasp that there is something*. If not, there is nothing to consider or to know.

This concept of existence is the widest of all concepts. It covers the entirety of everything which is, was and ever will be. On this axiom rest another – that human beings exists *possessing consciousness*. Consciousness is not inherent in the fact of existence as such; a world without conscious organism is possible. But consciousness IS inherent in one's grasp of existence; inherent in stating "there is something – of which I am aware."

Consciousness is the faculty of perceiving that which exists. *To be conscious is to be aware of something*.

A third axiom which rest on the first two is the 'law of identity' which states '*a thing is itself*, or more traditionally stated – *A is A*. The 'identity' of an existent (a thing) means that it *is what it is*; the 'sum of its attributes or characteristics'. Like existence and consciousness, identity is also a fundamental starting point of knowledge. Before one can ask *what* any existent is, it must be something, and one must know this. If not, then there is nothing to investigate – or to exist.

There is something I am aware of.

There is – *existence*; something – *identity*; I am aware of – *consciousness*. These three are the basic axiomatic concepts¹ on which the philosophy of *marketplace objectivity* is based. These are the starting points of cognition, on which all proofs depend.

Axioms are perceptual self-evidences. There is nothing to be said on their behalf, they require no definition and cannot be reduced any further. The fact that axioms are available to perception does not mean that all human beings accept or even grasp axioms in conscious, conceptual terms. Many people accept the narratives and contradictions of the Current that insist there are no basic axioms (or even truths) on which to base proof; that everything and anything is possible if one simply believes it is so. Though most sane adults inherently recognize and often adhere to the axioms of existence, identity and consciousness, and they will just as often, reject these axioms in favor of superstition, mysticism, magical thinking and other contradictions that justify or explain away reality. More commonly, those who fail to consistently produce the actions required to fulfill on their Chief Aims in Life will abandon reality rather than suffer the burden of dealing with it objectively and consistently. It is at these times, these "*moments of truth*" when ambitious adults demonstrate their self control, self confidence and self esteem. They do not abandon reality in favor of some irrational, undisciplined, ungrounded conclusion that distorts the facts and leaves their chief aims subject to some unconscious, irrational and unknowable phenomenon. They rely on their philosophy of life.

¹ *Axiomatic concepts* are not subject to the process of definition. Their referents can be specified only extensively, by pointing to instances. Everything to be grasped about these facts is implicit in any act of adult cognition; any subsequent knowledge adds nothing to the basic facts designated by the terms 'existence,' 'identity,' and 'consciousness.'

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As a human being you have no choice about the fact that you need a philosophy. Your only choice is whether you define your philosophy by a conscious, rational disciplined process of thought and scrupulously logical deliberation [objectivity] – or let your subconscious accumulate a junk heap of unwarranted conclusions, false generalizations, undefined contradictions, undigested slogans, unidentified wishes, doubts and fears, thrown together by chance, but integrated by your subconscious into a kind of mongrel philosophy and fused into a single, solid weight: self-doubt, like a ball and chain in the place where your mind's wings should have grown.²

From our first sensation of some 'thing' our relationship to existence began. Existence is implicit from the start. It is given in the first sensation – to grasp "identity" and later, "consciousness" however, even in implicit form, we had to attain, across a period of time, a certain perspective on our mental contents. We had to perform, in stages, various processes of differentiation and integration that are not given in the simple act of opening our eyes or feeling an object. Before a child can distinguish one object from another object, and thus reach the implicit concept of "identity," she must first come to perceive that objects exist. This requires that she move beyond the chaos of disparate, fleeting sensation with which her conscious life begins; it requires that she integrate her sensation into the percepts of things or objects. At this point the child has reached in implicit form, the concept of "entity."

Entities constitute the content of the world men perceive; there is nothing else to observe. In the act of observing entities, of course, the child like the adult, observes (some of) their attributes, actions and relationships. In time, the child's consciousness can focus separately on such features, isolating them in thought for purposes of conceptual identification and specialized study.

Objectivity and the Fundamentals of Transaction

The fundamental programs of Influence Ecology take an **objective** view of transaction.

Transactions have a definite and knowable structure. The constitutive elements of *every* transaction (moves and phases) are located at particular points and occur at a particular time in a definite cycle we identify as a *Primary Transaction Cycle*. We teach that the moves and phases of the Primary Transaction Cycle are fixed, permanent and knowable. When studied and practiced deliberately over a long period of time, the likelihood of success through effectively transacting in the marketplace becomes measurable and predictable.

If one doesn't know any better or overtly chooses to approach transactions in any other 'non-objective' way, one might see every transaction or some element as conditional, and choose to act or not act on any one element (move or phase) depending on their feelings, gut reactions or insights at the time.

² Rand, Ayn – *Philosophy-Who Needs It?* P.5
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One might choose, for example, to reject *'invitation'* as an element of the transaction cycle and opt to wait on the cosmic forces of the universe to provide the opportunities to *present* their offers.

One might choose to leave the terms and conditions of their *contract* to chance, and *fulfill* on their promises (go to work) before they have a lawfully enforceable agreement – appealing to the greater nature and 'good' of humanity to provide a fair and valuable compensation of their hard work after the fact.

In a non-objective view, the notion that "*everything happens for a reason*" allows for 'reason' to be left to some interpretation other than an objective definition which is grounded in reality and the methodology of logic; opting instead to consider "any" circumstance as a valid justification not to act deliberately.

One might choose to rely on popular trends and notions perpetuated by the Current, falling victim to weapons of influence of used by professional practitioners; accepting notions, potions as an "insight" having been 'delivered' through some inspired attraction, rather than relying on their own research, study, accurate thinking and planning.

To view a transaction in a non-objective way is to diminish or remove altogether any likelihood of measurable recurrence. If it is true that outside of luck or circumstantial good fortune, the only way we are able to produce wealth is through recurrent and valuable transactions over a long period of time – we are left with no other option than to approach transacting in the marketplace objectively. The purpose for our study then is to better understand, learn and apply the principals of Objectivity in our day to day transactions.

Given the limited resources available to most of us, which includes the time we have left to deploy them, we simply cannot afford the luxury of entertaining highly subjective concepts, views or philosophies about what it takes to make Money.

Understanding the fundamentals of marketplace transactions will not produce the action essential to cause results. It is the proper and effective application of the fundamentals over a long enough period of time that causes and allows for money to be produced and surpluses of it to be saved and invested. As obvious as that statement may seem, it does not account for the fact that a major challenge we face in dealing with participants in our programs is having them move from *understanding* into effective *recurrent application* of the fundamentals.

When pressed to explain this, participants will arrive at some subjective or well constructed set of justifications, behaviors or other arbitrary notions that have little or nothing to do with the reality of producing objective results. In other words, their view is ungrounded and non-objective.

Most business professionals with whom we work are able to prove the value of their offer by virtue of their incomes, savings and other measures. They are adults who recognize they must earn and save but are not able to produce significant surplus incomes. Though currently meeting their living standards, they know all too well that they cannot go beyond their current

level of performance. The reasons are many - but in the background of almost every situation a fundamental error in thinking can be found.

After a short time of observing their transactional behavior, what we find are people who are simply naïve or confused. They lack the knowledge, awareness or in many cases they simply refuse to accept the rigid and objective nature that dominates transactional behavior throughout the marketplace. They have a flawed or inaccurate view of the mechanics of transactional behavior and as a result they take ineffectual action that produces less than satisfactory results.

What must alter is a fundamental understanding of the mechanics and practices of an indifferent and objective world. Though you wouldn't know it by their confidence, attitude or conceit, you will see it in their satisfaction measures. They simply do not relate to the fact that the world in which they transact is objective and therefore they do not move objectively in it.

What they do not realize is that they have accepted a certain level of naivety or complacency with the requirements of a highly objective environment. They do not know or refuse to accept that they have settled for a subjective view (or narrative) about the kind of deliberate effort required to produce recurrent results.

They are stuck in a kind of soup of subjective narratives, ideas, possibilities, popular trends, notions and Current driven nonsense that distracts them from their primary aims.

Their subjectivity excuses them from being responsible for the coordination of action required to produce the results they say they intend, not in the short run, but over a long enough period of time to amass any real equity, enterprise value or wealth. We stress here that we are not equating 'responsibility' with integrity. On the contrary, these people make and accept promises and keep them consistently. The problem is not found in their ability to keep their word, to be trusted, the value of their offer or their work ethic, the problem is that the promises they make, and agree to keep, are insufficient to deliver their chief aims.

They are simply not objective enough, grounded in reality enough, and as a result, practiced enough to trust themselves to move ambitiously with the fundamental mechanics of effective transaction. Simply put, they only go "so far." They mistakenly believe that they can only make or accept offers that fall within their current capacities of time, energy and other resources. What they fail to realize is this: what limits them is not their lack of resources - as much as it is their knowledge of how to deploy their resources effectively.

They only go "so far" in taking the action required to study, prepare, practice deliberately and be ready and willing act. How far they are willing to go usually depends on the level of threat that they are experiencing rather than the level of performance and achievement they desire.

What we have observed is that those individuals, who learn to move objectively and deliberately in the fulfillment of their primary transactions, tend to produce the highest level of results. Those who accept the facts about human behavior, and invent their transactions to ethically exploit them according to the fundamentals of transaction have the greatest chance of success in the marketplace.

They do not get lost in their transactions. They are not subject to insight, magical or thunderbolt thinking.

They are not confused about the objectivity of the mechanics of transaction. They may not “like” the idea of notifying a likable prospect that they have accepted their indifference and moved to withdraw an offer, but that move will work more often than not – so they do it anyway. They may feel bad for those who seek to transact with them who offer little in return, but they have accepted the facts about the mechanics and refuse to deploy their resources in areas that do not offer the greatest possible returns. Those not lost in some highly subjective narrative about another domain and its causal relationship to the transaction at hand – move through their transactions quickly and effectively. Their transactions increase in value and speed. They produce surplus money.

To think and act objectively is to apply accurate thinking.

A fact about transactional behavior is this - the closer one comes to an imminent threat the more objective they tend to behave. It is much more effective to speed up a transaction through the use of threatening weapons of influence than it is to dangle an opportunity alone. Ambitious adults deliberately practice moves of threat – they deliberately apply the weapons of influence.

Another fact about transactional behavior – a specific ecology (group or organization) is more predictable than any individual. Ambitious adults invent their transactions for specific ecologies and design their invitations, offers and request around the predictable behavior of the group.

Another fact – an individual is more likely to do a thing she sees other people doing. Ambitious adults deliberately apply social proof at every opportunity.

Ambitious adults are in a relentless pursuit of the facts about transacting in their ecologies. They know the facts about their marketplace and they deliberately organize their practices according to reality.

The Influence Ecology primary transaction cycle is designed with certain facts about human behavior in mind. The cycle is built with this naturally occurring transactional behavior in the background.

The highly *subjective* nature of **Invention**, where *everything is possible* (the future/world), moves into the more *constructivist* view of **Present**, where *anything is possible* (the present/local). Once constructed the *objective* nature of **Fulfillment** takes over and *only some things are possible* (immediate/individual); only those things that produce a range of specific measures that satisfy the primary aim of the transaction. At which point the *skeptical* nature of **Completion** where *nothing is possible* (the past/historic), takes over and allows for the accurate thinking needed to assess the facts of the transaction for its value, relevance, and need.

We study the fundamental epistemology of subjectivism, constructivism, objectivism and skepticism as well as other philosophies and disciplines in our advanced programs. The

purpose is to better understand the ethics that are captured and organized in the work of educators, philosophers, anthropologist, sociologist, psychologist and many other specialists who developed and continue to evolve these concepts in order that we may further understand and learn how to coexist, cooperate and transact with others.

Views and philosophies found in the front end of the transaction cycle (Invent and Present) are subjective in nature – those found on the backend of the cycle are objective in nature.

We view a transaction as objective. The moves and phases are located and occur in a fixed cycle. Elements of the design and delivery take into account the need to include subjective narratives, as demonstrated in the moves of Invent and Present.

Objectivity and Deliberate Practice

In our study, training and work with thousands of people across many discourses in business as well as sports and entertainment, it has become strikingly obvious that those who reach the highest levels of performance and achievement share a narrow and observable set of practices and ethics (philosophy). Regardless of their widely varied and diverse beliefs, religions, backgrounds, education, physical strengths, mental aptitudes, etc. they share similarities in only a few distinct areas. They understand and know how to organize their work individually, and they understand how to organize and coordinate action with others. Simply put, their practices are **deliberate** and their philosophy related to their practices is **objective**.

In their practices, they are intentional, concentrated and focused. They are in a continual study and are *at work on* the mastery of the fundamental mechanics of their career, discipline or specialized knowledge. We recognize and identify this kind of work as **deliberate practice** and discuss it in the accompanying study in this issue of The Influence.

Ethics, a branch of philosophy, are a code of conduct, the standards, principles, and values to which one adheres. Ethics are constitutive of one's philosophy of life.

The rigors of **deliberate practice** require *a philosophy that demands of any individual - a standard of conduct grounded in Objectivity, based on the fundamentals of ethical transaction and applied against a context of social constraints*³.

We are not referring or arguing for the traditional philosophy of Objectivism that you may find in a general “search” on the subject; one that tends to equate, couple or inaccurately relate Objectivity with moral realism, pragmatism or utilitarianism. Rather we are simply bringing to light a kind of thinking and set of standards that we have studied and observed is consistent with the most successful and ambitious adults in the mechanics of transacting in the marketplace. Objectivity is a philosophy that represents the core ethic on which they base their conduct and on which they rely in the areas of their life where they intend to perform at the highest level of achievement. It is a philosophy we say is required for deliberate practice.

³ Objective Transactionalism as defined in the work of Influence Ecology.

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Conversely we notice, in those who earnestly desire and seek high levels of performance but fail to attain their ambitions, a tendency to deny or reject the objectivity required for deliberate practice in favor of other more subjective philosophies. They are most often naïve to or confused by the harsh realities and demands of top performance in the marketplace. We notice that, though they may be sincere in their “burning desire”, “optimism”, “positive thinking” and “belief”, they are simply inaccurately prepared for the rigors of an objective and indifferent reality. A reality that exists independent of their current knowledge, feelings, hopes, etc. These individuals know and can speak the language of Objectivity, but are ill-equipped to act consistently on their knowledge of it by virtue of their subjective notions, morals, beliefs (or collectively – philosophies.)

Concept Formation – Abstraction and Integration

Objectivity requires an approach to concepts that leads to the view that knowledge is the understanding of an object through an active, reality-based process chosen by the subject.

Concepts, like all modes of cognition, must conform to the facts of reality; a reality that exists outside of human consciousness. Human knowledge is the grasp, not the creation, of an object.

Beyond the perceptual level, such conformity can be attained only by a complex process of *abstraction and integration*. This process is not automatic and therefore we cannot wait for truth to enter our mind – like a thunderbolt, idea or insight.

In the use of a concept, as in its formation, we must **choose and act**. We must initiate step-by-step cognitive functioning; we must be willing to expend the effort required by each step; and we must choose the steps carefully. We must constitute a method of cognition, a method that makes it possible to deal with abstractions, **to achieve by deliberate practice and policy what is not guaranteed to us automatically**; to remain in contact with what is real.

Human beings utilize the method of measurement-omission, which is inherent in the conceptual faculty, whether we know it or not. What we are seeking to identify here is a method to guide the conscious, volitional aspects of concept-formation and use.

We will study later in this series, the principals and process of concept formation which include methods of measurement-omission.

Volition, the act of exercising the will – the ability of an individual to make conscious choices or decisions, is what makes thinking (reason) and knowledge (concepts) possible and necessary. Volitional consciousness, or conceptual consciousness as it is more commonly referred, is a method of knowing reality. It must reflect two factors: the facts of external reality and the nature of man’s consciousness.

It must reflect the facts of external reality because consciousness is not a self-contained entity; it is the faculty of perceiving that which exists. It must reflect the nature of man’s consciousness because consciousness has identity; the mind is not blank receptivity; it is a certain kind of integrating mechanism, and it must act accordingly.

A conceptual consciousness must focus on reality by a deliberate resolve. Such is the fundamental state of man's mind that the concept of "objectivity" identifies and upholds.

To be objective is to reject any approach whereby one looks 'outward' and waits for external entities to do the necessary cognitive work required to know and understand the world in which one lives. Also, objectivity rejects the approach of looking inward – to give up any relationship to reality.

Concepts are not valid (in an objective view of the world) if they do not reflect the facts of external reality – which should land as good news for anyone paying attention to the objective nature of the marketplace and studies the Current carefully.

The advantage in the game of marketplace transactions goes to those of us who move objectively, and especially as we move with those who are not grounded in reality; those who are likely to and accept what we know is the reality of how human beings transact but they mistake for insights, mystic attraction or thunderbolts.

In the next issue we will demonstrate how most of what we find as accepted notions and philosophies in the marketplace is couched in objective bravado – but awash in non-objectivity of ungrounded possibility, hope and magical thinking.