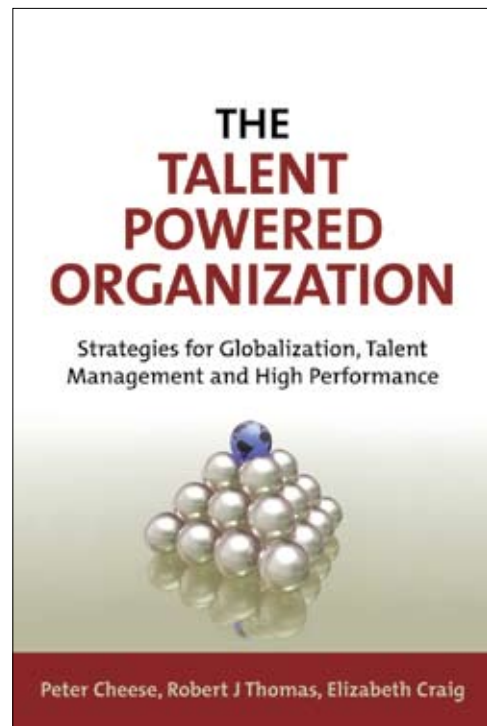


THE POWER OF HUMAN CAPITAL

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 The Talent Powered Organization: Strategies for Globalization, Talent Management and High Performance

By Peter Cheese, Robert J. Thomas, and Elizabeth Craig
 (Kogan Page, 288 pp. \$39.95)

Reviewed by Suneeta Mishra



The key factor that determines the success of any organization is its people. That theme comes through loud and clear in this book. In knowledge-based industries where human capital is the predominant resource that distinguishes winners from also-rans, employees are viewed as valuable resources. The authors of this book firmly believe that the ability to discover, develop, deploy, motivate, and energize human talent is the most valuable strategy in any organization.

The book is all about harnessing the power of human capital in today's business environment.

The concepts discussed provide a robust framework for managing intellectual capital in any organization that is facing the challenge of rapid globalization. As if to prove this, the chapters are often interspersed with a variety of case studies from a rich background of United States-based corporations. Although most of the companies discussed employ knowledge workers who come from diverse backgrounds and are often based in locations outside the United States, this

book is more about finding, managing, retaining, and multiplying talent.

Early in the book, the authors point out that most companies focus on the retention of top performers, which constitute 10 percent of the company's workforce. The message it sends to the 90 percent remaining is that they are not valuable to the company. This 90 percent is a vast pool of ignored talent that, if suitably engaged, will turn into a supply of additional talent for the company. The authors call this phenomenon "talent multiplication."

Engagement is discussed in great detail. The authors clearly outline why

engagement matters, what it means, and the role of line managers as key drivers of talent. The authors introduce six Cs that drive engagement: content (Do I enjoy what I do?), coping (How am I supported?), compensation (Am I fairly rewarded?), congruence (Do values align?), community (Is it socially rewarding?), and career (Where am I going?). The diagrammatic presentation and its interpretation are similar to Maslow's needs hierarchy, which makes it easy to understand how each of these six Cs influences the management of intellectual capital.

They emphasize the role of line managers in building engagement because they are usually closest to the knowledge workers and their actions typically constitute "company-speak" for the employees. So the company strategy, as well as their role in delivering it, should be clearly communicated to the line managers, according to the authors.

To sustain the talent multiplication efforts, HR systems in the organization should also be consolidated to provide a solid base of talent data and information. This according to the authors makes the system more accountable and helps in measurement of efforts by the line managers.

The last few pages of the book are devoted to outlining key responsibilities and tasks for key stakeholder groups who develop talent in the organization. These stakeholders include business leaders, line management, functional leaders, and employees, as well as government and regulatory agencies and investors.

The book provides a fresh look at human capital management. Ample use of diagrams and case studies do a good job of presenting complex issues in a simple format. The organizations featured in the case studies showcase some best practices in the area of talent management. This provides a good reference point for others who

might want to adopt similar models in the future.

However, this book does have prescriptive undertones that can put off readers who are looking for an easy read. On the other hand, if you are putting together a paper on how to retain and multiply talent in your organization, or if you are a student studying strategic HR and talent management in a global context, this book offers helpful tips.

Suneeta Mishra is instructional design manager at CompuCredit Corporation in Atlanta; suneeta.mishra@compucredit.com.

The concepts discussed in the book provide a **robust framework** for managing intellectual capital in any organization that is facing the challenge of rapid globalization.

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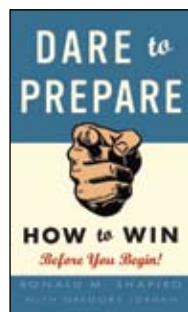
Strategic Preparation
T+D EDITORS EXPLORE THREE MORE TITLES.

Dare to Prepare: How to Win Before You Begin

By Ronald M. Shapiro with Gregory Jordan
(Crown Business, 282 pp., \$26)

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This is another sample of the popular "what makes the great ones great" books with short sketches of prominent figures. The author's premise is that successful individuals devote substantial energy to preparation before they begin the craft of writing, interviewing or coaching.



Befitting someone with a background as a sports agent, many of Shapiro's interview subjects are athletes, coaches, or broadcasters with familiar names. As much as he might try to avoid it, many still recognize him as a former attorney for O.J. Simpson. Each profile illustrates how an individual brings distinct work habits to her field. As might be expected, the portraits are flattering.

Historian Taylor Branch maintains a voluminous indexing system, down to the month, to track historical events that occurred simultaneously. Broadcasters such as Bob Costas and Liane Hansen reveal how they search for new questions or angles that frequent interview subjects are less likely to have been asked. Henry Taylor, a physician specializing in public health, outlines a strategy for how to build public awareness of potentially threatening diseases.

Michael Laff

Executing Your Strategy: How to Break It Down and Get It Done

By Mark Morgan, Raymond E. Levitt, and William Malek
(Harvard Business School Press, 270 pp., \$29.95)

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This book explores why businesses consistently fail to execute their strategies. According to the authors, corporations spend about \$1 billion a year on consulting management and training aimed at creating the perfect strategy. But more than 90 percent of those strategies fail because leaders don't identify and invest in the full range of projects and programs required to align the organization with its strategy.



The authors present six imperatives that will help readers to do the right strategic projects—and do them right. The six imperatives create the acronym INVEST: ideation, nature, vision, engagement, synthesis, and transition. There is a chapter on each one to clearly help readers navigate through the selection, alignment, and management of strategic initiatives.

The authors admit that this publication is just a starting point for successful strategic execution. Implementing these six imperatives will lead to valuable dialogue that can help organizations achieve better results.

Paula Ketter

Why Should the Boss Listen to You?: The Seven Disciplines of the Trusted Strategic Advisor

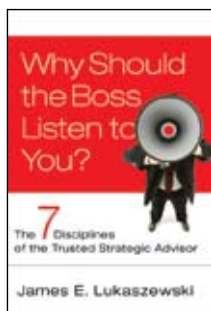
By James E. Lukaszewski

(Jossey-Bass, 184 pp., \$24.95)

This book is for the middle managers in organizations who want to better serve the leaders who run their organizations.

To do that, according to the author, you need to change your perspective and master seven key disciplines to stay at the table, be invited to the table earlier, or be consulted on decisions regularly.

Those seven disciplines are be trustworthy, become a verbal visionary, develop a management perspective, think strategically, be a window to the future, advise constructively, and show the boss how to use advice. The author devotes one chapter to each of these disciplines.



The author notes that to become a trusted advisor you must make a personal commitment to become one.

This book highlights how leaders think and operate, how to think and operate to meet your boss's expectations, and how to achieve real impact. By doing so, you will become someone who the boss can rely on and respect—a trusted strategic advisor.

Paula Ketter

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