

# FOCUSING ON WHAT MATTERS

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## Key Insights You Can Execute On June 2011

### Filters to view you, your focus and your organization (Ram Charan, Larry Bossidy)

- **Results come from:**
  - **The leader**
  - **Strategy, plans, execution**
  - **The leadership team**
  - **Monitoring results**
- **Purpose of strategy:**
  - **Win customer preference**
  - **Create a sustainable competitive advantage**
  - **Leave enough money on the table for shareholders**



**Onward, by Howard Schultz,  
CEO of Starbucks**

## What we can learn from his experience turning Starbucks around

- Leaders must instill confidence in the organization's future – confidence is the fuel to execute and perform. The focus is on :
  - Passion
  - Strategy
  - Tactics
- "Place the customers at the center of every meeting and business decision."
- Starbucks constituency priorities:
  - Partners(employees)
  - Customers
  - ShareholdersEmployees must feel good about the organization to take care of customers – they should be proud, inspired, appreciated, cared for, respected and connected
- Your plan, goals and strategies should be on one page and done in a way that anyone can read and understand.
- Communication is ever more essential when things are not working.



## **Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us**

By Daniel H. Pink

This is a business bestselling book. There are insights about what motivates us and how some of what we may believe about incentive compensation can work against us. Ensuring that we establish a framework which allows intrinsic motivation to be high is critical. What people are looking for:

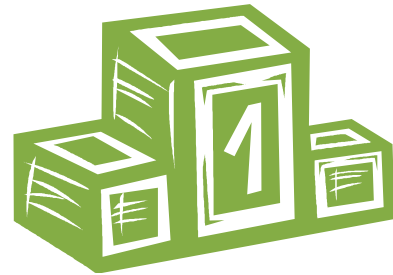
- Autonomy – we desire to direct our lives
- Mastery – we want to be challenged , learn and get better – the joy is in the pursuit
- Purpose – we want to contribute to something that is bigger than us and we want to do it in an environment of good relationships

In summary, we want to do something that matters, we want to do it well and we want to do it in the service of something larger than ourselves. Leaders can help by:

- Providing clear goals and expectations
- Create a sense of urgency and communicate the significance of the work
- Provide frequent feedback

One quick way to determine the health of your organization comes from Robert Reich, past Labor Secretary – when employees are

referring to the company, do they use the word “we” or “they?”



## **The Power of Small Wins**

By Teresa M. Amabile and Steven J. Kramer; HBR, May 2011

“Of all the things that can boost emotions, motivation and perceptions during a workday, the single most important is making progress in meaningful work. And the more frequently people experience that sense of progress, the more likely they are to be creatively productive in the long run.”

What serves as a catalyst and nourishes progress:

- Catalysts that directly support work
  - Help from a person or group
  - Clear goals
  - Allow autonomy
  - Providing sufficient resources and time
  - Openly learning from problems and successes
  - Allowing a free exchange of ideas
- Nourishers – directed at people
  - Words of encouragement
  - Recognition
  - Respect
  - Interpersonal support

- Emotional comfort
- Opportunities for affiliation
- Inhibitors – directed at work-actions that fail to support or actively hinder work:
  - Failing to provide support
  - Actively interfering with work
- Toxins – directed at people:
  - Discouraging or undermining events
  - Disrespect
  - Discouragement
  - Disregard for emotion
  - Interpersonal conflict

What does your organization look like?



Leadership –Airline King – Jeff Smisek  
– Continental and United, by Geoff Colvin; Fortune, May Xx, 2011

- Business plan – Go Forward Plan – short statement of company objectives on marketing, finance, operations and employees
- One piece of paper – if you are doing something and you can't trace it to this document, stop doing it and do something else

Allan Mullally used this process as a key tool help turn Ford around.



### **The Frontline Advantage**

by Fred Hassan; HBR, May 2011

MONEY is probably what you are losing if you are not leveraging this key resource and talent in your company – frontline managers! Frontline managers:

- Are most responsible for a company's success and failure
- Must understand the company's strategy and their own specific role in it – the hardest thing about strategy is execution!
- Must be engaged and willing to mobilize the entire organization – when they are engaged and energized, they communicate that to employees

The author creates a culture of passionate drivers:

- People who question the traditional way of doing things
- Dig into complex problems and stick with them until they are solved
- Have an appetite to innovate

What is your connection to your frontline managers? Do you receive unfiltered information from them? Do you do this within the context of the chain of command and without micromanaging?

**Energizing Your Workforce!** By Adam Grant; HBR – June 2011

“End users - customers, clients, patients, and others who benefit from a company’s products or services- are surprisingly effective in motivating people to work harder, smarter and more productively.”

Key points:

- Employees see end users as more credible than leaders
- Outsourcing inspiration keeps content fresh
- Shows employees their work makes a difference – one of the most important attributes of a job

Involving outsiders provides:

- Impact – employees see for themselves how their work impacts others
- Appreciation – employees feel valued by end users
- Empathy – employees develop a deeper understanding of end users’ problems and needs and thereby become more committed to helping them

Leaders can “outsource inspiration” by collecting their stories, introducing them to employees and recognizing employees who make a difference in their customers’ lives. If you can’t do this face to face, consider:

- Showing pictures
- Circulating inside stories
- Sharing outside stories

**Innovation Catalysts – your company’s front line**

By Roger I. Martin, HBR – June 2011

Intuit, adopted the Net Promoter Score Concept in 2004. The result of this along with an innovation process that you can use – net promoter scores are up; growth, revenue and

income has increased over the last 3 years.

Their process, coined “Design for Delight”, involves identifying customer’s pain points through direct interaction with them, brainstorming solutions and executing on them quickly.

Do you have anything like this in your organization? If not, check out this story.

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**I greatly appreciate introductions to leaders who are serious about getting results and would value my counsel. Thank you!**



**Tony Chivinski**