People-Centric Management: What are the current trends?

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Four models that promote a more humane workplace in 21-century organisations.

People-Centric Management remembers important foundations, discusses current trends, shares some concerns, suggest paths that should be omitted and establish the prerequisites in the space between traditional and people-centric.

People-centric is a core element of various organizational models that promote employee engagement, innovation and collectiveness rather than bureaucracy and self-driven models. Here is a selection of such models:

Holacracy

Introduced in 2009 by management coach Brian J Robertson (2015), the model replaces traditional hierarchies with a 'peer-to-peer' operating system that claims to increase transparency, accountability and agility. The idea is to distribute authority to teams, and empower people to take executive roles and make meaningful decisions. People-Centric Management promotes decentralized management with empowered teams. However, it does so without adding bureaucracy, without another top-down programme and without replacing hierarchy.

Responsive Organizations

These are built to learn and rapidly respond through an open flow of information, encouraging experimentation and learning through rapid cycles. This is an organization that focuses on networks of employees, customers and partners, and is motivated

by a shared purpose. People-Centric Management encourages learning and networks but does not promote experimentation, as one does not experiment with people.

Sociocracy

This was first conventionalized as a model by philosopher Auguste Comté in the 19th century and is now known as Sociocracy 3.0. It describes companies and teams that collaborate as self-managed, and where everyone gets a democratic voice. Its design is to grow an effective, agile and resilient organization. People-Centric Management is designed to enable collaboration and self-organization, but I stop short of viewing corporations as democracies.

Teal

Reintroduced by corporate coach Frederic Laloux (2014) in his book, Reinventing Organizations, the concept of 'teal' is based on spiral dynamics elements (Clare W Graves, 1970). The idea is that peer relationships and self-management with agile capabilities focus less on the bottom-line and shareholder value, through a strong evolutionary purpose. People-Centric Management emphasizes purpose as a means of motivation. And, it encourages simultaneous intangible and tangible value creation.

New organizational models grow like mushrooms. Their proponents always find an example where it worked in practice. That's the point. These models have been designed to fit the specifics of that organization. This does not mean that one can simply copy and paste what has proven successful in one place to make it work somewhere else.

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The research: Michel, L., Anzengruber, J., Wolfe, M., & Hixson, N. (2018). Under What Conditions do Rules-Based and Capability-Based Management Modes Dominate? *Special Issue Risks in Financial and Real Estate Markets Journal*, 6(32).

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