The Performance Triangle: The Story

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“Grounded in a synthesis of great management ideas and concepts from eminent thinkers such as Peter Drucker, Yves Doz and Gary Hamel and the deep and wide real-world experience of the author it will help managers to ask the right questions.” Dr. Richard Straub, Founder of the Peter Drucker Society Europe.

To win in an increasingly dynamic, ambiguous, and volatile environment, leadership teams in most industries must be agile – able to flexibly react to early signs and act on them quickly. The only thing we truly know about the future is that it will be different. We need to build organizations that can cope with these challenges rather than embarking on disruptive change processes. To do this, leaders face the dilemma of empowering people without losing control. An agile organization needs good decision-making at all levels – from the centre to the periphery – tapping into the full potential of the people, the operating model, the information technology, and leadership practices. Decisions are made by people.

It is so obvious: People are the most important assets. But good intensions alone are not good enough to win your game in a competitive and knowledge-driven environment. First, this means collaborating and relating with people to provide means for finding purpose rather than command and control; second, to provide choice, raise awareness about what is important, and help people remain focused on the things that matter most – the Inner Game technique that helps people to translate knowledge into action and performance. The result is relentless innovation as the prerequisite for growth in a competitive environment.

How do you get there? Stop and engage your team in a conversation about how to remove the organizational interferences that keep people from using their full potential, recommends the author. Build the bridge between the requirements for knowledge and the need for agility in corporate leadership. By asking the critical questions, you provoke your team to remove the barriers that keep people from addressing the challenges of the new era. They learn why it is important to overcome the fissure, identify the critical gaps in their leadership, focus on the issues that need to be addressed, and build the bridging capabilities as they go. The bridge is what the author calls a people-centric culture.

With his concise guide, the author recommends seven questions you and your team must explore to match the organization's operating system with a people-centric culture, enabling agility, relentless innovation and allowing you to lead with a higher chance of success.

Think about people-centric, agility, and innovation …

Why does it matter to you? What is your destination? What will success look like? What does it take?

How do you know it's there? Can everyone interact, collaborate, and contribute?

What does it mean to your team? Is everyone in the organization energized to achieve high scores?

How do you ensure it's everywhere? Do your controls, routines and rules enable good decision-making?

How do you make it stick? Does your Leadership Toolbox engage everyone to contribute?

Who is accountable in making sure it happens? Have you organized your infrastructure to empower everyone?

How do you lead with it? Does your leadership rhythm teach everyone to learn and grow?

These questions will force you to reexamine the many assumptions underlying your leadership and analyze how your organization enables agility through a people-centric approach. The author's many insights will help you understand your options and make the necessary choices to successfully coach your team.

You can start creating agility as a competitive advantage today, with the ten-question test and observation points to get you started.

Building on the experience of delivering many executive leadership programmes in every part of the world, and with the rich expertise from teaching and advising many business leaders about the research-based diagnostic tool, *The Performance Triangle* is a concise and practical guide for leaders of all kinds of businesses and organizations. It offers practical guidance on the design of 30 essential practices that leaders must get right in order to remain flexible and fast in adapting to an ever-changing environment.

On 360 pages, the book provides insights into ten years of research with practical implications for corporate leadership. The simple diagnostic and self-assessment tool puts the reader's organization at the center of attention. Many practical examples from business and sports support the reflection on leadership, culture, and systems as the three elements of the performance triangle. 30 practical tools with over 200 tips support the transfer into practices for an agile and speedy response of leaders to their challenges in turbulent times. 7 steps serves as self-mentoring guide towards people-centric leadership as the foundation for higher innovation and growth.

If you are responsible for a business or organization, then the author recommends that you take once a year time for half a day with your leadership team to ask yourselves, how do we manage our organization? Use the diagnostic questions to establish the starting point for your conversation, then use the many ideas in the book to find your response to the question. As a result, your team will create the context for people to use their creativity for more innovation and growth.

If you are an advisor or thinker interested in management and leadership, then the book will provide a practical solution for the ongoing conversation on “beyond”, “2.0”, “next practice”, or next “paradigm shift”. The bridge between people and organization offers four things leaders can do to create an organization that unlocks the potential of people as a means to cope with an ever turbulent environment.

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