

The Challenge of Leadership



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ron Wiens has spent the past 30 years helping organizations build high performance cultures. His most recent book, titled 'Building Organizations that Leap Tall Buildings in a Single Bound' is a leader's guide to culture as competitive advantage. To contact Ron, send him an email at ron@ronwiens.com

Leaders must create and nurture an environment that engages their people's will in the innovative and creative pursuit of the organization's business goals.

Traditional management practices have been built on the premise of a "command and control structure". This style of management was well suited for the economic structures of the past. However, the future growth of our economy is in the use of knowledge. The critical corporate assets are now found in the minds of the people who work in the organization. The traditional management skills of controlling and directing workers run counter to the need for creativity and innovation.

In the traditional command and control environment the manager used her or his will to get people to accomplish the organization's objectives. In these environments, people had narrow jobs with limited decision-making responsibilities. Two things are breaking down this way of managing and working. The first is the rapid rate of change. Managers who still insist on retaining the majority of the decision-making responsibilities are becoming bottlenecks to change. The second thing affecting the traditional approach to management is the need to do more with less. This means that rather using their own will as the primary engine to drive accomplishment, managers now have, as their prime responsibility, the creation and nurturing of an environment that engages their people's will in the innovative and creative pursuit of the organization's business goals.



Creating an environment that engages the will of others is all about giving people real responsibility. When this happens, people work to achieve their organization's objectives not because they have to but because they want to. This is self-actualization. This is the win for staff. Self-actualization is a synonym for peak performance. This is the win for the organization.

Releasing the will of others is the essence of leadership.