

(Mobile pdf) Designing the Purposeful Organization: How to Inspire Business Performance Beyond Boundaries

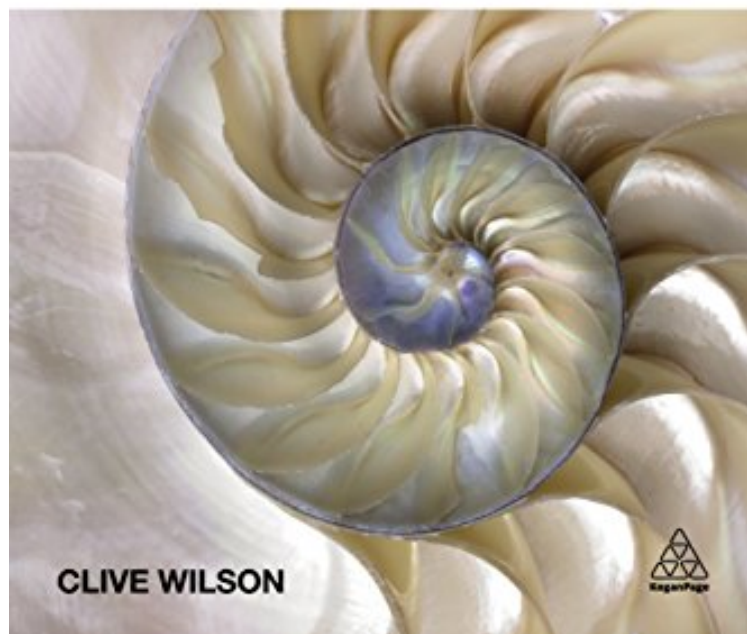
# Designing the Purposeful Organization: How to Inspire Business Performance Beyond Boundaries

*Clive Wilson*

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## DESIGNING THE PURPOSEFUL ORGANIZATION

How to inspire business performance  
beyond boundaries



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**Clive Wilson : Designing the Purposeful Organization: How to Inspire Business Performance Beyond Boundaries** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Designing the Purposeful Organization: How to Inspire Business Performance Beyond Boundaries:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Different!By DarrenIngram\_dot\_comThe answer to the question is not as straightforward as you might imagine, yet the central message is! How do we get a company to function well

and keep focussed on its key purposes? Yet the author sets out to show how a more "enlightened and authentic" leadership approach can give short-term and more importantly long-term benefits for the company and its key resources - its employees. Probably everybody understands the downside of short-termism yet all-too-many still keep the blinkers on and think "just for now", no matter what fine words they might utter about their longer-term strategies. The secret sauce, claims the author, is a eight-element framework - purpose, vision, engagement, structure, character, results, success and talent - that if implemented has the potential to give limitless benefits to an organisation's performance and thus its ability to deliver. Does it work? Well that is not for this review to determine, although it did deliver a fair few "light bulb-moments" as well as a lot of nods of agreement along the way. Things have changed but have we really kept up with the changes? As the author notes: "We live in a very different world to the one we inherited from our parents and grandparents. Take stock for a moment to consider how we can travel almost anywhere in the world in less than a day. We've even been to the moon and sent unmanned rockets far off into space to explore other planets. We can communicate 24/7 with people from all over the world in an instant. The goods we buy come from a truly international marketplace. Modern medicine has learnt how to cure many of the diseases that used to kill us and even to replace those parts of our bodies that no longer work. It seems we are capable of solving almost any problem we encounter. We're learning all the time about how best to organize ourselves to do it and the workplace is where most of this plays out. This workplace has become increasingly global and increasingly complex." Think about this, think about a typical company and its operations and if you don't get the point well, re-read the foregoing (as well as ensuring that you do buy the book!). Many companies have thought that they were too invincible and established to fail. A bad, arrogant mistake to make. Changes in society and technology have sent many companies to the graveyard, yet corporate arrogance and bad leadership has claimed a fair few scalps too! The company never stops evolving: it has to keep learning, reacting to and making change. Well it should never stop evolving but sometimes the machine gets jammed up despite the motor still going through the motions, for now... This won't be a book for everyone, despite its important messages. It takes a fair bit of focus and concentration yet when you "get it" you will see its potential power for what it is. Although, as with many problems, realising there is a possible problem and seeking help for it before it is too late is often the hardest part!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Performance Starts With Why By Roy Pollock

The data are clear: Engaged employees are happier, more productive, and more profitable. Yet survey after survey reveals that large segments of the workforce are no longer engaged in their work. And a leading cause is that work - or more specifically, the organization they work for - has lost its meaning for them; it no longer serves a purpose they care about. Making money for the shareholders and a big bonus for the CEO is not a compelling enough reason for workers to put forth their best efforts. In this engaging and wide-ranging book, Clive Wilson discusses what it really takes to build a purposeful organization - and it is a lot more than an inspiring mission statement or a neatly framed set of corporate values. As Wilson explains "we have to touch the hearts of our people at a deep level if we are to tap their truly awesome potential." Wilson argues that creating and communicating a compelling purpose should be a crucial and conscious focus because "there is clear evidence that organizations with a sense of purpose outperform those where purpose does not permeate throughout." In addition to a compelling purpose, seven other conditions must also be met for an organization to perform optimally:

- A clear vision
- A healthy learning ecosystem
- Structures designed to deliver
- Strength of character
- Tracking progress
- A sense of success
- Liberated talent

He devotes a chapter to each providing practical advice, personal exercises for reflection, and case studies and examples drawn from his vast global experience. At a time when so many organizations seem to have lost their way and come adrift from their moorings, Wilson's book is a refreshing reminder that we need to get back to basics: we have to give people a reason to excel by providing them the opportunity to work in an organization with a purpose they can believe in and help achieve. It is an important and timely message for HR professionals and business leaders alike.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Are you helping to build a "cathedral"?

By Robert Morris

As I began to read this book, I was again reminded of the ancient insight, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there." Many (most?) executives today are unclear about what the purpose of their organization is, other than -- as one CEO recently explained to me -- "to keep the doors open and the lights on." The title of one of Marshall Goldsmith's recent books asserts that "what got you here won't get you there" and I presume to add that "what got you here won't allow you to remain here," wherever and whatever "here" may be. This is probably what Cesar Fritz had in mind when explaining his hotel's purpose: "We are ladies and gentlemen privileged to serve other ladies and gentlemen" with service that is "invisible." Don't overlook this book's subtitle: "How to inspire business performance beyond boundaries." Leaders can't motivate people but they can inspire them to be self-motivated and the single greatest resource at a leader's disposal is a compelling vision of the given organization's purpose. Here's something else to chew on: Most of the companies annually ranked among those most highly admired and the best to work for are also annually ranked among those most profitable with the greatest cap value in their industry. Coincidence? I don't think so. They have customer evangelists because those who are employed by them are also evangelists, serving a shared purpose. These are among the dozens of passages of greatest interest and value to me, also listed to suggest the scope of Wilson's coverage:

- o The purpose-

driven organization, and, The eight conditions for a purposeful organization (Pages 2-3) o The power of focus (13-14) o Getting to the heart of purpose (14-17) o The wider perspective, and, The granularity of purpose (22-27) o Defining vision (35-40) o Sharing the vision (44-46) o The language of vision, and, Owning the vision (46-54) o Aligning perspectives (54-57) o Evidence that engagement makes good business sense (65-72) o Cue the "learning organization" (72-75) o Purposeful engagement in learning (75-78) o Keeping it simple (109-113) o The power of culture (120-127) o Leadership and its impact on culture (128-134) o The culture of a learning organization (141-145) o Purpose-driven or results-driven? (150-151) o A 10-step guide: Targeting and achieving powerful results (152-167) o Providing structures for success (182-185) o Successful teams (187-193) o Talent liberation (206-209) Wilson is to be commended on his brilliant use of reader-friendly devices that include directly relevant mini-case studies, implementation activities, and sets of "10 Questions" that serve as assessments of purpose, vision, engagement, structure, character, results, success, and talent. Keep in mind that when completing these assessments, there are no right or wrong answers, only honest and dishonest ones. Proceed accordingly. After you read (and hopefully re-read) the book, you may wish to revisit the sets of questions. Doing so will help to guide and inform an effective application of the information, insights, and counsel that are most relevant to your organization's current/imminent needs, interests, resources, issues, concerns, and strategic objectives. Keep in mind that most limitations are self-imposed. Also, make certain that the given purpose is worthy of what will be required to serve it well. Clive Wilson provides just about everything that you and your colleagues need to "inspire business performance beyond boundaries." I conclude with a story that has inspired me and countless others: "A man came across three masons who were working at chipping chunks of granite from large blocks. The first seemed unhappy at his job, chipping away and frequently looking at his watch. When the man asked what it was that he was doing, the first mason responded, rather curtly, 'I'm hammering this stupid rock, and I can't wait 'til 5 when I can go home.'" A second mason, seemingly more interested in his work, was hammering diligently and when asked what it was that he was doing, answered, 'Well, I'm molding this block of rock so that it can be used with others to construct a wall. It's not bad work, but I'll sure be glad when it's done.'" A third mason was hammering at his block fervently, taking time to stand back and admire his work. He chipped off small pieces until he was satisfied that it was the best he could do. When he was questioned about his work he stopped, gazed skyward and proudly proclaimed, 'I...am building a cathedral!'"

Globalization, competition and recession have created an overwhelming pressure on organizations to deliver growth. This has often resulted in tough performance targets being pushed down the line. Hard-hitting management may deliver short-term results but in the longer term key people burn out or leave, and business performance falls back. Designing the Purposeful Organization explains how to implement a more enlightened and authentic leadership style that aligns people's strengths to the delivery of a compelling future. It draws on a unique framework that helps leaders manage the eight elements essential for high performance: purpose, vision, engagement, structure, character, results, success and talent. It moves beyond the boundaries of transactional performance (pay me X and I'll deliver Y) to a purpose-centred performance that releases talent, creativity and engagement. It features case studies from Google, Whole Foods Market, the NHS and the London 2012 Olympics and is ideal for practitioners in organization development, senior HR managers and business leaders. This book demonstrates how business performance can be inspired beyond boundaries by aligning people to a compelling purpose.

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