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**MANAGEMENT
PERSPECTIVES**

Management Teams

From the Editor

Spring is a glorious time of year. It strikes me as the most magical of seasons, particularly when I look out my window at the tentative buds hesitantly poking their heads out of the soil. It's hard to imagine that they will soon sprout up into breathtaking tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths ...

But they will. Every year, I'm amazed and surprised at the colourful, patchwork quilt that is draped across large portions of our backyard. I don't even remember planting most of these bulbs — yet they're there, taking root under the frozen earth, growing and getting stronger underneath the surface, pushing onward and upward, towards the sun.

At LIVE Consultants, we believe that the best of training programs are like that, too. You may not consciously work on the skills every single day; you may not be religious about practising the theories or updating your action planners ...

But the learning is there, taking root, growing and getting stronger underneath the surface, pushing you onward and upward, towards your goals.

Marilyn Baetz, editor

About the Author and the Article

In 1760, Mother Goose gave us three archetypes for her time: the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker. And, tub aside, this represented a very important and diverse group of individuals who were valued in that society, each with distinctive talents, and each with an equally valuable role to play in the old world.

Over 200 years later, there's not much call for candlestick makers. Or even individual professionals. Today, everything is about teams. Author Stephen Baetz proposes that there are three emerging archetypes for the new world: the architect, the builder, the curator.

Like their predecessors, each has distinctive talents, each has an equally important role to play ... and each is vital to the success of your management team.

Stephen Baetz is a principal of LIVE Consultants Inc.



Stephen Baetz

Let It Role

Ask anybody who lives in the present and they will often tell you that the rate of change is faster than it ever has been. How do they know that, I wonder. Is it just a gut hunch or is it merely their way of making a point about how overwhelmed they feel about what they don't know? When I ask how they know that the rate of change is faster now than it ever was, they look at me as if I have betrayed them. I'm expected to buy the assertion as an article of faith and to join the pilgrimage to the future burdened with the shame that I'll never be able to keep up.

I ask the question more out of curiosity than disbelief. And perhaps I don't want to minimize the changes faced by previous generations of pioneers who found themselves in new worlds faster than they thought was possible.

Indeed, within the past decade, we have felt ourselves well challenged by new realities. The customer has been put at the top of the organization chart. Competition has arrived from beyond our borders and wants full citizenship. Technology has begun to serve. Everybody has learned the language of kaizen. Waste is inexcusable. Employees have created teams and are working to make quality and innovation more than just programs. The workplace has become a mosaic that celebrates diversity. Education and professional development has been democratized and everyone is learning the discipline of self-management.

As well, the era of multiple levels of management is coming to a quick end. Deep management structures with layers of redundancy are seen as too expensive, unresponsive, slow, and disconnected from the customer. We have come to recognize that management is too expensive if all it does is process corporate communication, aggregate performance numbers, and control processes. Technology is more suited to those types of tasks.

It is a new world that we are in. Organizational life in the '90s seems to have a different set of rules and expectations.

If ambiguity is the case, then it may be wise to strive for clarity. To that end, I offer a preliminary definition of three key roles that must be present in any management team: the architect, the builder, and the curator.

The Architect

The architect is the visionary who sees time, space, and events in a much different way than everybody else. They create new environments, change minds, challenge perspectives, stretch boundaries. They start the process of change.

In most organizations, in most teams, the architects are few in number. Architects ought to be thinking differently, framing issues and concerns like no one else in the organization, and changing the way we see the world.

These individuals ask bold, somewhat perplexing, questions:

What opportunities is the marketplace going to give us?

What kinds of problems and opportunities would we like to have in the future?

What inheritance do we want to leave to future generations?

What is the essential paradox we must face?

What is our fundamental purpose?

What do we not know that we need to know?

What do we know that's not worth knowing or using?

Architects dream. They imagine. They play. And then they define what few statements they want to make that will shape what others do. With those few statements, they inspire; they raise the sights.

If architects have done their work well, others will be amazed and wonder why they couldn't have seen the same thing themselves.

The Builder

If architects place teams and organizations into new space, into change, it is the builder who gains commitment, allocates resources, coordinates work, resolves conflicts, and encourages skilled technical people to collaborate in finding practical solutions.

But builders never start until they understand the dream and direction of the architect. Otherwise they will merely muddle through and, perhaps most unfortunately, miss the opportunities to improve on the design. They surround themselves with the right talent — people who are skilled at crafting quality, complementing the efforts of others, and being efficient.

The best builders manage what they do by focusing on the purpose. They plan. They measure. They encourage best effort. They refocus. They remind. They use the best judgement of the team members. They find what works. They build teams that are inspired by the dream.

Builders have the ability to manage the inevitable noise and disconnects which are part of team life in a complex world of limited resources. Frantic activity is given purpose. Loud protests have the volume turned down so they can be heard.

These individuals ask questions of progress and development:

Why is there a difference between what we anticipated and what is actually happening?

How are we working as a team?

What are the roles of the team members?

How will we make decisions, resolve conflict, and come to agreement?

How should we best use the resources we have?

How should we reward accomplishment?

The builders lead their teams by example and are flexible in how they meet the needs of the individuals on the team.

The Curator

The curator is the necessary balance to the team. They make secure. They act to stabilize. They steady. They make routine. They define procedures for the team and make sure those events occur to plan.

They ask very focused questions:

What is the best procedure?

How can we standardize that process?

What efficiencies can be found?

How can we establish and maintain consistency in our processes?

If architects are pioneers who dream, curators are the settlers who establish and maintain the infrastructure. Architects need curators. They make the grand design work on a daily basis.

Of Equal Value

In a world where people often compare and evaluate worth, there may be a temptation to argue that one role is more important than another. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Each has a specific contribution and needs the other in order for a team or organization to be successful.

The more important issue, therefore, is how to ensure that each role exists and is valued for what the role contributes.

Within existing teams, the members ought to be clear about who will play what roles and what the responsibilities of those roles are. In newly formed teams, the wise builder ensures that the roles are negotiated and that each can be heard. Those teams which do have clarity will be healthier and capable of meeting the demands of a changing world.

Selecting The Best Facilitators

Think about the cost of education and development.

Got it in your mind's eye?

Next think about what it would cost if your people weren't skilled, knowledgeable, and aligned with your organization's goals, strategies, and values.

An even bigger number.

Now imagine what opportunities you will have lost or sacrificed if you have invested in education and development but have program facilitators who aren't skilled at helping adults learn.

Sure, there are train the trainer programs that can be used but maybe your missing an important prior step — *selecting the best facilitator possible*. That challenge is particularly important if you are using line managers in the classroom to help make the learning relevant.

To help you select the best, we have developed a Facilitator Assessment Centre. At the end of a day-long process each candidate will know whether they are suited for the classroom or not. As well, they will receive a report which identifies their strengths and areas for development. The report is based on more than a dozen key factors that we know lead to facilitator success.

The net result is that the facilitators that do qualify, come to a train the trainer program focused and ready to learn.

Imagine the cost if you don't select the best!

For more information about our services, contact us at (519) 664-2213.