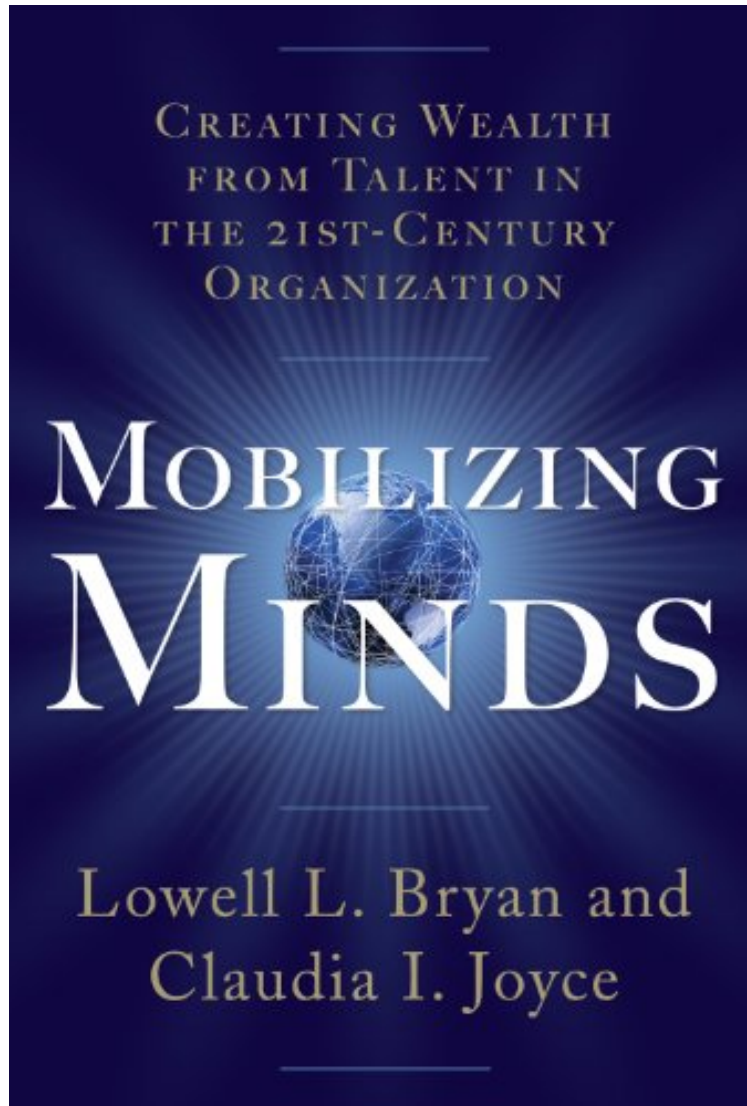


Mobilizing Minds: Creating Wealth From Talent in the 21st Century Organization

Lowell L. L Bryan, Claudia L. I. Joyce
audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC



#1284947 in eBooks 2007-06-17 2007-06-17 File Name: B0010V9VJ4 | File size: 45.Mb

Lowell L. L Bryan, Claudia L. I. Joyce : Mobilizing Minds: Creating Wealth From Talent in the 21st Century Organization before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mobilizing Minds: Creating Wealth From Talent in the 21st Century Organization:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I had the opinion from thirty years at IBM that the most-optimized company would combine the best organizational structure withBy Peter E. GreulichMobilizing Minds by Lowell L. Bryan and Claudia I. Joyce is a book written to those that are interested in organizational theory. Does the corporate

organization's structure matter? Before reading the book, I had the opinion from thirty years at IBM that the most-optimized company would combine the best organizational structure with the best talent. Organization though is always a problem. My experience at IBM was that if the corner office had the best people and just left the organization static, those people of great talent would figure out how to make even a bad organizational structure work. It is similar to the architect who finished a design for some buildings and placed walkways where they normally would. The CEO asked the architect to delay putting in all the sidewalks for a few months. After a few months he took the architect to the window of his office overlooking the complex and said, "Do you see all the places where the grass has been worn down by people walking where it is most efficient. Finish your sidewalks now." Good people adapt - even to the worst of organizational structures. The worst way to "manage the organizational structure" is to keep changing it. This thwarts the efforts of even your best people. Organizational structure to me could follow the same path. Build your organization - and this book offers a good place to start - mainly for mega-corporations. But since every company is unique, observe how the top talent you hire works within the organizational structure and make small micro-adaptions. This book offers some great insights into designing a structure, and how to judge and reward talent. Its one great failing is that the authors never consider the perspective of the talent, just the management of that talent. So, I believe they only address fifty percent of the organizational structure; the other fifty percent being the processes that encourage one-company cultures at the lowest levels of the organization to create an employee-owner. The organizational structure can not be disassociated from those processes at the lowest levels.

7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Not grounded but thought provoking, good read

By Alan Fryer

I recently became interested in defining my own role and wanted to ground my ideas in what is out there in the corporate world. I was also interested in hearing what a McKinsey person had to say, as our company has hired some former McKinsey consultants. To me this book had three stages:- the sales pitch - boring but thankfully brief. I did buy the book already...- brief discussion of existing organization theory. - A little brief for me. I would have liked a little more introduction to conventional corporate structures and thinking. Perhaps I am also not representative here, as this may be old hat to some.- their ideas for how to build an organization for the 21 st century. This is the bulk of the book and where the meat is. Overall, I found it very interesting and had a hard time putting the book down. I do wish it was a little more grounded in what was in actual practice with more case studies from existing companies that have excelled in certain areas. Instead, they tried to propose a new organization but are very honest in saying no current company implements all there ideas. My biggest complaint is that they choose to focus on approaches that work for mega corporations and often want to focus on how their ideas scale up rather than scale down. While, the complexities of running mega-corporations may require new approaches to truly scale, it seems like innovative, radical approaches would be first adopted in smaller organizations. Some of the high-lights for me include:- Clear separation of the duties and responsibilities of the different layers of management. Empowered Line management responsible for operations and shorter term initiatives. Senior and Top - Level management responsible for shared utilities, strategic planning and putting in place a one-company culture.- Strong use of hierarchy for clear decision making while at the same time, providing a framework for incorporating Teams at the top. In particular, I liked the idea that teams at the top would extend beyond the C-Level board and reach down lower level people. I agree with the premise that this will not only help train and retain promising talent but will also result in better decision making and planning.- Top down leadership towards mutual accountability.- The concept of portfolio of initiatives and the need to fund them out of corporate and top level management to avoid long-term planning and improvements being starved by more immediate line management needs.- Formal networks and Talent Networks were interesting but some of the concepts shared in knowledge networks were particularly interesting to me. Some of the concepts of Knowledge may be the easiest for smaller organizations to start putting in place. Thus, for me, this was a very good book and one that has certainly wetted my appetite for further reading. Perhaps, the authors could write another book focusing on grounded, shorter term improvements with an eye to smaller companies....

1 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Not worth the money.

By Matthew

I can't see this book being of much help to anyone. I'm actually not sure why it was written. It reads like a 300 page advertisement for McKinsey. It's sparse on details and the quality of writing is inconsistent. Sorry I don't have anything positive to say about this one.

Based on a decade of exclusive research, Lowell Bryan and Claudia Joyce of McKinsey Company have come up with a simple yet revolutionary conclusion: Your workforce is the key to growth in the 21st century. By tapping into their underutilized talents, knowledge, and skills you can earn tens of thousands of additional dollars per employee, and manage the interdepartmental complexities and barriers that prevent real achievements and profits. This can only be accomplished through organizational design and redesign. That's the new model for survival in the modern, digital, global economy. With the right design, your organization will have the capabilities to pursue whatever strategy is necessary to compete on any scale, react to any market change, leverage any opportunity, and sail past the competition. In *Mobilizing Minds*, the authors distill their research into seven strategic ideas that shatter the complexity frontiers, have the potential to unleash enormous profits, and enable long-term success for every company. Bryan and Joyce outline innovative principles that enable corporations to: Manage complexity, bureaucracy, and

redundancy Use hierarchical authority to strengthen the authority of key managers and drive performance Deliver operating earnings while implementing wealth-creation strategies Allow formal networks, talent, and knowledge marketplaces to work in a large company Motivate and reward wealth-creating behavior Pursue organizational design as a corporate strategy Increase worker satisfaction It is imperative for corporations to put the same energy used for new products and processes into organizational design. That's where the money is. That's where the opportunities lie. That's the key to surviving and prospering in the 21st century.

Considering so many of us are supposed to be working in something called the "knowledge economy," it is absurd how stupidly designed so many businesses and organisations actually are. Matrix structures are piled on ad hoc reorganisations, divisions are divided, parcelled up and then redivided all over again. No wonder accountabilities get blurred, employees are confused and performance suffers. A key problem in this digital age has been the failure to adapt the way businesses are organised. Few leaders see their company as a complete system. Instead, they try to carry out partial running repairs, leaving a fundamentally outdated structure in place. This is the argument put forward by McKinsey's Lowell Bryan and Claudia Joyce in their ambitious new book, "Mobilizing Minds". The authors believe that the great majority of businesses are underperforming precisely because their most important intangible assets - the ideas and creativity of their knowledge workers - are unwittingly suppressed by the way in which these businesses are set up to operate. "Trying to run a company in the 21st century with an organising model designed for the 20th century places limits on how well a company performs," they write. "The plagues of the modern company are hard-to-manage workforce structures, thick silo walls, confusing matrix structures, e-mail overload and 'undoable jobs'." Having studied the performance of the most successful businesses, Bryan and Joyce conclude that "thinking-intensive" companies do best when they unleash talent rather than constrain it. And looking at a new measure, profitability per employee, is a useful discipline towards raising overall levels of performance. "Profit per employee is a good proxy for earnings on intangibles," the authors say. It should become the most important measure of success, ahead even of returns on capital. That should be looked at "just to ensure that they are sufficient to cover the costs of capital," Bryan and Joyce say. The authors know what success looks like. It involves a virtuous circle of productive activity: knowledge being exchanged, reputations being built, relationships being established and developed, "competencies" growing stronger. And, all the while, profits per employee climb. The numbers involved are not trivial. "If a company with 300,000 employees can add \$13,333 of "rents" per employee (that is, earnings requiring no additional employment of capital or labour), by reducing unproductive complexity, it can add \$4bn in additional earnings," the authors argue. They estimate that this could add as much as \$40bn in market capitalisation. Leaders have failed to grasp the possibilities of the digital era. "The trial-and-error period of discovery has been under way for over a decade now," Bryan and Joyce say. (At which point you have to ask: so what have the strategy consultants been doing all this time?) Business has botched the introduction of new technology. "In cities the problem is congestion. In companies, the problem is unproductive complexity." So much for the - extremely good - diagnosis. What about the cure? Bryan and Joyce advocate a radical overhaul of the way organisations are designed. For example, even the largest organisations need no more than four layers of management from top to bottom. Front-line managers, like military captains, should be free "to make tactical decisions close to the front line," within the context of a strategy set by top management. There should be "one company governance and culture," supported by a partnership ethos at the top. And a "portfolio of initiatives" approach would lead to more dynamic management, while maintaining the discipline of meeting earnings targets. There are other, more radical suggestions for practical steps here concerning the management of people. Formal networks will help spread good ideas. There should be "talent marketplaces," with capable employees free to plot their own career path internally. New performance measurement is required to reward people's contribution to team as well as individual success. This is a densely written, powerfully argued book. Cynics will interpret the call for organisational redesign as a make-work scheme for management consultants. But even they would have to concede that this critique of organisational stasis is very well done indeed. Considering so many of us are supposed to be working in something called the knowledge economy, it is absurd how stupidly designed so many businesses and organisations actually are. . . . Matrix structures are piled on ad hoc reorganisations, divisions are divided, parcelled up and then redivided all over again. No wonder accountabilities get blurred, employees are confused and performance suffers. . . . A key problem in this digital age has been the failure to adapt the way businesses are organised. Few leaders see their company as a complete system. Instead, they try to carry out partial running repairs, leaving a fundamentally outdated structure in place. . . . This is the argument put forward by McKinseys Lowell Bryan and Claudia Joyce in their ambitious new book, "Mobilizing Minds," . . . The authors believe that the great majority of businesses are underperforming precisely because their most important intangible assets the ideas and creativity of their knowledge workers are unwittingly suppressed by the way in which these businesses are set up to operate. . . . Trying to run a company in the 21st century with an organising model designed for the 20th century places limits on how well a company performs, they write. The plagues of the modern company are hard-to-manage workforce structures, thick silo walls, confusing matrix structures, e-mail overload and undoable jobs. . . . Having studied the performance of the most successful businesses, Bryan and Joyce conclude that

thinking-intensive companies do best when they unleash talent rather than constrain it. And looking at a new measure, profitability per employee, is a useful discipline towards raising overall levels of performance. Profit per employee is a good proxy for earnings on intangibles, the authors say. . . . It should become the most important measure of success, ahead even of returns on capital. That should be looked at just to ensure that they are sufficient to cover the costs of capital, Bryan and Joyce say. . . . The authors know what success looks like. It involves a virtuous circle of productive activity: knowledge being exchanged, reputations being built, relationships being established and developed, competencies growing stronger. And, all the while, profits per employee climb. . . . The numbers involved are not trivial. If a company with 300,000 employees can add \$13,333 of rents per employee (that is, earnings requiring no additional employment of capital or labour), by reducing unproductive complexity, it can add \$4bn in additional earnings, the authors argue. They estimate that this could add as much as \$40bn in market capitalisation. . . . Leaders have failed to grasp the possibilities of the digital era. The trial-and-error period of discovery has been under way for over a decade now, Bryan and Joyce say. (At which point you have to ask: so what have the strategy consultants been doing all this time?) Business has botched the introduction of new technology. In cities the problem is congestion. In companies, the problem is unproductive complexity. . . . So much for the extremely good diagnosis. What about the cure? Bryan and Joyce advocate a radical overhaul of the way organisations are designed. For example, even the largest organisations need no more than four layers of management from top to bottom. Front-line managers, like military captains, should be free to make tactical decisions close to the front line, within the context of a strategy set by top management. . . . There should be one company governance and culture, supported by a partnership ethos at the top. And a portfolio of initiatives approach would lead to more dynamic management, while maintaining the discipline of meeting earnings targets. . . . There are other, more radical suggestions for practical steps here concerning the management of people. Formal networks will help spread good ideas. There should be talent marketplaces, with capable employees free to plot their own career path internally. New performance measurement is required to reward people's contribution to team as well as individual success. . . . This is a densely written, powerfully argued book. Cynics will interpret the call for organisational redesign as a make-work scheme for management consultants. But even they would have to concede that this critique of organisational stasis is very well done indeed. From the Back Cover *The Profit is in Your People. If You're Not Mobilizing Minds, You're Not Leveraging Your Organization's Single Greatest Asset.* "Mobilizing Minds will more than mobilize the mind of any reader. It will inspire, energize, and give them a basis for taking imaginative and creative action." -Larry Prusak, coauthor, *Working Knowledge* "In the increasingly globalized and complex world in which we operate, the need for companies to be agile and mobilize their human capital has never been greater." -Jean-Paul Votron, CEO, Fortis "Lowell Bryan is one of the most insightful individuals I know when it comes to organization design and leadership models. If we can reduce complexity while increasing collaboration of true leaders, the power of the organization and its people can be realized." -Dennis M. Nally, Chairman Senior Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP About the Author Harvard MBA Lowell L. Bryan is a Director (Senior Partner) at McKinsey Company. Over the past 30 years, he has spoken and written extensively on strategy, organization, and financial services. Bryan has been a frequent contributor to the Wall Street Journal editorial page, has had articles published in numerous periodicals, including the Harvard Business and the McKinsey Quarterly, and has authored or coauthored several other books. Claudia I. Joyce is a Principal at McKinsey Company and a core member of the Financial Services and Strategy Practices. Her work has been published on McKinsey's Knowledge Web and in the McKinsey Quarterly. She is a graduate of the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University (MBA) and of the University of Chicago (B.A. in Economics).