

THE COMPELLING JOURNEY™

A PLAYBOOK™ FOR SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE GROWTH

- ▲ Senior Leadership are powerless to execute without help within the organization
- ▲ Who are those within the organization who show promise?
- ▲ A deep dive into succession preparation



*“Our emerging workforce is not interested in command-and-control leadership. **They don’t want to do things because I said so; they want to do things because they want to do them.**”*

– Irene Rosenfeld

Approaching the Challenge – Emerging Leadership

The business was mushrooming. Hard work and good positioning in the market created a number of healthy opportunities. **The CEO and her team had weathered the difficult time of proving their bona fides and now they had several new projects that required attention and execution.** In fact, there were so many that the senior team was unable to keep tabs on all of them.

They knew that they had good people, but they didn't know how much they could handle when they stepped onto the larger stage that the projects required. One thing was certain, without finding people who could help the CEO's team execute, the opportunities would evaporate. **The CEO sat with her team and spearheaded an exhaustive review of the people in the enterprise to see whom they could count on to reach up for additional responsibility.** Who was ready now, soon and/or in the future? What would be necessary to help them be prepared to rise to the challenges that they would face when they took on these new projects.



Someone once asked, "Who is the least powerful person in an enterprise?" If you had answered counterintuitively and said the CEO, you would be correct. But wait! Isn't the CEO the one with all the power? Doesn't that person have the ability to make the rest of the people in the organization do her bidding? As with many issues in an organization, it's complicated.

Sure, the CEO's make the big bucks (there are those who argue that some get too much) and the big decisions, but they are not, in the strictest sense, the most powerful. Yes, they have the final say on who stays and who goes and who does what and gets what, but they are still the least powerful.

Everyone who joins an organization has tremendous potential. Presumably, they were brought on board because of certain skills and competencies, and they have talents (traits) that lend themselves to the makeup of the team. **In addition, they come with a mindset (habits, attitudes, beliefs, and expectations) that determines something that we call "discretionary energy."** That is, depending on their mindset, they can offer varying levels of energy, industriousness, creativity, and drive.

Every organization has a set of minimum standards of comportment and performance. Team members who do not meet this threshold are usually given a chance to become successful elsewhere. Typically, though, that minimum requirement is not enough for the organization to attain its higher aspirations. CEOs, and those supporting her, are obliged to tap into each team member's discretionary energy to provide the momentum necessary to reach the organization's goals. When the CEO is unsuccessful, the enterprise will fail or, at a minimum, underperform.

In other words, if the members of the enterprise fold their arms instead of contributing, the CEO is powerless.

The implications of this are as broad as they are evident. The CEO needs teammates, lots of them and they need to have elected to strive energetically in support of the vision promoted. A senior team that is so motivated is vital; however, it is also table stakes in the effort to transform the enterprise. **The CEO and the senior team must look deep into the organization to discern who among the remainder of the members can fulfill important leadership roles and functions.**

The next step in the Compelling Journey consists of an examination of the state of the organization's emerging leaders. **Who are they? What are their strengths? What needs improving?** What plans need to be executed to ensure that they are fully engaged and ready? What needs to happen to help them understand the Call to Action? Will they have clarity in their own development path? How will they know what is expected of them?

Fully fleshed, this step enables the organization to flourish as the members respond and dig into the Call to Action.

What is necessary then, is to clearly define the response to the Call. We will examine that next.