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of the KEN BLANCHARD COMPANIES

REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION

LEADING AT A HIGHER LEVEL

BLANCHARD ON LEADERSHIP AND CREATING HIGH PERFORMING ORGANIZATIONS

THE LEADING AT A HIGHER LEVEL SERIES

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Introduction

Several years ago, my wife Margie and I went on a safari in South Africa with some family and friends. We had been on a number of safaris over the past 20 years, but this time I saw some things differently. The jungle appeared more vicious, competitive, and territorial than ever before. If you've ever heard a lion roar, it sends chills up your back. When our long-time guide, Gary Clarke from Topeka, Kansas, imitates the lion's roar, he shouts, "It's mine, mine, mine, mine!" That's because when the lion roars, what he's really saying is, "This is my territory. Don't mess with me." In fact, lions will kill their sons if the sons challenge their fathers' control over their territory.

The reason I saw this more vividly than ever before is that I had decided on this trip that I was going to find out as much as I possibly could about Nelson Mandela. We had been at a dinner party where people around the table were asked to share what person—of anyone in the world—they would love to have dinner with. It was a quick decision for me. I said, "Nelson Mandela. I would love to have dinner with a man who was in prison for 28 years and treated cruelly, yet came out of that experience full of love, compassion, and reconciliation." On the trip, I began to read Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom.*

When I compared what I saw in the jungle with how Mandela had reacted to his treatment, I realized that in many ways we as human beings are just intelligent animals. And being intelligent animals, we can choose every day whether to be self-serving or serving. Jungle animals, like the lion, can't make that choice. They have to protect their territory. It's not in their nature to share with other species. And yet, just as Mandela did, we as human beings can make choices to live and lead at a higher level, to be serving rather than self-serving. But when you look at the leaders around the world—whether they're running countries, businesses, churches, educational institutions, or what have you—too many people are choosing to be self-serving rather than serving. Why is that? Because they don't have a different leadership role model. They have been conditioned to think about leadership only in terms of power and control. That's what this book is all about—a different leadership paradigm. We want to help individuals and organizations lead at a higher level.

Leading at a Higher Level

What is leadership? For years we defined leadership as an *influence process.* We believed that anytime you tried to influence the thoughts and actions of others toward goal accomplishment in either your personal or professional life, you were engaging in leadership. In recent years, we have taken the emphasis away from goal accomplishment and have defined leadership as *the capacity to influence others by unleashing their power and potential to impact the greater good.* Why did we do that? Because when the definition of leadership focuses on goal accomplishment, one can think that leadership is only about results. Yet when we talk about leading at a higher level, just focusing on goal accomplishment is not enough. The key phrase in our new definition is "the greater good"—what is best for all involved. We think leadership is a high calling. Leadership should not be done purely for personal gain or goal accomplishment; it should have a much higher purpose than that.

What is a higher purpose? It is not something as internally focused and self-centered as making money. As Matt Hayes and Jeff Stevens contend in *The Heart of Business*, when it becomes obvious that profit, which is a legitimate goal, is the driving reason for being in business, everyone—stockholders, top managers, employees, customers, suppliers, and the community—quickly becomes self-serving. They focus on their own agenda and personal enrichment. Employee loyalty and passion often go out the window as the point of work becomes simply to get as much as you can for as little effort as possible.[1]

What is the answer to this dilemma? A higher purpose—a key element of what we will refer to throughout this book as a *compelling vision*. In Hayes and Stevens' terms, it is something outwardly focused, it requires sacrifice—in other words, it takes precedence over any short-term goal like profit—and it is intrinsically honorable.

Leaders can be successful in the short run if they emphasize only goal accomplishment. What tends to fall by the wayside is the condition of the human organization. Leaders don't always take morale and job satisfaction into consideration—only results count. They forget what the point is. They don't have a higher purpose. In business, with that kind of leadership, it is a short leap to thinking that the only reason to be in business is to make money. An either/or is added to people and results. Leaders falsely believe that they can't focus on both at the same time.

When you are leading at a higher level, you have a both/and philosophy. The development of people—both customers and employees—is of equal importance to performance. As a result, the focus in leading at a higher level is on long-term results and human satisfaction. *Leading at a higher level*, therefore, is a process. We define it as *the process of achieving worthwhile results* *while acting with respect, care, and fairness for the well-being of all involved.* When that occurs, self-serving leadership is not possible. Why?

Self-serving leaders think that leadership is all about them and not about the best interests of those they serve. They forget about acting with respect, care, and fairness toward all involved. Everything is about their own self interest. It's only when you realize that it's not about you that you begin to lead at a higher level.

Why Did We Write This Book?

In 2006 we wrote the original edition of this book for several reasons. First, our dream was that someday everyone will know someone who is leading at a higher level. Self-serving leaders will be a thing of the past, and leadership throughout the world will be composed of people who, as Robert Greenleaf said, "serve first and lead second."[2] We wrote this book to help make our dream a reality.

Second, the vision of The Ken Blanchard Companies is focused on leading at a higher level. This kind of leadership begins with a vision. Jesse Stoner and I wrote a book called *Full Steam Ahead!* about the power of visioning. To us, a compelling vision tells you *who you are* (your purpose), *where you're going* (your preferred picture of the future), and *what will drive your journey* (your values).

The purpose of The Ken Blanchard Companies is to help individuals and organizations lead at a higher level. Our mission statement reflects our new definition of leadership:

Unleash the power and potential of people and organizations for the greater good.

Our picture of the future is

- Everyone is trained to lead at a higher level.
- Every organization is led by people leading at a higher level.

- People are motivated to lead at a higher level by observing people who lead at a higher level.

Our operating *values* are

- **Ethical Behavior**: Doing the right thing
- **Relationships**: Developing mutual trust and respect
- **Success**: Operating a profitable and well-run organization
- **Learning**: Always growing, inquiring, and developing

These values are ordered by rank. In other words, we won't do anything to improve the company's profitability that is unethical or that doesn't honor the relationships we have with our customers, our people, our suppliers, and our community. We realize that making money is not the higher purpose of our business.

You might say that this all sounds like Pollyanna—overly optimistic. That may be, but these are the standards we have set for ourselves. And these are the same high standards we want to help you and the people in your organization reach through this book. Helping individuals and organizations lead at a higher level is our passion, both for your organization and our own.

Finally, in many ways this book spells out our leadership point of view. Extensive research shows that effective leaders have a clear leadership point of view and are willing to share with others these beliefs about leading and motivating people. We hope reading this book will impact your leadership point of view.

How This Book Is Organized

Over the years, I have found that in organizations where leading at a higher level is the rule rather than the exception, people do four things well:

- They set their sights on the right target and vision.
- They treat their customers right.

- They treat their people right.
- They have the right kind of leadership.

This book is organized into four sections. Section I focuses on *the right target and vision* and integrates our work on the triple bottom line, the characteristics of a high performing organization, and the creation of a compelling vision.

Section II highlights *treating the customer right* and integrates our work on legendary service, raving fans, and customer mania. Today, everybody should realize that their customers are the reason that their organization exists.

Section III focuses on *treating your people right*. This is where the rubber meets the road. If you don't empower your people and treat them right, they won't take care of your customers, and in the long run, you won't get your desired results. This is the longest section of the book, because your treatment of people is leadership in action. This is what The Ken Blanchard Companies has been focusing on for more than 30 years. In this section, we start with empowerment and then examine four leadership domains: self leadership, one-on-one leadership, team leadership, and organizational leadership.

Section IV zeros in on *the right kind of leadership*. Here we're not talking about leadership style; we're talking about character and intentionality. My travels over the years through organizations of all shapes and sizes have convinced me of two things: Effective leadership starts on the inside, and the right kind of leadership is servant leadership. This is a leadership not based on false pride or fear, but one that's grounded in humility and focused on the greater good. With the right kind of leadership, leading at a higher level can become a reality.

This section also includes our thoughts on determining your leadership point of view. This turns the focus to you. Here we assist you in pulling together many of the concepts you have learned and help you integrate and apply that knowledge to your own leadership situation.

Writing this book has been a labor of love. Pulling together our best thinking from more than 30 years of working together, it truly is *Blanchard on Leadership*. With new chapters on culture and coaching, this second edition includes not only Margie's and my thinking, but also all the wonderful contributions of our founding associates—Don Carew, Eunice Parisi-Carew, Fred Finch, Laurie Hawkins, Drea Zigarmi, and Pat Zigarmi—and other fabulous consulting partners who have really made Blanchard "the home of the authors," including Scott Blanchard, Madeleine Homan Blanchard, Kathy Cuff, Garry Demarest, Chris Edmonds, Susan Fowler, Bob Glaser, Lael Good, Vicki Halsey, Judd Hoekstra, Fay Kandarian, Linda Miller, Alan Randolph, and Jesse Stoner .

We think everyone can lead at a higher level, whether at work, at home, or in the community. We hope that regardless of your position, the size or type of your organization, or the kind of customers or people you serve, you will learn some important information in this book. We also hope this book will help you lead at a higher level and create a high-performing organization that not only accomplishes your desired results but is a welcome harbor for the people you touch. May good come out of your reading of this book.

Ken Blanchard
San Diego, California
Spring 2009

Chapter 1

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION HIGH PERFORMING?

Don Carew, Fay Kandarian,
Eunice Parisi-Carew, Jesse Stoner,
and Ken Blanchard

Marksmen will tell you that when you aim at a target, you should go for the bull's-eye. The reason is that if you miss the bull's-eye, you're still on the target. But if all you do is aim for the target and you miss, you're nowhere. Don Shula, who coauthored *Everyone's a Coach*[1] with Ken Blanchard, always told his Miami Dolphins football team that the target they were aiming at was to win every game. Was that possible? Obviously not, but if you don't shoot for excellence, you never have a chance of getting there. That's probably why Shula's teams won more football games than teams of any other coach in the history of the NFL. His 1972 Dolphins is still the only team in history to go undefeated for an entire season. So the target you aim for has a lot to do with your performance.

Wall Street and the pressures of business today make many people think that the only target that counts is financial success. Yet few, if any, businesspeople would want their epitaph to include their company's bottom line—their stock price or profit margin. They might, however, want people to remember their contribution to the creation of a high performing organization.

Those who want to lead at a higher level need to understand that to create a high performing organization, they need to aim for the right target.

The Right Target: The Triple Bottom Line

In high performing organizations, everyone's energy is focused on not just one bottom line, but three bottom lines—being the ***provider of choice***, the ***employer of choice***, and the ***investment of choice***. This triple bottom line is the right target and can make the difference between mediocrity and greatness.[2] The leaders in high performing organizations know that their bottom line depends on their customers, their people, and their investors. These leaders realize the following:

> *Profit is the applause you get for taking care of your customers and creating a motivating environment for your people.*

Provider of Choice

Being the provider of choice is increasingly challenging. Competition is fierce as new competitors emerge unexpectedly. Customers are more demanding, with many more options at their fingertips. The world has changed in such a way that today the buyer, not the seller, is sitting in the driver's seat. These days, nobody has to convince anybody that the customer reigns. In fact, companies are motivated to change when they discover the new rule:

> *If you don't take care of your customers, somebody else will.*

In *Raving Fans®: Satisfied Customers Are Not Enough,*[3] Sheldon Bowles and Ken Blanchard argue that to keep your customers today, you can't be content just to satisfy them. You have to create raving fans—customers who are so excited about how you treat them that they want to tell everyone about you. They become part of your sales force. Let's look at a simple yet powerful example.

What's the most common wake-up call that you get in a hotel in America today? The phone rings at the allotted hour, but when you pick it up, no one is there. At least they got the machine to call your room at the designated hour. The second most common wake-up call greets you with a recording. But again, no one's there. Today if you pick up the phone on a wake-up call and a human being is on the other end—someone you can actually talk to—you hardly know what to say. A while back, one of our colleagues was staying at the Marriott Convention Hotel in Orlando. He asked for a 7:00 wake-up call. When the phone rang and he picked it up, a woman said, "Good morning; this is Teresa. It's 7 o'clock. It's going to be 75 and beautiful in Orlando today, but your ticket says you're leaving. Where are you going?"

Taken aback, our colleague stammered, "New York City."

Teresa said, "Let me look at the *USA Today* weather map. Oh, no! It's supposed to be 40 degrees and rainy in New York today. Can't you stay another day?"

Now where do you think our colleague wants to stay when he gets to Orlando? He wants to stay at the Marriott so that he can talk to Teresa in the morning! Raving fans are created by companies whose service far exceeds that of the competition and even exceeds customer expectations. These companies routinely do the unexpected and then enjoy the growth generated by customers who have spontaneously joined their sales force.

Employer of Choice

Being the employer of choice is equally challenging. With highly mobile, competent workers in demand, employers must find ways to attract and keep their best people. Good pay is no longer the only answer. It is true that some competent workers will go elsewhere for a higher wage; however, today's workers generally want more. They seek opportunities where they feel like their contributions are valued and rewarded—where they are involved and empowered, can develop skills, can see advancement opportunities, and can believe they are making a difference.

You will get little argument today if you tell managers that people are their most important resource. Some even argue that the customer should come second, because without committed and empowered employees, a company can never provide good service. You can't treat your people poorly and expect them to treat your customers well.

Several years ago, a friend of ours had an experience in a department store that illustrates this point well. He normally shops at Nordstrom but found himself in a competitor's store. Realizing that he needed to talk to his wife, he asked a salesperson in the men's department if he could use their telephone. "No!" the salesperson said.

He replied, "You have to be kidding me. You can always use the phone at Nordstrom."

The salesperson said, "Look, buddy! They don't let *me* use the phone here. Why should I let *you*?"

People who are treated poorly tend to pass that attitude on to their customers.

Another reason that your people are so important today is because these days your organization is evaluated on how quickly it can respond to customer needs and problems. "I'll have to talk to my boss" doesn't cut it anymore. Nobody cares who the boss is. The only people customers care about are the ones who answer the phone, greet them, write up their order, make their delivery, or respond to their complaints. They want top service, and they want it fast. This means that you need to create a motivating environment for your people and an organizational structure that is flexible enough to permit them to be the best they can be.

Investment of Choice

Growing or expanding requires investment, regardless of whether the company is publicly owned, privately held, government, or nonprofit. All organizations require funding sources, through stock purchases, loans, grants, or contracts. To be willing to invest, people must believe in the organization's viability and performance over time. They need to have faith in the leadership, the quality of the people, the product and services, the management practices, and the organization's resilience.

If an organization's financial success is a function of revenue minus expenses, you can become more sound financially either by reducing costs or increasing revenues. Let's look at costs first, because in today's competitive environment, the prize goes to those who can do more with less. More organizations today are deciding that the only way to be financially effective is to downsize. There's no doubt that some personnel reduction is necessary in large bureaucracies where everyone just has to have an assistant, and the assistant must have an assistant. Yet downsizing is an energy drain, and it's by no means the only way to manage costs.

There's a growing realization that another effective way to manage cost is to make all your people your business partners. For instance, in some companies, new people can't get a raise until they can read their company's balance sheet and understand where and how their individual efforts are impacting the company's profit-and-loss statement. When people understand the business realities of how their organization makes and spends money, they are much more apt to roll up their sleeves and help out.

Traditionally, managers have been reluctant to share financial information. Yet these days, many organizations are responding with open-book management. That's because they realize the financial benefits of sharing previously sensitive data. For example, in working with a restaurant company, one of our consulting partners was having a hard time convincing the president of the merits of sharing important financial data with employees. To unfreeze the president's thinking, the consulting partner went to the firm's largest restaurant one night at closing time. Dividing all the employees—cooks, dishwashers, waitstaff, bus people, receptionists—into groups of five or six, he asked them to come to an agreement about the answer to a question: "Of every sales dollar that comes into this restaurant, how many cents do you think fall to the bottom line—money that can be returned to investors as profit or reinvested in the business?"

The least amount any group guessed was 40 cents. Several groups guessed 70 cents. In a restaurant, the reality is that if you can keep 5 cents on the dollar, you get excited—10 cents, and you're ecstatic! Can you imagine the attitude among employees toward such things as food costs, labor costs, and breakage when they thought their company was a money machine? After sharing the actual figures, the president was impressed when a chef asked, "You mean, if I burn a steak that costs us $6 and we sell it for $20, at a 5 percent profit margin, we have to sell six steaks for essentially no profit to make up for my mistake?" He already had things figured out.

If you keep your people well informed and
let them use their brains, you'll be amazed
at how they can help manage costs.

This is particularly important in uncertain times. If you develop committed and empowered people, not only will they help manage costs, but they'll also increase your revenues. How? By providing legendary service that creates raving fan customers who will want to brag about you. These customers become part of your unofficial sales force or PR department, which increases your sales and/or visibility and makes your organization more attractive as an investment. Now you are a leader of a high performing organization.

A High Performing Organization Scores Every Time

Provider of choice, employer of choice, and investment of choice—the three elements of the triple bottom line—form the right target. If you aim for only one of the three elements, you won't hit the target, and your organization won't be able to sustain high performance. Once leaders understand the importance of the target, questions naturally arise, such as "What is a high performing organization?" and "What does a high performing organization that hits the target look like?"

To answer these questions, Don Carew, Fay Kandarian, Eunice Parisi-Carew, and Jesse Stoner conducted an extensive research project to define and identify the characteristics of a high performing organization.[4] Their first step was to define a "high performing organization." While many organizations rise quickly and then plateau or topple, some continue to thrive, somehow reinventing themselves as needed. The researchers focused on these kinds of organizations, creating the following definition:

> *High performing organizations are enterprises that over time continue to produce outstanding results with the highest level of human satisfaction and commitment to success.*

Because of their flexibility, nimbleness, and responsive systems, high performing organizations (HPOs) remain not only successful and respected today but also are poised to succeed in the future. HPOs demonstrate results consistently over time.

The HPO SCORES™ *Model*

As a result of their research, Drs. Carew, Kandarian, Parisi-Carew, and Stoner created the HPO SCORES model. SCORES is an acronym that represents the six elements evident in every high performing organization. A high performing organization scores—hits the target consistently—because it demonstrates strength in each of these six elements. The following pages give an overview of these elements.

S = *Shared Information and Open Communication*

In high performing organizations, information needed to make informed decisions is readily available to people and is openly communicated. Sharing information and facilitating open communication builds trust and encourages people to act like owners of the organization. Encouraging dialogue lessens the danger of territoriality and keeps the organization healthy, agile, flexible, and fluid.

C = *Compelling Vision*

A compelling vision is the hallmark of a high performing organization. When everyone supports such an organizational vision—including purpose, a picture of the future, and values—it creates a deliberate, highly focused culture that drives the desired business results toward a greater good. In these organizations, people are energized by, excited about, and dedicated to such a vision. They have a noble sense of purpose that creates and focuses energy. Their personal values are aligned with the values of the organization. They can describe a clear picture of what they intend to create. Everyone is aligned and going in the same direction.

O = *Ongoing Learning*

High performing organizations are constantly focusing on improving their capabilities through learning systems, building knowledge capital, and transferring learning throughout the organization. Organizational learning is different from individual learning. High performing organizations engage in both. Everyone is always striving to get better, both individually and as an organization.

R = *Relentless Focus on Customer Results*

No matter what industry they are in, high performing organizations understand who their customer is and measure their results accordingly. They produce outstanding results, in part because of an almost obsessive focus on results. However, what is unique is the way in which they focus on those results: from the customer's viewpoint.

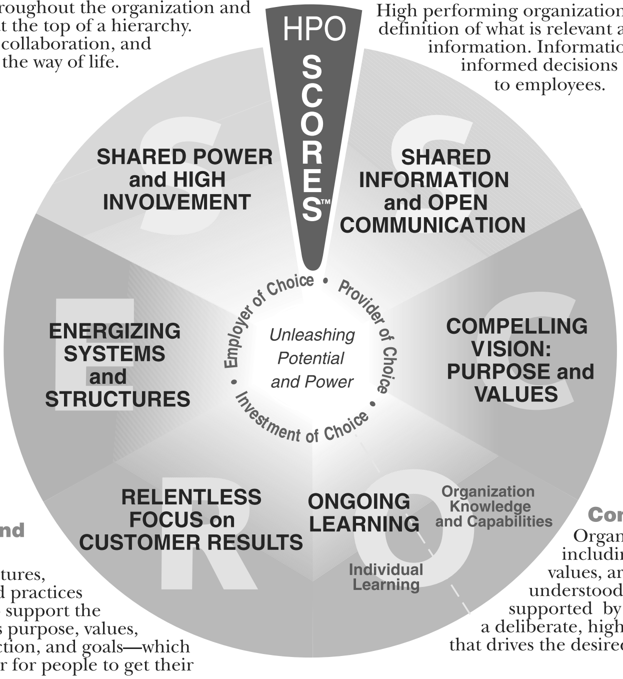
E = *Energizing Systems and Structures*

The systems, structures, processes, and practices in high performing organizations are aligned to support the organizati on's vision, strategic direction, and goals. This makes it easier for people to get their jobs done. Energizing systems and structures provide the platform for rapid response to obstacles and opportunities. The bottom-line test of whether the systems and structures are energizing is to look at whether they help people accomplish their jobs more easily or make them more difficult.

S = *Shared Power and High Involvement*

In high performing organizations, power and decision making are shared and distributed throughout the organization, not guarded at the top of the hierarchy. Participation, collaboration, and teamwork are a way of life. When people feel valued and respected for their contributions, are allowed to make decisions that impact their lives, and have access to information to make good decisions, they *can* and *will* function as valuable contributors to the organization's purpose and vision. In high performing organizations, a sense of personal and collective power exists.

The HPO SCORES™ Model


HPO
SCORES™
SHARED POWER and HIGH INVOLVEMENT
SHARED INFORMATION and OPEN COMMUNICATION
COMPELLING VISION: PURPOSE and VALUES
ONGOING LEARNING
Organization Knowledge and Capabilities
Individual Learning
RELENTLESS FOCUS on CUSTOMER RESULTS
ENERGIZING SYSTEMS and STRUCTURES
Employer of Choice • Provider of Choice • Investment of Choice •
Unleashing Potential and Power

Shared Power and High Involvement
Power and decision making are shared and distributed throughout the organization and not guarded at the top of a hierarchy. Participation, collaboration, and teamwork are the way of life.

Shared Information and Open Communication
High performing organizations employ a broad definition of what is relevant and necessary information. Information needed to make informed decisions is readily available to employees.

Energizing Systems and Structures
Systems, structures, processes, and practices are aligned to support the organization's purpose, values, strategic direction, and goals—which makes it easier for people to get their jobs done.

Compelling Vision
Organizational vision, including purpose and values, are clearly understood and passionately supported by all—which creates a deliberate, highly focused culture that drives the desired business results.

Relentless Focus on Results
High performing organizations produce outstanding results, in part because of an almost obsessive focus on results. However, what is unique is the way in which they focus on those results—from the perspective of their customer.

Ongoing Learning
High performing organizations are constantly focused on improving their capabilities through learning systems, building knowledge capital, and transferring learning throughout the organization.

The six essential elements of the HPO SCORES™ Model operate interdependently to produce sustainable high performance and human satisfaction. Refer to the "High Performing Organizations: SCORES" article for more information on each of the elements and the research behind them.

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Figure 1.1 The HPO SCORES™ Model

Leadership Is the Engine

If becoming a high performing organization is the destination, leadership is the engine. While the HPO SCORES model describes the characteristics of a high performing organization, leadership is what moves the organization in that direction.

In high performing organizations, the role of formal leadership is radically different from traditional organizations. High performing organizations rely not on cultivating a great, charismatic leader, but on building a visionary organization that endures beyond the leader. The role of leadership shifts from privileged status and power for its own sake toward a more complex, participative, long-term process. As this book will continually emphasize, once leaders establish the vision, they assume the attitude and behavior of a servant leader.

In high performing organizations, leadership practices support collaboration and involvement. Leadership is assumed at every level of the organization. Top leaders live the organization's values. They embody and encourage a spirit of inquiry and discovery. They help others think systematically. They act as teachers *and* lifelong learners. They are visible in their leadership and have the strength to stand firm on strategic business decisions and values. They keep everyone's energy focused on the bull's-eye of excellence.

In high performing organizations, leadership is not the province of formal leaders or a few peak performers alone; leadership emerges everywhere. Individuals with expertise come forward as needed throughout the organization.

The HPO SCORES Quiz:
How Does Your Organization Score?

To begin to see how your organization scores, take a few moments to complete the following quiz. It is based on a few of the questions from the HPO SCORES Profile, an organizational assessment that was developed as part of a research project.[5] We've also included some supplemental questions on leadership.

HPO SCORES *Quiz*

On a scale of 1 to 7, to what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Slightly disagree
4 = Neutral
5 = Slightly agree
6 = Agree
7 = Strongly agree

Shared Information and Open Communication

__ 1. People have easy access to the information they need to do their job effectively.
__ 2. Plans and decisions are communicated so that they are clearly understood.

Compelling Vision: Purpose and Values

___ 1. Leadership in your organization is aligned around a shared vision and values.
___ 2. The people in your organization have passion around a shared purpose and values.

Ongoing Learning

___ 1. People in your organization are actively supported in the development of new skills and competencies.
___ 2. Your organization continually incorporates new learning into standard ways of doing business.

Relentless Focus on Customer Results

___ 1. Everyone in your organization maintains the highest standards of quality and service.
___ 2. All work processes are designed to make it easier for your customers to do business with you.

Energizing Systems and Structures

___ 1. Systems, structures, and formal and informal practices are integrated and aligned.
___ 2. Systems, structures, and formal and informal practices make it easy for people in your organization to get their jobs done.

Shared Power and High Involvement

___ 1. People have an opportunity to influence decisions that affect them.
___ 2. Teams are used as a vehicle for accomplishing work and influencing decisions.

Leadership[6]

___ 1. Leaders think that leading is about serving, not being served.
___ 2. Leaders remove barriers to help people focus on their work and their customers.

How Does Your Organization Score?

It is possible to receive a total of 14 points for each of the elements and for the supplemental questions on leadership.

Add the scores for each element to determine how strong your organization is in that element:

Score 12 to 14 = High performing
Score 9 to 11 = Average
Score 8 or below = Opportunity for improvement

How Should I Use My Quiz Results?

Although this quiz may help you begin to determine if your organization is high performing, it should not be used as an organizational analysis. The main purpose of the quiz is to guide your reading. While the sections and chapters of this book are sequenced for good reason, they may not be laid out in the order that most matters to you and your organization today. If you scored 8 or below on any element of the HPO SCORES quiz, you might want to begin by focusing specifically on that area.

While it makes perfect sense to us to focus first on setting your sights on the right target and vision, it may make more sense for you to start with having the right kind of leadership. For example, some of our clients have a long history of having the right target and vision, but in recent years, some self-serving leaders have risen to the top and have been causing a gap between the espoused vision and values and the vision and values in action. Other clients have a real sense of the right target and vision, but a culture has emerged that is not treating their customers right. If that sounds familiar to you, you might want to start with Section II, "Treat Your Customers Right."

If you have no particular problem areas, we recommend that you start at the beginning and move through the planned sequence of sections as you learn how to create a high performing organization.

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