The Open Organization: Igniting Passion And Performance

Synopsis

Today's leaders know that speed and agility are the keys to any company's success, yet many are frustrated that their organizations can't move fast enough to stay competitive. The typical chain of command is too slow; internal resources are too limited; people are already executing beyond normal expectations. As the pace accelerates, how do you inspire people's energy and creativity? How do you collaborate with customers, vendors, and partners to keep your organization on the cutting edge? What kind of organization matches the speed and complexity that businesses must master - and how do you build that organization? Jim Whitehurst, CEO of Red Hat, one of the world's most revolutionary companies, shows how open principles of management - based on transparency, participation, and community - reinvent the organization for the fast-paced connected era. Whitehurst gives listeners an insider's look into how an open and innovative organizational model works. He shows how to leverage it to build community, respond quickly to opportunities, harness resources and talent both inside and outside the organization, and inspire, motivate, and empower people at all levels to act with accountability. The Open Organization is a must-listen for leaders struggling to adapt their management practices to the values of the digital and social age. Brimming with Whitehurst's personal stories and candid advice for leading an open organization as well as instructive examples from employees and managers at Red Hat and companies such as Google, The Body Shop, and Whole Foods, this audiobook provides the blueprint for reinventing your organization.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In The Open Organization, Jim Whitehurst presents a compelling, modern alternative to the traditional top-down hierarchy of business organization. Born from the open source software movement, Whitehurst advocates for a participative organization that values ability more than title. Throughout the book Whitehurst shares personal examples of his own transformation from a traditional leader to an open one. The stories are sometimes embarrassing, but his honesty and frankness are a key part of what defines a successful leader in an open organization.Even better, to my mind, are the examples that Whitehurst shares of other companies and leaders on the cutting edge of the open organization model. It's one thing to read a personal account of one company's efforts; but to see that company in the context of a larger movement to redefine the structure of success in the business world is truly eye opening.I've been using and contributing to open source software for over a decade, so much of what Whitehurst shares feels self-evident to me. Of course collaborative decision making is hard and messy, but of course the results are almost always better than one person making command decision alone. Despite my own belief in the power of openness, I had yet to see a thorough examination of the business value to such an approach, versus the community value.I had the pleasure of interviewing Jim Whitehurst for TechCrunch.com in early 2012 (http://tcrn.ch/Ix8AKF) and the seeds of many of the ideas in The Open Organization were clearly present even then. Reading The Open Organization felt, in some ways, like the conclusion to that interview.

Almost everything I know about the "open" concept and mindset I have learned from Henry Chesbrough and Linus Torvalds. According to Chesbrough in Open Business Models (2006), for example, "A business model performs two important functions: it creates value and it captures a portion of that value. It creates value by defining a series of activities from raw materials through to the final consumer that will yield a new product or service with value being added throughout the various activities. The business model captures value by establishing a unique resource, asset, or position within that series of activities, where the firm enjoys a competitive advantage."Having thus established a frame-of-reference, Chesbrough continues: "An open business model uses this new division of innovation labor - both in the creation of value and in the capture of a portion of that value. Open models create value by leveraging many more ideas, due to their inclusion of a variety of external concepts. Open models can also enable greater value capture, by using a key asset, resource, or position not only in the company's own business model but also in other companies businesses."Jim Whitehurst is the CEO of Red Hat, the largest open source software company in

the world. He and Red Hat demonstrate what Chesbrough describes in these brief excerpts. As Whitehurst explains, open source "successfully harnesses the power and commitment of talent and engagers that talent in an ongoing way over time." That is, "the term 'open source' is traditionally used in the software arena [e.g.

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