

# ***Enlightened Leadership: Best Practice Guidelines and Timesaving Tools for Easily Implementing Learning Organizations***

**Thomas, Alan G. Lovuolo, Ralph L. with Hillson, Jeanne C.**

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At the core of any company's success are innovation and creativity, twin forces that have traditionally been regarded as untamable creatures. In "Enlightened Leadership," authors Alan Thomas and Ralph LoVuolo provide owners, managers and team leaders with guidelines and tools (templates) to harness these forces and produce what they call "disciplined innovation."

"Enlightened Leadership" fills a growing vacuum in management studies today. Many eminent publications, such as the Harvard Business Review, have noted that business schools today fail to emphasize the importance of practical, real-world scenarios. Moreover, the authors' own survey of the market found that no other book contained "a carefully crafted backbone of generic best business practices."

The book, as the preface indicates, works at two levels. At one level, it can potentially be used as a guide to enhance an individual's leadership and management practices. The very first chapter provides a useful self-analysis tool that helps to assess personal strengths and weaknesses, business styles, openness and intellectual honesty. It also sets out "Fifteen Principles of Innovative Management" that help serve as a "guide" for the following chapters.

At a second level, "Enlightened Leadership" functions as a "team-learning tool," instilling "energy, empowerment, purpose and commitment" across an enterprise. The book provides practical models for continuous learning and improvement, team building and adaptation. It also warns managers about common pitfalls and tendencies. "Do not micromanage your organization," the authors state, and urge managers to nourish creativity by penalizing "inaction, not action."

In the first seven chapters, the authors provide a "Concise Guide to Innovative Management," stressing the importance of transformational learning, team planning, customer value creation, and contribution recognition. The next seven sections form "The Business Knowledge Navigator," in which the authors detail over 300 generic, best business practices in what they refer to as a "comprehensive, collaborative discourse template" that includes 35 modular sections. The book takes care to constantly apply these "key success factors" to a manager's everyday challenges. In its section on "Shirtsleeve Competitive Analysis," for example, the authors break down the analysis process into individual steps and ready-to-use information. Therefore, managers looking to identify the non-controllable factors in their "Shirtsleeve Competitive Analysis," for instance, are directly guided to look at the overall direction of the economy, government regulations, community affairs and industry characteristics, in addition to the more controllable factors, i.e., their customers, suppliers and competitors. Two more of the seven sections, for example, include an in-depth Organizational Diagnosis and Key Customer Service Factors.

"Enlightened Leadership" is a printable Adobe eBook, with internal navigation links and hot-links to every page number in the table of contents as well as the index that makes it an easy-to-follow, quick-to-use guide. This ease, when combined with its material, inspires managers to put into practice the Aristotle quotation that the authors open with: "Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

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