



Edward Lawler

Human Resource & Organizational Effectiveness Expert

TOPIC: Organization and People

SUBTOPICS: Leadership and Management, Business Strategy

BIG IDEAS:

Built to Change

Organizations can be built to change. They don't have to go through traumatic episodic change events if they are properly designed. In an environment that changes slowly it is reasonable to build organizations for stability, execution and reliable performance. But the world is changing rapidly and in ways that are hard to predict. The implication of this for the way organizations need to perform is clear. They need to be agile, they need to be adaptable, and they need to move quickly. Traditional organizations simply cannot do this even if they have a well designed change capability built into them. What is needed is an organization that is designed to change. Organizations that are designed to change are structured so that members have close contact with the environment, reward systems that reward change and shared leadership models that allow and encourage individuals to respond to environmental change. The future promises more and more rapid change and unless organizations want to be victims, they have to become more adaptable, flexible and innovative.

The Talent Imperative

For decades, managers have been saying that talent is important and in some cases the most valuable asset that organizations have. But the reality is that they rarely recognize this in their behavior. As a result, most organizations are not designed to use talent as a source of competitive advantage. More and more organizations are focused on treating people right and that is a good thing. Competitive advantage based on talent requires having good people and having good people requires treating them right. But, that is not enough. Organization must change to be more talent centric. Talent centric organizations use talent as a true source of competitive advantage. From the board down, talent centric organizations are designed around human capital. Among many other features, they need a board that has expertise in human capital management and, of course, an information system that provides metrics and analytics on the kind of talent the organization has and its financial impact of how it is utilized.

BIOGRAPHY

Edward E. Lawler III is Distinguished Professor of Business at the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business and founder and director of the University's Center for Effective Organizations (CEO). CEO has been recognized by *Fortune* and other publications as one of the country's leading management research organizations.

Professor Lawler has been honored as a major contributor to theory, research, and practice in the fields of human resources management, compensation, organizational development, and organizational effectiveness.

BusinessWeek has proclaimed Lawler one of the top six gurus in the field of management, and *Human Resource Executive* called him one of HR's most influential people. *Workforce* magazine identified him as one of the 25 visionaries who have shaped today's workplace over the past century. National television appearances include The Today Show, CNN, MSNBC, and CNBC.

Professor Lawler is the author and co-author of 36 books. *Built to Change: How to Achieve Sustained Organizational Effectiveness*, co-authored with Christopher G. Worley, is a groundbreaking book that shows how organizations can be "built to change" so they can last and succeed in today's global economy.

Professor Lawler is the recipient of many awards including SHRM's Michael R. Losey award for which he was the first recipient. He is also a consultant to many governments and corporations including the majority of the *Fortune* 100.