All Hands on Deck

- 8 Essential Lessons for Building a Culture of Ownership

- by Joe Tye

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- Book Summary by Douglas W. Green, EdD

- DGreen@Stny.rr.com

Who is Joe Tye?

o Joe Tye is CEO of Values Coach Inc., a training and consulting firm the specializes in values-based leadership and cultural transformation. He is a passionate and humorous speaker who has presented for hospitals, corporations, and associations across North America. Tye is also the creator of *The Twelve Core Action Values* course, which many participants refer to as "graduate school for *The Seven Habits* of Steven Covey."

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Joe Tells a Great Story

○ This book tells a fictitious story to make its points. The story features Corey Whitaker the new CEO of a hospital services company on the brink of bankruptcy. (Doug: Don't worry, all the concepts apply to education.) He finds himself in a limo with Walt Disney who takes him on a fantastic tour through time in order to visit many famous companies. These are companies that owe much of their success to the cultures created by their founders. Among the great historic leaders you meet are: Henry Ford, Tom Watson (IBM), Robert Wood Johnson (Johnson & Johnson), Ray Kroc (McDonald's), Bill Hewlett and David Packard, and Mary Kay Ash (Mary Kay Cosmetics).

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What to expect

o Due to the nature of this book, I have decided to feature the main concepts and leave out a summary of the story to inspire you to read the book. This is the type of book that you would like to have everyone in your organization read as, it helps people understand the importance of taking ownership of the culture. A key point of this book is that the quality of your culture is far more important than any strategy. In addition to the gripping story line, the book contains a lengthy appendix, which includes questions you can use with your staff as you study and shape your culture, and an excellent bibliography.

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Why a Culture of Ownership Matters

○ Most organizations put much executive energy into creating strategy and little into changing the cultural attitudes and behaviors that are essential to fulfill those strategies. Few leaders put much effort into designing and building the "invisible architecture" of corporate culture. It is often allowed to evolve haphazardly without plan or design. Gossip, complaining, finger-pointing, passive-aggressiveness and other emotional negativity are tolerated the way we once tolerated cigarette smoking. The author offers a *Self-Empowerment Pledge* that you can find at JoeTye.Com. He believes that you cannot empower people as empowerment is an inside job. You can, however, inspire people to empower themselves.

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Wisdom From the Past

○ You can learn most everything you need to know about building a great organization by studying strategies what were used by leaders who have already done it. Tom Watson (IBM) believed that corporate culture could be a powerful and sustaining source of competitive advantage. A company's culture is the driving force behind its growth during good times, and its resilience during bad times. In a left-brain industry, Watson used right-brained corporate culture to dominate the market. Much later, Lou Gerstner came in as IBM's CEO when the company looked like it was headed over a cliff. The most important thing he did was to tap the company's cultural heritage. He came to realize the corporate culture wasn't just part of the game, culture was the *entire* game.

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Cultural Ownership Begins With Loyalty

- Loyalty is always a two-way street. You cannot command loyalty; you have to earn it. If you are compassionate and generous, your people are much more likely to be loyal to you.

- Culture is the fabric of an organization's values, beliefs, philosophies, practices, traditions, customs, and rituals. In simpler terms, culture is to an organization what personality and character are to an individual. It is important to have a cultural blueprint. This will help you identify people who fit with your culture, which can help avoid turnover. Most people want to work for a company where values are a living breathing part of the cultural fabric, not just words posted on the wall. Values are like gravity. They keep you anchored.

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Trust Is the Glue in a Culture of Ownership.

- Great cultures require great trust all the way around. The absence of trust is like a tax on your business. When you trust people to act in the best interest of the company and place long-term loyalty ahead of short-term profit, you can create a sustainable and unrivaled source of competitive advantage.

- Culture eats strategy for lunch. Enron had a brilliant strategy but a horribly flawed culture that brought it down. McDonald's has tried some pretty seriously flawed strategies, but a uniquely powerful culture has assured that none of them were fatal. Strategy is extrinsically motivating, and culture is intrinsically motivating. (Doug: See my summary of *Drive* by Daniel Pink, which deals with this subject.)

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Stories Reinforce Cultural Norms

- Regardless of whether they are factually accurate, the best stories all carry a bigger truth. The best leaders know that an important part of their job is to write and tell the stories that help define the culture of their organizations.

- When the ship is about to go down and the captain gives the "all hands on deck" order, people aren't responding just because they've been commanded; they're up on deck because it's in their best interest to be there. When the big storm hits, there are no job descriptions; there's only the work that needs to be done. It becomes everyone's job to see that the work gets done and done right.

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Motivation and Moral Compass

○ One of the leader's most important roles is that of cheerleader. Some managers are so dead serious they seem to be seriously dead. They just haven't stopped breathing so we can bury them without breaking the law. People must be motivated. Leaders provide external motivation with praise and recognition. We need leaders who add value to the people and the organizations the lead; who work for the benefits of others and not just for their own personal gain; who inspire and motivate rather than intimidate and manipulate. Leaders need to live with people and know their problems and follow a moral compass that points in the right direction regardless of the trends. Any time you help someone else, you are helping yourself. When you ask someone for help you are helping them. People love to be needed.

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Use all the talent you have.

- As a leader, you will surrounded by "yes, but" men and women. Don't become one yourself.

- Tye mentions 3M as a company that lets employees spend 15% of their time working on projects of their own choosing. (Doug: Google does something like this as do some other innovative companies. It seems like a good way to motivate people. Educators should try to apply this idea for teachers and students.)

- Your employees have hidden talents. You need to find them and try to use them. It is important to learn about your employees' hobbies and interests

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Autonomy, Mastery, & Purpose

○ Daniel Pink's book on motivation (*Drive)* is cited as offering three key conditions for motivating workers. They are: give them as much autonomy as possible, allow them to use and enhance their skills to develop mastery, and give them a purpose for doing their job.

○ Too many managers think of their people as assets rather than resources. Accountants depreciate assets and write them off. Real leaders know that the futures of their businesses depend upon investing in people as resources, not writing off people as assets.

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Four Essential Elements

o Commitment to values, vision, and mission

o Engagement with customers, with coworkers, and with the work itself - (Doug: as an educational leader your customers are teachers, students, and their parents.)

o Passion - Enthusiasm for the work and fellowship in the workplace

o Pride in the organization, the job, and themselves

o Read chapter 11 to see how these elements play out in the fictional foundation of this book.

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Courage and Strength of Character

○ As a leader you will be tested by every group you work with. Get use to it. Courage is the main quality of leadership - courage to initiate something and the determination to keep it going. Challenges and tests will not only test your character, the are also going to shape it.

Cool Quotes

- The difference between courageous and cowardly is usually evident only long after the fact.

- Fear excludes and creates enemies; courage includes and creates friends.

- Fear is a reaction; courage is a decision.

- Someone with a job is never secure; someone with a calling is never unemployed.

- "Stay hungry and foolish, be willing to take risks, and settle for nothing less than being insanely great." Steve Jobs

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