He Says We Need a Revolution



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This week I've been engrossed in "Beyond Management: Taking Charge at Work," the new book by featured SUMMIT keynote speaker Mark Addleson. The author of "Beyond Management" offers a sobering perspective on the discipline of management. According to Professor Addleson, when performance falls short of expectations or lack of cooperation among employees leads to costly mistakes, many leaders instinctively turn to the structure, strategy and process, the building blocks of management systems. There is a tendency to focus on re-engineering the "structure" of the organization, honing strategy, and improving processes—how the work gets done. The author asserts that too often, systemic breakdowns are due to the *very structures and systems intended to make the organization manageable*. Examples of these impediments to great performance include the familiar departmental structure (silos), our relentless thirst for data, and constantly changing yet often convoluted chains of command.

Addleson urges his reader to abandon an old fashioned "outside view" of work focused on the "documentation, data, deliverables, directives, deadlines and dollars," and instead take an "inside view" in order to understand, support, empower and motivate today's *knowledge worker*.

According to Addleson, today's knowledge workers:

- Spend most of their work time organizing work
- Are asked to figure out problems and decide what to do about them
- Make meaning out of situations that often don't make much sense
- Design and create work through conversations
- Engage in dynamic (versus linear) processes that involve reflecting, exploring, inquiring, clarifying and resolving

Mark Addleson's thought-provoking examination of "management" as we know it is a must-read for any nonprofit leader who serves in a management role. If your schedule permits, I hope you'll join me at the 18th annual conference of the Nonprofit Risk Management Center this August 26-28 in Chicago. I am looking forward to hearing more about the role of knowledge workers in a modern workplace, how to change the way we lead and motivate, and why traditional management thinking isn't enough to support and sustain the ambitious, mission-focused nonprofits we serve. Mark Addleson says we need to revolutionize the way we manage people and organizations. If you're keen to learn why and how, register for the SUMMIT today.

Melanie Lockwood Herman is Executive Director of the Nonprofit Risk Management Center. She welcomes your

ideas about any risk management topic, feedback on this article and questions about the Center's resources at Melanie@nonprofitrisk.org or 703.777.3504. The Center provides risk management tools and resources at www.https://nonprofitrisk.org/ and offers consulting assistance to organizations unwilling to leave their missions to chance.