



## ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS IN THE DIGITAL FUTURE

BY WALLY BOCK



### *The Power of Pull*

By John Hagel, John Seely Brown, and Lang Davison

**A**merican inventor Charles Kettering said: “My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there.” He would have loved *The Power of Pull: How Small Moves, Smartly Made, Can Set Big Things in Motion* (Basic Books, 2010) by John Hagel III, John Seely Brown, and Lang Davison.

Most business books are a collection of recipes. They outline the ingredients to gather and how to fix them up to get a specific result. This is more like a book about the culinary trend of molecular gastronomy. According to Wikipedia, “Molecular gastronomy seeks to investigate and explain the chemical reasons behind the transformation of ingredients, as well as the social, artistic and technical

### TEAM TIP

Who are the people “on the edge” in your organization or industry—those who are experimenting with new approaches or pushing the envelope?

components of culinary and gastronomic phenomena in general.”

As you might guess, that means you will have to spend some time with this book in order to get value from it. If you are willing to put in the effort, this book will pay big dividends. You will have a picture of what forces have created what everyone seems to call “unprecedented change” over the last couple of decades. And you will gain insight into how the future will play out and what it means for you and your business.

Here are the book’s key insights:

The companies of the Industrial Age start by forecasting and planning. Then they design systems to push the right resources to the right place at the right time. They are hierarchically structured. They concentrate on controlling resources and achieving efficiency through economies of scale.

The companies of whatever we want to call the next age will be different. They will concentrate on attracting resources when needed and achieving maximum learning and adaptation. Instead of seeking efficient scaling of production, they will seek effective scaling of learning. According to the authors, “the success of institutions will depend on their ability to amplify the efforts of individuals so that small moves, smartly made, can become catalysts for broad impact.”

In the Introduction and first chap-

ter, the authors trace infrastructure shifts from the personal computer through social networks to show how they make many changes both possible and desirable and sometimes necessary or natural. The next three chapters describe the three most important aspects of pull.

“Access in an Unpredictable World” tells you how to find the right people and resources when you need them. In “Attracting What We Need,” ignore the jargon about “shaping serendipitous encounters” but pay attention to ways to attract people with talent, knowledge, and relationships from unexpected places. “Achieving Our Potential – The Highest Level of Pull” shares the promise that you will achieve your potential faster and more powerfully than ever by following your passion.

If you want to understand some of the changes of recent decades, this book will help. If you want an idea of some changes yet to come, this book has a framework you can use. If you want to exploit those changes for your own success, *The Power of Pull* will point you to useful tools and concepts. ■

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