

THE NEW CORPORATE PIONEERS

Not so long ago, it was all about going West. The Western world was leading economy and innovation. And then, Japan and Korea have been fairly active in the past decades to compete in most technological fields with the US and Europe. And now China and India as well!

Emerging countries have conquered a predominant position in manufacturing due to cheaper labour costs, but organizations almost everywhere in the world have not really changed. It's still about profit and management.

Some companies are looking in different directions to build self-managed organizations. With a proven success track-record.

A career transition period is an ideal moment to rethink the type of professional environment you want to join. Large Groups, small or medium size companies, consultancy, entrepreneurship...your choice can be a tricky one.

But you can also consider picking your next job on different criteria: job content, meaning and usefulness, team context, boss, resources, exposure...

And why not investigate those corporate pioneer companies who have simply broken the long established management codes by inventing innovative operating schemes? Companies willing to get away from top-down management, clusters and stock price imperialism.

Looks trendy from the outside, but there's much more to it! These companies are promoting the CO-Thing: co-working, co-development, collaboration. A new mind-set for the older generations, and nothing but natural to the Y-Gen and the Millennials.

In Freedom, Inc., Brian M. Carney describes organizations where people free to act in the best interests of their company get tremendous results. And most of the time, it's a reality built by bottom-line focused leaders.

In these companies, employees have commitments more than jobs and they reach quicker their own potential, because their leaders free up individual initiative and risk-taking instinct. They focus much more on well-being at work, than suffering (PSR or psychosocial risks) and encourage their employees to get involved in building up creative projects.

In Belgium, the HRVP of the local Social Security has renamed her job title and is now Happiness Director. Extravagant, don't you think? Probably not that much. The idea behind it is to promote positive energy among co-workers to increase performance within the organization. An organization which is no longer auto-centric, but customer oriented.

Pioneers as Ricardo Semler at Semco (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4vzhweOefs>) or Jean-François Zobrist at Favi (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_4DzvRn-Qg), but also Gore or Harley-Davidson have led the way, a new way. They're inspiring visionaries who have bet on human capital and creative energy of everyone to complete their company's shift.

It will probably take another 50 or 100 years to turn the actual organization format into self-managed enterprises, but it is definitely an in-motion process and the next generations will most certainly look at the 2015 company model as we look today at the first industrial revolution firms (mines, railway companies...).

It's good to know that "the times they are a changin".

Marc Saunder

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MARC SAUNDER

Author:
'THE NEW CORPORATE PIONEERS'

The January 2016 ACF Europe Newsletter will feature an article by Mark Richter (CEO at OTP Switzerland and Board Member of ACF Europe)

Christmas Message from the ACF Europe Board

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the end of the year it is often a time for reflection and celebration. As businesses we will have accomplished much for our clients businesses and the clients we deliver our services to. For many we will have transformed lives at a time where their career has come to an abrupt halt with their employer and they were struggling to find the best new path for them. Others will have been listened to deeply, probably for the first time in their career and given expert guidance. There is no doubt in my mind that the work we do makes a huge difference, I know we all meet people years later only to be regaled with stories of how it changed their thinking and made a lasting difference. As an industry we have much to be proud of.

This year the ACF has held another successful conference from which three proactive working groups emerged and have been meeting virtually on a regular basis to progress their tasks on our behalf. The groups are always welcoming new members so please do reach out to the group leaders if you would like to join them, willing hands to help make things go faster are ever welcome.

As we write this newsletter we are in the throes of planning the **2016 conference**, this year we are delighted to announce that this will be held in **Berlin**. The dates for this conference are Thursday evening dinner on the **21st of April 2016** with a full day conference **Friday 22nd April**. Please hold the date. We will be contacting everyone in January with conference theme and outline and location.

In the final weeks to the end of December we wish you are your businesses a happy and celebratory time and very much look forward to working together in 2016.

Warm regards

The Board of ACF Europe,
Cetti, Herbert, Mark, Henry, Marc and Bev