



A Manager's Guide to **Unleashing the Intrapreneur**

Debbie Wooldridge

ttcl Publishing (Oct 1, 2017)

Softcover \$14.95 (145pp)

978-0-9981075-1-6

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A Manager's Guide to Unleashing the Intrapreneur by Debbie Wooldridge makes a strong case for building an intrapreneurial corporate culture.

Corporate trainer Debbie Wooldridge is very familiar with the millennial mindset; her company has done extensive research on the audience demographic. This intriguing book encourages businesses to cater to millennial employees by providing opportunities that are akin to operating independently, except in a corporate environment.

The reasoning behind such an approach, writes Wooldridge, is that millennials have “an entrepreneurial spirit” yet a “high debt-to-income ratio” that makes them a poor risk when it comes to starting their own businesses. Still, they can flourish at companies that “drive change from within the organization using company funds and infrastructure to support the effort.”

As the title suggests, the book guides managers through the process of establishing an intrapreneurial company. Part I addresses corporate cultural aspects and demonstrates how to identify potential intrapreneurial employees. Part II focuses on “establishing engaging experiences” for intrapreneurs and includes worthwhile discussions of typical millennial aspirations, how to help employees achieve work-life balance, the value of mentoring, and the importance of innovation.

The book has two primary strengths. First, the author frequently inserts lists that make it easy to understand and put into practice the book's concepts. For example, included are twelve characteristics of an intrapreneurial company, five tips for creating an intrapreneurial culture, twelve ideas for helping employees achieve the goal of work-life balance, and ten tips for offering employees opportunities to progress in their career.

Second, the author utilizes excellent examples, all of which are extracted from interviews conducted with company managers as part of a podcast series. Links are included to the complete podcasts. Companies both large and small are featured, and each of the brief cases highlights a particular section of the book.

The mentoring program at financial firm Edward Jones, for instance, is “one of the linchpins of our culture,” according to Penny Pennington, principal in the company's client strategies group. She describes the ways in which mentoring works, both formally and informally, at Edward Jones.

The book includes a number of useful activities that managers can complete, typically by answering questions or filling in charts, such as “Measuring Your Appeal,” a chart that facilitates ranking a company's “ability to support the factors most valued by Millennials.” All of the material in Wooldridge's book is informative, instructional, and authoritative. It should provide managers with a solid sense of direction for intrapreneurial implementation based on the author's experience.

A Manager's Guide to Unleashing the Intrapreneur is concise yet packed with valuable information and original ideas. Wooldridge concludes that "championing intrapreneurship is without a doubt the best way to safeguard your organization against becoming irrelevant and to successfully innovate now and into the future." The author's passion is inspirational, and it should encourage business owners and senior executives to take action.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (October 24, 2017)

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