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Book Review

Open Talent

Authors: John Winser, Jin H. Paik
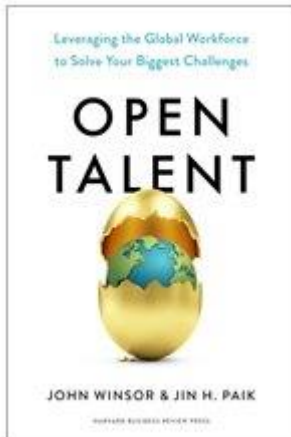
Reviewer:Christ Ward

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: **Open Talent: Leveraging the Global Workforce to Solve Your Biggest Challenges**[1]

Author: **John Winsor & Jin H. Paik**

Publisher: Harvard Business Review Press

List Price: $32.00   Format: Hardcover, 276 pages

Publication Date: 2024   ISBN: 9781647823887

Reviewer: **Christa Ward, PMP**

Review Date: January 2024

Introduction

Every facet of the traditional talent management process is in disruption. Business leaders need to fill skill gaps, improve employee retention, and increase engagement. Individuals are going beyond corporate walls to supplement their income, pursue passion projects, and explore new interests.

Overview of Book's Structure

In Open Talent, pioneers and co-authors John Winsor and Jin Paik present a playbook for this growing talent management strategy and discuss potential pitfalls, success measures, and key ecosystems. There are advantages to this approach for both enterprises and employees but two important concerns are culture and governance.

Highlights

Companies that have found success with open talent understand there is no one-size-fits-all approach. What is true across these organizations is a growth mindset and a comprehensive approach to governance. They optimize the skillsets of internal and external employees across the enterprise and protect these relationships with a central center of excellence (CoE) and digital open talent platforms. As decision-makers consider whether open talent is the right for their organization a sense of curiosity is key.

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Building an open talent strategy begins with a structured period of reflection. First, a sponsor, champion, or program manager should be named to oversee the work. The next step is an assessment of the company's environment. The authors write that reaching open talent's full potential "means a comprehensive shift in organizational culture toward encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing, as well as implementing robust operational changes that promote flexibility and responsiveness." Ultimately, they explain, "the goal for deploying open talent is to transform our hierarchical organizations into networks -- and then develop and deploy networked strategies." Here are some guiding questions the authors present to foster an environment that leads to a networked organization:

- Is the organization mindful of psychological safety?
- Does it foster emotional resilience?
- Does it recognize the need for flexibility?
- Is it open to learning?
- Is it digitally connected?
- Does it promote conviction, providing incentives to allies and ambassadors?

"The most effective networked organizations," they add, "balance the tension between humility and boldness to encourage the spirit of inquiry among leaders and teams." A successful open talent strategy is governed by accountability across teams within the company and its network of employees. Trust is a key component of this strategy. If the company decides to pursue it further, a more formal assessment is recommended and outlined in the book.

Highlights: What I liked!

The authors encourage a sense of curiosity throughout the book. Approaching the topic with an explorer's mindset and critical thinking will lay the foundation for innovation in this space.

Who might benefit from the Book?

The book should appeal to business leaders. Executives, staffing managers, functional managers, and project/program managers in large companies will find value as they think about how to be more innovative in this space. Small/medium businesses owners and entrepreneurs can glean insights to apply as the dynamics of their businesses change over time. And individuals interested in new ways to partner with businesses will find value in understanding how to increase their visibility, leverage their native skills, and improve access to training opportunities.

Conclusion

Open Talent offers business leaders a flexible framework for solving the staffing challenges of the digital economy at scale. It also presents suggestions for employees and individuals interested in exploring passion projects or new interests. As the world of work evolves and more digital tools and solutions are developed, open talent is a

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strategy that can increase engagement, improve efficiencies, and foster greater innovation.

For more about this book, go to: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/product/10567-PDF-ENG?Ntt=open%20talent

About the Reviewer

Christa Ward

Dallas, Texas, USA

Christa Ward is a Lead Project/Program Manager and accomplished leader in the technology industry. With a strong background in project management and communications, she has successfully launched startups and led transformation programs. Known for her innovative approach to increasing operational efficiency, Christa recently spearheaded a broad change initiative that resulted in significant cost savings for her organization. She holds an MBA from Texas A&M University-Commerce and is certified as a PMP and 6σ Green Belt. Christa has received awards for driving change through values-based practices.

She enjoys reading memoir and journaling.

Connect with Christa at linkedin.com/in/christaw.

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the PM World Journal and the PMI Dallas Chapter. Authors and publishers provide books to the PM World Journal Editor; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter where they are offered free to PMI members who agree to provide a review within 45 days; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. Reviewers can normally claim PDU's for PMP recertification upon publication of their book reviews.

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