

## The Economic “Mess” and Where Do We Go From Here? A Call For A Return To Effective Management

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Are you asking yourself, “How did we (they or I) get here? Using the same level of thinking we used when the world was a very different place. The solution will require a change of mindset and a different approach to solutions. Einstein said that we cannot solve problems using the same level of thinking we used to get into them.

Consider the fact that an agriculture based-economy dominated the World during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the family farm in America, operated by classic entrepreneurs, gave way to the corporate world. People moved to the cities to work in manufacturing plants as World move into the Industrial Age. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the manufacturing-based economy gave way to the Information Age John Naisbitt wrote about in *Megatrends*, a best selling book back in the ‘80s.

The information age produced software engineers, technicians of all types and a variety of professional advisors such as lawyers, accountants, financial planners and others who dispense information. An information explosion made it impossible to keep up and we turned to gurus for guidance to interpret what was relevant to our situation. The late, great, management expert, Peter Drucker coined the term, “Knowledge Worker” in his 1966 best-selling book, *The Effective Executive*. He predicted the shift to a class of people paid for doing jobs that implemented what they learned in school instead of what they could do with their hands. These workers are characterized by an ability to acquire and apply theoretical and analytical knowledge.

According to Daniel Pink, author of the book *A Whole New Mind*, the world is moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age. We will continue to need computer programmers to write code, lawyers to draft legal documents and MBAs to analyze numbers. However, we can no longer rely on logic-based, linear thinking to solve the problems and make decisions in an increasingly complex world. Aside from the political factors, the failure to shift management style and thinking created the mess the world is in today A different management skill set is required to be effective in the new economy!

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What do we do about it? First, consider a key point about Drucker’s Knowledge Worker, a type of worker he said we will not know how to manage. Consider the comment of a recent MBA graduate with over a decade of management experience who is striving for workplace excellence said she still didn’t know the secret to being a good manager. However, she acknowledges it was her organizational behavior classes that most piqued her interest. After spending most of her career dealing with people as a manager, she recognized that organizational behavior deals more with how managers and employees interact.

Part of the current economic condition is the result of a generation of mis-managed workers. We are overdue for a change in developing and utilizing talented employees. This change must begin by optimizing management effectiveness. How we manage must change to create a sustainable recovery from “the mess.”

Old dogs must begin to learn new tricks! Some of these new tricks include mastery of personal skills. Once considered soft skills, they are now essential skills. Naisbitt said we would need high touch to go with the high tech skills of the Information Age. Pink says we need high concept plus high touch to be effective in the Conceptual Age. I recommend five steps for optimizing effectiveness, which I call the Effectiveness TEAM™ Approach, for all with managers.

T= Talent that has be identified and matched to the requirements of the job.

E= Engagement and Empowerment.

A= Alignment and Attitude.

M= Mastery of Essential Skills.

Finally, there must be an emphasis on a total Team Approach to assure optimal levels of creativity, collaboration and innovation that will provide breakthrough thinking required to sustain a competitive advantage.

Contact Bob for a complimentary consultation to discover how the Effectiveness TEAM™ approach to optimizing management effectiveness could apply to your business.

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