

THE
OPEN

ORGANIZATION

IGNITING PASSION AND PERFORMANCE

JIM WHITEHURST
CEO, RED HAT


WITH A FOREWORD BY GARY HAMEL

HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW PRESS


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Jim Whitehurst

THE OPEN


GIFT OF THE ASIA FOUNDATION
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CONTENTS

Foreword ix

1. Why Opening Up Your Organization Matters 1

PART ONE

WHY

Motivating and Inspiring

2. Igniting Passion 25

3. Building Engagement 53

PART TWO

HOW

Getting Things Done

4. Choosing Meritocracy, Not Democracy 85

5. Letting the Sparks Fly 109

CONTENTS

PART THREE

WHAT

Setting Direction

6. Making Inclusive Decisions	135
7. Catalyzing Direction	163
Epilogue: It's a Journey	183
<i>Appendix</i>	195
<i>Notes</i>	203
<i>Bibliography</i>	209
<i>Index</i>	211
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	221
<i>About the Author</i>	225

FOREWORD

Here's a conundrum. The human capabilities that are most critical to success—the ones that can help your organization become more resilient, more creative, and more, well, awesome—are precisely the ones that can't be “managed.” While you can compel financially dependent employees to be obedient and diligent, and can recruit the most intellectually capable, you can't command initiative, creativity, or passion. These human capabilities are, quite literally, gifts. Every day employees choose whether to bring them to work or leave them at home. Suppliers and customers make similar decisions—to engage with your enterprise in a spirit of true collaboration or apply their energies elsewhere. As a leader, how do you create an environment that inspires people to volunteer those “gifts”?

Nearly fifty years ago, Warren Bennis, the much-missed leadership guru, predicted that we'd soon be working in “organic-adaptive structures,” organizations that feel like communities, not hierarchies. In a community, the basis for loyalty is a common purpose, not economic dependency. Control comes from shared norms and aspirations, not from policies and bosses. Rewards are mostly intrinsic rather than extrinsic. Contributions aren't predetermined and individuals are free to contribute as they may. Examples are as diverse as a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous or a team erecting a house for Habitat for Humanity.