



When I was a young woman, I taught summer theatre classes to a group of kids that participated in a summer repertory theatre. I had no children of my own at the time, and after a few days of *total mayhem* stumbled upon a way to get everyone to participate. I found that the best way to get this room full of 5-12 year olds to cooperate with me was through **creative choice**.

What do I mean by that? The program had a curriculum, and my fellow teacher and I would give the young actors choices within the assigned structure. For instance, if the day was to focus on improving improvisational skills – we would focus on improv, but allow them to choose the order of the games. If we had time at the end of a class, we would allow them to come up with their own game to hone their skills. We would even let them work independently for a given amount of time, and then present their work. I found when my students felt as if they had a certain amount of autonomous control over their assignments and projects, they were, cooperative, creative, and open to new ideas. In a word, they were **engaged**.

This is why a light bulb turned on when I read Daniel Pink's newest book, *Drive*. Daniel Pink has again shown us why **right-brainers will rule the future**, and why those companies that learn to work with creative mindsets rather than exert absolute control over creative workers will rule the corporate world.

Mr. Pink opens the book with a scientific study that looks at the basic human drives:

- Biological: This is about survival – food, shelter, water, etc.
- External: This includes reward and punishment – where managers and parents keep their focus.
- Intrinsic: This is the intrinsic satisfaction derived from completing a task.

Although this third drive probably isn't news to you, it apparently has been hotly debated in the business management and psychological community. It is this third drive that Pink sees being ignored by managers and organizations today. And it is this third drive, that he says will dictate how companies work in the future. Pink says that this intrinsic motivation is as basic and as strong as the other two drives, and I agree.

The book has a myriad of examples of this particular drive. Study after study proves that this drive, which has been largely ignored by the corporate world, responds **internationally** to stimuli of autonomy. Jeff Gunther, a thirty-something CEO, entrepreneur, capitalist of several ventures turned his company *Meddius*, into a ROWE (Results Only Work Environment). This means that his employees have a certain amount of autonomy. Their work is based on **results**, and they can achieve those results when, where, and how they please. Of course, they have to produce results on time – but they don't have to do it with a manager hanging over their shoulder. Production has gone up. Not only that – their goals are not tied to compensation. Radical. He says that the freedom they have is worth more than any kind of bonus. His employees' family members agree.

Pink's point is that the old style of management is broken in this rapidly changing economy. With low-skilled work being shipped overseas and replaced by software – the new worker is an intellectual worker. A creative worker. A worker that needs the space to innovate. The new model is self-direction. *Meddius* is a perfect example. They are in software development. They can now focus on the projects at hand rather than struggling to get to and from the office and still make a child's softball game or soccer practice. Not only that, but when this model is implemented, it has a tendency to create loyalty. Workers are less likely to leave (even for a higher salary), and turnover can be reduced.

The corporate world is changing, and more and more people are doing creative work that requires the room to do it. Old management styles do not work for this kind of laborer, and, can affect their creativity, as well as their production levels. The old "eye-for-an-eye" management method is quickly becoming obsolete as companies learn to bring out the best in their creative workers.

Of course there will be a few bad eggs that try to take advantage of this new management style – and that is fine. Get rid of them. You can't expect a utopia of creative and productive autonomy to crop up overnight! Change is hard – but corporations should begin to discover how they can speak to this third drive, this intrinsic motivation – before their competitors do. The future of your organization and your workers may depend on it.

"You do not lead by hitting people over the head – that's assault, not leadership." ~Dwight D. Eisenhower

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