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FOREWARD

by Larry Broughton

If your goal is to build a high functioning organization that redefines success for you and your team, you have the right book in your hands. History is replete with stories, from boardrooms to battlefields, of smaller organizations out-maneuvering and out-performing their larger, better-funded adversary. How is this possible? The common denominator is found in the organization's team culture and the unparalleled loyalty of its members.

When I met Dianne Crampton in Los Angeles last year, I was immediately intrigued as she shared with me the premise of this book. I'd been blessed to serve on elite teams while in the military, and had significant leadership roles in business, so I thought I had a pretty good understanding of the importance of this topic. I admit, however, I was skeptical. I had read plenty of books promising to unlock the secrets to organizational success, only to find them to be overly academic, sophomoric, or simply too *airy-fairy*. Not so in this case. I am so glad I read this book! And you will be too.

TIGERS Among Us is unique. Dianne Crampton not only shares her perspective on the common traits of four diverse, exceptional organizations that have distinct, team-oriented corporate cultures, but she taps into twenty-plus years of research and application helping hundreds of organizations build fiercely loyal teams, while improving productivity and profits. Her tips, inventories, and exercises throughout

this book will serve as a blueprint for those who strive to build top performing teams in any industry or field.

I've been blessed to have the opportunity to interview and speak with hundreds of top business and thought leaders about their journey to success. Those who have experienced *enduring* success cite many of the same values and behaviors Crampton highlights as key attributes to their organizations' achievements. By reading this book, you'll shorten your learning curve and avoid the landmines most leaders experience through trial and error.

Oliver Wendell Holmes famously touted "I'd give my right arm for the simplicity on the other side of complexity." Well, Crampton offers clarity and has provided a plan that demystifies the elusive ingredients of winning team cultures—those ingredients that, until now, have prevented many good people from creating great organizations.

A word of caution: organizations that embrace the values of trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk and success, and encourage the same among its team members, often experience growth beyond their wildest expectations. Apply what you learn here, and prepare your team as they head to the launching pad.

Enjoy the journey. Here's to your success.

Larry Broughton

Author, *Leadership Lessons From A Former Green Beret*

Founder & CEO, Broughton Hospitality

Founder, www.LarryBroughton.net

Larry Broughton is a former US Army Green Beret, having served on Special Forces A-Teams for nearly 8 years. He is Founder & CEO of Broughton Hospitality, based in Newport Beach, California, and has been awarded Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year®, and the National Veteran Owned Business Association's (NaVOBA) Vetrepreneur® of the Year. He is an author and highly requested keynote speaker on the topics of leadership and team building, and is Founder of www.LarryBroughton.net.



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to TIGERS Among Us.

Imagine a business in which every employee cares as much about the organization's quality of effort and success as the owners and leaders do. It would be a workplace in which the desire to make a difference was present. Yet, this desire, inherent in the human spirit, is rarely tapped by traditional command and control work cultures that have dominated the business landscape since the industrial revolution.

This book discusses a viable alternative to the command and control model. It advocates an authentic team culture that effectively harnesses in the workplace the individual and collective desire—the spirit—to achieve remarkable results.

At TIGERS Success Series, our work is aimed at building highly effective, motivated and successful team cultures. We achieve success by working with six collaborative principles—collaborative values—and identifying behaviors that support these values.

Trust
Interdependence
Genuineness
Empathy
Risk
Success

TIGERS

Clearly, there are behaviors that build strong teams and behaviors that tear them down.

Using the TIGERS approach, team-oriented businesses are able to quickly and effectively identify such behaviors—both the good and the bad—and make appropriate changes to enhance the workplace environment. The TIGERS approach allows businesses to *measure* the level of the TIGERS collaborative values present in the workplace, and measure how effectively those values interact and support one another. TIGERS assists leaders in identifying how team members treat one another, and assists in creating or improving an authentic team culture, which leads to motivated, inspired teams hitting their targets and beyond.

Chapter 1 explains the results of my quest years ago to discover the key characteristics that distinguish a group of people—maybe called a team—from a highly functioning group of people operating in an authentic team culture. I explain the founding of the TIGERS team culture assessment tools and why the TIGERS values are so critical to maintaining the health and vitality of a team.

Chapter 2 discusses each of the six TIGERS values in detail. It includes a list of behaviors that reinforce each value and behaviors that will predictably disrupt team dynamics. These disruptions adversely affect team morale, employee commitment and creativity. They create

conflict and misunderstandings that ultimately damage the company's bottom line.

But this book is far more than just a description of TIGERS and the theories behind its founding and success. I want to show the reader what an authentic team culture actually looks like in the workplace—not just words but deeds—and show how trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk, and success are part of the glue that holds together a true team culture. So I searched out companies, large and small, that operate under authentic team cultures.

Chapters 3 through 6, therefore, profile four very successful businesses with on-the-ground team cultures. These companies range in size from the smallest, with 10 employees and about \$1 million in annual revenues, to the largest, with 1,300 employees with hundreds of millions in revenue. The companies are Zappos.com, Dos Gringos, 4Refuel and Tribe, Inc.

The company profiles demonstrate how TIGERS' six collaborative values function in these four unique businesses that operate under true team concepts.

Chapter 7 discusses workplace culture and a concept called Culture Split. Culture Split occurs when business owners don't commit to either an Individualistic culture or a Collaborative and Team-Centered culture, but instead attempt to blend supporting behaviors in a way that creates unpredictable and inconsistent practices.

For example, to assess Culture Split TIGERS recently conducted a survey of 250 management-level employees in companies that use teams at one or more levels of operation. The survey results produced evidence that these managers had lost touch with their company's values or were uncertain what the values were. They indicated an inconsistency between business practices and team expectations. Most of the respondents indicated that they were employed by a business operating under a hierarchal, individualistic culture.

In chapter 8, I leave you with some conclusions and ideas on how to use this book for your own team development purposes.

The appendix section in the back of the book includes several tools for your use. The culture and values assessment and a series of exercises are designed to stimulate your thinking and team discussion about how your company can achieve higher levels of productivity with committed employees.

TIGERS Among Us provides a foundation for assessing your own team culture. It does not offer a cookie-cutter approach to team building, but instead honors your unique team dynamic and chosen values.

The wisdom of how to improve your team culture comes most directly from you and your team members. I firmly believe that by nurturing the growth of trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk, and success within your team, you will harness employees' desire to make a difference, and to be productive, happy, and successful. Your business will reap rewards.

Dianne Crampton
January, 2010
Bend, Oregon



FINDING TIGERS

Why work culture should be a conscious choice.

Most of us know about businesses that struggle to keep a team together. They are beset with unmotivated employees or experience high turnover. Too often, the best employees, seeking a more satisfying work environment, look for a way out not long after being hired.

Then there are businesses led by managers who consider “team” to be more than just a word. Embracing a collaborative culture, these enterprises attract and retain committed, satisfied employees.

Every business, of course, is a team of some sort. But what is the secret sauce that attracts inspired and happy employees dedicated to a company’s success and growth?

Over twenty years ago, I wanted to know what made a good group of people truly great. I defined “great” as a group that is ethical, quality-focused, productive and successful.

I also qualified the meaning of “success” because it needed to be more than just about making money. To be successful, group members

needed to consistently accomplish the goals they set for themselves. In doing so, group members, under my definition of success, needed to be content, challenged, and committed to the group's ongoing success.

When I launched my investigation in 1987 into why some groups—specifically businesses—work and others don't, I researched business, education, and psychology group dynamics literature. I expected these studies to lead me to management practices, technical skills or motivational techniques that would provide the answer to my question.

Instead, and much to my surprise, what emerged were six universal themes, or values, that create successful collaborative relationships among people:

Trust
Interdependence
Genuineness
Empathy
Risk
Success

TIGERS

When these values are present, any group of two or more people who come together to achieve a goal can successfully cooperate and collaborate with one another. The presence of these values can also benefit institutions outside the business arena, such as marriage, family, a team of kids engaged in cooperative classroom learning, a site-based school council, a city council, or a community.

Once these themes emerged in my research, it was important to determine whether each of the six values was measurable. This became a four-year challenge during a time when I was a single parent with a young daughter. Fortunately, I was teaching on contract at local col-

leges in the Spokane, Washington area while data for this study was collected.

My data collection included the development of a survey with questions aimed at determining whether the six values could be measured. I pulled together 27 groups that included Boeing personnel, community teams, welfare-to-work programs, and site-based school councils to help me further investigate the findings and refine my conclusions.

Subsequently, Gonzaga University and the Washington State Education Association independently evaluated the data from two validation studies. In both evaluations, the six TIGERS values were proven to be reliable indicators of a group's behavior. And the values, by their inclusion or omission, were predictors of relationship strengths or weaknesses within a group.

Since then, I have used the TIGERS values to aid in measuring team behavior and building strong teams. Sometimes it was during the tumultuous wake of mergers and acquisitions. Other times it was helping community non-profits be more effective, or simply assisting an already strong team culture in getting a little bit better. The result is that over the years I have refined TIGERS applications.

Through these real-world, on-the-ground applications, I learned that the six TIGERS values can be used as tools to screen new employees. They can be applied when coaching leaders in achieving personal and professional growth. The values can be incorporated into performance reviews and used as a basis for dismissing or reprimanding employees who are not in alignment because of untrustworthy, change-resistant behavior that causes excessive conflict in the workplace.

That these values—trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk and success—can be measured presents a solid alternative to simply speculating, or guessing, what type of training and development a team might need to improve relationships and group performance. I have found that, in fact, guessing was the decision process most often

used to select soft-skill training designed to team-build. And guessing is much like a duck hunter sitting in a field, loading a shotgun, pointing it in the air, shooting, and hoping to hit a duck.

Leaders did not have a way to readily measure whether people were candid and truthful with one another. It was hard to assess how relationship issues impacted the bottom line.

Managers relied more on technical training, figuring people with new or improved skills would automatically become more productive. And, when trouble broke out between people, usually the person with seniority or the one more favored by upper management was able to push out of the organization, or make miserable, rivals who were “insubordinate” or “difficult.”

As a result, team-building training was often off target and failed to result in team improvement. True behaviors affecting the relationship were often carefully concealed by some team members because they didn’t want to cause trouble or create larger problems for themselves.

Therefore, what was supposed to be a fun training day away from work for team members often failed to provide a good return on investment for the business owner. The true relationship challenges facing the team were often carefully concealed by people who were fearful of future repercussions.

My four years spent in researching and validating the TIGERS values resulted in providing leaders a reliable way to track the team development process. It also provided a way to measure the return on investment in team training and team building.

PREDICTING TEAM BEHAVIOR

The six collaborative values are reliable predictors of team behavior, either by their inclusion or omission. When present they create a sense of coher-

ency that ripples through the organization not unlike a pebble dropping into a still pond. They connect team members to the company's stated mission, goals and values, allowing teams to achieve with less conflict, more fun, greater productivity, stronger commitment, and more creativity.



The TIGERS values lie at the point of maximum team impact and reinforce your organization's existing values, mission, and goals.

WHAT DOES TIGERS MEAN TO WORK CULTURE?

The six values—trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk and success—support collaboration and a cooperative way of working. By contrast, the command and control hierarchical culture supports centralized, top-down decision making and an internal competition-based group dynamic.

Collaborative and competitive group dynamics are the two main categories of work culture. They are the Collaborative or Team-based Culture and the Individualist Culture. Although business and social psychologists have described many additional subsets of these two categories, the Collaborative or Team-based Culture and Individualist Culture are two distinctly different group personalities.

The following charts identify the differences between Individualistic and Collaborative cultures in polarized terms.

**Comparison of Leadership Focus in
Individualistic and Collaborative Group-Centered Cultures**

LEADERSHIP FOCUS Individualist Culture	LEADERSHIP FOCUS Collaborative Group-Centered Culture
Leadership is earned by being more skilled than others. Advancement is a competitive process.	Leadership is expected of everyone. Advancement comes from knowledge, achievement and peer recommendations.
Power is held by a few.	Power is held by many.
Goals are achieved through others.	Goals are achieved with others.
Success is achieved through management direction and employee compliance.	Success is achieved through team achievement and employee empowerment.
Strong individual personalities influence the culture.	The culture is value-centered with transparent norms, processes and procedures that apply to everyone.
Leaders hold power and autonomy in their positions resulting in power over others.	Servant Leaders hold power in direct proportion to the number of people they serve.
Organizational input is controlled by a few.	Organizational input is controlled by many.

Comparison of Advancement and Learning Opportunities in Individualistic and Collaborative Group-Centered Cultures

ADVANCEMENT AND LEARNING Individualist Culture	ADVANCEMENT AND LEARNING Collaborative Group-Centered Culture
Individuals are vertically skilled and compete with their skills for promotion.	Individuals are horizontally and vertically skilled and hold cross-functional skill value.
Upward promotion is based on linear individual achievement.	Upward promotion is based on team skills, horizontal learning tracts and endorsement from team members.
Competition for advancement is based on individual achievement.	Advancement is based on team achievement, relational skills, team skills and the respect one achieves from the team.
Training benefits upward promotion.	Training benefits cross-functional achievement and upward promotion.
Opportunity for achievement is directed by others.	Opportunity for achievement is self-directed.
Freedom and authority increase through promotion.	Freedom and authority are collective and benefit group achievement.
A pool of employees with limited job scope and little opportunity for upward mobility is required.	All employees may advance horizontally through cross-functional team roles, and vertically based on their learning tracts, work and team skills.
Feedback is directive.	Feedback is facilitative.
Key positions are filled from outside the organization.	Key positions are filled from within the organization.
The environment promotes work skill development.	The environment promotes personal, interpersonal and work skill development.

Comparison of Compensation in Individualistic and Collaborative Group-Centered Cultures

COMPENSATION Individualist Culture	COMPENSATION Collaborative Group-Centered Culture
Large differences in pay scale mark upward advancement.	Smaller differences in pay scale mark upward achievement.
Pay for knowledge is resisted.	Pay for knowledge is encouraged.
Large difference in pay ratio between senior management and entry level employees.	Smaller difference in pay ratio between senior management and entry level employees.
Bonuses restricted to leadership team.	Bonuses earned by everyone based on profit or gain sharing formulas.

THE CULTURE CHOICE

Consciously choosing a business personality, or way of being, is one of the most important decisions a business founder or leader can make, and small business owners and entrepreneurs creating new companies often overlook it. It is also often neglected in business mergers and acquisitions or in any planning scenario focused on short-term returns rather than long-term results.

Culture is a critical part of the strategic planning process. It helps an organization determine, through core value demonstrations, what it will be like to work in the business and to do business with it. For some venture capitalists, it is becoming an increasingly important vehicle in determining the ultimate scalability of a company for future sale (i.e. the potential for the business or an aspect of the business to continue to function effectively as its size increases).

Indicators of Competition and Team Work in Individualistic and Collaborative Group-Centered Cultures

COMPETITION AND TEAM WORK Individualist Culture	COMPETITION AND TEAM WORK Collaborative Group-Centered Culture
Emotional connection to work is subordinate to following direction.	Team members have an emotional connection to work and will often take on additional tasks to help the organization succeed.
Internal competition is directed toward resources, position and power.	Internal competition is directed toward work processes and procedures that contribute to improved quality and cost savings.
Competition benefits the most successful individual or department.	Competition benefits everyone who meets or exceeds expectations.
External competition is for market share.	External competition is for market superiority.
Working with others benefits self-promotion.	Working with others is how work is done.
High commitment exists for following directions and doing a job correctly.	High commitment exists for contributing to the organization's success on multiple levels.

An ever-increasing number of entrepreneurs and business owners understand that strategic planning should include determining, in a very clear and pragmatic way, what a company personality should be so they can hire people who are in alignment with that culture.

Conscious choice of a preferred culture sets the stage for aligning the values of employees with the values of the company. It governs what characteristics to look for in new employee candidates. It establishes

**Problem-solving and General Indicators in
Individualistic and Collaborative Group-Centered Cultures**

PROBLEM-SOLVING AND OTHER INDICATORS Individualist Culture	PROBLEM-SOLVING AND OTHER INDICATORS Collaborative Group-Centered Culture
Problem-solving is achieved by management direction.	Problem-solving is achieved through team direction.
Management directs employees.	Management facilitates employees.
An element of secrecy exists in the workplace.	Transparency exists in the workplace.
The culture benefits work.	The culture benefits work and relationships.

how employees are treated, rewarded, trained and promoted. It determines how problems are solved, how decisions are made, and ultimately how employees treat the company.

If a businesses owner deliberately chooses and executes the culture, and never veers from that choice when challenges arise, the chance of building a company that prospers with committed and loyal employees greatly improves. Without a deliberate choice, culture often develops by default.

The cultures of smaller companies, for example, are often determined by a leader's value system. Or as the company grows and as new leaders with strong personalities are hired for key positions, the culture might shift and wander.

If there is not a clear-cut cultural definition of the company's personality, it risks drifting along based on persuasive leadership person-

alities chosen more on résumé merit than values alignment. The result can be “a way of being” that resembles a person with a multiple personality disorder. This creates inconsistencies that confuse employees. It makes them question whether it is safe to express their own unique talents and insights. They ultimately question what the company stands for.

These inconsistencies also create problems for employees by forcing them to negotiate political landmines and put too much effort into protecting turf. It causes conflict and distrust that saps creativity and commitment from employees, which translates into lowered productivity. It results in a host of untrustworthy, competitive, non-genuine, judgmental, fearful, success-sabotaging behaviors that undermine a cooperative effort and profits. The company eventually experiences high turnover and finds it difficult to attract and retain talented employees.

When leaders deliberately choose their company’s cultural personality, they are able to confidently select the behaviors they desire in prospective employees. Most collaborative and team-based CEOs affirm that if you put attention into hiring right the first time, the inconvenience of hiring the wrong people tends to diminish. And team-based companies that hire right the first time usually offer employees upward career paths supported by meaningful mentoring, training and leadership development. They are able to harness their human resources rather than being drained by conflict or high turnover.

Consciously choosing the appropriate culture helps business owners and CEOs turn the largest business expense on the company balance sheet, human resources, into an asset. They do this by unleashing their true human resource potential to better solve problems, create more innovation, and improve customer service, which points them on the path of seizing market superiority.

Further, when employees experience high levels of collaboration often fewer employees are required. This results in cost savings that can be shifted to refine systems and to fund long-range planning.

In the next chapter, I explain the meaning of each of the TIGERS values in depth. I also identify behaviors that support the values and behaviors that ultimately tear good teams down.

TEAM CULTURE TIPS

For teams of any size—from two people to hundreds

- ◎ Consciously choose a collaborative or team business personality or culture. Everything flows from this decision, from strategic planning to hiring.
- ◎ When hiring, look for TIGERS values in your employee candidates. The TIGERS values reinforce your organization's values, mission and goals, and help you identify the people who will be the best fit for your company.
- ◎ Recognize the TIGERS values that are demonstrated by your current employees. The values, by their inclusion or omission, will predict the relationship strengths or weaknesses of your organization.
- ◎ To promote collaboration and cooperation in the workplace, do not encourage internal competition between departments and employees.

- © If you plan to grow your company, a team culture is more scalable than an individualistic culture.

- © To get a great team discussion going, you can download a free TIGERS MP3 CD that discusses the six TIGERS collaborative values and also includes the team coaching exhibits included in the Appendix at www.TIGERSAmongUs.com.