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New Thought Leadership on Building Enterprises for Meaningful Contribution

Sharing resources on dialogic organization development, inside out social innovation and reinventing organizations

Three resources released in 2014 offer insight on building enterprises that contribute to society in a way that is meaningful to all stakeholders, including the enterprise. Though not necessarily geared to social enterprises, the thought leadership offered in these publications certainly applies to them as well. Each resource includes tangible take-aways.

1. Dialogic Organization Development

In order to make a meaningful contribution through an organization, people must make personal, voluntary commitments to new behaviours and projects. That's essentially the premise of this article by Gervase Bushe and Robert J. Marshak.

The article includes both the theory behind this premise as well as practices that enable this to happen.

A nugget quote from the article: "Change results from 'changing the conversations' that shape everyday thinking and behaviour through involving more and different voices, altering how and which people talk to each other, and/or by stimulating alternative or generative images, to shape how people think about things."

Click here to read the full document.

2. Social Innovation from the Inside Out

For this article, Warren Nilsson and Tana Paddock researched truly catalytic organizations and what differentiates them. The authors identified one apparently simple practice across the board: These organizations pay a great deal of attention to the inner experiences of the people who work in them.

The article details how this focus on people's inner experiences drives social innovation. It also includes a sampling of practices that can help in surfacing these inner experiences.

A nugget quote: "Inscaping (the authors' term for surfacing a person's inner experiences) … helps (people in an organization) to become more fluid in their work and more responsive to their context. And it challenges them to never stop asking how they can best realize their purpose in this place, with these people, on this day."

Click here to read the full document.

3. Reinventing Organizations

Based on three years of research, Frederic Laloux's new book, Reinventing Organizations, proposes that the shape of organizations is continually evolving and it's time for a new model – one that takes into account the growing awareness that "the ultimate goal in life is not to be successful or loved, but to become the truest expression of ourselves … and to be of service to humanity and our world … [to see life] as a journey of personal and collective unfolding towards our true nature."

The author outlines hallmarks of this new model as well as provides case studies of existing organizations that already fit this mold in some form.

Nugget quote: "An increasing number of us yearn to create soulful organizations, if only we knew how. Many of us don't need convincing that new types of companies, schools, and hospitals are called for. What we need is faith that it can be done and answers to some very concrete questions."

Click here for the Reinventing Organizations website, which includes an option to download an e-book and "pay what feels right."

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