



The No Limits Workplace
Aligning Work with the Human Spirit
Yielding Enduring Prosperity and Individual Reward

SUMMARY OF THE SIX TENETS AND HR SECTION

The following provides a one-paragraph summary of each of the six No Limits Workplace tenets and the accompanying HR Section.

Tenet 1 - The “Three C’s”, three trends that are shaping our socio-economic environment

Regardless of industry, we’re truly in the knowledge and idea economy and there are three trends (The Three C’s) that are both fueling it and being fueled by it. The three are steadily increasing complexity, change, and competition. Whether noticed or not, these trends are having such profound effects on companies that it’s accurate to say that they’re re-defining the terms for success and failure in business today. The systematic implications of increasing complexity, change, and competition are often going undefined by companies yet the daily effects are very significant for all levels of the organization causing increased operational chaos, various forms of waste, turmoil, and employee dissatisfaction. Tenet 1 connects the trends with the implications and resulting problems and offers general solutions that can position any company to take advantage of the historically unique and very dynamic environment being created by these trends. The other tenets then provide specific know-how and actions to successfully implement these solutions.

Tenet 2 - The real drivers of sustained high performance and employee engagement

Organizations have always operated from a weak understanding of human nature and have therefore failed to maximize potential to a great degree. This has long been an acceptable weakness shared by most employers. But going forward, this is an area that offers huge opportunities for companies to differentiate themselves through increased understanding of human nature and the implementation of workplace practices that align with people’s higher nature. Tenet 2 takes a stepwise approach, explaining why meaning is the source of sustained high performance and how in making work meaningful, companies and employees develop a powerful shared purpose that translates into high level enduring success. This knowledge of human nature and the ability to effectively align work with what’s best in people is becoming an important factor and perhaps the most important factor in determining success in the knowledge and idea economy.

Tenet 3 - Value of work thinking

Value of work thinking is a highly optimistic but completely practical and grounded operational view of what creates wealth and prosperity and therefore enhances the bottom line. VWT provides business leaders with the logic and perspective to move beyond the limited resource thinking so common among managers today that helps institutionalize mediocrity. Limited resource thinking works from a “how do we slice the limited pie” approach whereas VWT works from a “how do we expand the pie” approach. Among other things, it’s far more attuned to what is best in people. Tenet 3 explains how raising the value of a unit of work increases productivity. It points out that a focus on increasing the value of work both requires and promotes creativity, enthusiasm, learning, discipline, camaraderie and other positive performance characteristics. Value of work thinking defines entrepreneurship and is easily understood and adopted by all employees when communicated within the context of other No Limits Workplace ideas and practices. Additionally, it’s brutally revealing in identifying waste and underperformance while at



the same time promotes common objectives and provides a systematic / no blame perspective that encourages frank and honest discussions about work.

Tenet 4 - Effective use of continuous improvement (CI) tools, techniques, and methods

The three trends mentioned in Tenet 1 are creating an environment where the ability to improve one's work is becoming as important as doing the job. This is a very significant change in how work should work. Today, every employee needs to be equipped with the tools and resources to improve both their individual work and the processes and supply chains of which they're a part. For the best companies, improvement is built into the job expectation. Companies taking that approach are winning and will continue to win because they're matching the demands of the reality around them. These improvements may be swift responses to changes that affect them (customer requirements, equipment, technology, suppliers, knowledge requirements, work instructions, people, etc.) or ideas for improvements in any aspect of work. By training people on basic CI tools and techniques (process mapping, brainstorming, problem solving, standard work, etc.) and positioning them to use these tools and continually get better at using them, companies can leverage massive amounts of potential. The output is a company that's more responsive, adaptable, innovative, smarter and at the same time engaging and energizing employees around higher value work.

Tenet 5 - Decentralizing org' structures to maximize potential

Traditional top-down centralized org' structures continue to be the standard and have much influence on how businesses large and small are managed and operate. Yet these structures and their accompanying practices and assumptions about how work should work are a product of a different era with very different demands. Today's complex, fast-changing and competitive business environment requires a nearly opposite approach. What's working are org' structures, practices, etc. that promote responsiveness, innovation, continuous learning, and engagement of employees in numerous aspects of business traditionally thought to be best done by management only. Tenet 5 makes it clear that top-down centralized entities can't, by their nature align with and promote what's best in people. It goes on to identify the types of structures and practices that do.

Tenet 6 - Investment-First Leadership

The No Limits Workplace is a leadership initiative. Tenet 6 starts with a brief but powerful definition that makes distinctly clear what the act of leadership is. The article then offers numerous insights about how to lead and the attributes and knowledge that supports one's ability to do so. Tenet 6 looks at each of the other five tenets from a leadership perspective and in doing so provides much of what amounts to a leadership strategy for moving one's enterprise into alignment with what today's knowledge and idea economy demands.

HR considerations for promoting what's best in people

The section begins with an explanation of the role that HR plays in maximizing the potential of people and therefore company results. It makes the case that today's business environment is such that potential maximization has become a bigger differentiator among businesses than ever before. It then provides a handy and insightful HR practices summary, commenting on compensation, benefits, selection, training & development, policy & practice, employee relations, legal / regulatory compliance, and communications. For each it describes practices that support the theme of positioning people to bring what's best in themselves to the workplace and to align those best efforts with common purpose and organizational objectives.