Driving the Strategic Agenda in the New Work Environment
"We are operating in more locations and in more geographies than ever before. It makes it increasingly hard to build the kind of culture we need to drive our business priorities."

CEO
Information Services Company

Leaders are finding it harder to engage employees in corporate priorities. Top-down management is less effective as work becomes more horizontal and distributed.

More Coordination
60% of employees coordinate with at least 10 people to complete their day-to-day work. Thirty percent are working with 20 or more colleagues on a daily basis.

More Decision Makers
50% of employees say more people are involved in decisions today than there were three years ago.

More Work Across Silos
67% of employees say they are working with people from different teams and departments.

More Global
57% of employees say they are working more with employees in another location than they were three years ago.

Employees are more engaged than they have been since before the global recession...

...but they are less focused and do not feel aligned with corporate objectives.

Even as leaders succeed in driving higher levels of effort, they are failing to apply that energy toward the business objectives they have established for the company.

60% of highly engaged employees report their work is not aligned with company goals.  

2. CEB, Mobilizing the Workforce, 2012.
In the new work environment, leaders use culture to convert employee engagement into a competitive advantage. They drive agility to sustain that advantage.

- Equip managers at all levels with the skills and tools to drive engagement.
- Define a clear set of cultural norms to guide decisions, align employees, and bring focus to their energy.
- Equip employees to be agile, to sense, and to respond to change.
A Simple Metric for a Powerful Driver of Performance

Recent research on the components of employee engagement has highlighted the importance of optimism—the belief that the organization will perform well in the future. Higher effort comes from a combination of pride, energy, and optimism.

The connection between effort, individual, and corporate performance is compelling.

Richard Branson, Chairman Virgin Group

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I think the model for starting employee engagement activities has to be embedded in everything you do.

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1. The ratio of a firm’s market value to the replacement cost of its assets.
2. Based on 93 firms across diverse industries and 65 firms for q.

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Achieving Strategic Alignment

When effort is well directed and behaviors are aligned with strategy, the organization achieves extraordinary levels of performance. The challenge leaders face is knowing which capabilities and cultural attributes will have the biggest impact on the success of their strategy.

CEB’s research teams—more than 1,000 professionals—work on behalf of our member companies to more deeply understand the drivers of corporate performance.

Research and Analysis...
- Quantitative Analysis
- Best Practice Research
- Academic Literature Review
- Cross-Functional Leader Interviews

...Provides Insight on Specific Capabilities Required to Succeed

Companies Driving Growth Through Innovation Need These Characteristics:
- Tolerance for Risk Taking
- Collaboration
- Market Sensing
- Creativity

Companies Driving Growth Through Mergers and Acquisitions Need These Characteristics:
- Cultivating a Shared Sense of Purpose
- Collaboration
- Change Management
- Cultural Integration
- Best Practice Adoption

Culture is the foundation for any successful enterprise, and ours inspires our people to improve every day. It is why GE works.

Jeffrey Immelt, Chairman and CEO GE
In a recent survey of business leaders, more than 80% said that employee agility was the workforce attribute most critical to their company’s success.

Agility is not about responding to change but anticipating and leading change in the day-to-day work environment.

DEFINING AGILITY

Anticipating Change
- Environmental sensitivity
- Planning

Leading Change
- Prioritizing changes
- Executing on changes in operation

65% of companies have experienced multiple major changes to their organization.  

Agile workforces drive higher levels of profitability.

Profit Margin

Leaders vs. Laggards

Agility Laggards: 5%
Agility Leaders: 13%

2 2009 CEB analysis of financials and employee survey data from 61 companies.
The Role of the Survey in Driving the Strategic Agenda

Communicate Corporate Priorities
Provide a tool for ongoing dialogue about corporate priorities.

Metrics Linked to Specific Priorities
Measure and assess the specific characteristics most critical to achieving your company’s success.

Engage Employees in Improvement
Enable your employees to improve and drive change through self-service tools, which include proven implementation checklists, e-learning, and behavioral checklists.

Insight to Guide and Direct
Provide HR and leaders with best practices from the world’s leading organizations to guide strategy and direct management attention.

Resetting the Strategy
In 2008, executives at Discovery Communications set out to drive growth through innovation and through its ability to bring innovative content to audiences around the world.

Using the Survey to Communicate Direction and Create Urgency
Survey design and the follow-up actions all focused on maximizing the level of innovation.

Actions to Drive Change
As a result of the survey, executives created more opportunities for collaboration and encouraged managers to increase their tolerance for risk, enabling the organization to learn, grow, and be creative.

Truly innovative companies leverage the broad organizational capabilities that enable innovation. Unlocking employee potential at Discovery has increased share price growth when compared to other competitors.
At CEB, we are committed to unlocking both individual and organizational performance through advances in the science of management. We develop and apply the world’s leading organizational and individual assessments to identify improvement opportunities. We document and implement best practices to help our clients achieve their potential.

CEB. What the Best Companies Do.

We invite you to partner with us.

16,000+ Leading Executives  240,000+ Business Professionals

94% of Fortune 100 Represented  40+ Years of Survey Experience

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