



Bridges

A bi-monthly newsletter from Meridian Consulting, Inc.

Building Bridges to Success
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Featured Topic: *Corporate Citizenship*

"Today's flatter organizations must have the strategic involvement of all its people. This is achieved when there is a sense of shared ownership, that is created through authentic participation.

Authentic Participation by Richard W. Cronen

Business is a uniquely human endeavor, it is conducted by people and between people. Businesses are like small communities that exist within our society as a whole; the organizational community you inhabit has an infrastructure, culture, roles and reputations. The values and the reputation of your organization is a reflection of the collaborative effort. When the people have a sense of commitment to the organization as a whole, it projects a powerful image that reflects the quality of the collective effort. Unfortunately, the reverse can also be true.

More than ever before, your organization's success reflects the collaborative effort, and its true success relies on your level of commitment. Regardless of your title or pay grade, the results achieved by your organization are a reflection of you and all who work there. In a very real sense, each person is an owner of the organization, and its reputation is a reflection on you as a member of that community. This means that the responsibility for good corporate citizenship belongs to everyone.

However, we have all encountered (or been) people who are not fully engaged at work. You hear them in the lunchroom and in the halls. They are the people who are quick to point out what is wrong, who has wronged them, and how things will never change.

While you cannot change the mindset of others, you can be a powerful influence by modeling the behavior you would like to see in others. The road to being involved as a good corporate citizen begins with your attitude, because your attitude is the control center of your actions.

In making every action count and being accountable for your every action, you carry forward the best part of the past--what's right and good about you and your organization. This is an attitude based on hope, not deficit; people will not be committed to what is wrong, but what is right. The author, Barbara Kingsolver, illustrates the attitude beautifully:

*"The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what you hope for.
And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire
it from a distance, but live right in it, under its roof."*

How do you rate as a corporate citizen? On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, rate yourself in the following areas:

1. I fully support the goals of my organization.
2. On a daily basis I do my best to make my organization the best it can be.
3. I am a good role model for others.
4. I take initiative to improve my personal performance.
5. I am responsible for my own results.
6. I hold myself to the same standards of accountability that I would hold others.
7. I assume that others act towards me in good faith.
8. I am good at resolving differences with others.
9. I am open to influence and prepared to change.

Corporate citizenship evolves from:

- **Commitment** – Not only do you need to demonstrate a commitment to your organization and its goals, but to the other people in the organization as well. Put aside your concerns about what others should be doing for you. Commitment is inwardly focused, looking at what you need to do, not outwardly focused, calling attention to what others are doing wrong.
- **Accountability** – Like commitment, accountability starts at home. Neither the failure of others nor the shortcomings of the organization can or should excuse you from maintaining high personal standards and to hold yourself accountable for the results you attain. Accountability becomes reality when it is self-imposed. (See the review of the Gallup Article below.)
- **Interdependence** – Working successfully with others starts with your own attitude and the commitment to building and sustaining strong interdependent business relationships. Your actions are characterized by your underlying beliefs:
 - I assume good faith.
 - I care about my relationships and resolve differences with others.
 - I remain open to influence and I'm prepared to change.

Looking at your score from the quiz and the three cornerstones of citizenship, what are your natural talents and strengths that contribute to your success and that of your organizational community?

Being a good corporate citizen doesn't mean that you ignore what's wrong. Instead, you must work from hope with positive energy and leverage your strengths to build, nurture and sustain what is right and good about yourself and your organization. As Gandhi said, "We must be the change we wish to see in the world."

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### **Article Review: *The Four Disciplines of Sustainable Growth by The Gallup Organization***

In April of 2002, the Gallup Organization released their findings that, "A more engaged employee was more productive, more profitable, more customer focused, safer and less likely to move on." They also found that 70% of all employees surveyed could not describe themselves as "engaged at work" and the longer an employee stayed with a given organization the less engaged they became. (Based on a sample size of more than 700,000 employees.) Gallup went on to characterize four "disciplines" as the "keys" to creating more engaged employees:

**Discipline 1:** *Hold employees accountable for their local performance outcomes.*

According to their research, Gallup found that 58% of all respondents couldn't strongly agree to the statement, "I know what is expected of me at work." To increase this number Gallup suggests that each employee have and manage their own "performance dashboard" that measures:

- Dial 1 – Their business performance.
- Dial 2 – How engaged they are.
- Dial 3 – Level of customer satisfaction (both internal & external).

Gallup further suggests that the measures will be more meaningful if the employee is the one who collects and analyzes the data.

**Discipline 2:** *Teach all employees to identify, deploy and develop their strengths.*

Employees and managers need to identify their collective "in-born talents, skills, and knowledge." This goes beyond typical roles and responsibilities and provides the key to personal satisfaction and professional success.

**Discipline 3:** *Align performance appraisals around identifying, developing and deploying employee strength.*

Instead of performance evaluation systems that are remedial and conducted annually, focus on developing and applying each person's key talents and strengths. The employee should manage it as part of their strategic responsibilities.

**Discipline 4:** *Design and build each role to create world-class performers in that role.*

Each employee should be able to say with confidence, "At work I have the opportunity to do what I do best everyday." Rewards and recognition should be designed to reflect performance as opposed to position. Many organizations

profess to wanting to become world class, while at the same time, they build a career ladder that rewards an employee's excellence in his or her current role by moving them out of it as soon as possible.

Click here for a copy of the article: [The Four Disciplines of Sustainable Growth](#)

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### **Quick Tips: *Book Recommendation***

"I highly recommend the book, [Soul of a Citizen, Living With Conviction in a Cynical Time](#), by Paul Rogat Loeb. I read it over the holidays and as I shared the high points with Rick, we started to make a connection between being an involved citizen in your community and being an involved citizen in your business community. I hope you enjoy the book and are as inspired by it as I am." **Angela C. Gonzalez**

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### **Featured Service: *Coaching***

*"My specialty is working with clients to build sound strategies and actionable plans for working more effectively with others.*

**Angela C. Gonzalez, Business Coach**

Investing in coaching gives you the opportunity to reflect on *what's important, move to action, and achieve the desired results*. Your journey does not have to be taken alone. Coaching can help you achieve insights, growth, and results faster and easier than doing it by yourself.

If you are interested in developing new skills sets, seeing things in new ways, internalizing new behaviors and overcoming obstacles, one-on-one coaching can benefit you in a range of situations:

- You have just been promoted or stepped up to a new level that requires different skill sets.
- You want to leverage your strengths.
- You are being held back by one or two challenges.
- You want to re-engage your career.

### **What My Clients Say**

*"We would all like to believe in our capability to resolve issues and handle difficult situations by ourselves, but my Coach helped me achieve significant improvement. Angela provided me with insightful guidance, relevant information and actionable tools that helped me significantly improve my leadership and management effectiveness."*  
**VP of Marketing, Financial Industry**

*"Angela pulled me out of the doldrums of 'nothing will change around here' and into the possibilities that exist when I finally realized on a 'gut level' that all change starts and ends with me. She turned my*

*cynicism into 'I can' do something about this—starting with working on developing more effective management skills. She kept me focused on my area of control and helped me improve my communication skills. Now I spend my time working in areas where I truly can make a difference. I am more successful in getting my ideas across. I have been able to influence outcomes because I can talk in a way where people with different values can listen."* **Program Officer, U.S. Military**

*"As my Coach, Angela has helped me with difficult employee problems, as well as helping me cope with the pressures that accompany that type of problem. We have worked on goals very successfully and she always delivers. She has the ability to identify the heart of the issue so that I can truly resolve problems and make progress."* **VP of Risk Management, Financial Industry**

Contact Angela C. Gonzalez today for a **free** coaching session and experience how coaching can help you attain tangible results and achieve greater satisfaction from your work and your business relationships.

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