

Globalization—The Emerging Business Paradigm of the 21st Century

By Dr. William A. Guillory



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The Age of Human Potential is characterized by Performance and Talent Management—the Quest for Talent. As shown in the diagram, power in that paradigm is based upon the acquisition and retention of human capital. These initiatives will continue to be a major objective as we simultaneously merge into the Age of Globalization.

Globalization is recognizing, acknowledging, and leveraging the natural connections that comprise the world-wide business ecosystem. It is designed to leverage the potential of people, performance, and profitability. Power in this emerging paradigm is an organization's ability (willingness) to create alignment, unity, and oneness in terms of its vision, mission, and business objectives. This concept is expressed by the quote below.

"THE GREAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE THOSE THAT CELEBRATE THEIR DIFFERENCES. THEY SEEK HARMONY, NOT UNIFORMITY. THEY HIRE TALENT, NOT COLOR. THEY STRIVE FOR ONENESS, NOT SAMENESS."

—GIL ATKINSON

This phenomenon is also the culmination of the natural progression of Diversity, Inclusion, and Globalization. Diversity and inclusion have naturally merged with major business and performance initiatives. As we have stated previously:

"DIVERSITY IS AN INHERENT PART OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE."

Diversity is present because people are involved; in the ways we are, (human diversity); the ways we think, (cultural diversity), and; the ways we naturally do tasks, (systems diversity).

In practice, globalization involves:

- Resourcing the best people available for business functioning;
- Maximizing the performance of people in producing goods and services; and
- Achieving profitable business results in serving customers and clients.

The key concept where globalization is involved is integration. The recognition and acknowledgement that the most powerful and enduring business connections are those forged from the synergism of mutual contributions. Integration provides the opportunity for personal and organizational transformation—not simply change.

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Transformation creates a totally different way of viewing and utilizing people and process.

Examples include a shift from viewing people (employees) as expendable commodities to the core resource for sustainability; from exercising command and control in veiled ways to truly democratizing leadership and management, and; from dominantly operating in an individually, task-oriented mode to and integration of relationship, communication, and collaboration. Most of all, the achievement of a globally inclusive, high-performance culture—confirmed by a comprehensive measurement instrument.

The working practices that compromise this new paradigm are summarized on the following page.

PEOPLE

Core resource for global business functioning

1. Global resourcing for diverse talent
2. Capitalizing on differences
3. Aligning the support of all stakeholder
4. Establishing a mind-set of continuous learning
5. Ensuring employee well- being, quality, and balance
6. Ensuring the development of employee technical, interpersonal, and functional competencies
7. Becoming employer of choice
8. Engaging employees for committed performance
9. Ensuring culturally competent employees
10. Branding for the best compatible talent available

PERFORMANCE

Maximizing the performance of people and systems

1. Structuring for exceptional performance
2. Democratizing operations
3. Leading with courage, vision, and wisdom
4. Managing empowered functioning
5. Teaming for cooperation and collaboration
6. Maximizing the integration of technology for informing, cross- functioning, connecting, and serving customers
7. Integrating spirituality into workplace functioning—globally
8. Ensuring a globally integrated and inclusive culture through measurement
9. Ensuring a culture of creativity and innovation
10. Implementing a plan to achieve a culture of global inclusion with accountability

PROFITABILITY

Achieving exceptional business results

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1. Exceeding customer expectations
2. Partnering with organizations having similar value propositions
3. Offering breakthrough products, and services
4. Maximizing efficiency and effectiveness of operations
5. Creating customer loyalty
6. Providing exceptional customer service through measurement and feedback
7. Creating customized products and services
8. Providing exceptional quality and speed of delivery of goods and services
9. Branding for an exceptional reputation
10. Responsibly managing budgets and resources

The cognitive and functional practices listed in columns one and two above are the essential elements that characterize exceptional performance in the 21st century. In the present Age of Human Potential, they are the guidelines for leveraging the differences in competencies, societal/organizational compositions, and cultures. The practices in column three reflect business results from creating a naturally profitable operation that serves employees and the communities where business is conducted.

The major factor in achieving globalization is leadership. Global leadership is the ability to competently function across the divergently different value systems of the world. This leadership model begins with Self-mastery and is expressed as Developing people; Driving Inclusion; Managing performance; and, Delivering business results. This is a leadership model from the “inside out.” The first two descriptors are an emphasis on people and the latter two descriptors are an emphasis on performance.

The secondary factor in achieving globalization is the role of employees in actively creating an inclusive workplace through Small Acts of Inclusion.² This is achieved by the viral dissemination of inclusive relationships—relationships that are characterized by acceptance, respect, and support of each other’s success. Where there is no expectation in return for another’s support, we experience a small act of transformation. An organization that has implemented this strategy with overwhelming success is the United States Department of Agriculture led by Secretary Thomas Vilsack and the Head of Diversity, Dr. Alma Hobbs.