

Competitive Edge in Simplicity

In our busy lives full of personal and professional expectations and commitments, the pursuit of success can often feel out of reach. Colleagues and loved ones are asking you to do more in a shorter amount of time. Leaders are faced with challenges such as rapid and volatile change and an increasingly complex and unpredictable future. Does this challenging competitive landscape force us to take on more commitments and spread us out too thin?

Perhaps not, because according to author William Jensen, your path to success might lie in simplifying your process. In his book *"Simplicity, the New Competitive Advantage in a world of More, Better, Faster"*. Perseus Books. 2000", Jensen identifies ways to deal with leadership challenges through simplifying critical processes and working more intelligently.

Communication

Present information, ideas, and goals with clarity and in a way that allows direct reports to understand expectations. Jensen suggests that in order to maximize the time spent in meetings, a leader should always carefully consider the needs of participants. Active listening is also an element that will enhance and simplify the interaction between a leader and the organization. By actually listening and understanding, from the beginning, you can end up saving a lot of time and energy on questions, mistakes and conflicts when it is all said and done.

Strategy

Many companies start by implementing strategies from the top of the organization. Slowly they work their way down and may or may not latch on as a part of the overall culture. In the end, how often do they actually reach the customer and how much time is spent reiterating those strategies? Jensen suggests a different approach as he claims the most effective strategies will be the ones generated in the interaction with customers.

Development

At IOL Tool, we believe a leader should focus on developing one skill or area at a time. This targeted effort will likely produce better and faster results. Multi-tasking is without a doubt a skill, but be cautious about applying it to every aspect of leadership. For important tasks attempt to stay in the moment and focus solely on the current situation.

*Author: Jonas Enander Hedin
Posted: May 1, 2014*