



## ***Built to Change: How to Achieve Sustained Organizational Effectiveness***

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Lawler is Distinguished Professor of Business at the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business and founder and director of the University's Center for Effective Organizations (CEO). He is the author and co-author of 36 books including *Achieving Strategic Excellence: An Assessment of Human Resource Organizations* with John W. Boudreau and Susan Albers Mohrman, *Creating a Strategic Human Resources Organization: An Assessment of Trends and New Directions* co-authored with Mohrman, *Treat People Right!: How Organizations and Individuals Can Propel Each Other into a Virtuous Spiral of Success*, and, most recently, *Built To Change* with Christopher Worley and *The New American Workplace* with James O'Toole. Worley is a research scientist at USC's Center for Effective Organizations and the former director of the Master of Science in Organizational Development (MSOD) program at Pepperdine University. His other published works include *Organization Development and Change* and *Essentials of Organization Development and Change* with Thomas Cummings and *Integrated Strategic Change* with David E. Hitchin, and Walter L. Ross.

In the Foreword, Porras briefly explores two themes: "First, leaders must understand their organization's values, and work to shape them in such a way that those values guide and sustain needed changes rather than undermine them. Second, leaders must architect their organizations to embrace rather than resist change." Co-authors Lawler and Worley see this volume as a sequel to Jim Collins' *Built to Last* as they explain "what organizations need to do once they have developed the foundation for survival and want to increase their effectiveness over time." This seems to be the same objective that Collins set for himself in his own sequel, *Good to Great*.

What Porras and Worley call the "B2Change Model" consists of Environmental Scenarios (which describe a range of possible future business conditions and identifies "preferred futures") and three primary organizational processes that contribute to organizational effectiveness. Strategizing (a process by which to establish priorities so that by having a "strategic intent"). Only after concluding this process can an organization then initiate the other two processes, Creating Value through competencies and capabilities and Designing the structures and other processes that enable an organization to achieve sustained effectiveness enterprise-wide. Step by step, with both rigor and eloquence, Lawler and Worley explain how any organization (regardless of size or nature) can do this, guided and informed by the B2Change Model.

In the final chapter, they make several key points. First, that making the transition to a B2Change organization is much more difficult than operating one. Each of the three processes is more changeable and more flexible than the prior one. However, the designing process is the key to developing the competencies and capabilities that are needed to implement a strategic intent. They identify five key initiatives on the road to becoming B2Change and then discuss them in the order in which they recommend implementation. (They are listed on page 287.) They also explain how certain key elements can support an organization's focus on its external environment so that everyone involved understands change as a natural process. "Creating a change-friendly identity is a fundamental step in becoming a B2change organization." Still another key point involves what Lawler and Worley see as the final initiative: bringing all of the prior processes together in a virtuous spiral. "Virtuous spirals—periods in the life of an organization—are characterized by critical configuration, proximity, and dynamic alignment. They are built and sustained by a series of temporary competitive advantages."

In 1963, Peter Drucker wrote an article for *Harvard Business Review* noting "There is surely nothing quite so useless as doing with great efficiency what should not be done at all." That is precisely why Lawler and Worley place such great emphasis on the first process of the B2Change Model, Strategizing. It is imperative that proper organizational priorities and an organization's strategic intent be established first. Otherwise, completion of the second and third processes may well be flawless but ultimately worthless. ❖