

but it is still very much a part of the corporate world and the leadership challenges within it. Manville and Ober do admit that it is difficult to actually operationalize the ideal of citizenship in practice, finding the “right balance” between inclusiveness and exclusiveness as membership should be extended only to those with the “necessary” level of talent and commitment. To simply suggest that such membership is “yet another design choice” underscores my point about the power of hierarchy—people at the bottom will not be making that decision. While their vision of fundamental change through a dynamic mix of values, structures and practices is appealing, the Athenian ideal falls well short of being an effective paradigm for leaders in today’s knowledge age organizations.

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**Joseph A. Raelin, *Creating Leaderful Organizations: How to Bring out Leadership in Everyone*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, CA, 2003, 290 pages, US\$22.95**

What is it about ‘leadership’ that excites the minds of scholars and practitioners that so many of them, Joe Raelin being the latest, can continue to reformulate what this concept is really all about? Perhaps it is our tradition of being in awe of those who inspire us or who guide us to accomplishments we never thought possible. Perhaps it is from a sense of appreciation for those who lead that we continue to try to understand what they do and how they do it.

The more we write and read about leadership per se, the more we may be stuck in its traditional paradigm that equates leadership with individual competence or position. What Raelin makes clear (and argues for passionately) is that the value of leadership is not in ascribing it to some person or some defined or orchestrated role but in realizing it as a practice and skill. We are all capable of leaderful practice.

If our aim is to create organizations that endure and produce something of lasting value, then any concern for building leaders creates temporal value, while building leaderful organizations ensures long-term results. A leaderful organization is one where employees feel free to take action that is consistent with its mission. In effect, the model that Raelin presents in his book ‘transforms leadership from an individual property into a new paradigm that redefines leadership as a collective practice’ (p. 5). It is a paradigm that has parallels to other domains from empowerment to creativity. For example, in their recent book *Creativity*, Mauzy and Harriman (2003) claim that the key role of leadership is to foster systemic creativity and that everyone has the potential to be creative.

I do not know how much of this trend to diffuse responsibility for leadership or creativity comes from the impact of organizational downsizing, the pressures to increase productivity, or, as Raelin claims, the need for organizations to be more nimble and responsive to change. Perhaps it does not matter since our challenge is how best to respond to the trends in our environment. The trend that Raelin is riding is the move to expedite change and to get everyone involved in that process. There seems no better way to do this than to encourage all employees to act as leaders in their own domains. Workers need no longer wait to be led; formal applications for employment are still required but not for being leaderful.

Being a leader means that people turn to you for ideas, direction, inspiration, support, and hope. In a leaderful organization, individuals are encouraged to evoke some intrinsic source for behaviors, skills, and attitudes that are consistent with culturally defined versions (and visions) of leadership. Perhaps this trait is the inevitable development of what Peter Senge referred to as personal mastery. When we are masterful, we practice leadership and learning; the key for organizations is to have employees who are self-sufficient and self-assured.

To differentiate leaderful practice from traditional views of leadership, Raelin relies on four characteristics or contrasting, bipolar dimensions. It is not clear whether these dimensions are completely independent or where they come from, but they are provocative and they do create a useful template within which Raelin expounds on his ideas. The four tenets, as Raelin calls them, pertain to the experience of leadership in one or many places (*serial vs. concurrent*), the embodiment of leadership in one or many individuals (*individual vs. collective*), the role or style of leadership to direct and control rather than dialogue and collaborate (*controlling vs. collaborative*), and the sensitivity of leaders to the dignity of others (*dispassionate vs. compassionate*). Traditional, old-style leaders can be characterized by the first set of extreme categories (serial, individual, controlling, and dispassionate); Raelin labels this configuration ‘conventional leadership.’ The second contrasting set of categories (concurrent, collective, collaborative, and compassionate) typifies what Raelin highlights as ‘leaderful practice’ and what organizations need to move towards.

This contrast in styles is mindful of managerial choices to act on the basis of theory *X* versus theory *Y* assumptions. When that distinction was first highlighted by McGregor, many management pundits took it to mean that all managers should hold theory *Y* assumptions. What we have come to understand over time is that an informed choice is situational. In making as strong a case as possible for leaderful practice, Raelin does not elaborate on conditions that may yet call for conventional leadership. However, he does claim that today’s new forms of organization structure and the need for companies to promote creativity, flexibility, and rapid responsiveness to changing circumstances require leaderful practice. Companies do not have the luxury to wait for leaders on high to make decisions when their customers want immediate answers or when employees recognize problems or see precursors to accidents.

Raelin’s book is organized in a meaningful and helpful way—10 chapters grouped in two main parts followed by endnotes for each chapter. In Part I, Raelin defines and makes his case for leaderful practice

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