

Companies with spirit

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Some companies are respected for their cutting-edge technology. Others are respected for their balance between the technical and the human. Among these are companies in which the human side is expressed through the technical, that is, all the human technologies are used with great efficiency. They are in the vanguard of the mechanics of the human, but not of its essence.

There are companies, however, in which the human is not something technological. These are companies with spirit. The essence of the human is there, alive, pulsating in a manner that is natural, genuine – an invisible, intangible essence, not expressed in systems, technologies, or techniques, but an essence that is felt by collaborators, by suppliers, by clients. It is something that is in the environment, in the "climate," in the company atmosphere, in all that is done, said, even thought: individuals with constructive attitudes, with a genuine interest in being helpful, in serving, in contributing to clients and to all who, directly or indirectly, will use the products and services generated.

In companies with spirit, individuals are more than colleagues – they are friends. There is a climate of camaraderie among all, without separation, without feuds, without exclusion. Individuals know each other well. And, for this reason, they are capable of understanding one another, and, thus, overlook differences in style, in personality, in the manner of communicating, and even of demonstrating (or not) their emotions and feelings. And it is because of this level of understanding that in these organizations there is, in addition to a genuine esprit de corps, an exceptional level of collective motivation.

What is the effect of all this on the performance of companies, on the results that they attain? Obvious? Not always ... If it were, we would have many more companies at this level of perfection as teams, as groups of true friends. What, then, seems to prevent more organizations from attaining this level of motivation, enthusiasm, energy?

Is it an excess of a culture of the technical that brings coldness to human processes? Is it an assumption that too much friendliness will impair the logic that should prevail in business? Is it leadership styles based on command and control that tend to stifle creativity and spontaneity in individuals? Or is it the belief that a successful organization is one that "operates like a well-oiled machine" and that the technical is everything?

To speak of the importance of individuals in organizations is to say the obvious. Less obvious, more subtle, less perceived and practiced is to understand that the spirit of companies is not in individuals, but in their motivation. In how many organizations in the country are individuals motivated all the time, and not only on the two or three days following a pay raise or the payment of a bonus? In other words, in how many organizations is motivation sustained, something inherent to its way of being, and not the result of "spasms" generated by artificial stimuli?

This level of sustained motivation is only possible in organizations in which the purpose, its reason for being, is noble. These are organizations in which all know that they work for the common good, for society as a whole, that they are building a legacy for future generations.

And it is this consciousness that drives people to give the best of themselves, generating exceptional levels of quality in all that they do. A non-mechanical quality, not only one of "technique for technique's sake," but a quality generated by a simple interest in the well-being of the individual who will use the final product or service.

What would happen in our country and in the world if more and more organizations, in the business sector, in government, and in the third sector, HAD this kind of spirit and DID their best, motivated by noble purposes, in search of the common good?

Technology is always neutral. What gives it true value is the intention that lies behind its application – the purpose. And it is here that rests the essence of organizations with spirit. And of the life expressed through all of us.

**Oscar Motomura is the CEO of the Amana-Key Group, an international clearinghouse for radical innovation in management. The purpose of Amana-Key is to place all its creative potential in management in service to fostering the highest level of consciousness in leaders in all areas of activity. Amana-Key's intention is to enable conscious leaders to create together the conditions that ensure a life of dignity and harmony for all.*