

(14) Introduction to the Executive in Action

- o There are many how to do it management books but few tell the executive what to do let alone why.
- o There are equally a great deal of what to do management books, but few of them tell the executive how to do it.
- o Yet treatment without diagnosis is as useless as diagnosis without treatment.
- o And in any practice the two go together.
- o And management is a practice
- o The three books of mine, here brought together in one volume embrace the three dimensions of the successful practice of management:
 - s managing the existing business (Managing for Results)
 - s changing tomorrow's business (Innovation & Entrepreneurship) and
 - s managing oneself (The Effective Executive)
- o Each of these books is distinct and self contained, yet in the executive's work the three are always joined.
 1. Managing the existing business is the first day-to-day task no matter how clear the executive's vision.
 - i No matter how brilliantly she or he plans for the future and innovates, today's business has to be managed for results now or there will be no tomorrow.
 - i What knowledge is needed for that job, what actions have to be taken, what pitfalls to be avoided and what results should and perhaps must be attained.
 2. Conversely the seemingly most successful business of today is a sham and a failure if it doesn't create its own and different tomorrow.
 - i It must innovate and recreate its products and services, but equally the enterprise itself.
 - i Business is society's change agent, all other main institutions of society are designed to conserve if not prevent change.
 - i Business alone is designed to innovate.
 - i No business will long survive, let alone prosper unless it innovates successfully.
 3. Finally no matter how brilliant individual executives are or how hard they work, they will be failures and their efforts will be futile unless they are effective.
 - i And neither innovation or entrepreneurship are flash of genius, they are disciplines and require concepts tools and organized, systematic work.
 - i It is not so terribly difficult to be an effective executive. All it requires are a few habits, that is doing a few things day in and day out and not doing a few other things.
 - i Yet few of the many executives with whom I have worked over my more than 50 years were truly effective.
 - i They were mostly very bright, worked mostly very hard, yet had little to show for their ability, their knowledge, their hard work.
 - i The reason is simply that modern organization and with it executives in significant numbers only emerged a little over a century ago and the human race is a slow learner.
 - i To be sure though there have been naturals throughout human history, the most effective executive on record of whom we have any information was surely the minister of an ancient Egyptian Pharaoh who almost 4250 years ago conceived the first pyramid with out any precedent whatever for such an edifice, designed it and built it and still stands today without much having to be re-engineered and he did it without any management books to help him, surely without having an MBA.
 - i But we need far too many executives to depend on geniuses.
 - i And then there is a need for a discipline and the discipline of being an effective executive.
- o Together these three books should enable executives, whether high up in the organization or just beginning their career, but also those men and women today who are studying to become executive tomorrow to know the right things to do, know how to do them and to do them effectively. Together the three books provide the tools kits for effective action.

PD's View of Developmental Directions

- o **Written in 1996**