

How Do You Have Your Company Be Built To Last A Lifetime?

The first thing is, don't try to do it all yourself. It's exhausting, it takes twice as long, and ultimately it doesn't give you what you want. You need a team to get started, and a particular kind of team that wants to go wherever you're going. Jim Collins discovered this in his 5 years of research published in, *Good To Great*: "Those who build great companies understand that the ultimate throttle on growth for any company is not markets, or technology, or competition, or products. Its one thing above all others: the ability to get and keep enough of the right people".¹ This also corresponds with the research on high-performance teams both in the corporate and military sectors; that the most successful teams are comprised of individuals who *do not* have the skill set at the onset of the project— they have the passion and the drive, and they develop the skill set along the way.²

The next thing you need is to invite each person to participate, followed by an unrelenting stand behind that invitation to do whatever it takes to support the collective vision of the team that arises— and what comes after does take *rocket science*; to continue to support, guide, inspire, coach and mentor leadership while you are building the structures that support your intentions. I've written elsewhere about the specific elements of an accountability culture, the point I want to make here is the importance of the people you call your team. This is a 180-degree shift away from the normal thinking and practice of one or two people being completely in charge and running a whole company. You can do it, but why would you want to? Even if you are successful in achieving your business goals— you're left being the driving force of it all! What you want is people behaving as an owner, making important decisions, taking risks, giving you their best efforts.

The Solution

Set up your team to win! That's all they really want to do for you. By winning I mean, work with your team to clarify the vision of your company. Let them have a voice in the matter of their future in your company. Most companies don't bother taking the time to listen to what their key employees have to say— huge mistake! Once you have a clear direction that your whole team embraces, you have a firm foundation to move that vision into strategic actions and specific individual accountabilities. The difference is this: you have a highly motivated team of individuals, each of whom is looking out into a future that includes where he or she really wants to go— that gives you a collective force of intention that is ready to move that vision into reality.

¹ *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't*, by Jim Collins

² *The Discipline of Teams*, by Katzenback and Smith