

[Download ebook] The Positive Organization: Breaking Free from Conventional Cultures, Constraints, and Beliefs

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Robert E. Quinn

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Robert E. Quinn : The Positive Organization: Breaking Free from Conventional Cultures, Constraints, and Beliefs before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Positive Organization: Breaking Free from Conventional Cultures, Constraints, and Beliefs:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Irsquo've been intrigued by the power of the positive since my early skateboard days listening to Bad Brains PMABy jasonI bought this book the very first day it was available. Quinn is one of the forefathers of the Center for Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) at the University Of Michigan Ross School Of Business. 5 Years ago I attended a Positive Leadership executive education course at Michigan. I was introduced to the positive organization concept and the underlying academic discipline of Positive Psychology. Irsquo've been intrigued by the power of the positive since my early skateboard days listening to Bad Brains PMA.Quinn hypothesizes that by using the Positive Organization Generator (provided in the appendix and online here) and doing some work we can lead our organizations to a more positive place. The trick is that most leaders, over the years, have developed negative and constraining mental maps. They see all organizations as top-down hierarchies where people are primarily self-interested and driven by fear. Quinn wants to show us how to change our mental map to one where we see organizations as networks of relationships full of people motivated by their desires to grow, learn and serve a larger goal.I believe Quinn. I have seen the results first hand in my organization.0 of 0 people found the

following review helpful. Great and Practical By Edival Joseacute; dos Santos Juacute;nior I love the subject! The book is very good, provide some great ideas that can be easily implemented. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a great book. Unlike many books on leadership By Lukas This is a great book. Unlike many books on leadership, this one provides a very specific framework one can use where turning organizations into more productive, effecient and most importantly, human-centered environment.

Beholden to accepted assumptions about people and organizations, too many enterprises waste human potential. Robert Quinn shows how to defy convention and create organizations where people feel fully engaged and continually rewarded, where both individually and collectively they flourish and exceed expectations. The problem is that leaders are following a negative and constraining "mental map" that insists organizations must be rigid, top-down hierarchies and that the people in them are driven mainly by self-interest and fear. But leaders can adopt a different mental map, one where organizations are networks of fluid, evolving relationships and where people are motivated by a desire to grow, learn, and serve a larger goal. Using dozens of memorable stories, Quinn describes specific actions leaders can take to facilitate the emergence of this organizational culture—helping people gain a sense of purpose, engage in authentic conversations, see new possibilities, and sacrifice for the common good. The book includes the Positive Organization Generator, a tool that provides 100 real-life practices from positive organizations and helps you reinvent them to fit your specific needs. With the POG you can identify and implement the practices that will have the greatest impact on your organization. At its heart, the book helps leaders to see new possibilities that lie within the acknowledged realities of organizational life. It provides five keys for learning to be "bilingual"—speaking the conventional language of business as well as the language of the positive organization. When leaders can do this, they are able to make real and lasting change.

Powerful and accessible. Quinn takes the critical topic of positive mindset in organizations and makes it approachable, compelling, and actionable. It will be a must for my graduate entrepreneurship course at Stanford and for the CEOs I mentor. It is as valid for a young entrepreneurial organization as it is for a large established corporation.—Ricardo Levy, Lecturer, Chemical Engineering, Stanford University, and author of Letters to a Young Entrepreneur "Bob Quinn has an amazing gift for taking seemingly intangible topics and bringing them to life. The book opens the door to impact. There were many moments when Bob unpicked the Gordian knot of culture with such clarity that I found myself literally stopping and just reflecting on the possibilities and potential for new behaviors. This will be a must-read for all new leaders in our organization."—Julie Redfield, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, and Global Head of HR, Dorel Sports "In today's landscape, there is a plethora of readings, teachings, and TED Talks about the power of vision, mission, and purpose. What Bob Quinn gives us is more than just the what and why—his research and insights give us tools and practices that help us with the how. Having a glimpse into what great leadership teams inside world-class brands are doing to establish positive practices is a gift to be leveraged."—Gina Valenti, Vice President, Owner Services and Hampton Brand Culture and Internal Communications, Hilton Worldwide "In a world where feeling overextended and underutilized is pervasive, it's hard to imagine being fully engaged and continually renewed. But this book will show you how to do just that. Quinn not only provides clear, inspiring steps but also shares 100 unique examples used in pathbreaking companies to provide you fresh, exciting ideas about where to start."—Leslie Perlow, Konosuke Matsushita Professor of Leadership, Harvard Business School, and author of Sleeping with Your Smartphone "Integrating the findings of a decade of scholarship into positive organizations, Bob Quinn applies the same cogent and deeply honest analysis that has characterized his previous writings to produce a highly readable and relevant primer on how leaders can break free of the conventional constraints that bind organizations and individuals to slow-death behaviors and replace them with a culture of sustained excellence and growth."—Douglas D. Anderson, Dean and Jon M. Huntsman Chair, Jon M. Huntsman School of Business, Utah State University "Few argue with being positive, but fewer can turn aspirations for being positive into specific organizational actions. Quinn is an exquisite observer and advisor on organizations. This book specifies actions that leaders can take to create abundant or positive organizations. The ideas make sense, the tools are informative, and the examples are clear. This book lays the foundation for redefining organizations."—Dave Ulrich, Rensis Likert Professor, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, and Partner, The RBL Group "A profound book offering wise lessons for igniting deep positive change in your organization. Sound too good to be true? Actually, I think it may be an understatement. The Positive Organization can help you discover the vision and practices needed for creating cultures of possibility where people exceed expectations and flourish in their work."—Charles C. Manz, coauthor of Share, Don't Take the Lead and Self-Leadership: The Definitive Guide to Personal Excellence "Bob Quinn addresses the practical realities of building a positive enterprise and the positive culture necessary to sustain it."—Bill Robertson, Chairman, Weston Solutions, Inc. "Ten years ago I read Building the Bridge as You Walk on It by Robert Quinn. It changed my career. As I read his new book, I realize it is having the same kind of impact but at an organizational level. I have already started applying the ideas to my company, and the results have been

powerful. If you want elegant, easy to access, and deeply engaging, start reading now.”—Nick Craig, President, Authentic Leadership Institute, and coauthor of *Finding Your True North*”

“Another insightful, poignant, and practical guide by change master Robert Quinn, *The Positive Organization* is the ultimate user's manual for leaders who want to create positively deviant organizations. It will work for people who want to change any organization, from a multinational company to neighborhood association.”—Jim Mallozzi, Chairman and CEO, Prudential Real Estate and Relocation Services (Retired)

“People are drawn to the positive. When we are engaged and creative, we are living for a greater purpose. But because we biologically defend ourselves above all else, the default in organizational life is being defensive and then infecting everyone around us with negativity. Quinn unveils the positive organization without being gushy or Pollyanna. He provides hope for the entangled, a spotlight to guide the lost, and reassurance for those on the journey.”—Richard Boyatzis, Distinguished University Professor, Departments of Psychology, Cognitive Science, and Organizational Behavior, Case Western Reserve University, and coauthor of *Primal Leadership*”

“Another masterpiece from Robert Quinn! I have worked with organizations on creating more positive organizations, and while everybody endorses the concept, people typically find it challenging to make it practically sustainable. Bob's new book provides valuable new examples that illustrate how to do this and tools to achieve success.”—Anjan Thakor, John E. Simon Professor of Finance, Director of WFA Center for Finance and Accounting Research, and Director of Doctoral Programs, Olin Business School, Washington University in St. Louis

“This is a wonderfully persuasive, tactile immersion in positive organizations that demystifies them and makes them more attainable while magnifying the reader's desire to get on with that attainment. This is Bob at his best! And it is positive organizing in its best rendering.”—Karl E. Weick, Rensis Likert Distinguished University Professor of Organizational Behavior and Psychology, Emeritus, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan”

“Bob Quinn identifies the critical path to invigorate the human spirit at work. His daring description of being ‘fully engaged and continually renewed’ charts a course on how to invite people to the new possibilities of authentic conversations that ignite positive cultures.”—Jim Haudan, author of *The Art of Engagement*”

“Who doesn't want to be part of an organization where people flourish, are unified with clear purpose, and exceed expectations? Robert Quinn's newest work offers clear pathways for leaders to authentically engage others, consider new possibilities, and think beyond problem solving. Building and understanding positive organizations helps create places where others want to contribute, results are celebrated, and people prosper. This book matters.”—Jim Mahoney, Executive Director, Battelle for Kids

About the Author Robert E. Quinn holds the Margaret Elliot Tracey Collegiate Professorship at the University of Michigan and serves on the faculty of Organization and Management at the Ross Business School. He is one of the co-founders and the current faculty co-director of the Center for Positive Organizations. He is particularly known for his work on the Competing Values Framework. He has 30 years of experience consulting with major corporations and government agencies.

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INTRODUCTION

The Reality of Possibility

One day, Laura Morgan Roberts spoke at the Center for Positive Organizations. Dr. Roberts is a researcher who studies identity and seeks to understand how people can flourish at work. She spoke of modern work-life, the effort to find balance, and a terrible paradox she has identified. She pushed her clicker and a very simple slide went up on the screen. It read as follows:

Overextended and Underutilized
I could feel something happening. I looked around. The audience was full of professionals who work in organizations. The slide seemed to have an actual physical impact. Faces were full of pain. It was a rather remarkable moment.

Many people are overworked. They live on the edge of exhaustion. This fact is publicly recognized, and there is endless discussion about how to better manage our ever-shrinking supply of time. What is not so widely recognized, however, is that many of those same people are being underutilized. Their strengths go untapped, and their unique gifts go unexpressed. They are giving all their time and energy, yet they get back only a financial return. Their pay-check is important, but it is not enough. As they pursue recognition, wealth, and security, they are infected by the epidemic of disinterest and end up joining the legions of the walking dead.

Laura's slide seemed to bring all this to the fore in three simple words.

The next morning I found myself pondering Laura's paradox. Recognizing that every coin has a flip side, I wrote this contrasting paradox:

Fully Engaged and Continually Renewed

While the first paradox suggests a cycle of depletion that is not easily broken, the second suggests a cycle of renewal that is not easily believed. When I show these two contrasting paradoxes to people, they immediately identify with, and emotionally react to, the first. They see its negative message as both real and inevitable. It is a downward cycle that always threatens organizational life. People react differently to the second paradox. They see it as an unreachable ideal. It is not something they experience or expect to experience. They believe, with good reason, that full engagement and continual renewal is not going to happen. Few people can envision it and even fewer ever aspire to creating such a reality. The lack of vision and aspiration is crucial to this cycle.

The Book Your current organization is not static. It is continually becoming more negative or more positive. As organizations become more negative, the people within them tend to withdraw and underperform. As organizations become more positive, their people tend to invest and exceed individual and collective expectations. The purpose of this book is to help create the second kind of organization. It not only illustrates how this is done in real organizations but also explains how to invite people to purpose, how to bring about authentic conversations, how to connect people

to new possibilities, how to orient them to the common good, and how to facilitate the emergence of new, more positive cultures.¹The appendix contains a useful tool called the Positive Organization Generator. It includes 100 positive practices from real organizations. It is designed so the reader can create new practices that can be implemented in any context without having to ask for permission from someone of higher authority. At the end of each chapter, you will be asked to think about a key insight you gained and how it can help you to create a more positive organization. It is important to follow through on this, because it will help you envision the organization you want to create as you use the Positive Organization Generator. There are also other tools for readers. At the end of chapters 3 through 7, there are assessments and activities you can use to introduce your unit or team to the concepts in this volume. In the end, this book does two things. First, it introduces ideas designed to challenge your conventional assumptions. Second, it offers real tools and simple processes designed to support you in trying new things. Deep learning can occur when both challenge and support are present. As you begin to conceptualize new practices and to see things from a more complex mental map, you will be able to transform yourself, your unit, and even your organization. If that happens, you and your people will never be the same. Your people will begin to flourish and exceed expectations. They will become fully engaged and continually renewed,² and a more positive organization will emerge.

Acknowledgments This book is full of stories. They come from the lives of wonderful people trying to make the world a better place. I am grateful for the legions of folks who have shared their life experiences and invited me to the wisdom of positive organizations. In writing this book, there has been an effort to make it as accessible as possible. Much of the academic work that informs this text appears in footnotes. I am indebted to the scholars I cite. I am particularly indebted to the scholars and leaders who surround me at the Center for Positive Organizations. These include Wayne Baker, Kim Cameron, Jane Dutton, Betsy Erwin, Fred Keller, Shirli Kopelman, David Mayer, Roger Newton, Gretchen Spreitzer, Chris White, and Lynn Wooten. I am grateful to Erin YaLe Lim, my research assistant, who found most of the hundred practices in the Positive Organization Generator. Many people have read some or all of this manuscript and made comments prior to publication. A large subset of them put more into the process than I have seen before. I am deeply indebted to Kirk Blad, Wally Bock, Bruce Degn, Dan Duckworth, Erin Dunn, Wade Eyerly, Kathleen Flanagan, Maria Forbes, Ed Francis, Mirena Hine, Jessica Johnson, Lucie Newcomb, Craig Matteson, Valerie Matteson, Ryan Quinn, Shawn Quinn, and Shuryce Prestwich. Thank you for your every expression. I owe special thanks to Katie Outcalt and Mark Templeton. They read multiple iterations of the manuscript, sent extensive feedback, and continually challenged me to think more deeply. In 1986, a young editor nurtured me through the production of my first book. His influence was extraordinary. Decades have passed, and now he is CEO of one of the most positive organizations in the publishing industry. Yet, he once again took on the difficult role of supporting me and pushing me forward in the creation of something that matters. I am forever indebted to Steve Piersanti and the entire staff at Barrett-Koehler Publishers. It is an honor to be associated with such extraordinarily constructive professionals. Finally, there is Shauri. In launching this book, my daughter and I agreed on a bold experiment. She would become my manager. While living in the Republic of Georgia and raising a new baby, she threw herself into the task. There were daily phone calls in which she demanded that each page be rewritten, multiple times. The manuscript teems with her creativity and discipline. In gratitude, I dedicate this volume to my amazing and energizing daughter. Thank you.

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