

Lead, Manage or Dig

The HpO (High-performance Organization)

LEAD, MANAGE OR DIG—THE EXPEDITION TEAM—THE EXPEDITION—THE HpO (HIGH-PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION)—
CAPTAIN'S LOG—THE MOTLEY CREW—PIRATES & PEAK PERFORMERS—EMBARK OR DISEMBARK—COURSE HEADINGS

“The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity. The fears are paper tigers. You can do anything you decide to do. You can act to change and control your life; and the procedure, the process is its own reward.”

—Amelia Earhart

Lead, Manage or Dig

Throughout this book, a number of concepts are introduced, along with suggestions on how to implement each of them into your organization to improve financial and non-financial performance. There are, however, three key concepts at the root of all others which lend their name and purpose to this book.

-  **Lead** – refers to effectiveness (knowing what to do, when and where). Leaders are accountable for the direction an organization takes. They use strategic and risk management techniques to pursue innovative ideas and ensure profitability.
-  **Manage** – refers to efficiency (knowing how, with the least amount of waste). Managers' primary responsibility is to support the diggers to ensure they are able to execute their direct physical activities safely, with quality and efficiency. Their secondary responsibility is to establish and maintain a contributing culture and to ensure sustainability.
-  **Dig** – refers to the energy (contribution) or effort (work) expended to physically produce a product or service by a human resource (also known as the digger).

Obviously, in the absence of *what* to do, *where*, or *how*, the digger's value will be less than one-hundred percent. However, in the absence of the digger's direct energy or effort, the leader's and manager's value is *zero* because they are indirect overhead and, in most cases, unbillable. The emphasis must be on supporting the digger in any business, if financial and non-financial performance is to be sufficient as to qualify for an HpO designation.

The Expedition Team

Every organization, whether profit or not-for-profit, is unique. Often, an organization's greatest distinction is its culture; culture influences its level of financial and non-financial performance. Because culture is shaped by human interaction, it's not difficult to see how organizations differ, despite having similar business products or services.

How an organization's human resources lead, manage or dig depends on the culture within. This could be either an opportunity and a problem—an opportunity if the current culture is secure and a problem if it is not. An insecure culture indicates insufficient leadership, a lack of friendship, or both. Imagine yourself traveling alone to a strange country where you do not understand the culture, or the language. How secure would you feel? Now imagine travelling to that same country with your friends? Once more, consider how secure you would feel if you arrive, and a local person who understands the culture and speaks the language is there to guide you. Instead of feeling insecure, you would most likely be enthusiastic about contributing to whichever adventure lay before you. Furthermore, you and your friends would most likely be open to facing changing conditions with great physical and mental agility.

When it came time to mobilize our management team from Canada to contribute to a mining project underway in Madagascar, our friendships were well established. Upon our arrival, the leadership team on the ground had our assignments laid out for us. Gradually, we were introduced into the culture through integration with National employees. As conditions changed, as they do on mega-projects in developing countries, we were able to adjust quickly and often with enthusiasm.

The Expedition

Once you understand the HpO from a leader, manager or digger point-of-view—taking into account the subtle and not so subtle differences between traditional organizations and pirates and peak performers—you'll be better prepared to *set sail* (Treasure One) with Captain Cèò, where you'll learn to:

- assess your current charter, which outlines your project or business goals and objectives in terms of value and performance.
- establish performance improvement opportunities.
- create a vision, one that clearly and succinctly supports the end goal.
- establish a new charter, which supports your vision.
- develop crew charts to establish roles and responsibilities and rank and file.

As we continue our expedition we'll encounter the inevitable *winds of change* (Treasure Two), where we'll learn to:

- adjust the sails using a formal change management process.
- avoid a mutiny by dealing with fear and resistance to change.
- swab the decks and prepare for changing conditions.

When everything is finally shipshape we'll drop anchor for well-deserved shore leave. This is where we'll address the individual fears and collective desires of the crew, and take whatever time is necessary to establish a contributing culture through a process called *The Emergent Strategy*. Treasure Three (*Communication & Culture*) explains how to instill confidence—Captain Cèò will set an example, which we'll follow—to communicate our emerging strategies. You'll learn about:

- communicating effectively (from the crow's nest to the poop deck).
- a smuggler's culture (cultural change)
- a contributing culture and *The Emergent Strategy*.

- espoused values, basic assumptions, and observable artifacts.

Once the entire crew is fully informed, educated and inspired it's time to *plot a new course* (Treasure Four). Though a contributing culture, enthusiasm will begin to replace fear with courage, and a commitment to a new adventure will emerge; confirming that the captain's vision *is* achievable (the hidden HpO treasure). Here you will learn to:

- employ strategic planning to establish objectives.
- illustrate the objectives on a process flowchart (treasure map).
- define policies and practices.
- mitigate risk (defining tactics).

Treasure Five (*Navigational Aids*) will ensure you and your crewmates navigate uncharted waters without losing sight of the captain's vision. You'll learn about:

- harbingers (forecasting change and making course corrections).
- establishing key performance indices and instrument dashboards.
- re-adjusting the sails to manage changing conditions.

As we navigate toward the hidden HpO treasure, you and your crewmates will experience Treasure Six (*Manage Work, Lead People*). Here you'll learn to:

- manage work, lead people—establish a transformational environment where managers and diggers are empowered to practice their assigned activities.
- set expectations—the importance of aligning work with the resource most likely to be engaged and enthusiastic will ensure they meet safety, quality and efficiency targets.

Treasure Seven (*Hire, Train, Promote & Retain your Crew*) takes us almost within reach of the hidden HpO treasure where you and your crewmates will discover the secret to hiring, training, promoting and retaining employees. At our final destination, Treasure Eight (*Recognition & Reward*), Captain Cèo will disembark the HpO Vision and lead us toward a treasure so valuable—whether you lead, manage or dig—your new found wealth will be immeasurable.

The HpO (High-performance Organization)

An HpO (High-performance Organization) is a sustainable organization—profit or not-for-profit— whose employees are engaged *and* recognized for their individual and collective contributions. An HpO establishes a culture where everyone—leaders, managers *and* diggers—value strategy, culture, change, and agility as its guiding principles. Through innovation, they consistently achieve results better than those of their competitors in financial and/or non-financial performance. Of course there are those who believe the HpO must achieve *both* consistently over five years or more, but the reality is, five years in today's business, especially in the technology industry, is a lifetime. Better to track the non-financial performance—which demonstrates an organizations' culture—over a period of years, while measuring short-term strategic, innovative-related financial performance.

- 📖 **Strategy** – primarily the leader's responsibility with respect to establishing the direction an organization is heading, while mitigating risk. The leader's vision of where and when a new or

innovative idea is to be realized is summarized in a vision statement and communicated to the managers and diggers.

-  **Culture** – essentially the manager’s responsibility with respect to navigating uncharted territory—ensuring diggers are equipped to travel in harmony—to safely, and with quality and efficiency travel to the destination determined by the leader’s vision. A mission statement is created by managers, providing navigational beacons to guide the diggers under defined measurement criteria.
-  **Change** – an extension of strategy and culture, where everyone—leaders, managers and diggers—are receptive to strategic change and equally capable of reacting to tactical change as conditions dictate.
-  **Agility** – related to culture and change, where the ability to adapt quickly to strategic or tactical changes strengthens recognition of individual and collective contributions.

Why an HpO

Underperforming organizations are ubiquitous, many of them undesirable for investors and employees. Nevertheless, avid investors, anxious jobseekers and nervous employees risk association for a number of reasons. One of these reasons is potential, although it is not always obvious to everyone.

For a shareholder, an HpO offers a consistent, safe, generally high return on investment. For a director, an HpO offers stakeholders an opportunity to expand. For an employee, an HpO offers an opportunity not to work (as in labouring hard, expending effort versus contributing with passion) with the potential for performance bonuses and long-term association. Whether you are an investor, stakeholder or employee, you’ll benefit more from an HpO than you will from a traditional or peak-performing organization (*see Peak Performers & Pirates*).

Organizations with the most potential to become an HpO are the ones whose managers and diggers (the working-class) are able to establish a contributing culture. As I’ve stated previously, my purpose in writing this book is to assist the working-class by educating them with entertaining materials. As the contributing culture is established, leaders gain the opportunity to strategically position managers and diggers to achieve unprecedented performance (given their ability to navigate changing conditions with the least amount of resistance from internal or external sources). Any organization with a contributing culture is better positioned to achieve high-performance, regardless of the health of its balance sheet or P/E Ratio¹ (Price-Earnings Ratio).

Captain’s Log: 02-Oct-1825

43.7000° N, 79.4000° W—Town of York, Upper Canada

Captain Cèo arrived in the town of York as a passenger aboard the packet ship *Columbia* on warm autumn afternoon after a voyage that lasted more than three weeks. Immediately upon his arrival he was summoned to the Canada Company to be briefed on the state of the industry—on its progress, labor relations issues, economic situation, and natural resource status—at which time he was given his expedition charter, subject to

¹ For example, if a company is currently trading at \$43 a share and earnings over the last 12 months were \$1.95 per share, the P/E ratio for the stock would be 22.05 (\$43/\$1.95).

change (the need for a good supply of copper ore remained the primary goal, but whether the economic crisis looming in England and South America would cause an industry slowdown and force the cancelation of his expedition was yet to be determined).

On his second day in York—the first day of his final expedition—Captain Cèo awoke early, ate a hearty breakfast, then made his way down to the harbor where his new ship and crew awaited. Despite having slept little since his arrival he was spirited and enthusiastic.

The grey clapboard warehouse on the water's edge—a twenty minute walk from the York hotel—housed expedition and nautical materials on the first two floors, with offices and strategy rooms situated on the third and top floor. Captain Cèo climbed the exterior stairs and entered the second floor then marched down a scarily lit hallway and entered a panoramic gallery. He halted abruptly in its grand entrance. Morning rays of sun beamed-in on the dusty blackboards and navigation maps that covered an entire wall adjacent to floor-to-ceiling bookshelves; volumes of geographical texts and shipping manuals filled the wooden shelves. Nautical instruments and artifacts lay about as if the future had abandoned them—the largest of which were scattered on the hardwood floor, with smaller items on wooden benches and tables, which were haphazardly arranged in rows of three in classroom fashion. As he surveyed the room he blew out a loud breath, combing his fingers through his long greyish hair. Static silence snapped and crackled in the unusually dry air, shocking his hair between his fingers. After a moment of hesitation he stepped into the room, treading carefully toward the muffled sound of voices escaping from a narrow doorway on the opposite corner of the room.

It was a small room; a canteen of sorts. As Captain Cèo entered a group of men and women hushed their conversation and met his gaze with quizzical faces. An overenthusiastic young man was the first to introduce himself—an officer, or so it appeared. Captain Cèo exchanged pleasantries. More introductions were made and the room quickly energized with fervent conversation. Captain Cèo graciously accepted a large mug and filled it with a South American blend of coffee, listening over his shoulder to the half-dozen voices sharing their views on the upcoming adventure. Laughter, mixed with accented vocals made him shiver. He turned to share his own view on the upcoming expedition, which, after a moment of nervous laughter from the group, hung in the air like a fog rolling in on a grey dawn. Satisfied that he'd made a first, lasting impression, he gave a quick nod and followed the young officer out of the canteen, though the gallery and up to an office on the third floor.

The corner office was glazed with floor-to-ceiling windows, offering a magnificent view. Captain Cèo walked around a large mahogany desk ostentatiously situated in the middle of the room and stepped up to the edge of the glass, squinting out onto the harbor. The lake sparkled in the early dawn; its waters rippling with lazy waves splashing ceaselessly against the hull of the *HpO Vision* moored at the end of a vacant jetty. In a few months he and his motley crew would set sail for South America. Knowing it would be his last adventure, Captain Cèo promised himself to make this expedition his legacy. He turned away from the window, rubbing his bristly chin. First impressions must be recorded, he decided, dismissing the officer with a wave of his hand, plunking himself down at his desk. He removed his logbook from a beat-up leather bag and began to scribe.

I arrived on the shores of York in Upper Canada less than one week ago, in the midst of a stock market crash. Since then, England has closed six London banks and sixty country banks, mostly due to the speculative investments in Latin America, including the fictitious country of Poyais. I almost regret my decision to lead this expedition given the economic forecast. Alas, I have promised the king to take on this one last expedition to strengthen our position in the new world. Hence, I shall do everything in my power to ensure its success. I will recommend that we delay our expedition until spring.

Things to do:

- 1. Review the expedition charter.*
- 2. Inspect the HpO Vision.*
- 3. Meet with the motley crew.*
- 4. Review captain logs - previous expeditions.*

The Motley Crew

A motley crew is a cliché for a roughly organized assembly of characters. Typical examples of motley crews are pirates, Western posses, rag-tag mercenary bands, and freedom fighters. They may align with, include, or be (as a group) either the protagonist or the antagonist of the story.

Motley crews are, by definition, non-uniform and undisciplined as a whole. They are typified by containing characters of conflicting personality, varied backgrounds and, usually to the benefit of the group, a wide array of methods for overcoming adversity. Traditionally, a motley crew who in the course of a story comes into conflict with an organized, uniform group of characters, will prevail. This is generally achieved through the narrative using the various specialties, traits and other personal advantages of each member to counterbalance the (often sole) specialty of a formal group of adversaries².

Archetypical instances of the "motley crew" overcoming adversity are commonly found in fantasy and science fiction. A motley crew is also the model for most sports stories, in which the opposing and antagonistic team that is ultimately defeated is also much more organized and coherent.

The motley crew consists of leaders, managers and diggers, each with their own role. Achieving the leader's goal (vision with a date) safely, with quality, and the least amount of waste (lowest cost and shortest duration) is what lead, manage and dig and the HpO is all about. Regardless of what business you are in, someone must establish the goal (leader); someone must establish the best way to navigate to reach the goal (managers); someone must pursue the goal (diggers). In the absence of a leader (that is to say, in the absence of a goal), managers and diggers are left to figure out which direction to go. This results in confusion, lost time, cost overruns and numerous other non-performance and non-compliance issues.

² *For more see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motley_crew

Leaders (Rare)

Leaders are rare because they choose to go where managers and diggers fear to tread, albeit not without first establishing a strategic plan (treasure map) and mitigating risk.

A leader is *effective* (knowing the right thing to do) as opposed to *efficient* (knowing the best way to do it), which is a manager's responsibility. Leaders depend on their managers to assist with developing a strategic plan and mitigating risk (an HpO is both effective and efficient).

Leaders are typically extroverted, but not so much that in a way makes them talkative and loud. On the contrary, much of what leaders communicate is by way of silent, inspirational example. A leader's creative imagination, curiosity and desire for adventure are attractive, often inspirational to their followers (managers, diggers, investors). Leaders engage managers in such a way that many managers become leaders in their own right, using transformational³ leadership skills.

Leaders have an acute sense of the possible, seeing the goal as if through a powerful telescope. They visualize innovative concepts and products, which lead to profits and organizational sustainability. Every leader must have a clear, specific goal in mind at all times: a destination towards which all actions are directed. When the leader says "set sail," everyone must know which route to navigate. If the leader lacks a sense of direction, then the managers and diggers will wind up some distance from the treasure, like sailors without a compass.

Leaders know the value of their managers and diggers; without their managers and diggers to navigate and create, the leader's vision is nothing more than a dream. Knowing their managers' and diggers' value, however, does not always mean a leader will like and respect them. Many leaders are demanding, short-tempered and often difficult to get along with. Often, in an attempt to motivate their managers, leaders will not be kind (firmness and commitment require leaders to occasionally prod their managers). This is not to say that leaders are not nice (sympathetic). Unfortunately, leaders do not always have the luxury of establishing friendships, given their authoritative position. For this reason, leaders often rotate in and out of an organization's various business-units, occasionally sent in to an underperforming business-unit or facility to clean house (so to speak).

Leaders are recruited (not hired) as an asset to an organization, or fired as a liability. There is no in-between. If a leader were hired as a resource—a low risk investment that guarantees an average return—he or she would not be desirable to an organization, except as a manager or a digger. A true leader has the ability to add significant value to an organization through innovation, strategy and risk management. As it is with Captain Cèo, any discovery of land claims and buried treasure adds significant value, power and control to the kingdom. On the flipside, a shipwreck can quickly devalue or destroy its Monarchy's power, reputation and worth. Obviously, for this reason, leaders are well compensated. Most enjoy high salaries and stock options, among other perks. It is therefore expected that the decisions a leader makes will result in profitability and

³ Transformational relates to a leader's vision and the contributing culture of their managers and diggers in exchange for recognition and reward. As opposed to transactional, where leaders recognize the rewards their managers and diggers want from their work in exchange for performance.

sustainability, ensuring a substantial return on investment. Regardless of their success in leading the organization, leaders are a significant indirect overhead cost to the organization.

You cannot learn to be a leader. Your personality, desire, and passion will determine this. (You may be a manager with acquired leadership skills but, in the absence of the leader's personality, desire and passion, an organization will operate on a status-quo basis.) Therefore, it is important for leaders to evaluate themselves based on this information, as it is for the directors and shareholders to confirm.

The leader's primary responsibility—what he or she is accountable for—is strategy and risk management, aimed at the achievement of their established goals (establishing an effective treasure map, as it were).

On a final note, if a leader is successful in reaching the intended goal, the recognition is attributed to their managers and diggers—the teams, as it were. If a leader is not successful in reaching the intended goal, the leader accepts responsibility. Or, to put it another way, the captain always goes down with the ship.

Managers (Precious)

Two variations of management styles exist in today's modern business world; hence, two types of managers. The first style of management, and most prevalent, is a carry-over from years of industrial-age human resource management: the boss (transactional management style). Typically, this type of manager is a foreman or supervisor. They motivate and control their diggers through transactional management, most often in a traditional, policy-driven organization or peak performer where the diggers are at the bottom of the organization chart (subordinates of managers and leaders). The boss is focused on managing people rather than leading people and managing work.

The second style of management—transformational—is becoming more popular as organizations strive to enhance performance and retain employees. Basically the opposite of boss, these managers support their diggers from the bottom of the organization chart—managing work, leading people.

Managers are precious (those with a transformational management style) in that they understand how to establish a contributing culture. Most importantly, managers with a transformational management style support their diggers. These managers provide navigation, tools, training, information and any number of requirements, to ensure the diggers are safe and efficient; work is managed for risk, quality, timeliness, and cost.

Managers represent their respective internal departments, i.e., Stakeholders: *Accounting, Production/Operations, Maintenance, Safety/Environment, Procurement, Engineering, Product Development, Marketing, etc.*

Managers, too, are indirect (un-billable) overhead in an organization. In fact, much of an organization's indirect overhead can be attributed to the management level (junior, middle or senior). For this reason, it is important that the directors and shareholders validate this investment in terms of RoI (Return on Investment). It may surprise you that many organizations cannot calculate the RoI of its managers—neither gains nor losses are ever attributed to managers. This, of course, is unacceptable. Both intangible and tangible contributions by

management *can* be measured on a regular basis to determine performance ratings (see Treasure Five—*Navigational Aids*).

The manager's primary responsibility—what he or she is accountable for—is culture and navigation, aimed at the achievement of their leader's established goals (efficiently navigating the leader's treasure map, as it were).

Diggers (Priceless)

On the end of every shovel—metaphorically speaking—is a direct revenue-generating human resource, a.k.a. the digger. Behind the digger are the indirect resources (leaders and managers), who determine how much revenue is generated and how much of that revenue is turned into profit.

The digger is an essential resource in any organization. No amount of raw material, physical assets, capital, indirect resources, or market share can make a business in the absence of the digger. Diggers are the resources with the greatest potential to generate revenue—through direct physical effort—whether performing a service or producing a product.

Diggers *are* priceless, and for good reason. A digger, although an obvious human resource, is more of an asset to an organization given their ability to generate revenue *directly*. Their overhead cost to the company is less than the salary and benefits paid by their organization (depending on the type of business, e.g., Electrician, Salesperson, Lawyer, Investor, Carpenter, Garage Mechanic, Truck Driver). *Or*, a digger may be one that generates revenue *indirectly*. Their overhead is one hundred percent, but, due to their position, may influence revenue generation through performance (customer satisfaction), e.g., Flight Attendant, Waitress, Receptionist.

A digger may also be classified as an indirect asset who does not influence revenue generation, e.g., Janitor, Admin Assistant, Bookkeeper, Maintenance Mechanic or Production Operator. The digger resource does, however, have the potential to increase profit margins by being efficient and reliable, reducing risk and increasing quality (e.g., maintaining physical assets, thereby reducing operating and maintenance expenditures).

It's worth noting that, although a digger has the potential to contribute to an organization's profitability when supported by effective (leadership) and efficient (management), poor performance will most certainly deem them a liability. A digger whose performance does not reflect their organization's vision, stakeholders' mission, corporate values or principles (provided these actually exist) will reduce revenue and profits, and (in most cases) threaten sustainability.

A digger's poor performance may be attributed to poor attitude or, more often than not, to the organization itself, for any number of reasons: lack of training, lack of processes, lack of leadership and/or management (*see Pirates & Peak Performers*). Regardless, any digger deemed a liability *can* and will be transformed into an asset or resource simply by establishing an HpO.

Diggers are often members of an organized union, hourly paid, and almost never turn down the opportunity to work overtime. In fact, many diggers count on a specific number of overtime hours per year to boost their annual income. Many diggers earn more on an annual basis than their managers do. However, there is a point where monetary compensation as a reward is saturated.

Diggers *are* the hidden treasure. In a contributing culture, and with management support, diggers add immense value; everyone benefits. Security, wealth, happiness, and self-worth all result from the digger's ability to dig safely, efficiently, and with quality through enthusiastic engagement. The HpO owes a great deal to its diggers for its sustainability.

The digger's primary responsibility—what he or she is accountable for—is physical creation, aimed at the achievement of their manager's established objective (safely, with quality and efficiency): the adventure, as it were.

Pirates & Peak Performers

Navigating today's sea of competition, trying to stave off pirates and avoid peak performers, can take its toll on underperforming organizations. Pirates (competitors) will go to great lengths to undercut rates and prices, offering substandard merchandise or second-rate services in an attempt to increase revenues and profits. Peak performers, on the other hand, will take advantage of their status to mass produce new, innovative products at a low cost and offer a wider range of services—often at the expense of its employees and all too often with an inexpensive offshore labor force—to establish a greater market share.

The first step in avoiding the perils of pirates and peak performers is to identify them. This includes taking a step back and objectively assessing the status of your own organization, as well as your own personal commitment. Pirates are easily identifiable, given their aggressive marketing campaigns claiming to deliver cheap, fast *and* good products and/or services. Peak performers, on the other hand, know the pirate's business is not sustainable; they choose to avoid them, or destroy them, by offering only two options: cheap *and* fast. An HpO, however, understands that neither business creates long-term stability, offering only one option to its customers and clientele: *good*. This is not to say that an HpO cannot be price competitive, or that prompt delivery of its products and services cannot be achieved. On the contrary, because an HpO's primary focus is strategy plus culture, its *good* products and services are, by default, cheaper and faster to manufacture and deliver.

To the conscious observer, it may seem that a peak performer would be more profitable than an HpO, that offering good products and services alone would be neither profitable nor sustainable. However, despite both pirates & peak performers claiming good returns (revenues), many cannot claim sustainable profits and growth. Most are inefficient, have high employee turnover, and experience significantly high non-conforming production of products or delivery of services due to a lack of quality control and/or employees' unengaged, un-trained, inexperienced efforts.

Ironically, that which separates an HpO from pirates and peak performers is the very thing pirates and peak performers want to destroy (while at the same time wish to discover). Pirates and peak performers envy the

HpO's key success factor: its contributing-class culture, low employee turnover, and innovative products and services—a good reason to keep your treasure map under lock and key.

As previously stated, an HpO is a profit or not-for-profit business whose financial and non-financial success is sustainable (with growth), making it desirable for employees, vendors, investors, customers, and communities. An HpO's culture extends from the society in which it has been established, that is to say, the leader's strategy and the manager's culture align with the digger's desire for recognition through contribution. Any attempt to sink an HpO by pirates and peak performers—by kidnapping its crew, stealing its designs, robbing it of its customers or market share—will therefore be averted under the HpO flag (strategy plus culture).

Embark or Disembark

As I write this passage (as a manager for a peak performing organization), I am contemplating embarking on a new adventure: disembarking from my current full-time position to pursue a personal goal—something I have been moving toward for a number of years—of coaching leaders, managers and diggers in their pursuit to establish a contributing culture within their organization. I mention this only as a reminder that you have a choice. Either you embark on a change initiative to establish an HpO, or you disembark and set sail on another ship (or set sail on your own adventure). Adding value to an organization requires more than simply showing up; passion, desire, enthusiasm are all necessary to establish a win/win contributing culture and an HpO.

As a member of the working-class, I know first-hand how it feels to be controlled by the calendar and the clock, to trade my time for wages as an employee of traditional or peak performing organizations. For many years, I believed that this was the only possible way to survive. I believed that laboring with effort, versus contributing with energy and enthusiasm, for a regular paycheck and employment status defined success. Whether an organization valued my effort, commitment or contribution was not always evident. This left me, at times, wondering if I should embark on a new change initiative, or disembark on a new adventure.

At this time—regardless of your status (leader, manager, or digger)—you may be asking yourself similar questions, while at the same time wondering what you can do to improve your organization's performance alongside its working-class people. As a leader, you have the advantage of changing and plotting a new course. As a senior manager, you have the advantage of establishing a contributing culture. For the rest of us, however, as working-class people (managers and diggers), the opportunity to enhance performance through change is difficult. Status quo and high employee turnover continue to haunt the shop-floors and cubicles of traditional and peak performing organizations.

It is possible, however. With desire and commitment, working-class people can learn to *partially* establish an HpO from the bottom-up. Diggers can do this by creating a contributing culture where an increase in safety, quality and efficiency add significant value, regardless of how effective the organization may be. Gradually, as a contributing culture is established, senior managers and leaders will be encouraged to plot a new course to create a profitable and sustainable business (an HpO in its ultimate context).

If you find yourself with one foot on the dock and the other on the gangplank, now is a good time to decide, before we set sail. Should you embark on a new adventure? Or should you disembark and keep your fingers

crossed that, when your ship comes in, it's the *HpO Vision* captained by a leader as innovative as Captain Cèò?

ATON: *weather the storm, as long as you're heading out of it...*

Course Readings

1. Determine which status of employee or contractor best describes you, your role, and your value to the organization: leader, manager or digger?
2. Determine which type of organization you are currently associated with: pirate, peak performer, traditional, underperformer, HpO.
3. Determine which culture best describes your current organization: transactional or transformational.
4. Prepare, either to embark or disembark. Keep in mind, however, you may end up having to walk the plank.