



Managing and Leading Tomorrow

By Paul Knudstrup

What skills will managers and leaders need in the months and years ahead? The accelerating pace of organizational change, the turbulent economic environment, and the rapidly evolving restructuring of traditional industries all require a flexible, adaptable, results focused management style.

Outsourcing will continue and expand as developing countries become more competitive. Constant professional development will be a huge key to individual and organizational success. Learning, training, retraining, getting up to speed quickly and thriving in a continually evolving environment are becoming mission-critical skills for more and more managers and leaders. Shifting constituencies, multiple stakeholders, new markets, new competitors . . . the list goes on. Communicating successfully with a wider focus, managing virtual teams separated by distance, culture, and relationship to the organization (think consultants, part-timers, freelance, contract, service bureau, etc.) and a workforce who understands that the world has changed, and former notions of loyalty to the organization are no longer viable.

Currently nearly 25% of the U.S. workforce is made up of freelancers, the self-employed, project-workers, or independent contractors. Some predictions indicate this percentage may approach 50% of our workforce by the year 2011. Those same predictions say 15% of us will be employed in large organizations with 35% of us in small organizations. While large organizations will continue to be an important part of the economy, it is the smaller organizations that are the economic engine of the future. Managing and leading these lean, growing, change-friendly organizations of today and tomorrow calls for a skill set similar to yet dramatically different from the large, bureaucratic organizations.

For those of you who are interested in discussing, exploring, or learning more about all of this, we invite you to join a virtual roundtable. Your ideas and suggestions are welcome and actively solicited. [Let us know what you think!](#)