



The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else In Business

By Patrick M. Lencioni

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There is a competitive advantage out there, arguably more powerful than any other. Is it superior strategy? Faster innovation? Smarter employees? No, *New York Times* best-selling author, Patrick Lencioni, argues that the seminal difference between successful companies and mediocre ones has little to do with what they know and how smart they are and more to do with how healthy they are. In this book, Lencioni brings together his vast experience and many of the themes cultivated in his other best-selling books and delivers a first: a cohesive and comprehensive exploration of the unique advantage organizational health provides.

Simply put, an organization is healthy when it is whole, consistent and complete, when its management, operations and culture are unified. Healthy organizations outperform their counterparts, are free of politics and confusion and provide an environment where star performers never want to leave. Lencioni's first non-fiction book provides leaders with a groundbreaking, approachable model for achieving organizational health—complete with stories, tips and anecdotes from his experiences consulting to some of the nation's leading organizations. In this age of informational ubiquity and nano-second change, it is no longer enough to build a competitive advantage based on intelligence alone. The Advantage provides a foundational construct for conducting business in a new way—one that maximizes human potential and aligns the organization around a common set of principles.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1091 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2012-03-13
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.10" w x 5.90" l, 1.00 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 240 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Q&A with Patrick Lencioni, Author of *The Advantage*



Patrick Lencioni, Author

Your other books have all been fables, but *The Advantage* isn't. Why?

Unlike my other books, *The Advantage* is not written as a fable because the nature of the subject it covers is just too broad to fit into one story. In the past, I've taken on slightly more contained and limited issues--teamwork, meetings, employee engagement--but this time I'm taking a much more holistic, comprehensive approach to improving organizations. Still, I've used stories about real organizations to bring the points to life, and I'm hoping that readers enjoy those stories and find them helpful in learning and applying the principles.

Do you consider your company healthy?

Yes, I consider my company healthy. And like any healthy company, we're messy and imperfect. We argue sometimes, we make mistakes, we try things that don't work. But we know who we are, what we believe in, and what we're trying to accomplish, so we're able to recover from setbacks quickly and grow stronger through conflict and adversity. I'm glad to say that we've always believed in living the principles that we espouse. And though we can sometimes forget and feel like the cobbler's children without shoes, we have certainly worked hard to become a healthy organization, and we continue to do so every day.

Having worked with companies for so many years, is there anything that still surprises you?

Yes, I still get surprised by what I see in companies I work with, even after all these years. Some of that surprise is just a function of the fact that no two people, and thus no two organizations, are exactly alike. The nuances are interesting and keep me on my toes. But ironically, the biggest surprise I get is being reminded again and again that even the most sophisticated companies struggle with the simplest things. I guess it's hard

for me to believe that the concepts I write and speak about are so universal. I don't know that I'll ever come to terms with that completely.

How can someone who's not in the upper levels of their organization make an impact on its health?

While it's true that no one can influence an organization like the leader, and that without a leader's commitment and involvement, organizational health cannot become a reality, there are many things that employees deeper in an organization can do to make health more likely. First, they have to speak truth upward in the organization. Most leaders, even the struggling ones, want to get better. They're not leading and managing in the way they really want to, even if they don't come out and say so. When an employee is courageous and wise enough to come to them with respect, kindness and honesty, most leaders will be grateful. Without honest upward feedback, a leader cannot get better. Beyond that, people deeper in an organization can focus on making their own departments healthier, and not getting too distracted or discouraged by their inability to change things outside of their "circle of influence", as Stephen Covey says. By focusing on their own departments and their own areas of influence, they provide others in the organization with an example to follow, and they put themselves in a position to be promoted and to have even greater influence.

What's something I can do tomorrow morning to get started?

The first thing anyone can do, immediately, to begin the process of making their organizations healthier, is to begin with themselves and their team. A leader has to understand and embrace the concept of being vulnerable, which inspires trust on the leadership team. That trust is the foundation for teamwork, which is one of the cornerstones of organizational health. If a leader cannot be vulnerable, cannot admit his or her mistakes, shortcomings or weaknesses, others will not be vulnerable and organizational health becomes impossible.

Review

Consulting executive Lencioni (*The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*) has an answer for floundering businesses—aim for organizational health. In other words, businesses that are whole, consistent, and complete, with complementary management, operations, strategy, and culture. Today, the vast majority of organizations have more than enough intelligence, experience, and knowledge to be successful. Organizational health is neither sexy nor quantifiable, which is why more people don't take advantage. However, improved health will not only create a competitive advantage and better bottom line, it will boost morale. Lencioni covers four steps to health: build a cohesive leadership team, create clarity, overcommunicate clarity, and reinforce clarity. Through examples of his own experiences and others', he addresses the behaviors of a cohesive team, peer-to-peer accountability, office politics and bureaucracy and strategy, and how all organizations should strive to make people's lives better. This smart, pithy, and practical guide is a must-read for executives and other businesspeople who need to get their proverbial ducks back in a row. (Apr.) (*Publishers Weekly*, 1/16/12)

From the Inside Flap

"Organizational health will one day surpass all other disciplines in business as the greatest opportunity for improvement and competitive advantage."

This is the promise of *The Advantage*, Patrick Lencioni's bold manifesto about the most unexploited opportunity in modern business. In his immensely readable and accessible style, Lencioni makes the case that there is no better way to achieve profound improvement in an organization than by attacking the root causes of dysfunction, politics, and confusion.

While too many leaders are still limiting their search for advantage to conventional and largely exhausted areas like marketing, strategy, and technology, Lencioni demonstrates that there is an untapped gold mine sitting right beneath them. Instead of trying to become smarter, he asserts that leaders and organizations need to shift their focus to becoming healthier, allowing them to tap into the more-than-sufficient intelligence and expertise they already have.

The author of numerous best-selling business fables including *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* and *Death by Meeting*, Lencioni here draws upon his twenty years of writing, field research, and executive consulting to some of the world's leading organizations. He combines real-world stories and anecdotes with practical, actionable advice to create a work that is at once a great read and an invaluable, hands-on tool. The result is, without a doubt, Lencioni's most comprehensive, significant, and essential work to date.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jacquelyn Lopez:

Now a day people who Living in the era just where everything reachable by connect with the internet and the resources inside can be true or not require people to be aware of each info they get. How individuals to be smart in acquiring any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Reading a book can help persons out of this uncertainty Information specially this The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else In Business book as this book offers you rich details and knowledge. Of course the knowledge in this book hundred % guarantees there is no doubt in it you may already know.

Maureen Jones:

Information is provisions for those to get better life, information presently can get by anyone from everywhere. The information can be a expertise or any news even a problem. What people must be consider when those information which is inside former life are challenging to be find than now is taking seriously which one is acceptable to believe or which one typically the resource are convinced. If you obtain the unstable resource then you get it as your main information you will have huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen with you if you take The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else In Business as your daily resource information.

Mattie Peters:

In this time globalization it is important to someone to receive information. The information will make you to definitely understand the condition of the world. The condition of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of recommendations to get information example: internet, newspaper, book, and soon. You can view that now, a lot of publisher in which print many kinds of book. The actual book that recommended to your account is The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else In Business this reserve consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This book was represented how does the world has grown up. The vocabulary styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. Typically the writer made some analysis when he makes this book. Here is why this book suited all of you.

Alberto Turcotte:

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