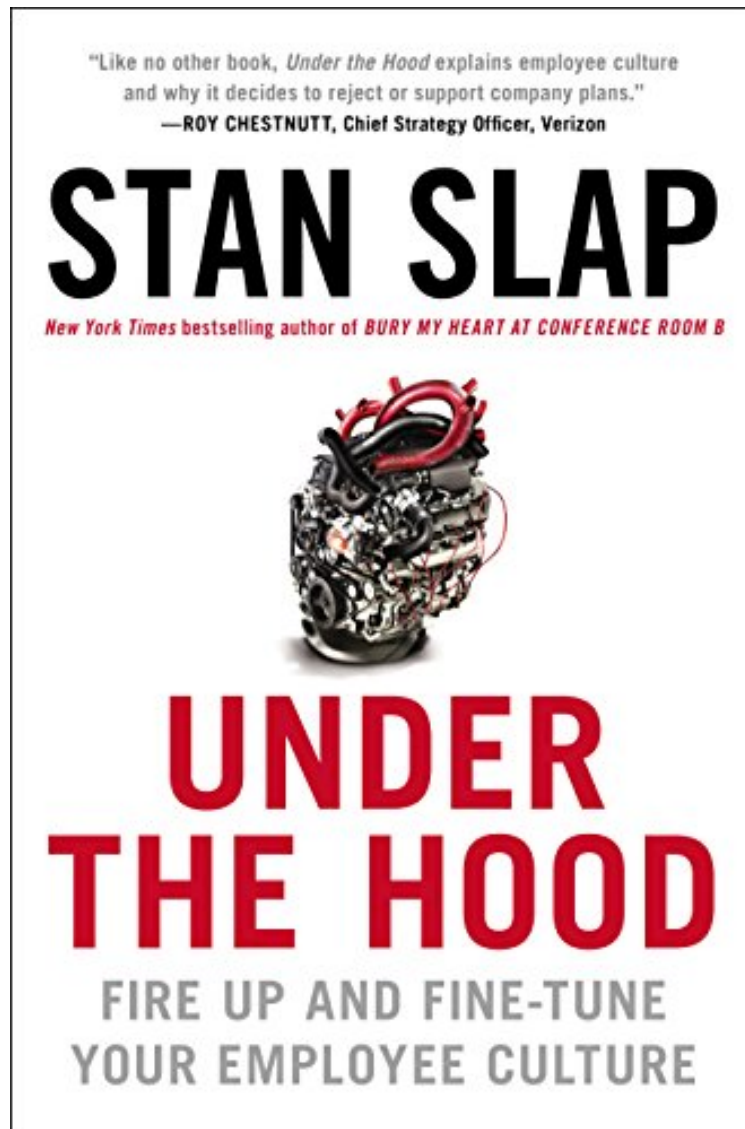


Under the Hood: Fire Up and Fine-Tune Your Employee Culture

Stan Slap

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Stan Slap : Under the Hood: Fire Up and Fine-Tune Your Employee Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Under the Hood: Fire Up and Fine-Tune Your Employee Culture:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The scientific rigor of a physician with a stethoscope . . . By Gary Whitlock
About a year ago I bought a new car -- a pretty nice one. It had that amazing new car small, and there were all kinds of cool gadgets and features that made me wonder how I had put up with my beat up Camry for so long. At around six months I was driving and the engine light came on. I was terrified at the the thought that my dream car

wasn't perfect. There was something wrong. So I rushed home and scoured the owner's manual hoping to discover what was the matter. The only wisdom to be gleaned was the counsel, "If engine light comes on, see your dealer." So I went to the dealer, and I tried to explain the nuances that I had observed (as though I was helping, ha!). He opened the hood and graciously suggested that I stop talking. He called over the lead mechanic and I marveled as he reverently studied the engine and listened carefully with the same scientific rigor of a physician with a stethoscope. Aside from the manual, this master automotive artisan knew what to look for. And in a matter of minutes he had diagnosed my issue and I drove home smiling sans engine light. Many management books read like an automobile owner's manual -- they give a general direction that can probably enhance your business to some degree. But when you're dealing with something as nebulous and critical as employee culture, you want someone looking under your hood who is a culture maestro. And that is exactly what I found in reading Stan Slap's latest offering. As you digest the pages, you feel that Stan is so familiar with YOUR situation that it's as though he's personally listening to your corporate engine purr (or sputter). And his diagnosis will keep you racing on the road of cultural and business growth.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This book tells you how to solve this problem: You can't sell it outside if you can't sell it inside. By Natascha Thomson I was lucky to have access to a pre-release copy of the book. It's an amazing read, full of insights but also compassion. How many business authors make the case for humanity? And it seems heartfelt and genuine. #EmployeeCulture is no longer just a buzzword as Stan Slap has filled it with meaning. My favorite line is: "You Can't Sell it Outside if You Can't Sell it Inside". As somebody who has been working in Silicon Valley for over 15 years, I've seen the results of not focusing on your employees too many times. A company stating at the all-hand that "we have the best people" does nothing for an employee culture. As I like to say, every company I've worked for told me they had "the best people" and the only constant was me :-). Seriously, we all have worked with people who don't pull their weight, and then being told "we have the best people" can only make you cynical. But what can a company do? Well, you'll need to read Stan's book to get the answer, but here an insight that stuck with me: "Want your employees to buy a new management goal? You have to know how to sell it to them. This means selling to your employee culture - knowing how the culture works and how to work the culture." I don't want to take away too much, so I will close by sharing my main personal take away from Under the Hood: The term "customer-centric" is probably one of the most misunderstood terms in business. Everybody talks about being customer-centric and tell their employees to do the same. But that alone does not work!!! A company can only be customer-centric if it focuses on their employee culture first. Focusing solely on the customer and assuming employees are happy and on board with everything, or even worse, are happy to be told what to do and think, will backfire. "You can't sell it outside if you can't sell it inside". Wise words. Don't miss this book.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Slap's latest book does not disappoint! By 8.5 Mile An amazing book by an inspired leader. Slap reminds us that it's the PEOPLE within companies that have values, not the companies themselves. Complete with real-company stories about what it is to have a healthy respect for employee culture, and what that can do for the prosperity of the company. Hint: it starts with you, leader.

You can't sell it outside if you can't sell it inside. You want maximum business performance? Look under the hood and you'll find your employee culture: it is the power that drives the enterprise engine. To harness that rumbling power you've got to solve the mystery of what an employee culture actually is, how it operates and how to move it forward. These are the keys that this book will put right in your hands. Renowned business culture expert Stan Slap knows the difference between understanding your employees and understanding your employee culture. The distinction isn't semantics; it's the key to whether your strategies will succeed or fail. This myth-busting book reveals why an employee culture is an independent organism with its own rules, beliefs, and motivations -- and the power to make or break any management plan (and any manager right along with it). Slap shows you how to get whatever you want from your employee culture, whether it's improved accountability, innovation, flexibility, resilience, energy, loyalty, or trust. Along the way he solves mysteries that have puzzled managers since the first Mesopotamian farmer hired some help, including: Why does an employee culture really resist change? What does it care about more than money? Why does it respond to leadership differently than to management? How does it talk to itself, and what does it mean when it won't talk to you? Why are company values the most dangerous threat to gaining its trust? If you have a wonderful employee culture, this book will help you scale it. If you have a troubled employee culture, this book will help you fix it. If you have an employee culture under pressure, this book will help you ease it. If you have a new employee culture, this book will help you shape it. And if you are investing in a company, this book will help you protect your greatest purchasable asset. Under the Hood is informed by immaculate research, including surveys of more than 15,000 employees from companies the world over. It's packed with original tactics that have driven performance for many organizations and countless managers. And it includes jaw-dropping inside stories of employee cultures from the likes of Samsung, Oracle, Progressive, CNN during wartime, Paul McCartney's band, and the Super Bowl film crew. It's all delivered in classic Stan Slap style: profound and provocative, heartfelt and often hysterical. This is not simply a management book; it is the business case for humanity. Management advice doesn't get realer or more important than this. From the

Hardcover edition.

"I have never met anyone who knows more about employee culture than Stan Slap. If you want your own culture to stay great or get great, you must read this book."—ROBERT HOHMAN, chief executive officer, GLASSDOOR.COM "A supportive relationship between a company and its employee culture is essential to business success. Under the Hood is the essential guide to achieving it."—CRAIG JELINEK, president and CEO, COSTCO "Under the Hood is a major accomplishment. This is serious new information about how to create enterprise success. It belongs in the hands of every manager responsible for their company's performance."—TODD GEBHART, vice chairman, INTEL SECURITY "Wow. Stan Slap has a powerful message about improving employee culture and delivers it in a way only he can: with passion, punch, and respect. Under the Hood is a turbo-charged ride from a master communicator, with important lessons for every leader."—KEN BLANCHARD, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*; and *The Secret: What Great Leaders Know and Do* "Employee culture is the most important asset of any company. If you want to know how to make the most of it in your company, Under the Hood is a must-read book—and a must-heed game changer."—DR. THOMAS GIRST, head of cultural engagement, BMW GROUP "The more you read Under the Hood, the less you'll understand how you ever got along without it."—JOE BERGER, president, Americas, HILTON "Slap's advice, guidance and directions are truly priceless. This is one of the most important business books ever written."—JASON JENNINGS, New York Times bestselling author of *The Reinventors* and *Think Big, Act Small* "Under the Hood provides a clear and compelling guide to putting your employee culture into motion. If you don't want to use hope as a strategy, read this book."—JAMES CURLEIGH, president, LEVI'S, LEVI STRAUSS "Under The Hood is a book that needs to be highlighted, quoted, referenced, remembered, and applied on a daily basis."—KIP KNIGHT, president, HR BLOCK RETAIL "This remarkable book will help you supercharge what your employee culture has to offer your business. It is vital to a well-run organization."—VITTORIO SEVERINO, chief operating officer, North America, HSBC About the Author STAN SLAP is president of the international consulting company SLAP, renowned for achieving maximum commitment in manager, employee, and customer cultures. His work has produced legendary impact for a who's who of successful companies—the kind that don't include "Patience" on their list of corporate values. He is the author of the New York Times bestseller *Bury My Heart at Conference Room B*. He lives in San Francisco. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. New York Times bestseller; Wall Street Journal bestseller; USA Today bestseller; 800-CEO-READ best in category; Inc. Best of the Year list; Fast Company Best of the Year list; Miami Herald Top 10 business books list; Soundview Top 30 best list; Booklist Top Ten Business Books of the Year: Starred; Publisher's Weekly: "must read"; A NOTE TO MANAGERS WHO DON'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO READ THIS SENTENCE ALL STUFF, NO FLUFF Your employee culture is not the same thing as your employees and it is far more important as a driver of business impact. This book will finally explain how an employee culture actually works and exactly how to work it. It will provide plenty of new insight for you, and it will allow you to get an astonishing level of commitment from your own culture, along with the flexibility, resiliency, accountability, and innovation that come with it. This is a book about results. MAKE IT YOUR OWN OF course I want you to cancel every listing on your calendar, bar the doors, and read this book start to finish in one jaw-dropping, life-changing lost weekend of epiphanies. That will give you the ultimate understanding of culture, which is the ultimate key to your success as a manager. But if you're facing an urgent performance issue, you can also self-curate these pages for focused help. Go right to the Original Sin to get the essential explanation of what your employee culture really is, and why it chooses to buy or reject any management plan. Go right to any of the other Seven Sins for fast tactical steps you can take around issues like change, communication, and compensation. Go right to any of the Four Vulnerabilities to fix circumstances of unusual stress on your company. What I want most for you is the success you want for yourself. Let's go. INTRODUCTION THURSDAY MORNING. 7:30 a.m. I've been asked to an urgent meeting with the senior strategic team of a very well-known IT company. * They are not happy. "Seriously, this strategy could be a matter of life and death for us," one of them explains earnestly. "We've made some mistakes, okay? And we've been slow. We've got one big move left, and if we don't get it right we're going to be irrelevant in a competitive market and never recover." "We do have a turnaround plan, and we know it's really good," he insists confidently. "We've actually had it for a while, but we've waited to implement it until we got the whole company on board. It's going to need a lot of change from our people." "So we did everything right," chimes in another. "The big strategy kickoff, then the regional strategy road shows, then the employee intranet strategy site. We did the strategy T-shirts, the strategy posters, the strategy mouse pads, the strategy screen savers, and the strategy wallet cards." "We did those balloons," adds a third. "That's right! We did the strategy balloons for

everybody.” On the eve of execution we decided to audit our employee culture; they continue. “Not because people didn’t know about the strategy. You’d have to be brain-dead not to know about the strategy; it’s all been talking about for eight months. It’s that we’re sure our turnaround is going to work. This is going to be taught as a case study someday, and we figured some proof about all the patience we showed under pressure would make it even better.” So we polled our entire employee population and asked only one question: Do you understand our new strategy? When the answer came back, it was overwhelming. “No.” What is wrong with these people? they moan. Nothing is wrong with the employee culture. What’s wrong is that the executive team didn’t read the whole response. The employee culture wasn’t actually saying, “We don’t understand the strategy. You’re using too many big words.” The employee culture was saying, “We don’t understand why we should get up for making the strategy happen.” With all the rah-rah and blah-blah, management forgot to acknowledge the mantra of successful selling: You must respect why your customer buys. And the mantra of this book: You can’t sell it outside if you can’t sell it inside. 1, 2, 10! Increase revenue. Increase margin. Don’t just make market share; take it. Improve customer reputation. Improve product quality. Get to market faster. Put major distance between you and the competition. Become one united team across business units. What employee could argue with the irrefutable logic of these corporate performance strategies? In a perfect world, your own employees would immediately grasp the logic and devote themselves wholeheartedly to achieving them. Wake up, wipe the drool from your desk, and say “hello” to reality. In the real world, neither business logic nor management authority nor any compelling competitive urgency will convince an employee culture to adopt a corporate cause as if it were its own. In the killing field between company concept and employee commitment lies many a failed strategic plan. Want your employees to buy a new management goal? You have to know how to sell it to them. This means selling to your employee culture—knowing how the culture works and how to work the culture. You’re not just talking about a bunch of employees. When they form a relationship with a company, employees become a culture and are far more self-protective, far more intelligent, and far more resistant to standard corporate methods of influence. A culture is a distinct organizing framework that gives your people a motivation fundamentally different from the company’s motivation. It’s not late-breaking news that you have employees, but it’s only when you truly understand them as a culture that problems once considered chronic are finally resolved, and opportunities once considered unattainable are finally realized. The difference between understanding your employees and understanding your employee culture is the difference between whether your performance goals succeed or fail. FROM MACRO TO UH-OH You’re going to need that understanding. Like any company, your company regularly bets its life on the ability to roll out new strategies to the marketplace—ahead of schedule, ahead of budget, on the heads of your competitors. Yet most strategies in most companies don’t really work. They don’t really do what they were supposed to do, don’t really cost what they were supposed to cost, and don’t really happen when they were supposed to happen. They only look like they’re moving forward because they’re being slammed from behind by the next strategy. This is because even the smartest companies subscribe to the most dangerous strategic myth: A strategy has to be planned well to be successful. In fact, a strategy has to be implemented well to be successful. Successful implementation starts with being able to enroll your employee culture in fierce support of the strategy. If you can do this, you’re well on the way to achieving strategic insurance. If you can’t, and you think any strategic or performance goal will be successful without the hard-core support of this particular group, you’re building a base camp on Mt. Delusional. WHAT THIS BOOK WILL DO FOR YOU This isn’t another book about how to successfully manage employees; it’s a unique book about how to successfully manage an employee culture, which is a whole different thing. Yet an employee culture is the same thing whether you have two employees, 200, or 20,000, or whether your employee culture is located in Manhattan, Mumbai, or Machu Picchu. And the best ways to gain its ultimate commitment are the same, whether you are a senior manager with responsibility for the entire company or you are a line manager with responsibility for a single team. If you have a wonderful employee culture, this book will help you scale it. If you have a troubled employee culture, this book will help you fix it. If you have an employee culture under pressure, this book will help you ease it. If you have a new employee culture, this book will help you shape it. And if you are investing in a company, this book will help you protect your greatest purchasable asset. There is often frustration among managers about why an employee culture acts the way it does: Why can’t it just dependably support what’s important to the business? But it’s not up to an employee culture to understand the business logic; it’s up to the business to understand an employee culture’s logic. This book will explain exactly why your own employee culture may choose to resist supporting a strategy or performance goal and explain practically and tactically what to do about it. Not just to gain your employee culture’s support. To gain your employee culture’s maximum, dependable, adrenalized support. Along with frustration, there is a belief among some managers that there’s a genetic limit to an employee culture’s willingness to give sustained commitment and loyalty. There’s not, of course, but this book is going to blow the cap right off any limitation. You’ll learn how to get whatever you want from your employee culture, whether it’s greater commitment to the company and its goals, increased accountability, increased innovation, rapid

acceptance of change, improved speed and accuracy of execution, or representation of your company's best intentions to your customers. Whatever plan you have for increased performance, I can assure you it will be far better protected and promoted by your people. I can assure you because for years I have been applying these same proprietary methods in many of the world's most successful, demanding organizations in information technology, financial services, entertainment, mobile, manufacturing, and retail—creating large, sustained metrics impact for companies that don't include "Patience" on their list of corporate values.

MYSTERY ACHIEVEMENTS As a kid I was notorious in my family for certain behaviors. One of them was being very hard to bluff: Parents: "Eat your vegetables; there are people starving in China." Me: "Name one." Another was an obsessive curiosity about how and why things work. How did it come to be? Where is the power? How can it go faster, do more, or do something new? How do you fire it up, fine-tune or fix it? What is under the hood? I carried this obsession into adulthood and into business. It causes the results my company gets for our clients today. That's because I found the ultimate answer to how and why things work. An employee culture is the power that drives the enterprise engine. Fire it up and it will take you wherever you want to go; fine-tune or fix it and it will take you there faster. You want maximum business performance? Look under the hood and you'll find your employee culture. Under the hood there is both power and mystery. To harness the rumbling power of your employee culture you've got to solve the mystery of what that culture actually is, how it operates, and how to move it forward. These are the keys that this book is going to put right in your hands and that's a real good thing. A company that will achieve long-term progressive success without them? Name one.

LET'S MAKE IT PERSONAL My company is renowned for achieving maximum commitment in manager, employee, and customer cultures. That's what we do; the reason I do it is because I believe that, short of homicide, the worst thing one human being can do to another is to make them feel small: You're not. You can't. You won't ever be. This is a killing of the soul, of hope, and of potential. Domination and disregard drive me absolutely nuts, whether it's committed by individuals or by organizations. The world works, and it is affected by work. A person made to feel small on the job doesn't stay on the job. These same people are parents, partners, neighbors, and voters: The toxic impact is incalculable. Nothing—no motive, no circumstance, and no position of authority—grants the right to cause it. The passion that fuels my work is that nobody should be diminished by business—working in it or buying from it. This may be a noble sentiment, but it's too unproductive to interest the typical profitable enterprise, so I long ago translated it into a series of high-impact ROI methods that most definitely do. When an employee culture is repositioned as a newly precious, workable asset, a company will naturally protect it, same as with any asset. An employee culture can't be protected without protecting the humanity it represents and without managers reclaiming their own humanity where it may have disappeared in the labyrinth of their job descriptions. If we lose humanity in business, we're all doomed. If we save it—company by company and manager by manager—we will have saved ourselves. In case you fear this icy hand of altruism will grip your own company by the throat and choke the life out of revenue, not to worry: We're talking here about making the business case for humanity. In any environment where meaning is determined by metrics, the point of view and processes in this book are going to cause measurable, sustainable results.

BETTER YET, LET'S MAKE IT PERSONAL TO YOU James Bond is strapped to the table as a laser beam relentlessly moves to cut him in half. As it's about to reorganize critical parts of his anatomy, Bond frantically offers, "If you kill me, they'll just send another agent to take my place." Goldfinger gives him the villainous eye roll. "I don't think so, Mr. Bond." "Can you afford to take that chance?" Bond counters, and the laser is shut off. If you're a senior manager and all the last major strategies or critical performance goals in your company worked just like they were supposed to, maybe you don't need to leverage the true motivations of your employee culture. But they probably didn't, and considering that your company's success in a hypercompetitive market—as well as your own success and legacy—could depend on the next one, can you afford to take that chance?