

# Competing to Win

## Lessons Learned for Reaching the Next Level of Organizational Performance



*For many years I worked with Ted in Switzerland. His ability to boil down most complicated issues of management to the key points fascinates me time after time. He is able to deliver clear strategic advice without becoming nebulous or losing contact to the operative grounds of success. As a lecturer for senior executive programs in Swiss universities, as well as a consultant, he used his experience gained by working with a lot of renowned companies around the world to provide valuable insight and support.*

—Dr. Lothar Natau, CEO, Natau Management and Bereitungs GmbH, Switzerland

- 1. What does it take to build and maintain a truly enduring and continuously successful business – one that stands the test of time, turbulence and change and despite all that has continued to set the standard for performance and excellence by which other organizations are measured?*
- 2. What really makes your organization unique? What really distinguishes us in the minds of our customers or other key stakeholders – makes us stand out in a way that motivates customers to want to do business or have a relationship with us rather than a competitor? What are those most important factors which form the foundation of that uniqueness and our competitiveness as an organization?*
- 3. Have you and your leadership team described your business model in a clear and understandable manner that any employee could grasp? Have you examined each component of that business model to identify the value it adds to the long-term future success of your business? This includes the leadership team itself, culture, values, beliefs, core shared purpose, renewal (integration of innovation, adaptation and learning), principles of engagement (sustainability, governance, corporate social responsibility), and vision. What are your conclusions? What actions should you now take?*

These questions and over 150 more equally stimulating and change-provoking questions are raised and explored within this concise text. As senior executives, you always have many areas where you can focus your attention—paths along which you can guide your organization to enable it to ultimately reach its full competitive potential. Guide your organization to its competitive potential by answering the questions within this text and by applying Dr. Ted Marra's approach to developing a working business model and crystal clear vision.

Dr. Ted Marra has lived and worked in 37 countries during the past 40 years, helping over 155 organizations from virtually every industry and sector. Here is his summary of this first book in the Wisdom Chronicles Series:

*This book is really about focus. Forget all the latest theories. To a large extent, the “secrets” to success have never really been secrets. It’s often about getting back to basics—doing the right things for the business and doing them right. This is the essence of what Peter Drucker considers “leadership.” In addition to my hands-on experience, I have read all the thought leaders: Hamel, Porter, Kotter, Collins and more. I have been in conferences all over the world, interacting with the likes of Juran and Welch as well as many others. All of that, plus my own reflections, and distilling it down has been a lifetime pursuit. This book contains that distillation of my observations providing the reader with what I believe are truly the vital few keys to long-term organizational success – competitiveness and profitable growth and overall higher performance across the board.*

Well known strategic facilitator and organizational mentor Ted Marra has taught and lectured in a number of universities in Boston, Detroit, the UK, Croatia and Switzerland. His focus has been on Strategic Leadership and Strategic Stakeholder Relationships. He has consulted widely with some 155 organizations in 37 countries over 40 years and has led transformation initiatives in some of the world's most prominent companies. Ted was Senior Policy Advisor for President Reagan and has held management positions with such organizations as General Motors, Goodyear, and Firestone.

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