

Preface

Great companies and organizations project a strong sense of themselves that everyone can recognize: Disney's imagination, Nike's drive, IBM's methodical dependability, or Nordstrom's service. These companies know who they are, and they behave that way consistently, day in and day out. Successful, enduring companies have at their core a personality that we connect with and understand. In fact, all companies have a personality—because companies are people, too.

While there are some interesting points of comparison between the personalities of corporations versus human individuals, the real significance of the title of this book pertains to the relationship between an organization and the people who get the work done. At its core is an 84-item questionnaire that will assess the innate strengths, growth opportunities, character, and values of your company. The idea is to get business leaders to recognize the personality of the company they serve and to use this information to take performance to a higher level.

This book will help you discover, articulate, and live your company's personality. It is written for leaders who want their companies to thrive over the long term, regardless of who is at the helm. It is for inquisitive leaders who know there is something special deep within their companies that people need to understand and connect with. It is for involved leaders who jump in the trenches and work these concepts into every fiber of the company. Finally, this book is for leaders who are willing to check their egos at the door and set aside their own personal preferences in favor of leading the company according to its own set of values and preferences.

You can use the information you will learn about your company to strengthen your brand, know what to change and what to keep, and attract and keep employees and customers who share your values. Use it to differentiate yourself from your competition and

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to gain consistency in behavior and decisions from your staff. On a personal level, use it to see what kind of leader you really are—whether you're leading the company from your own biases and preferences or are acting as its steward, building on the qualities and characteristics that have brought it this far and will carry it through the future.

You can trust the information you read because it's based on research. Companies Are People, Too® (CAP2) is used at more than 100 organizations, each of which has validated the accuracy of its profile. The instrument is subjected to an ongoing scientific validation process for reliability and continuous improvement. This work has been greatly encouraged and influenced by the research platforms and findings of Jim Collins and Jerry Porras, reported in their book *Built to Last*,¹ and of Arie DeGeus for his book *The Living Company*.² Their work proved that organizations that were in touch with who they are and what they stand for, and that live it every day, are more successful and long-lived than those that don't. Collins's latest research, published in his book *Good to Great*,³ reinforces that great leaders lead to their companies' strengths and values, which means setting aside their personal preferences.

BACKGROUND AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As the owner of a marketing communications firm, Fekete + Company, which I founded in 1983, I've seen and learned a lot—both from running my own business and from being involved in my clients' businesses. The major lesson has been that *our companies are not us*.

Years of listening to CEOs telling me what made their companies great so that we could create marketing campaigns for them led me to disbelieve most of what I heard. More often than not, there was a disconnect between what they perceived the company's strengths to be and the reality of what their customers and staff experienced. (Our research shows that 8 of 10 CEOs perceive their companies' personalities differently than do the other people who work there.) I followed my instincts on the path to developing a tool that would enable my firm to help our clients discover who their companies really were so that we could develop truthful marketing messages and our clients could deliver on their promises to their customers.

The journey has been collaborative all the way. A group of experts have been attracted to the idea one by one, and each has helped make CAP2 great. Karen Twinem, a trusted associate and

friend, was the first to intuitively grasp the idea that a company's personality is *not* based on the sum of the individual personalities of the people who work there. She intensely researched and wrote the initial questionnaire and profiles, and interpreted the results of the first companies who took the questionnaire.

Today, CAP2 is used by companies in the United States and abroad. We have diligently gathered and analyzed data from each of those organizations in a rigorous validation process led by Gerald Macdaid, former chief executive of the Center for Applications of Psychological Type. Jerry's work separates CAP2 as the only scientifically validated assessment device in the field of organizational personality.

You will learn from examples of companies that have participated in Companies Are People, Too discovery sessions led by myself and qualified consultants, particularly organizational coach Roy Shafer. Roy's work with children's museums and science and technology centers around the world has created a number of success stories in an industry that was jolted out of its nonprofit mind-set by competition from the profit-minded entertainment industry. That these institutions have emerged intact, many with elaborate new (and expensive) facilities, is a testimony to the power of initiating change with CAP2 as the foundation. Roy is to be credited with the development and integration of the CAP2 Decision Making Framework in his work with nonprofits, higher education, and for-profit companies. His application makes CAP2 truly systemic to an organization, providing far-reaching results for sustainable success.

To help you understand how your personal leadership style might positively or negatively impact your company's personality and how it gets work done, Henry (Dick) L. Thompson, Ph.D., president and CEO of High Performing Systems, Inc., has written leadership profiles specifically for this book in Chapter 8. An early proponent of CAP2, Dick has also developed training programs to qualify consultants to work with the instrument to guide companies as they discover, articulate, and live their personalities.

How an idea becomes a book was uncharted territory for me. Guiding me through the process, including securing John Wiley & Sons as our publisher, was Vicki Lenz—author, speaker, and now a qualified CAP2 consultant and trainer.

LeeAnna Keith deserves all the credit for pulling everything together in prose that is instructional and compelling. Her intellect

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enabled her to quickly grasp and even become an expert at organizational personality. Her inquisitive nature led her to thoroughly research and present the cases of some well-known companies that illustrate how personality can be used (or not used) to alter a company's fate.

LET'S BEGIN

Companies Are People, Too is a beginning, not an end. It is a diagnostic tool that will give you insightful information about your company and about yourself. CAP2 alone can't make a sick company healthy any more than an x-ray can cure a broken bone or a spot on a lung. I've seen impressive results, like double-digit growth five years in a row, when CEOs embrace and work CAP2. I've also witnessed fun-time sessions that produce meager results when managers fail to follow up on the work or where no one takes responsibility for acting on what they've learned. As for the latter example, when we ask participants to cite their concerns about doing the program, we frequently hear, "Nothing will really change." That kind of skepticism is usually very truthful and founded on their experience with your company. It's up to you as leader to make it different this time—to set new expectations and see the work through until things *do* change.

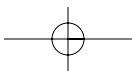
One of the benefits CAP2 offers is the opportunity to build consensus. You can discover what everyone believes, add it up, and interpret it without taking a lot of anyone's time or energy. This is not a business solution produced in a vacuum. That's why we recommend that you share the insights of this book with other members of your organization, especially decision makers, opinion leaders, and influencers. Get them to answer the questionnaire and participate in the exercises from the subsequent chapters. As you begin to experience the power of personality, consider bringing in a facilitator to help you dig deeper and make what you've learned systemic to your organization.

There's work to be done, and we show you how to do it. We offer explanation and application in three sections entitled "Discover," "Articulate," and "Live." First, in the "Discover" section, we introduce you to the theories behind CAP2 and allow you to answer the questions for your company, using the abbreviated version in the book or the full questionnaire online. You'll discover your company's strengths and growth opportunities, communication style, work environment, values, ideal clients, and

more. In learning how to lead with personality, you'll have an opportunity to discover your own leadership style and to compare your personal preferences to those of your company.

In the next section, "Articulate," we guide you through the process of bringing your company to life by creating its persona and defining its core vision, mission, and values. You'll learn how to develop marketing messages and orientation programs that say who you really are.

Wrapping it up is the "Live" section, which provides plenty of examples and ideas to help you do and be what your company is and stands for. In all of our work with companies, the hang-up is not usually on *what* needs to be done, but on *how* to get it done. *Companies Are People, Too* is a doing model more than a planning model. If you concentrate on leading the company according to its values and preferences, and allow the company to be itself on purpose, you will achieve clarity, consistency, and alignment in your business operations. That's the CAP2 promise. The result? You will be irresistibly attractive to your ideal customers, investors, corporate partners, and employees.



Companies Are People, Too
