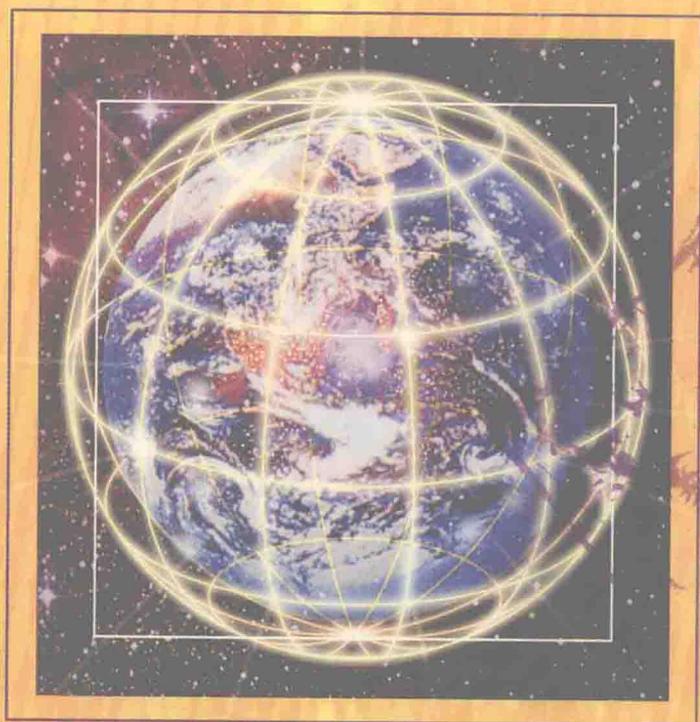


The Employee Handbook of

NEW WORK HABITS FOR A RADICALLY CHANGING WORLD



*13 Ground Rules for Job Success
in the Information Age*

Price Pritchett

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In the Information Age*



PRITCHETT & ASSOCIATES, INC.
Dallas, Texas

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PRITCHETT & ASSOCIATES, INC.

During the early 1900's, 85% of our workers were in agriculture. Now agriculture involves less than 3% of the workforce.

In 1950, 73% of U.S. employees worked in production or manufacturing. Now less than 15% do.

The Department of Labor estimates that by the year 2000 at least 44% of all workers will be in data services – for example, gathering, processing, retrieving, or analyzing information.

Careers come and go. Jobs change. This is nothing new – it's just happening far faster than ever before.

You're involved in something *BIG*: The shift to an entirely new economy... a new age... a vastly different approach in the way organizations operate.

Work is going global. We're entering the Information Age. The economy is shifting more and more toward *services*, and toward *knowledge work*. Before long, top management absolutely won't be able to run things the old way, even if it desperately wants to.

New technologies – especially computers and telecommunications – have already created intense, worldwide competition for business. Soon, competition for your very own job could come from practically anywhere on earth.

Careers have already quit working like they used to. That's not really *anybody's* fault. But

employees and organizations are very much at fault if they, too, don't change in order to adapt.

It does us no good whatsoever to complain or be bitter about what's happening. In fact, such behavior can only do us harm. We waste precious energy if we resist, get angry, or give in to grief over all that's being lost. We jeopardize our future if we cling to old assumptions and expectations about how careers should operate.

Frankly, the world doesn't care about our opinions. Or our feelings. The world rewards only those of us who catch on to what's happening, who invest our energy in finding and seizing the opportunities brought about by change.

And change *always* comes bearing gifts.

Considering the scope and speed of change these days, there will be precious gifts—many priceless opportunities—for those of us who play by the new rules, position ourselves right, and take personal responsibility for our future.

Meet the challenge. Follow these 13 guidelines for managing your job during radical change.

As recently as the 1960's, almost one-half of all workers in the industrialized countries were involved in making (or helping to make) things.

By the year 2000, however, no developed country will have more than one-sixth or one-eighth of its workforce in the traditional roles of making and moving goods.

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Already an estimated two-thirds of U.S. employees work in the services sector, and “knowledge” is becoming our most important “product.”

This calls for different organizations, as well as different kinds of workers.

– Peter F. Drucker,
Post-Capitalist Society

Become a quick-change artist.

● Taking care of your career these days means managing perpetual motion.

Your organization will keep reshaping itself, shifting and flexing to fit our rapidly changing world. That's the *only* way it can hope to survive in this fiercely competitive environment. Look for it to restructure, outsource, downsize, subcontract, and form new alliances.

You also can expect flexible ways of working. Duties will be constantly realigned. Short-lived assignments will be common. Maybe you'll work on a contract basis, or spend time on several project teams. You might even end up working for more than one "employer" at a time. You'll probably have a constantly new set of coworkers, more new bosses, even new careers.

You're not going to like some of this. Chances are, nobody will like it *all*. But that's neither here nor there. Question is, will you get with the program anyhow?

You need to know that resistance to change is almost always a dead-end street. The career opportunities come when you align immediately with new organizational needs and realities. When you're light on your feet. When you show high capacity for adjustment. Organizations want people who adapt—*fast*—not those who resist or psychologically "unplug."

Granted, change can be painful. When it damages careers, emotions such as grief, anger, and depression come naturally, making it hard for people to "buy in" and be productive. But being a quick-change artist can build your reputation, while resisting change can ruin it. Mobility, not mourning, makes you a valuable member of the group.

Shoot for rapid recovery. Instant alignment. Take personal responsibility for adapting to change, just like you would if you accepted a new job with a new employer.

“You think you understand the situation, but what you don’t understand is that the situation just changed.”

– Putnam Investments advertisement

In 1991, for the first time ever, companies spent more money on computing and communications gear than the combined monies spent on industrial, mining, farm, and construction equipment.

*This spending pattern offers hard proof
that we have entered a new era.*

*The Industrial Age has given way to the
Information Age.*

Commit fully to your job.

Expect your employer to expect more from you. The reason? The marketplace is demanding far more these days from the organization itself.

Clients and customers want much better quality than before. They expect top-notch service, too, or they'll take their business to your competitors. Speed is also essential, because people have gotten used to instant everything. Frankly, the only way your organization can even hope to compete is to employ high performance people.

In times past, the most common solution to problems was just to hire more employees. Spend more money. But companies can't afford that approach any more. Instead of simply throwing more people at problems, organizations now throw fewer. They have to do more—faster and better—with less. This calls for highly committed people.

There's no room now for employees who mainly put in their time, going through the motions but giving only half-hearted effort. The people who seemed to keep their jobs merely because they could “fog the mirror” are goners.

In today's world, career success belongs to the committed. To those who work from the heart...who invest themselves passionately in their jobs...and who *recommit* quickly when change reshapes their work.

If you find you can't recommit rapidly when the company changes, you probably should quit. Get out of there. Don't waste your energy resisting change, and don't kill precious time sitting on the fence. Either buy in, or be on your way, because that's best for both you and your employer.

This is not the same as asking that you be “loyal” to the organization. That would probably strike you as rather hypocritical anyhow, because we’ve all seen that the world puts hard limits on how loyal an employer can be in return. But urging you to have high job commitment actually serves your best interests, even as it benefits the company.

Strong job commitment makes work far more satisfying. It’s therapeutic, too, an excellent antidote for stress and a fine cure for the pain of change. It also empowers you, bringing out your very best potential, and making you a more valuable employee.

Bottom line: Commitment is a gift you should give to yourself.

*“They’re only puttin’ in a nickel, but they
want a dollar song.”*

– Song title

You're in Paris, and you decide to use your American Express card. Getting credit approval involves a 46,000-mile journey over phones and computers.