FOREWORD BY RON PONDER

UNLEASHING THE POWER OF IT

BRINGING PEOPLE, BUSINESS, AND TECHNOLOGY TOGETHER

DAN ROBERTS

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Foreword

A funny thing has happened to business over the last 30 years. In many cases, technology has become the face of the company, both for internal clients and all the way out to the end customer. Tracking shipments through Fedex.com? Ordering books at Amazon.com? That interface *is* the business. Meanwhile, in the same time frame, a funny thing has happened to technology—the success of implementations hinges more on human behavior and well-executed processes than the performance of development languages and database design.

I can fairly say I was there when the business world began to discover data, a key factor in today's high valuation of technology. When I first started in IT, mainframes hummed away in a darkened room, and we worked behind a curtain of mystique, automating traditional business processes for technologically unsophisticated users. But as time moved on, projects grew more complex and strategic. During my days as a senior executive and CIO, I helped introduce FedEx's worldwide package-tracking system, oversaw the implementation of AT&T and Sprint's customer billing and marketing systems and drove the technology strategy as Wellpoint grew from an $18 billion to $76 billion health insurance giant.

Fast-forward a few years, and we reach the age of the Internet, rampant mobilization and new computing architectures like cloud computing—not to mention steady progress in database design and programming languages—to the point where today, technology has never been more complex and yet more integral

to most people's lives. Meanwhile, when it comes to technology savvy, all the players—internal clients, business leaders and external customers—are smarter than they've ever been.

What all this means for IT leaders is that the demands have never been greater. And yet I see a disturbing trend in the increasing scarcity of what I call "the complete CIO." This is someone who can sit at the table with the C suite, with a complete command of the IT strategy, masterful knowledge of the business strategy and the ability to synchronize and coordinate the two. This same person should thoroughly understand the business the company is in and view it through the client's and the customer's eyes. He or she needs to comprehend the entire technology spectrum and have the mindset and skills to see projects through to completion. Unfortunately, this is the kind of rising IT leader that seems to be in diminishing supply, these days.

In the large and complex projects in which I've been involved, technology has generally never been the salient point of failure. It's always some aspect of the human equation that falters – not having an enterprise view, not being politically astute, not knowing how or when to push back on client requests in a positive way. And today, I see up-and-coming IT leaders continually repeating the same mistakes. I'm not sure if this is true for other professions, but what we lack in IT is a vehicle for transferring knowledge from a collective memory bank of lessons learned, to grow and evolve into something better, with each passing year.

Until now. In its new book, Ouellette & Associates has successfully captured years of experience in one easily digested but highly detailed, very true-to-reality book. Finally, someone has recorded what it takes to move beyond the behaviors that lead to project delays and cost overruns, and transform IT into the mature, evolved profession that those who are committed to it—and those who rely on it—truly deserve. O&A has compiled,

in one place, decades of lessons learned, recipes and prescriptions for doing IT right, indeed, to become "the complete CIO."

Reading this book was a fascinating experience for me—it felt both like a collection of memories from my time in the industry and a searing look at the present, as well. The human side of the IT enterprise is where the work needs to be done, and that's exactly where the authors focus for creating a transformed IT workforce and culture.

IT transformation doesn't happen overnight, and the book's layout takes that into consideration. Read straight through, the book moves from the stage-setting topics of team transformation and a service-oriented, consultative mindset, to the more advanced skill of negotiation. With that foundation, it tunnels into project management and requirements-gathering and then pops back out to the more sophisticated area of politically savvy. It is only once you have these skills mastered that you can move on to the last three areas explored, which are marketing your newly developed value, managing service providers and—finally—driving change management efforts. For each skill, you can dip your toe in the water, get comfortable and then move to the next stage.

At the same time, I've always believed in tackling large and complex jobs by breaking them into smaller, logical pieces, and the authors have also accomplished that. You can go right to Chapter 4 to learn about consultant skills or burrow into Chapter 9 to learn how to market IT. Checklists, recipes and diagrams enable you to put new insights immediately into action. And all the while, you get the distinct feeling that these people get it—they've seen it before. They've been there.

I see the need for this book in almost every company I work with today—and in retrospect, the ones I worked with in the past. It is my firm belief that many senior IT professionals have the capacity to be the "complete CIOs" that business needs today, if they would give themselves, and their staff, the chance.

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It's easy to say, "I don't have the time" for the transformation espoused in this book. But if everyone could do even half of what this book advocates, we could begin to pass the baton of experience onto the next generation of IT leaders, who could go on to enjoy the fulfilling career in IT that people like me have had the honor to experience.

I think anyone who—like me—has spent the last three decades in IT would concur: With this book, O&A has done a great service for IT professionals. I'd urge anyone who is serious about IT to start the transformation the book describes to unleash the power of their own career.

Ron J. Ponder
The Ponder Group

Preface

Positioning IT as Provider of Choice: Moving Beyond IT and Business Alignment

We at Ouellette & Associates Consulting, Inc. (O&A) are committed more than ever to preparing IT leaders and their staffs and organizations for the next phase of IT's evolution and a successful future. This is particularly true as forward-thinking IT leaders change their focus from "aligning IT with the business," to instilling a philosophy that says, "We are the business." With the growing belief that IT and business alignment has exacerbated the us-versus-them issue, IT leaders today are becoming laser-focused on ensuring that IT is integrated into the business.

Since 1984, our tagline has been, "Developing the Human Side of Technology," and never has this mantra been more important to IT than it is today. We've been fortunate to work with more than 3,000 IT organizations representing all industries, led by progressive IT leaders who are dedicated to changing the culture of their IT organizations, whether their staffs numbered 10 or 10,000. This book is based on these industry pioneers and their passion for and commitment to moving their organizations from reactive, technology-centric order takers to consultative and service-minded—in short, organizations that position internal IT as the business's technology provider of choice.

While other managers immediately cut their professional or organizational development budget at the first sign of economic distress, these savvy leaders invested in their people during both

good and bad economic times. Through their leadership and professional development initiatives, they spearheaded and sponsored their own personal transformations and then proceeded to help their departments reach their full potential.

A Unique Approach: Putting the Book into Action

Others have written about the changing field of IT, but O&A's approach is unique. For one, it's written by a team of highly experienced subject matter experts who have lived in the trenches, worked with world-class IT organizations and—for the first time—have committed their insights and experience to paper. Together, these seasoned professionals represent more than 200 years of experience in the real-world IT trenches and as consultants and trainers, helping tens of thousands of IT professionals change how they do business, both individually and organizationally. Because they've walked the walk as IT practitioners, leaders, and consultants, they write with a voice of authority that comes from experience.

On a personal level, I have contributed to several books that have been very well received by our industry. I am extremely excited about *Unleashing the Power of IT: Bringing People, Business, and Technology Together,* based on the reviews and feedback provided by several respected industry leaders, and am confident about the value it's going to bring to the IT industry and profession.

Our approach is also unique because the advice and guidance we provide are not just words that lie on the page. You won't hear us promoting the latest management fad, promising silver-bullet solutions to the challenges you face as an IT leader. We strived to write a book that was practical and immediately applicable. How many times have you read a business book, agreed with most everything it said and then discovered you

didn't have much, if anything, tangible to apply? This book, like the proven workshops and services it is based on, is designed for you to begin using what you've learned immediately. Rather than writing from a 30,000-foot level, we have combined big-picture context with specific advice you can use in your next planning session, staff meeting, or client interaction.

At the end of each chapter, you'll find a "Top Ten" list summarizing the chapter and providing you with immediate, actionable takeaways. We will also prompt you to note a few specific actions you plan to take based on what you just read.

We also include a "Putting the Book into Action" chapter, in which we illustrate how three of our clients have successfully used our workshops, certification programs, consulting services, and books to turn their IT organizations into strategic business partners.

This format aligns with our overall philosophy of helping our clients "learn how to fish." At O&A, we've never been big fans of the traditional consulting model that makes clients be dependent. This may be good for revenue generation, but it's an approach that's never sat well with us. Our focus has always been on helping our clients become self-sufficient. This book will seek to do the same.

This book is also not going to tell you everything there is to know about IT culture change. It would take several books and more time than you have to cover everything there is to know about this topic. Our goal instead is to help you be effective, to jumpstart your journey, and to build and sustain your momentum. If you've already begun, then this book will add to your toolkit. If you're one of those rare IT leaders who've successfully transformed your IT organization, you already recognize that success is a journey and not a destination. I hope you'll meld our experiences and best practices with your own to take your organization to the next level.

We base the book on proven approaches that generate results. O&A's clients have applied and sustained the teachings in this book, and by doing so, they've positioned their organizations for the future. They've chosen to focus on developing the "human side" of IT rather than "fixing" IT by applying the latest technology, methodology, framework, or management guru fad. They've discovered that success is based not on a big-bang theory but by executing many little things every day. These small wins add up and build momentum from the top down and from the bottom up.

That's why we believe that by reading this book and acting on its advice, you too can build strong relationships with your business partners and earn a seat at the table of strategic decision making. You too will be perceived as an effective communicator, tactful negotiator, and influential opinion leader across your organization. And your IT organization will also be positioned as the IT provider of first choice.

Acknowledgments

A book project is a major undertaking that requires the efforts of many great people to bring it to fruition. Looking back, we actually started work on this book in 1984 when we began partnering with our clients in support of their transformation efforts.

We want to thank our world-class clients who include us in their transformation initiatives. We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to work with some of the most savvy IT leaders in our industry; some have sponsored our work at two, three and even four companies. Without them our work would not be possible and this book could never have been written.

Three CIOs have provided us with an inside look at how they have transformed their IT organizations, applying the concepts of this book to build a high performing culture. In Chapter 12, you will read about the real-world success stories of Marriott Corporation CIO Carl Wilson, St. Luke's Health System CIO Adrienne Edens and Bowdoin College CIO Mitch Davis. You will no doubt enjoy reading about the transformational journeys of these visionary CIOs and benefit from their years of experience, keen insights and the best practices they leveraged along the way.

Several other clients were kind enough to review and critique our manuscript, provide encouragement and offer detailed feedback that greatly enhanced the book you now have in your hands. These highly regarded IT leaders include: Roger Agee—JELD WEN, Inc.; Ben Berry—Oregon Department of Transportation;

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Scott Culbertson—UGI Utilities; Inc.; Rick Giese—Great Lakes Educational Loan Services; Cam Henderson—Portland General Electric; Don Desiderato—Novarica; Alan Guibord—The Advisory Council; Don Imholz—Centene Corporation; Laurie Koetting—Computer World Services Corp; Barbara Koster—Prudential; Chris Loizides—The MITRE Corporation; Deane Morrison—Capital Region Health Care; Eric Nilson—Jet Propulsion Laboratory; Ron Ponder, The Ponder Group; Guy Russo—CommunityAmerica Credit Union; Wade Vann—Augusta Sportswear; Sharon Waid—Boston Financial; Lorena Weaver—Allianz Life; and Meg Williams—Columbus Regional Airport Authority.

We also want to thank our families who support the work we do with clients. Without their support on the home front while we are traveling and logging crazy hours, we could not do the work that we love so much.

Tackling a book project with multiple authors is a blessing and a curse. It's a blessing because you can leverage the knowledge and experiences of many subject matter experts. It's a curse when you try to weave different personalities and voices together to ensure consistency for the reader. Given this challenge, we want to thank Mary Brandel because without her writing talents, this book would not have become a reality. Her ability to capture our real-world experiences and personalities is a gift. Her ability to find a common voice for our readers was incredibly important.

And many thanks are extended to the great folks at Wiley. We could not ask for a publishing partner that is more talented, dedicated and professional. We are proud to be part of Wiley's CIO Book Series.

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CHAPTER 1

Creating Your Twenty-First Century Workforce and Culture

There has never been a better time to be an information technology (IT) professional. That's right! While prognosticators have loudly predicted the demise of IT, I firmly believe there has never been a more exciting or auspicious time to be in this profession.

That may sound strange to some of you IT veterans out there. You may remember the good ol' days of electronic data processing when IT professionals were safe behind the glass walls, free to focus on technology, without interference from those pesky end users. Or perhaps you remember being the hero in the late 1990s, riding in on a white horse to save the world from the Y2K coding debacle. Then there were the wild, early days of the Internet, when being a techie was suddenly cool.

For those who long for any of those days, I can appreciate your disdain for my optimism. You've weathered the worst recession we've seen in our lifetime, the outsourcing that leveled many of your staffs, the questioning of IT's value and the return-on-investment scrutiny that continues today. You're now witnessing the encroachment of consumer technology into the enterprise, rampant proliferation of as-a-service computing models, virtualization of nearly everything, and the growing

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