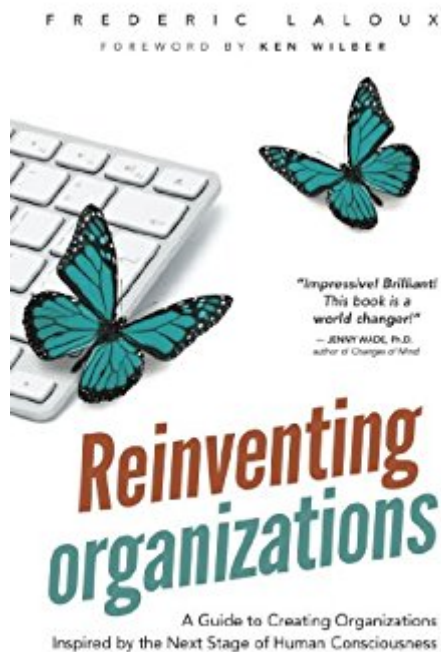




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# Reinventing Organizations: A Guide To Creating Organizations Inspired By The Next Stage Of Human Consciousness



## Synopsis

**FROM THE BACKCOVER**The way we manage organizations seems increasingly out of date. Deep inside, we sense that more is possible. We long for soulful workplaces, for authenticity, community, passion, and purpose. In this groundbreaking book, the author shows that every time, in the past, when humanity has shifted to a new stage of consciousness, it has achieved extraordinary breakthroughs in collaboration. A new shift in consciousness is currently underway. Could it help us invent a more soulful and purposeful way to run our businesses and nonprofits, schools and hospitals? A few pioneers have already cracked the code and they show us, in practical detail, how it can be done. Leaders, founders, coaches, and consultants will find this work a joyful handbook, full of insights, examples, and inspiring stories.

**ADVANCE PRAISE**"Congratulations on a spectacular treatise! This is truly pioneering work. In terms of integral sophistication, there is simply nothing like it out there."--Ken Wilber, from the Foreword

"The most exciting book I've read in years on organization design and leadership models."--Jenny Wade, Ph.D., Author of *Changes of Mind*

"A book like *Reinventing Organizations* only comes along once in a decade. Sweeping and brilliant in scope, it is the *Good To Great* for a more enlightened age. What it reveals about the organizational model of the future is exhilarating and deeply hopeful."--Norman Wolfe, Author of *The Living Organization*

"A comprehensive, highly practical account of the emergent worldview in business. Everything you need to know about building a new paradigm organization!"--Richard Barrett, Chairman and Founder, Barrett Values Center

"Frederic Laloux has done business people and professionals everywhere a signal service. He has discovered a better future for organizations by describing, in useful detail, the unusual best practices of today."--Bill Torbert, Author of *Action Inquiry*

"As the rate of change escalates exponentially, the old ways of organizing and educating, which were designed for efficiency and repetition, are dying. Frederic Laloux is one of the few management leaders exploring what comes next. It's deeply different."--Bill Drayton, Founder, Ashoka: Innovators for the Public

## Book Information

File Size: 5166 KB

Print Length: 378 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Nelson Parker (February 9, 2014)

Publication Date: February 9, 2014

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00ICS9VI4

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #18,940 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #12 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Organizational Behavior > Organizational Learning #47 in Kindle Store > Business & Money > Processes & Infrastructure > Organizational Learning #61 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Management

## Customer Reviews

Great information but can be hard to read and stick with. I have sent this book to two other people and both of them said that they had a hard time getting through it. The book describes the evolution of organizational models and differentiates them using a color coding system. The primary focus is on the most progressive of the models, called teal which emphasizes self-management, purpose and wholeness among other principles. The world would really benefit from adopting this mindset more and I highly recommend this book despite the challenges with getting through it.

I generally dislike business and management books. The whole community of business management writers seems self-serving, and completely inconsequential. How many books are written that always boil down to the same message over and over: "invest in your people they are your most important asset". What I like about this book is that it gets to the heart of why Business fails to execute on this simple idea. Because of the Power Relationships inherent in culture and organizational structure of most businesses. You get the best out of people when you trust them and give them power to make decisions. Not by "empowering them" as if some top-down executive is doling out charity, but by fundamentally creating an equal playing field from the start. This creates shared power, shared responsibility, to the benefit of everyone. I love this book, I can't recommend it enough.

Based on the work of numerous developmental psychologists such as Ken Wilbur and Bob Kegan,

Laloux achieves the impossible: a very readable, understandable and (yes!) plausible vision of the future organization. I have read about some of these companies before in Gary Hamel's books but never really understood how it worked. It reminds me of the first time I tried to understand Object-Oriented programming or Agile Development and thought it was impossible. Laloux not only shows that it is possible, but that it's already working! Truly inspiring when we consider that the vast majority of people are unengaged in their jobs.

Reinventing Organizations is a book that pushes the limits of how mainstream society often thinks about the structures and operating principles of nonprofit and for-profit organizations. It begins by drawing on Spiral Dynamics and Ken Wilber's Integral Theory. The foundational assertion of the book is that a new way of collaborating has emerged with every major stage in human consciousness, resulting in new organizational models. The organizational models are given names and colors: reactive--infrared paradigm, magic--magenta paradigm, impulsive--red paradigm, conformist--amber paradigm, achievement--orange paradigm, pluralistic--green paradigm, and evolutionary--teal paradigm. Each paradigm has distinct characteristics and marks a different way of operating than the other paradigms. For example, achievement orange is focused on individual success and results (e.g., profits). Power and a self-serving drive for success are characteristics of this paradigm. In contrast to the other paradigms that have come before it, organizations in the evolutionary teal paradigm have three essential characteristics: self-management (vs. traditional hierarchies), an ethos of striving for wholeness (bringing one's whole self into the workplace), and the practice of listening for evolutionary purpose (actions are informed by adherence to organizational values). Building on this evolutionary paradigm structure, Laloux discusses his research findings on 12 teal organizations in both for-profit and nonprofit arenas. At first, the practices and structures of these organizations seemed radical to me as someone who is new concepts such as Spiral Dynamics, Integral Theory, and self-management. With that said, the stories of how these organizations are structured and how they function are fascinating and have profound implications for how other organizations could operate if the conditions are ripe. When reading the book, I often felt simultaneously inspired by the possibility of surpassing business as usual using evolutionary teal practices and frustrated that the transformation to this new paradigm is currently unlikely in most settings given a strict adherence to hierarchy and power structures. The main disappointment from Reinventing Organizations is that Laloux declares--only towards the end of the book--that building an evolutionary teal organization is only possible if the CEO and owners/board of directors fully support the structures

and practices of teal organizations. Furthermore, he explains that he has not found an organization that is segmented with part of the organization functioning with teal practices and the remaining segments functioning in more traditional, hierarchical ways. While this conclusion is not surprising, it left me wanting a different outcome from the research. The consolation prize Laloux offers is to encourage organizations with CEOs and owners who do not support teal practices to strive to create more healthy practices within their current paradigm. There are many examples throughout the book of practices that could be adapted within the limitations of green, amber, or orange organizations. The book is easy to read overall, although lengthy at times and dense in the opening chapters, and is directed toward practitioners, not researchers or academics. While Laloux presents a substantial list of research questions in the appendix, he does not describe his methodology or analysis techniques in the book. Anyone who is part of an organization and open to a different way of operating that enables people to bring a sense of wholeness to their work should consider reading and applying ideas from *Reinventing Organizations*.

This book describes what could be the next version of the organization. This evolving new version is very different from the hierarchical, command and control organization that predominates today. I initially found the book challenging to read. The beginning section of the book takes an in-depth look at the societal stages of development, levels of consciousness, culture and the types of organizations found in each of the different stages. This in depth study is done through the eyes of evolutionary, developmental and integral theory. Laloux notes that every transition to a new stage has resulted in significant changes to the human experience. Each stage is identified by a specific, designated color “infrared, magenta, red, amber, orange and green. This book is about the new emerging stage being referred to as the teal stage of development and especially the organizations that will be found in this stage. After describing the overall look of the teal stage, the author focused the remainder of the book on the nature and framework of the emerging teal organization. There are actually a number of existing teal organizations portrayed in the book. I found it very interesting to read about these organizations. Once I made it through the initial portion of the book focused on the various historical stages of development, my reading of the book went along quite well. I was glad I did not set the book aside during the early going. If you are interested in the study of organizations, or if you are curious as to what the organization of the future might look like, this book should be a must read. I know I am glad I read it.

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