PRIMAL MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

THE RISE OF THE SUPERORGANISM

In biology, a superorganism is a group of individual organisms that act as one--like a colony of army ants. Ant colonies, working as coordinated units, can defeat creatures hundreds of times their size. Corporate superorganisms are similar. They are composed of individual human beings who think and act as one, much like a tribe. They are as formidable in the corporate ecosystem as army ants are in their ecosystems.

I don't mean to imply that human beings should cooperate like mindless insects. Human beings possess a sophisticated form of social bonding that some psychiatrists refer to as *cathexis*. This social bonding mechanism underlies relationships of all types, and corporations, unfortunately, are not aware of it. Traditional corporate hierarchies rely, instead, on rules, regulations, bureaucratic structures, hard-fisted competition, and fear to coordinate human beings.

A superorganism, on the other hand, is held together organically and naturally by invested relationships and doesn't need an artificial shell to force cooperation and coordination. If you remove the bureaucratic shell from a traditional hierarchy, the humans inside would mostly scatter like marbles because there is nothing fundamental holding them together. If you remove the shell from a superorganism, it will continue to function because its individual members are interconnected, self-motivated, self-organizing, and self-managing--just as nature intended.

Any company can become a superorganism if it learns how to work harmoniously with human nature rather than against it. Superorganisms, I predict, will someday dominate the corporate landscape because they create maximum wealth for the corporate ecosystem. They create a win-win scenario where everyone benefits--shareholders, managers, employees, and customers.

A HARD APPROACH TO THE SOFT SIDE OF BUSINESS

The secret to aligning with human nature, and thereby creating a corporate superorganism, lies in understanding the motivational mechanism that powers human achievement. I've been researching the motivational mechanism from a hard, biologic/engineering perspective for thirty-one years. I started pondering emotions and motivation in 1977 when I was an engineering student at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. I had always been impressed by the elegant design of the human body--the human hand, for example, is an elegant mechanism that engineers have yet to duplicate. The same goes for the human eye or circulatory system. Then the thought occurred to me, "What about human

emotions? Where is the elegance in a system that causes people to jump off bridges, go postal, and experience road rage?" I felt, deep down, however, that our motivational mechanism should be just as elegant as the rest of our design--and so began my odyssey to reverse engineer nature's motivational mechanism.

This hard approach reveals emotions and feelings for what they are--the fundamental forces that make us go. I hope to demonstrate that emotions are involved in every decision and every move we make. This claim may seem audacious and far-fetched now, but, by the end of the book, it will hopefully make perfect sense. I hope you enjoy this tough, logical, engineering approach to the soft side of business.

Emotions, as the word implies, put us into motion. They are the forces that move us from the moment we wake up in the morning to the moment we go to bed. As forces, they obey laws similar to the laws of physics. Newton's first law of motion states that an object at rest will remain at rest unless acted upon by a force. I will prove something similar--a human being at rest will remain at rest unless acted upon by an emotional force---a feeling! Taken as a group, these forces are responsible for essentially everything going on inside corporations everywhere. In other words, they are *fundamental*. *Primal Management* proposes a methodology to measure, manage, and harness these vital forces to create a high-performance workplace.

I aim to shake the business community out of its wrong-headed approach to emotion. It has pretended that emotions and feelings are irrational and unimportant. This is simply wrong. I intend to turn this kind of thinking on its head by proving that subtle emotional incentives lie at the core of economic decision making, the core of economic utility, the core of employee

satisfaction and engagement, and the core of organizational excellence. Emotions lie at the vital core of the human condition because we are universally motivated to seek emotional pleasure and to avoid emotional pain. We will discover that making a few deep changes at an emotional level will radiate organically throughout an organization and empower it—somewhat like turning on a light switch.

How many times have you heard someone say something like, "I don't care how they feel. I just want them to get their work done." I intend to demonstrate, in *Primal Management*, that this macho "Who cares about feelings?" attitude may work in the short term to get a project out the door, but is downright unbusinesslike and harmful in the long term. Ignoring the intrinsic rewards that power human performance is equivalent to a race car driver ignoring his engine--it's not a good idea if you want to win races.

THE DEEP ARCHITECTURE OF MOTIVATION

During my thirty-one years of exploring the murky subject of emotion, the deep architecture of the human motivational mechanism gradually came into focus for me. This mechanism is easy to understand once you understand nature's design theme--survival. This is the main idea throughout this book--that nature does not leave the necessities of life to chance. Rather, it evolves circuits to make sure the necessities get done. The main behaviors that ensure our physical survival, and the feelings of pleasure and pain that encourage them, are as follows:

- Acquiring nutrition: enforced with feelings of hunger, thirst, and satiation
- Energy conservation (rest): enforced with feelings of fatigue and relaxation

- Protection of one's physical body: enforced with sensory pain and pleasure
- Oxygen intake: enforced with the pain of holding one's breath
- Reproduction: enforced through romantic pleasure and sexual pleasure

These biologic appetites, and the feelings associated with them, are simple and straightforward. Nobody would question their existence because they are self-evident. What is less self-evident, however, are the feelings that regulate our social needs. I will argue throughout *Primal Management* that our social needs are just as tightly regulated as our biologic needs--and with similar appetite-like circuits that generate pleasurable and painful feelings.

Here are the social appetites that complement the biologic appetites to create a comprehensive bio/social survival system:

- Innovation: enforced with curiosity and the eureka pleasure when we get an idea
- Skill mastery or competency: enforced with feelings of high and low self-esteem
- Skill deployment and goal attainment: enforced with the euphoria of a win, and the dysphoria (pain) of a loss
- Cooperation: enforced by the warm feelings we experience when we are with the persons, places, and things that are important to us and painful feelings of alienation when we are excluded from the tribe

- Self-protection: enforced with pleasant feelings when we achieve security and fearful and anxious feelings when our survival is at risk

Once nature chose to traverse the slippery slope of using feelings of pleasure and pain to regulate biologic needs like reproduction, energy conservation, and nutrition, there was no turning back. Once one behavior was rewarded in this way, then, logically, every other survival behavior needed to be similarly rewarded or human beings would have overindulged in the rewarding behaviors at the expense of the ones without rewards.

I propose that positive feelings emanating from the motivational mechanism, taken as a group, constitute the emotional paycheck (intrinsic rewards) that drives human achievement. We will learn how to measure and track this important paycheck in Chapter 2.

THOUGHT EXPERIMENT

Perhaps the social-appetite concept will make more sense if we conduct a little thought experiment. Imagine that you, and ten of your neighbors, volunteer for an experiment at a local university to assess the role of emotions in human survival. Step 1 of the experiment involves entering a chamber where your memories are erased except for a rudimentary vocabulary and basic motor skills like walking, running, and throwing. You and your neighbors emerge from the chamber disoriented and able to neither recognize one another nor recall any previously acquired knowledge, skills, or experiences. In other words, you are all suffering from debilitating mass amnesia. Now imagine that your group is dropped into the middle of the Amazon rain forest with just the clothes on your backs. What would happen to your group? Are you doomed?

THE INNOVATION APPETITE

You are initially befuddled and clueless. Some of your neighbors are terrified by the strange surroundings and jungle noises and huddle together for protection. The risk takers in your group, coaxed by curiosity, the pleasure of novelty, begin to cautiously explore the new environment. During the course of these explorations, observations are made regarding the types of plants, animals, and resources in the forest that might come in handy later on.

After a period of exploration, one of your neighbors, a woman, notices fruit hanging from a tree. She also recalls seeing a patch of bamboo growing next to a nearby river. In a flash of insight, these observations congeal into an idea, a simple innovation--knock the fruit down with long, lightweight, bamboo poles. This eureka moment announces itself with a brief burst of pleasure. The eureka pleasure serves a couple of functions. First, it informs the innovator that she has made a potentially important discovery that may help her group survive. Furthermore, the eureka pleasure motivates her to share her discovery with the group.

Curiosity (the pleasure of novelty) and the eureka moment (the pleasure of ideation) emanate from what I call the innovation appetite. This appetite encourages human beings to explore their environment and invent survival technologies. In the modern context, this appetite motivates everything from family vacations to exploring novelty-rich (exotic) destinations to innovation on the cutting edge of scientific research.

THE COMPETENCY APPETITE

The female neighbor returns to the group with an armful of ripe figs. The famished group applauds her discovery, and pays careful attention as she demonstrates how she used the pole to

knock down fruit. This fruit-collecting technology is unanimously seen as valuable and worth copying and perfecting and is thereby added to the tribe's embryonic trove of survival knowledge--its culture.

The group, by applauding the new fig-harvesting technology, unwittingly triggers the next appetite--the competency appetite. This appetite locks on to applauded skills, like the fig-harvesting skill, and makes them feel desirable and worth mastering. Everyone who subsequently masters the new skill will experience improved feelings of self-esteem and self-confidence. These rewarding feelings lie at the core of the competency appetite and at the core of human culture.

Additional innovations occur over the next several months as the group develops hunting, gathering, tool-making, shelter-making, and food-preparation skills. Group members who master these skills experience higher and higher levels of self-esteem and feel and act the most confident. They also become esteemed and relied-upon by other members of the group. Members of the tribe who fail to master these skills are internally punished with painful and persistent feelings of worthlessness and incompetence and sulk around on the periphery of the group.

Over time, feelings of high and low self-esteem motivate individuals in the group to master a shared toolbox of survival knowledge and skills. This vital social appetite gets the entire group marching in a common direction with a shared survival technology. In the modern context these powerful feelings motivate us to master the survival skills of our nation-tribes by attending college, learning trades, and becoming skillful in sports, hobbies, and artistic endeavors.

THE SKILL-DEPLOYMENT APPETITE

Mastering skills is not enough. It is equally important for the group to be productive by deploying their skills on a daily basis. Motivating day-to-day achievement falls on the next social appetite, the skill-deployment appetite.

Imagine that you are assigned the task of putting meat on the table tonight. When you accomplish this task, say, by trapping a capybara, the skill-deployment appetite will detect your achievement and reward you with a brief, but highly rewarding, euphoria. This sort of reward motivates everyone in the group to be active and productive in the many tasks of everyday life. If a member of the group sits for too long without completing a task, the skill-deployment appetite will detect this inactivity and punish him/her with a gnawing sense of boredom.

In the modern context, the skill-deployment appetite is hugely important. It motivates a rich swath of productive, goal-directed behavior. Without this appetite there would be no pleasure associated with a win. Winning and losing would feel exactly the same--nothing. Fans at football games would no longer cheer when touchdowns are scored and golfers would stop playing golf because a good shot would feel exactly the same as a bad shot. Competitive sports, card games, hobbies, home-improvement projects, and all other goal-directed behaviors would cease because success and failure in these activities would feel exactly the same.

I think you can see where I am going with this discussion of the social appetites. Emotions are not as soft, irrational, or irrelevant as we have all been taught. Rather, they are absolutely vital for our survival and without these subtle incentives the group of neighbors in our

thought experiment would be dead. The biologic and social appetites, taken as a group, constitute a sophisticated autopilot that stealthily points us in the direction of survival.

Anyone attempting to lead a group of human beings should understand the primal appetites all human beings possess to innovate, master skills, deploy skills to achieve goals, work as a highly coordinated and bonded team, and feel protected. If corporations are smart, they will reject dispassionate rationalism and learn to feed the social appetites that drive high performance.

The implications of the social appetite approach are enormous. Advertising professionals, for example, must evoke positive emotions to sell their products and services. If *Primal Management* can clarify how these emotions function, then it can deliver tremendous value to the advertising community. The application pursued in *Primal Management* is not advertising, but employee motivation--how to evoke positive emotion to create an optimally productive workforce. The suggestions contained in this book should work as well today as 1,000 years from today. They should work until scientists reengineer human nature. I have worked diligently to simplify the vast and murky subject of human motivation to its crystalline essence. Simplicity and clarity are therefore my value-added propositions.

This book should help executives, managers, and supervisors everywhere bring out the very best in their employees. I hope to change your view of yourself, your employees, and the society you live in. You and I have been brainwashed by Western culture to look at human beings as fundamentally rational creatures. This is simply wrong. We are fundamentally emotional creatures who devise rational strategies to serve our emotional (survival) needs.

RESPECTING YOUR WORLDVIEW

As you've probably noticed, this is a science-based book with an evolutionary perspective. When I say "nature designed" or "nature made," this is shorthand for saying, "the impersonal process of natural selection, operating across thousands or millions of years of human evolution, caused the motivational mechanism to evolve slowly and organically to its current state."

If recent surveys about religion are accurate, I'm in grave risk of alienating 45 percent of the U.S. population that believes in the biblical, creationist worldview. Another 38 percent of the population accepts the idea of evolution but believes that human evolution was divinely guided.[1] Pope John Paul II, one of the most scientific popes in recent memory, believed that humans evolved but that God inserted a soul at some point in the process.

I don't want to threaten or disrespect anyone's belief system, but I'm a scientist and this book takes a scientific perspective. Perhaps we can resolve this issue by agreeing that the motivational design ought to be logical and serve our survival, regardless of who, or what, "designed" it. I will henceforth refer to the designer simply as "nature."

Since we are having this heart-to-heart, I also want to broach another sensitive issue--respecting one another's investments. I promise to respect you, the reader, as an expert on human nature--particularly your own nature. We are all lifelong users of human nature and we've all built a worldview brick by brick around our personal experiences. I don't want to topple anyone's hard-won edifice of understanding. I therefore suggest that readers look at this book as

an organizational framework on which to hang your hard-won wisdom regarding human nature. Think of my social appetite theory as a Christmas tree and your hard-won insights as the ornaments. Let's face it, emotions and motivation are complex and confusing so an organizational framework that is simple and clear is a good thing--a valuable thing!

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR ANCESTRY

Human beings today are physically, intellectually, and emotionally similar to our Upper Paleolithic ancestors who hunted big game in small bands 40,000 years ago. Human beings today, like then, are fundamentally designed to live in small, tightly knit tribal communities. The tribe is therefore the best unit of analysis for thinking about human behavior. If companies want to align themselves with human nature they must understand, and conform to, a survival mechanism designed for small tribal groups.

Another benefit of the tribal perspective is its simplicity. It is far easier to wrap one's mind around a group of 150 individuals with a unitary culture and shared identity than it is to contemplate today's megasocieties and megacorporations. The tribal perspective is not only scientifically correct, but it makes our journey much easier.

I use the terms *tribe* and *tribal* throughout this book. [2] Whenever I use the word tribe, I'm talking about something serious--ancestors who triumphed in the difficult struggle for survival and therefore made our existence possible. The latest thinking in genetics suggests that evolution can occur at both the individual and group level (group selection). In this case, it is often the fittest group that survives, the tribe, not necessarily the fittest individual.

We don't think of ourselves as tribal people because we abandoned that lifestyle long ago, yet it still affects every aspect of our minds, emotions, personalities, and organizations. The motivational mechanism, we will discover, is a distinctively tribal apparatus that often malfunctions within the context of modern complex societies. Hierarchically organized corporations are not united or tribal and do not take full advantage of nature's motivational mechanism. Rather, they starve the social appetites and end up with motivationally malnourished employees.

A smattering of contrarian companies, like Google, Quad/Graphics, W. L. Gore, Whole Foods Market, Nucor Steel, and Herman Miller in the United States and Semco SA in Brazil, have achieved spectacular productivity and growth by trying something radically different. They created structurally flat organizations that meshed with the underlying emotional architecture that all human beings share. These corporate superorganisms are unusual by Western standards, but are relatively common in East Asia where the cultures are more "we" focused than "me" focused. [3] Chinese family-owned companies, for example, are based on *guanxi*, or trust networks, and have many of the same qualities as the Western superorganisms. [4]

HOW STERILE IS YOUR CAGE?

What do human beings and zoo-raised tigers have in common? Answer: We both live outside our natural habitats. Tigers are native to the jungles of Asia. Human beings are originally native to a wide variety of ecosystems where we survived by hunting and gathering.

What do you suppose happens to a tiger after it is plucked from its natural environment and placed into a sterile zoo setting? Before the 1960s, zoos kept animals in simple enclosures surrounded by iron bars. These impoverished environments created stress and profoundly abnormal behavior. The animals were often aggressive and self-destructive.

Our cousins, the great apes, also did not react well to sterile captivity. They would often sit in a stupor and rock back and forth, just like mentally ill human beings often do. Animals would generally not breed under such unnatural conditions. The brains of both animals and humans exhibit reduced neuronal branching and increased cell death, especially in the hippocampus region, after long-term exposure to stressful conditions. In other words, keeping an animal in an unnatural and stressful environment will result in brain damage. [5]

Beginning in the 1960s, zoos were pressured to treat their animals more humanely. In response to this pressure, zoos started designing enclosures that mimicked the animals' natural habitats. Bars were replaced by moats and zoo curators went to great lengths to research the ecosystem requirements of their animals.

Human beings today face precisely the same plight as the abused zoo animals, yet nobody in corporate America is researching the habitat needs of their employees. We were also plucked from our ancestral hunter-gatherer habitat and placed into a gilded cage of our own making. In a very real sense, we are like fish out of water.

Human beings are small-group creatures. Our motivational systems function best in groups of 150 or fewer individuals. [6] Human beings, just like the zoo animals, often malfunction

in the unnatural "cages" provided by today's megasocieties because our brains were designed to operate within small, intimate groups.

Companies often lock employees in sterile cages by treating them in a cool, impersonal manner. This unnatural, hyperrational approach to management creates an impoverished work environment in which human beings battle one another instead of cooperating. Human beings have a deep-seated need to be imbedded within a close-knit group to function at their best; and this need is often frustrated within the modern work world.

A cool, impersonal approach to management ignores the motivational mechanism and is therefore harmful to everyone involved--management, shareholders, customers, and employees. Hyperrational management tries to jam a square peg into a round hole. I propose a more balanced, ecosystem approach to management that embraces both the rational and emotional sides of human nature. Employees, I will demonstrate, function much better when companies craft a natural workplace ecosystem that mimics the closely knit tribal communities of our ancestors. This is the truly rational and efficient thing to do.

MEET THE MAVERICKS

I profile three contrarian leaders, and their unconventional companies, in *Primal Management*. Each of these leaders worked harmoniously with human nature and achieved spectacular success in the process:

- Ken Iverson, the chairman of Nucor Steel (deceased)
- Harry Quadracci, the founder, president, and CEO of Quad/Graphics (deceased)

- Ricardo Semler, the CEO and main shareholder of Semco SA, a Brazilian company that provides a diverse array of products and services

I refer to, and quote from, this threesome often because they are my management heroes. All three of them detected something rotten in traditional management dogma and had the guts to do something about it. Traditional, hierarchical, bureaucratic management didn't feel right to these guys so they broke all the rules and created something natural and marvelous in the process--thriving egalitarian companies that were self-managing, self-motivated, and self-organizing. In other words, they spawned the first generation of superorganisms.

All three of my heroes described themselves as business mavericks and two of them wrote books with maverick in the title. They earned the moniker maverick because they turned right when the rest of the corporate world turned left. By turning right, however, they aligned themselves with human nature and enjoyed spectacular business success on account of it. In *Primal Management* we discover the method behind their madness and hopefully convince you to turn right too. By the end of the book I intend to show the mavericks for what they were--brilliant management innovators who were well ahead of their time.

All three mavericks used a similar formula to align with human nature. There is nothing complicated about their formula because it boils down to treating employees with dignity and respect. Here is how Ricardo Semler describes his democratic (egalitarian) approach to management:

The first of Semco's three values is democracy, or employee involvement. Clearly, workers who control their working conditions are going to be happier than workers who don't.

Just as clearly, there is no contest between the company that buys the grudging compliance of its work force and the company that enjoys the enterprising participation of its employees.[7]

Semler, by the way, is a Harvard-trained MBA who was named a "Global Leader of Tomorrow" by the World Economic Forum; was twice named as Brazil's "Business Leader of the Year;" was voted "Latin American Businessman of the Year" the *Wall Street Journal*; and his company, Semco SA, is often referred to as the best place to work in Brazil by management associations, labor unions, and the press.

Here are several of the principles all three mavericks profiled in *Primal Management* shared:

- They were all aggressive hierarchy-busters so their organizations were flat and based upon egalitarian--nobody is better than anybody else--principles. Hierarchy, they felt, creates barriers to communication, concentrates decision making in the few rather than the many, and makes the folks on the bottom feel small, insignificant, disrespected, and, hence, demotivated.

- All three mavericks believed in the motto "small is beautiful." They managed to maintain a sense of interpersonal intimacy by keeping individual plants/offices/and teams small, even as they grew into large organizations with thousands of employees. Harry Quadracci summarized this philosophy with his oft-used phrase--"think small."[8] The modular design of the superorganisms resulted in some redundant overhead costs and lost economies of scale, but these

losses were more than compensated for by the improved motivation and productivity realized within intensely-bonded workgroups.

- All three mavericks created companies that were almost completely devoid of bureaucracy, rules, regulations, organizational charts, and other systems of control. They achieved much of their efficiency from the simple notion that human beings will make good decisions, and will not need to be monitored by an army of overseers, if you treat them with respect and dignity and let them manage themselves.

Harry Quadracci and the other mavericks, I argue, aligned their companies with human nature by feeding the five social appetites that are the topic of this book. Quadracci's employee-centric approach resulted in both spectacular growth for the company and seven consecutive years on *Fortune* magazine's 100 Best Companies to Work For list. Quad/Graphics is a social experiment that succeeded spectacularly!

Quadracci's approach worked because it meshed with the emotional architecture of his workers. In other words, human beings function best in intensely personal, committed, and invested workgroups. This sort of tribal setting is the natural habitat for a social species such as ours.

So what was the outcome of Quadracci's employee-centric behavior? It was a printing company that stunned the competition with its innovation and productivity. Quad/Graphics was also nimble. It could erect a printing plant in half the time of its competitors, run the presses

faster than their rated capacity, and out-innovate the competition. Quad/Graphics produced a superior product at a reasonable cost.

Quadracci's formula resulted in a fantastic growth rate. Quad/Graphics went from a shoestring startup operation in 1971 to a company with $500 million in yearly revenues in 1984. It now employs 12,000 people and has yearly revenues of nearly $2 billion.[9] *Inc.*, *Forbes*, and other national business magazines featured Harry in their publications between 1980 and 2002. Quadracci's success was remarkable by any measure, but more so considering that he triumphed in a mature, slow-growth industry with entrenched competitors and with a management team dominated by high school graduates.[10] Quad/Graphics is a classic example of a superorganism. It is also a personal favorite because I worked there for six months while I was getting my MBA at the University of Chicago. Harry hit on something fundamental about human nature. He put a round peg in a round hole and discovered that human beings will manage themselves if they are part of a committed, tight-knit group. His ideas will work in any industry--service or manufacturing, profit or nonprofit--that is populated with human beings. If you want to create a productive superorganism filled with dedicated employees, follow Quadracci's example.

Ken Iverson was the business maverick who created the largest superorganism, Nucor Steel. Nucor has grown into a $14-billion dynamo in the steel industry based on Iverson's simple idea, ". . . aligning worker interests with management and shareholder interests through an egalitarian meritocracy largely devoid of class distinctions."[11] In other words, Nucor's path to dominance in the steel industry was to become a very large tribe—a superorganism just like

Quad/Graphics and Semco SA. I quote Iverson often because he eloquently describes the essence of egalitarian, trust-based management.

My hat goes off to the three mavericks. They pulled it off. They proved that companies that align themselves with human nature are both incredibly productive and incredibly rewarding places to work. Ricardo Semler, the South American maverick, describes management that aligns with human nature as "the third way" or "natural business"--not capitalism, not socialism, but something that is simultaneously more trusting, productive, exhilarating, and, in every sense, rewarding.[12] Semler believes that the purpose of business is not to make money, but to make the workers, whether working stiffs or top executives, feel good about life. This is similar to the main tenant of *Primal Management*--that nature wants human beings to feel good (experience the five productive pleasures) when they do good work.

Semler's contrarian, employee-centric approach attracted tremendous interest in the business community. He has given hundreds of speeches at companies, conferences, and universities like Harvard, MIT, Stanford, and the London School of Economics. Seventy-six universities feature Semco in their case studies and sixteen master's and PhD theses have been written about the company. Hundreds of newspaper stories have been written and dozens of television programs have profiled Semco.

Semler's contrarian approach to management has motivated some the world's most respected companies to make pilgrimages to a nondescript industrial complex on the outskirts of São Paulo, Brazil, including, IBM, General Motors, Ford, Kodak, Bayer, Nestle, Goodyear, Firestone, Pirelli, Alcoa, BASE, Chase Manhattan, Siemens, Dow Chemical, Mercedes Benz,

and Yashica.[13] For a while, Semco led twice-weekly tours of their facilities for groups consisting of thirty-five companies at a crack. These tours were eventually canceled because employees began feeling like animals in a zoo.[14]

CEOs have jealously eyed Semco's successes in terms of profitability, growth, sustainability, turnover, productivity, and innovation--like peering at a pot of gold on the far side of a deep chasm. Few, however, have been willing to cross what they perceived to be a wobbly, fraying rope bridge to get there. Most executives were unwilling to discard their security blankets--the sacred core precepts of traditional management--to get to Semler's pot of gold because the risks seemed to outweigh the potential benefits. This is where *Primal Management* comes in. It lays out a rock-solid business rationale for energizing the workplace based on cutting-edge science. It replaces Semler's wobbly-looking rope bridge with a sturdy four-lane highway. *Primal Management* allows you to emulate the mavericks, but without appearing soft, unbusinesslike, or unconventional.

You may have noticed that the three mavericks worked their magic inside factories dominated by blue-collar employees. The same employee-centric principles will work inside any workplace, white collar or blue collar, because they mesh with our underlying nature.

I have personally seen employee-centric ideas applied successfully inside a university hospital staffed with doctors and nurses and inside a large design firm staffed with professional architects and engineers. Authors like Peters and Waterman (*In Search of Excellence*) and Jim Collins (*Good to Great*), have found maverick-like policies at the cores of the excellent/great companies they researched--which spanned the spectrum from manufacturing to retail to

professional services companies. Bottom line, these ideas will work for any company populated with human beings.

Primal Management provides a synergistic blend of theory and practice. The three mavericks and the excellent/great companies supply much of the practice (what works) while I supply the theory to explain why it works. The practice element is more powerful and convincing because of the theory, and vice versa.

I think there is an urgent need for this book because too many companies and business schools still downplay the "people factor." They focus on the tools and analytical techniques necessary to organize, coordinate, and monitor a business, but they don't emphasize the leadership skills needed to energize and empower it.[15] I think it's time for the corporate world to wise up and begin aligning itself with the emotional forces that engender passion and commitment inside organizations. *Primal Management*, and the three mavericks, show you how to morph your company into a superorganism by feeding the five social appetites that drive high performance.

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[1] The Gallup Organization has surveyed Americans about their views on human origins annually since 1982. The results of these surveys have varied only slightly over the years. Between 43 percent and 47 percent of Americans agreed with the strict creationist view. Between 35 and 40 percent agreed that human beings evolved, but with divine guidance. I refer to the midpoint of these ranges in the text. See, Frank Newport, "Republicans, Democrats Differ on Creationism," June 20, 2008, retrieved from Gallup Organization website on October 11, 2008. http://www.gallup.com/poll/108226/Republicans-Democrats-Differ-Creationism.aspx

[2] I will use the terms "tribe" and "tribal" to refer to our hunter-gatherer ancestors because these terms are familiar to most readers. The more accurate term, however, is "band." A band is defined as a small egalitarian kin group no larger than an extended family. Tribes are larger groupings consisting of many families. Tribes are also more hierarchically structured and have more social institutions such as chiefs and councils of elders.

[3] Daniel Goleman, Social Intelligence, The New Science of Human Relationships (New York: Bantam Books, 2006).

[4] Ming-Jer Chen, *Inside Chinese Business*, (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2001).

[5] "Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience," *Neuroplasticity*, Jean-Paul Macher, editor, Les Laboratoires Servier, 6, No. 2, (2004) : 125.

[6] You might be wondering how I came up with the figure of 150, or fewer, individuals as the natural group-size for human beings. There are certainly no written records from the ice age, however, evolutionary biologists have come up with an innovative approach for determining this number. They noticed a relationship between social group size and brain size in primates. They concluded that group size in primates is limited by the information-processing ability of the primate brain. When this brain-size to group-size relationship is graphed and extrapolated to the size of the human brain, the predicted maximum group size for humans is 148 (95 percent confidence limit ranges from 100 to 231). This finding is consistent with the clan sizes observed in the few hunter-gather societies that have survived into modern times, such as the San of the Kalahari and with the sizes of the world's oldest-known villages in Mesopotamia. These villages were built 8,500 years ago and consisted of twenty to twenty-five dwellings and an estimated population of 150-200 individuals. For more information, see R.I.M. Dunbar, "Co-Evolution of Neocortex Size, Group Size and Language in Humans," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 16, no. 4 (1999): 681-735.

[7] Ricardo Semler, "Managing without Managers," *The Harvard Business Review*, September-October, 1989, 2.

[8] "Harry Quadracci, 66; Printing Firm Made Him Among Richest in U.S.," LA Times, August 1, 2001, B-13.

[9] Tom Daykin, "Quad/Graphics to lease new facility in Falls," JS Online, Feb 28, 2008, downloaded from http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=723177 on August 22, 2008.

[10] Rebecca Ganzel, "Putting Out the Welcome Mat," Training Magazine website, March, 1998, Downloaded on 8/22/08 from

http://www.trainingmag.com/msg/search/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1505740&imw=Y

[11] Jim Collins, *Good to Great*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 136.

[12] Ricardo Semler, Maverick: The Success Story Behind the World's Most Unusual Workplace, (New York, NY: Warner Books, Inc. 1995), foreward.

[13] Ricardo Semler, Maverick: The Success Story Behind the World's Most Unusual Workplace, (New York, NY: Warner Books, Inc. 1995), 1.

[14] Ricardo Semler, The Seven-Day Weekend: a better way to work in the 21st Century, (London, Century, the Random House Group Limited, 2003), 4, 11-12.

[15] A recent critique of business school education supports my contention that MBA programs persist in emphasizing technical skill over leadership training, despite what their marketing fliers claim. Here is a quote by Khurana and Snook, that supports my position.

"Recognizing that business schools have a responsibility that extends far beyond technical training is perhaps why so many business schools have come to describe their mission as one of educating leaders. While such mission statements make for attractive admissions copy or fundraising brochures, the actual business of educating leaders however, is not an easy pedagogical undertaking. Developing leaders is not the same as training our students in negotiations or the mechanics of financial engineering. Not only is the general process of leader development not well understood, but there is at least one essential element that business schools have not addressed very well, according to various surveys of MBA programs and the continuing exodus of executives as a consequence of falsifying financial returns and backdating stock options. The art of educating society's business leaders then goes well beyond equipping students with technical skills in finance, marketing, and organizational behavior." See, Khurana and Scott, "Comments on Glenn Hubbard's Business, Knowledge, and Global Growth," *Capitalism and Society* 1, Issue 3 (2006).