

To Get Out of the Crisis, Organizations Must be Open to Confrontation

An interview with **Roberto Panzarani**, President of Studio Panzarani, expert of Business Innovation, working with the development of programs for **managerial training** for top management, major companies and Italian institutions.



Jeremy Rifkin, in a 2014 essay, wrote, *“In the era that is emerging, working hard in the collaborative commons will assume the same importance that the market economy has had to work hard with, and the accumulation of social capital will become precious as the accumulation of market capital has been. The degree of existential fulfillment of individuals, will be defined by attachment to the community and the search for transcendence and meaning, no longer by material wealth. Kids of the internet generation conceive themselves more as players, than as workers. They consider their personal qualities more as talent than skills, and they prefer to express their creativity on a social network rather than working in office workstations or carrying out autonomous activities in a context market. The Internet of Things will liberate human beings from the market economy and guide them in the search for common and immaterial interests in the Collaborative Commons”*. The famous scholar's message captures a precise need very well, the union of several people is needed to bring about the changes that can lead to a leap forward for the history of humanity.

Professor Panzarani, you have recently republished *Sense of Community* (ed. Palinsesto) an essay centered on a dual aspect: that of collaboration and community as the foundation of a new way of doing business. But which people and skills do we need to manage this transformation process?

At this moment, the ingredients that I define in the essay as the **collaborative "commons"** are needed. To be competitive, companies must be collaborative; collaborative leaders must assume the function of facilitators, rather than authoritarian leaders. The future belongs to those who know how to adopt a **widespread leadership** style, and where the single boss treasures the experiences of others and shares responsibilities and experiences with colleagues. «Let's look around us, companies are increasingly more fluid and less hierarchically structured», says Alessio Tanganelli, Regional Director of the Top Employers Institute for Italy, Spain and Brazil.

«And their culture has obviously changed: today there is a new global vision of corporate leadership, much more open and collaborative, projected outside the traditional spheres which also affects business results». **Empathy, awareness** of the organization, a creative **vision**, a development of the **potential** of others, the dissemination of **knowledge** and the use of **social networks** are just some of the qualities that a collaborative leader must possess. The skills necessary to create different and better companies such as the ability to listen, emotional intelligence are characteristics present in the female world, which I never get tired of repeating. They are the professional assets that will become even more strategic in the leadership of the future.

It is not easy to say all this, in a historical phase which sees an objective decline in the quality of the leadership and more generally of the ruling classes. How do we get out of this?

Without the right leadership, collaboration can get lost: social media and other technologies allow connections anywhere and at any time, if we don't work on forcing an adequate ruling class we will gradually exit, I am referring to the Italian system which obviously concerns us more up close, from the list of countries that count. **Connectivity** is an integral part of **collaboration**, but without a guide who has abandoned the concept of "command and control" there is difficulty in adapting to new realities. We need a cultural leap to accompany the development of techno-science.

Organizations will have to rethink organizational arrangements and vision of work. It is a profound transformation and at what point are we with this?

We are starting to see a glimpse of something, even though we still have a lot to do. Let's keep in mind that to be a collaborative leader, you need to be able to connect people and ideas outside the organization to those that are present within it, leveraging different talents. Posing as a collaborative role model at the top, requires a solid punch in keeping teams focused on the discussion that will improve the product or service. In short, a collaborative culture must be actively encouraged. We know companies that are moving towards a **"digital workplace"** are increasing. Although this approach is considered strategic, only 25% of organizations are implementing it seriously. Knowledge of the new ways of working is still scarce and this does not allow for achievement of the hoped-for or potential benefits. Therefore, the challenge is having a leadership capable of integrating the new methodologies, as much as possible, within the company processes. Flexible hours, better and more effective communication and collaboration in the company (also thanks to the use of digital devices), greater freedom and more responsibility for workers in achieving their objectives. These are some of the changes that, in my opinion, a company must be able to adopt if it wants to remain competitive.

For years you have insisted on themes of social innovation, which is the matrix of the paradigm shift that has generated the "fourth revolution." What scenarios will arise?

There are many studies that point the way forward. According to Michael Porter, the creation of shared value should prevail, in guiding the investments made by companies in the communities in which they operate. In the book "The Wisdom of the Crowd" James Surowiecki treats cooperation as an opportunity also to arrive at true knowledge. *"Groups can be intelligent, only if there is a balance between the information shared by all and that possessed by its individual members". (...)* *"Paradoxically, aggregation – which could be seen as an anomalous form of centralization – it is fundamental for the success of decentralization."* In fact, we are heading towards a leadership in the global world which will have to have a collaborative matrix, to fully seize opportunities both internally and externally: translated into corporate language, this means seeking **opportunities** among **collaborators**, **suppliers**, and **clients**. The hierarchical, bureaucratic and functional company is finished, as many organizational science gurus have been repeating for years that understanding it quickly can only help us face change.

For further information:

[KPMG - Government & Public Sector](#)

it-fmnewsletterps@KPMG.it (Editorial Team)