

THE PURSUIT OF IMMORTALITY: BEYOND THE COMPETITIVENESS PARADIGM

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ABSTRACT

As the rules of the business game are getting re-written in the post-industrial era, the competitiveness paradigm is approaching its end. In this article, we discuss the death of inter-firm and intra-firm competition as we know it and propose an approach beyond competition, which we call the pursuit of immortality. Our digital age offers immense and unprecedented opportunities to bring forth the latent potential of organisations, by allowing individual employees scope for the expression of their capacity for learning and creativity. It is our thesis that every individual deep down is in search of something everlasting, and wants to leave something behind that endures. To help in this process, we recommend that companies imitate pre-industrial society value systems that allowed the free expression of what we call the "divinatory" instincts in individuals in the form of arts and crafts while maintaining focus and coordination through the use of information technology.

Basically, competition that benchmarks against the best already known is for lesser mortals. For the truly creative to emerge, we must rid ourselves of the limiting confines of the "known". Companies should get out of this rat race and concentrate on setting their own standards rather than frittering away their energies in outsmarting competition. In the ultimate analysis, it is more important to make this world a better place to live in, than to build a better battleground for rivalry and competition.

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