

BUSINESS

THE NEW WORK ETHIC

Values Shift: The New Work Ethic & What It Means For Business
John B. Izzo, Pam Withers
Prentice Hall, Canada
228 pages

BY BRENDA LARSON
Staff Writer

It used to be simple. You went to school, you graduated, you got a job.

And you didn't let go of that job if you didn't have to. You hung on as long as you could, because it was secure and respectable. That's what you did.

Today, this philosophy doesn't apply.

Workers aren't satisfied with simply having a job and drawing a paycheck. There's more to it than that.

That's what John Izzo and Pam Withers are proposing in their book *Values Shift: The New Work Ethic and What It Means for Business*.

Izzo and Withers believe there are six trends affecting how we do business — six trends workers are adopting.

First, workers expect to be involved in a partnership rather than in a top-down hierarchy. It makes sense. They want to feel as though they're just as important in the process as anyone else.

Second, workers expect there will be some kind of recognition of

the necessity for a balance between work and life. Whether it's mom who has to leave to pick up her baby from a daycare centre or dad who is tapped for hockey practice, employers have to recognize that time committed to families doesn't necessarily have a negative affect on their production companies.

Third, workers expect their employer to have a noble cause and to have workers share their noble causes with their colleagues.

It's great for an employer to show support for a charity. But it's even more important to the employers to show support for a worker's charity by allowing him time to pursue that community involvement.

Fourth, workers have an expectation of personal growth and development. Training, that's what it's all about. More and more employees in any type of employment believe they don't have the tools necessary to do their jobs. If they can't have the training, they don't want to be part of the organization.

Fifth, workers have an expectation of community at work. They want to have conversations with the guy at the next desk, the guy in the satellite office, the guy at head office. They want to expand their horizons. But they also want to know that, if they need help with a story or an editorial or layout, then

they'll get it at their office, right away.

Sixth, there has to be trust. Workers have to feel they can trust their bosses and vice versa. Trust, of course, best grows from mutual respect.

Izzo and Withers, book focuses on these factors and explains various means of making them achievable for a workforce.

Izzo tells us to undertake the difficult and sometimes challenging self-assessment, citing that it's critical to future growth. There's no way to improve performance or skills unless there's a fair assessment of those skills to draw on.

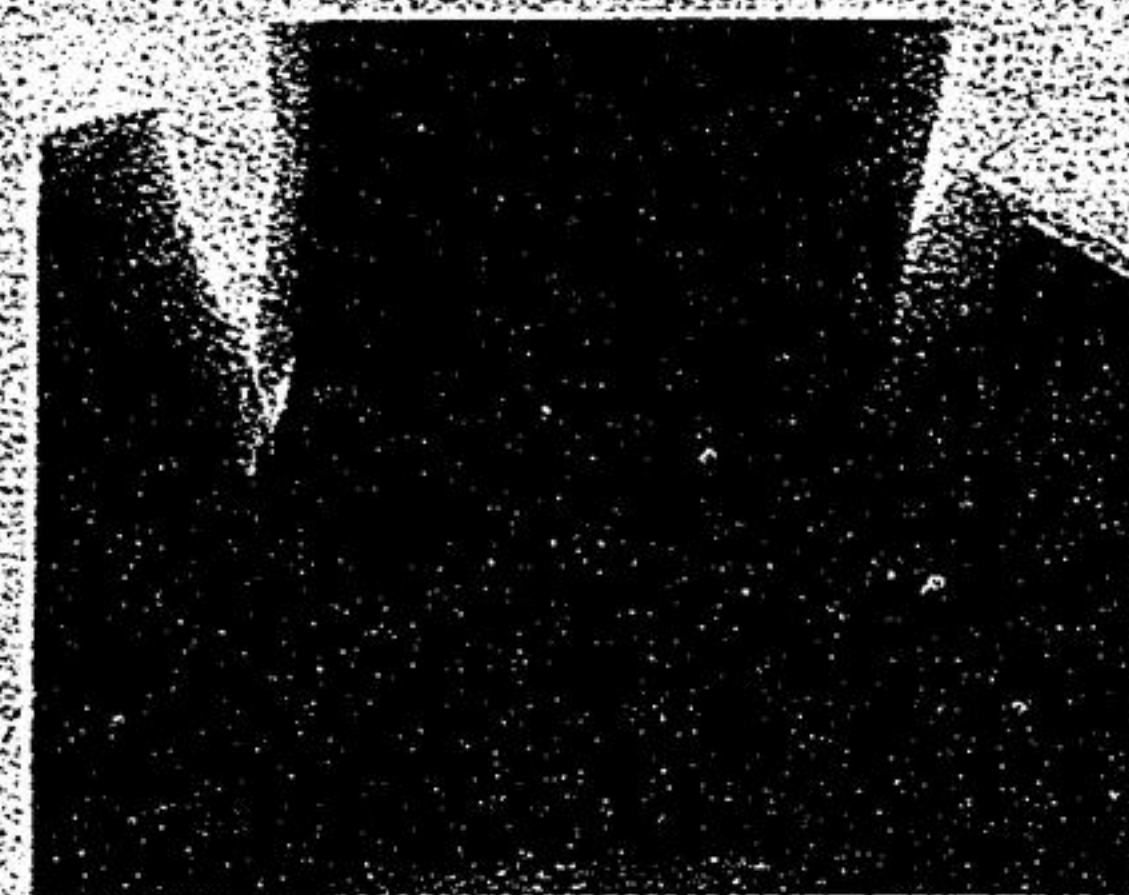
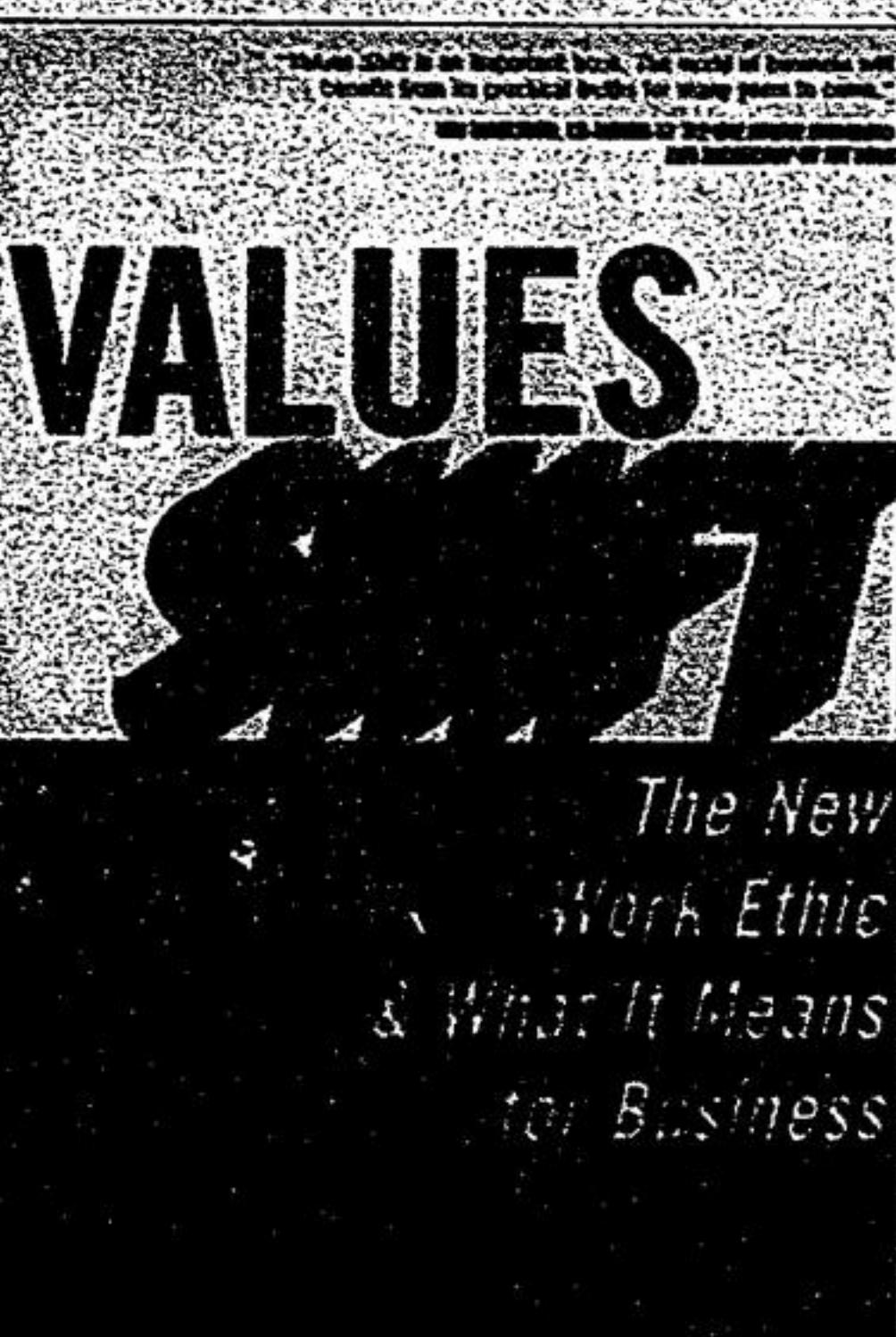
So what else can an employer do?

Be empathetic. Listen to employee concerns and problems. Try to establish a consistent method for addressing the problems.

Provide the appropriate types and levels of training so that employees are not left behind the rest of the group.

Involve employees in workflow — whether it's as simple as adding one more step to a process or determining the best means for getting the job done — because it's critical to find out what the best processes are.

Izzo and Withers have provided worthwhile tips to improve the work place.



BIZ BRIEFS

Business information session

The Community Business Access Centre holds an information session for its Business Incubator program tonight at 7 p.m. at the York Region headquarters building in Newmarket. The sessions provide an opportunity for aspiring entrepreneurs about to embark on a new business venture. To pre-register, call 895-5844.

Referral group meets in Newmarket

The Newmarket chapter of Business Network International meets Tuesdays at 7 a.m. at the Golden Griddle Restaurant on Yonge Street. There are now more than 1,600 BNI chapters with more than 30,000 members throughout the world. For more information, call 895-0898.

YTA fundraiser in Thornhill

Stand-up comic Derek Edwards will perform at the 4th annual fundraising luncheon of the York Technology Association Wednesday at Le Parc in Thornhill.

The event gets under way at 11:30 a.m. with a silent auction. Edwards performs following lunch at 1:15 p.m. Proceeds from the event will go the York Region United Way and Ability Online. Tickets are \$70 and reservations must be confirmed by tomorrow. Sponsors of the event are Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, Bell Canada, DataMirror Corp., Launchworks Inc and Royal Bank Financial Group. For more information, call 841-4422.

Please do not adjust your television set

BY ROGER VARLEY
Staff Writer

Thousands of television viewers in York Region have been switched to a different cable company — and the TV screen didn't even flicker.

About 600,000 Shaw Cable customers in Ontario and New Brunswick were transferred to Rogers Cable, while a similar number of Rogers customers in western Canada moved to Shaw in a swap approved by the Canadian Radio-Television Commission in October.

The companies also swapped

employees in the regions, a total of about 960 each.

Last week, anyone calling a Shaw Cable telephone number in the region was greeted by an employee identifying it as a Rogers Cable location.

Taanta Gupta, spokesperson for Rogers Cable, said cable customers involved in the swap will see little difference on their television screens.

"The change is pretty transparent," she said, noting that one of the few changes will be the appearance of the Rogers logo on screens that once carried Shaw signals. But there will be no alterations in channel allocation or

programming, other than on the community channel 10.

"When you do a swap — with both customers and assets — it's a very complicated process," said Gupta.

The actual transfer in billing begins at the end of January, one place where customers will notice a difference.

Gupta said Rogers bills its customers after service, where Shaw Cable billed in advance.

The transfer in technology will take place over the next several months as Rogers will continue to offer Shaw high-speed Internet services until Rogers is ready to offer the same systems.

Gupta said the former Shaw customers now will be able to take advantage of Rogers' VIP cable package that offers 10-percent discounts on a number of options.

"We have all these companies they can take advantage of," she said.

She said there will be no increase or decrease in cable rates other than an eight-cent increase that has already been approved for all cable companies by the CRTC.

Gupta said all former Shaw Cable customers now under the Rogers umbrella will be receiving a "welcome kit" explaining the changes sometime in the new year.

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