

Corporate Entrepreneurship – February 2012

How Entrepreneurial Is Your Organization?

By [Susan Foley](#)

If you are a frustrated Intrapreneur or corporate entrepreneur the reason may be that your organization is not entrepreneurial.

Intrapreneurs are either highly **engaged** or **disenchanted**. There is nothing in between. They are engaged if they are working on strategic opportunities to grow the business. They are disenchanted when the organization does not provide room for entrepreneurship.

In the article, [The Talent Paradox](#), the authors say that only one-third of employees are likely to stay in their current job when the economy turns around. Chances are the best and brightest employees already have one foot out the door. *The same is true for corporate entrepreneurs.*

It is natural for corporate entrepreneurs to feel like they don't fit but it is another thing to realize that the organization doesn't want to be entrepreneurial or doesn't know how to become entrepreneurial.

There are three things that need to be in place for corporate entrepreneurship to flourish inside of an organization. *They are simple, yet complex.*

- Individuals with a core set of **action-oriented competencies** needed to lead new growth initiatives.
- The freedom and flexibility to **build new systems and processes** to support their efforts.
- The ability to **create an environment** conducive to entrepreneurship, learning and growth.

Of course this needs to be front-ended with a strategy that is focused on new business growth, not incremental growth from existing products (a fallback position many companies have adopted to minimize risk). It's not about getting more out of what you have but creating new growth.

Research has shown that having the right people, supported by the right processes, in the right place is highly correlated to **corporate entrepreneurship** and leads to higher levels of innovation, productivity, engagement, and financial results. *It doesn't work unless you have all three of these things in place.*

So how entrepreneurial is your organization? That is the question that many corporate entrepreneurs and Intrapreneurs are now asking themselves about their organizations. They want to work in an entrepreneurial environment that leverages their entrepreneurial skills and capabilities, *not stifle them.*

As the economy recovers we are seeing corporate entrepreneurs and Intrapreneurs become more discerning about what companies they want to work for. They are using their own experience to evaluate how entrepreneurial a company is. Not by the external image these organizations convey but by the internal operating environment and culture that they have.

Understanding how entrepreneurial your organization is will be critical to attracting the talent you need to grow your business.