

Intentional Work Book Summary

Intentional work is a vastly different concept to society's standard perception of work. An organization that practices intentional work seeks to empower its employees, facilitating opportunities for them to have greater responsibility and freedom than a standard work place. An employee who applies intentional work is clear on their interests, goals and purpose, both for their life and for their work. Their interests, goals and purpose align with that of the organization. This creates a synergy where the organization benefits from having motivated employees and the employees benefit through contributing to something meaningful and enjoying opportunities not found in a standard work environment.

In her book, *Intentional Work*, Lea Dahlke uses Chilcotin Holidays as a case study for intentional work. She explains how employees take responsibility and the organization reciprocates by facilitating opportunities.

The values that are important for intentional work include collaboration, empathy, mentoring, responsibility and leadership that leads from behind. Collaboration means everyone can apply their unique strengths to create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Empathy is to believe everyone works to their best the majority of time so if a task wasn't done as expected, the employee isn't judged, but the organization seeks to understand what happened. Mentoring creates a culture where everyone can teach everyone something, in this way the whole team learns how to do all tasks. This way the organization isn't handicapped if a person leaves or can't work one day. Responsibility means everyone takes responsibility for themselves and what they do, stepping up to take on additional responsibilities when they are ready to do so and when the situation necessitates it. Leading from behind means a leader gives other people the opportunity to lead and practice their own skills, providing a safety net so the other people can learn. This means there is not just one leader, but everyone can be a leader.

Lea discusses the different levels of leadership as identified by John C. Maxwell in his book *The Five Levels of Leadership* and how these apply to an intentional work culture as employees develop on their leadership journeys. A leader who uses intentional work will be operating in the higher leadership levels or aspiring to do so.

Lea then explains the other principles that define intentional work. She defines these as equal opportunities for all employees, autonomy, variety of opportunities, being flexible and adaptable, reflection, appreciation and a nature connection. These all build up to the bigger picture for why organizations and employees practice intentional work. Not for the paycheck or to increase staff retention but to contribute to something bigger than the self such as conservation of the environment.

This is what the organization facilitates, Lea then identifies the values and principles of the employees who practice intentional work. Firstly, they take responsibility for their actions. They have clarity on their interests, goals and purpose and how this aligns with the organization. They have commitment to what they do, meaning a job won't be left half-done or completed halfheartedly. Communication means they can collaborate with other team members or the public to create positive, constructive outcomes. They understand the concept of reciprocity, where everyone who benefits gives back in return. They are also part of a community, which means they are connected to fellow employees on a much deeper level than by simply being work colleagues. This is based on an alignment of interests, goals and purpose. Everyone is pulling in the same direction to create the best possible outcome.

Lea then share the stories of several interns and employees at Chilcotin Holidays to bring to life the concept of intentional work. These stories show how intentional work is applied throughout an employee's journey and how these employees continue to apply it after they have moved onto other jobs. This shows the strength of the community of like-minded individuals as many employees continue to be involved with the organization sometimes decades after they have moved onto other jobs.

Lea ends the book by challenging the reader to step up and apply the concepts of intentional work. It is an ongoing process where there is always room for improvement so organizations and employees can benefit from this book whatever stage of their intentional work journey they are at.

Are you ready to find out how you can apply the concepts of intentional work, either as an organization or as an employee? Are you ready to challenge yourself and take responsibility for everything you do? Get your copy of *Intentional Work* from fortressbooksandweb.com or at wildernesstrainingacademy.com and begin your intentional work journey today.