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# FOREWORD

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No leader achieves anything of true, lasting value alone. Whatever great things you aim to accomplish, whatever changes you're determined to drive, you need others to make it happen: others *working together in teams*. Therefore, building great teams ought to be your highest priority.

(That really ought to be self-evident. Sadly, though, I've seen plenty of organizations where it's not. Those organizations fail: nowadays, sooner, rather than later.)

Given their importance, how do you develop great teams? What are the foundational elements central to success?

To begin with, great teams require talented individuals who have the specific skills and know-how to get the job done. They must receive the resources they need: money, people, time, executive support. They need strong feedback mechanisms so they can track results in real time and quickly make course corrections. Finally, great teams must be empowered with the freedom and flexibility to find and execute great solutions—and do it *now*.

Makes sense, right? But I've barely alluded to the most important element. *You need outstanding people*. In the right roles. With a passion for owning the results.

Let's face it. Leaders really only empower people they believe in: people with the attitude, skills, leadership, and persistence needed for success.

And there's the rub: *there's more competition than ever before for the kind of people you CAN believe in*. It's increasingly challenging to find and recruit those scarce individuals. Even after you've brought them aboard, or developed them internally, talented people have a world of choices—and *they know it*. How do you keep them?

These are urgent questions. You need to address them head on. Reading *Talent Force* is an excellent way to start. Rusty Rueff and Hank Stringer crystallize the profound issues surrounding talent recruitment and management. Their book is far more than a manifesto. It offers powerfully innovative solutions, with real case studies to support them.

When I had the privilege of leading PepsiCo, I came to know Rusty as one of our most talented HR executives—and as a master recruiter. We're several years down the road, yet I can see the origins of many of this book's great ideas in his work for us at PepsiCo.

As our Vice President of International HR, he took on one of our most urgent challenges: finding people with outstanding international experience to support our global expansion. He systematically identified and built relationships with the best general managers throughout Asia, Europe, India, and Latin America: people who'd never worked with us, never even considered us. We found some of our best people that way. In fact, Rueff introduced me personally to a leader with such exceptional talent that we created a top position in China specifically for that individual.

When Rusty Rueff talks about the importance of building a *talent web*—a global community of talent you can draw on whenever the need arises—he's been there, done that, and demonstrated the results. When he talks about the importance of “high-touch” approaches in recruitment and retention, he's in a position to know.

When Hank Stringer talks about creating “talent brands” that encourage great people to come to you, or re-envisioning talent management for today's radically new business environment, or using the Web for more than just collecting resumés, it's not just talk. Hank, like Rusty, has been there—whether creating compelling recruiting brand messages for an up-and-coming computer company called Dell Computer, or innovating revolutionary Internet recruitment technology at Hire.com for companies the world over. Rueff and Stringer are talent experts; they've been out there doing these things, refining them, making them work, driving real business value.

Back at PepsiCo, we liked to say that the soft stuff is always harder than the hard stuff. The trick, we realized, was to make the soft stuff “hard”: to operationalize it. When it comes to recruiting great people, *Talent Force* will help you do precisely that. If you're as committed to finding and nurturing great talent as I am, you'll find it invaluable.

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and former Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, PepsiCo, Inc.  
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