



Organisational PurposeQuests

by the CEO of a global technology company

Following a complex international merger in difficult external conditions, we had completed three years of successful restructuring and cost reduction and met our financial targets. It was becoming ever clearer, however, that the organisation needed to rediscover its spirit if it was to realize the many growth opportunities facing this technology-driven business.

Our people, and particularly our leadership, needed to find their belief in the possible. In general, everyone set about their daily tasks with enthusiasm; teamwork and trust were high. But there was an unspoken assumption that financial performance was the only metric that mattered. Resolving this paradox held the key to unleashing the organization's full potential.

This led to a discussion with **nowhere**. What was it that motivated our people at the start of each day? Our diagnosis was that the overriding and collective purpose of our business provided the daily stimulus, but none of us could find the means to express it.

It took little to persuade me that finding our purpose would unlock the answer, but a little more persuasion was needed to undertake such a quest, given what looked an unconventional methodology.

Following several weeks' preparation with **nowhere**, a team of eight leaders from across the organization, including myself, was guided through a reflective experience, alone and in groups, as we led a hermit-like existence for four days on a mountain in Crete.

Through a process that released unsuspected creativity and undiscovered beliefs, together we rediscovered our purpose. We also learned the power of simplicity of language to inspire others. We were surprised to find that heightened self-awareness and attention to our immediate surroundings enabled a creative but disciplined process to achieve a goal against a deadline.

What flowed from uncovering our purpose was the immediate expression of the values particular to us and a new leadership model uniquely in service of our strategy and our ambition. Within weeks this was skilfully communicated to senior leaders around the world.

Four years later, the company has grown and flourished. Our purpose and values are the touchstone for the organization worldwide. We have put the soul back into the organisation. There is no need for vision or mission statements. We know what motivates us all every day. It is close identification with our purpose.

