Organizational Longevity — *What it Takes*

The Most Enduring Organizations . . .

1. Create and sustain a **compelling vision** of what is possible. This includes a core ideology that describes what the organization strives to accomplish or create and the beliefs that members subscribe to.

2. Are **sensitive and adaptive** to a changing world. While staying true to their core vision and ideology, they are keenly aware of changes in the world around them and adjust their strategy in response to these changes.

3. Create a work environment that gives people a sense of **community** and **belonging**. In organizations that stand the tests of time, people feel connected and integrated into a larger, meaningful whole.

4. Display a driving commitment to **new ideas, learning, innovation, reducing organizational complexity, and continuous improvement.**

5. Encourage the **free-flow sharing of divergent ideas**, **information**, and **knowledge**. Enduring organizations recognize that great ideas can emerge from anywhere within the organization (not just at the top) and that people must be encouraged to share this information and knowledge in order for it to be useful to the organization.

6. **Strengthen the capacity of the front line to think and act independently** to make decisions, solve problems, and initiate the changes needed to improve their ability to serve their customers, create value, enhance their job satisfaction, and deliver quality results. Job ownership positively correlates to customer satisfaction and profitability.

7. Create **reward systems** that are perceived by stakeholders as **fair and equitable**, and which reward innovation, risk taking, and quality.

8. **Are conservative with financial and other resources**. People at all levels of enduring organizations understand that resources are finite and they manage their resources effectively.

[Adapted from the work of Arie de Geus (The Living Company), Jim Collins and Jerry Porras (Built to Last), Jeffrey Pfeffer (Competitive Advantage through People), and the research of Nitin Nohria, Wiliam Joyce, and Bruce Roberson, summarized in the Harvard Business Review Article, *What Really Works* (July 2003)] Rev. 5.17.2019