

# Changing mental models

Psychology



On the other hand, Southwest Airlines is described as breeding a culture of accountability, but from a different perspective than that of American Airlines. Rather than focusing on the individual or group of people who have caused the delay, they make it a point to promote the fact that delays are everyone's responsible; supporting the mind-set that the organization is a team. Thus, Pfeffer (2005) describes Southwest Airlines as having greater success in its approach, working to find solutions rather than the person or department to blame the problem on.

Managing a company's culture has been proven to be at the root of its successes, and failures (Pfeffer, 2005). While accountability is extremely important in business, who is being held accountable is even more critical. As can be seen in the American Airlines example discussed, the blame-game can transform a well-meaning system into a useless chain of finger-pointing in a hurry. Then, the focus is on finding out who is responsible for the problem, rather than how it happened, to try and avoid it in the future; hence, Pfeffer's emphasis on changing leader mindsets to change the culture.

That said, although " hiring, retaining, and developing people are critical activities in a world in which intellectual capital and organizational capabilities are the key sources of competitive advantage," there is another responsibility, just as crucial to overall business success, that Human Resources (HR) must consider (Pfeffer, 2005, p. 127). Pfeffer (2005) suggests the diagnosis of changes to be made in regard to the mind-set of an organization is one of the most important, yet most underestimated tasks the HR team will perform.

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