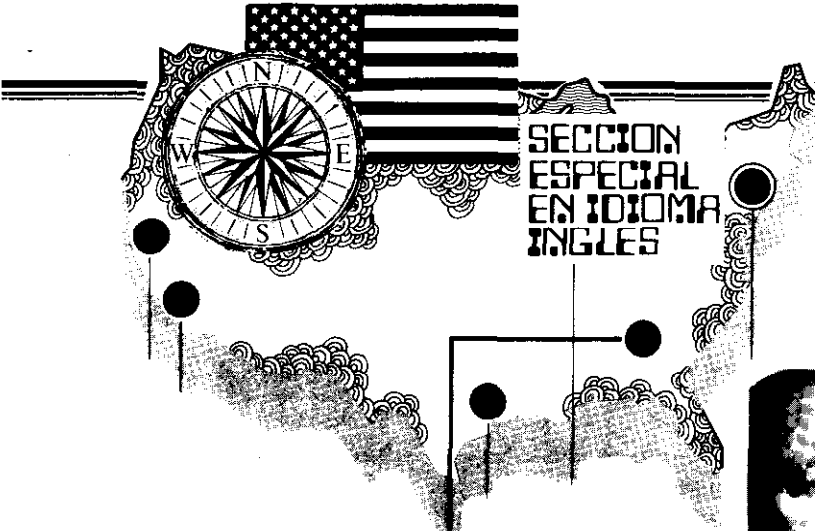




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Jingshen



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Jingshen is the Mandarin word for spirit and vivacity. It is an important word for all who would lead, because above all things, spirit and vivacity set effective organizations apart from those that will decline and die. And leaders by their words and actions build or kill an organization's spirit.

It is too easy these days to explain an organization's success in terms of its material wealth or its capital goods or the quality of its science, as if things and knowledge get things done. Things and knowledge are inert, inanimate, passive. They lie dormant until applied by people. Just as a violin's sound depends on the skill and personality of the violinist, so does the usefulness of things and ideas depend on the skill and spirit of those who use them.

By recognizing that spirited people make the difference, we have not really advanced the management art. Down through the ages leaders have known that the spirit of their troopers, seamen, farmers, teachers, scientists to a great extent determined the outcome of the struggle. And long ago, too, it was found that, while mercenaries would fight well for money and plunder, and slaves would fight well from fear and for freedom, free men would fight hardest and longest, and against any odds, to save their freedom and to accomplish the goals to which they had freely committed themselves. This lesson is still relevant today.

Bosses fail

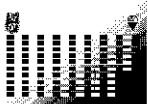
But even today there are bosses—to call them leaders would demean the term—who rule by fear. These are the drivers who march *behind* their people with the whips of firing or loss of opportunity in their hands. These are the managers who say, "Stop coddling Mary, she's lucky to have a job." Or, "Harry, you're not showing the attitude that people must have to advance here."

Bosses *do* create attitudes in their workers, but they are not attitudes that lead to productivity. The attitudes they create don't lead to harmony, they lead to fear and discord—and sabotage. When whipped, people will run or fight. If they run, they will run in any direction, not necessarily the direction in which the organization wants them to run. If they fight, they will fight using fair means and foul, and people fighting with their supervisors—and among themselves—obviously are not working for the common good.

The days when an organization could buy people's commitment are also past. The fear of loss of income is much less today than in the past. With national social welfare programs developed to the extent they are, few people face starvation if they become unemployed. Nevertheless, some managers view money as the only sound motivator available to organizations. These are the managers who feel they can only field a mercenary army, an army bought and paid for to do its job. This is probably the most widespread of all managerial attitudes, even today. And when managers project it, workers accept it, and the circle goes round and round.

No one will deny that money is important. Most of us *do* work in a money economy, and cash is the most flexible, most useful medium of exchange we have. People *will* work for money. And for more money. And for more money. And for more. For most people, money has become more than a medium of exchange useful in economic transactions; it has become a badge of honor—and a device for measuring power and for determining the winners of conflicts.

Money does motivate, then, but only for a short time and only as long as it serves as a measure of worth or of power or of victory. But when a given amount of money paid in a particular way begins to lose its symbolic value, the only recourse for the employee is to seek more. The demand for more is not related to amount produced or



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some personal concept of equity, but to the very human need to be recognized, to be accorded some special distinction. When the only inducement to effort in support of a cause is money, only significant and regular increases in money will keep people at their tasks—and even then often grudgingly.

Willing commitment

The organization with spirit, with high morale, with the vivaciousness that will sustain it despite disappointments and failures is an organization that has in its ranks people who have freely identified themselves with the organization and its goals. On a small scale, then, an organization, whether it's a company, a hospital, a college, or whatever, has the same governing task as a city, a state, or a country: It must conduct its affairs in such a way as to attract to it people who accept its philosophy and purpose and who will willingly give their support to achieve the greatest good for all.

Men have long experimented with different political systems in an effort to find one that works. The ingenuity of man has been turned to that task, and from this pool of creativity a variety of "solutions" have arisen. At the moment, political institutions that allow the voices of the citizens of a community to be heard on matters that affect them seem to be the institutions that produce the highest level of general satisfaction—spirit, morale—and the most willing subordination of selfish interests to the interests of the group.

The lessons learned from political science are supported by behavioral science research in industry. The basic structure of most industrial commercial organizations is, of course, hierarchical and authoritative, reflecting the reality of managers being accountable for the prudent use and preservation of the owner's property. But having allowed for reasonable controls to ensure the

protection of the property rights of owners, more and more organizations are actively enlisting the participation of their employees in the decision-making processes of the company.

As with political decisions, not everyone participates in all decisions, but as far as possible, those likely to be affected by a decision are asked to express their views and preferences on what decisions should be made. This style of management extends from the highest levels of the organization down to the shop floor, and it is known as participative management. In the '30s, in fact, in the context of the emerging union movement in the United States, it was encompassed under the name industrial democracy.

Industrial democracy

Industrial democracy, today, describes efforts to give employees more control and influence over their own work lives. In some efforts it can involve decisions that range from the design of the work area to who will become members of a work group and how much they will be paid.

This movement toward greater participation of employees in the decisions that affect their everyday work lives—not the politically oriented power thrust of some movements toward "industrial democracy"—seems to reflect the desire of free men to have greater control of their own lives. To the extent that this occurs, and to the extent that free men commit themselves to the goals of the organization because of their participation in its decisions, we are likely to have organizations of spirited, vivacious people working together to accomplish their common goals—not bossed, not "hired," but free, committed men.

In the competitive test of organizations, *jingshen* counts. ●

