In this new book, leadership expert David Ulrich teams up with clinical psychologist Wendy Ulrich to explore the “why” of work—the common driving force behind every successful organization. The focus is on:

*MAKING MEANING in the workplace—to bring out the best in everyone.
*CREATING VALUE for your employees, your customers, your company, and yourself.
*BUILDING HOPE for the future by building “the abundant organization.”

7 Disciplines

• Positive psychology
• Social responsibility
• Marriage and interpersonal relationships (including high performing teams)
• Employee engagement
• Culture and positive work environment
• Growth and learning
• Happiness

Seven questions that drive abundance
We propose seven questions to help leaders drive the abundance agenda –
questions that help leaders make meaning, add value, create emotional energy, and foster hope while at work. This is the architecture for abundance.

1. **What am I known for? (Identity)**
   The field of positive psychology helps leaders answer this primary question. The traditional approach of psychology to depression, anxiety, and addiction disorders has been to develop models and techniques for fixing what is wrong with us. Few theorists or clinicians also probed what is right. Into this space, Martin Seligman and his associates have inserted the proposal that the domain of psychology extends beyond fixing pathology to probing health and happiness. Positive psychology asks what makes people happy in the long run. Researchers in positive psychology have discovered that when we identify and regularly use our signature character strengths, life becomes more satisfying and meaningful. They further assert that even when we must cope with depression, anxiety, addiction, or other mental illness (and their corporate equivalents), building on our signature strengths fosters creativity and courage for tackling our challenges.

2. **Where am I going? (Purpose and motivation)**
   Social responsibility and environmental activism are fields that speak to the importance of addressing society’s biggest problems while investing in corporate citizenship. In order to manage scarce resources and rebuild organization reputations, many leaders have begun to pay attention to a “triple bottom line” of people (values and reputation), profits (financial return), and planet (e.g., carbon footprint). Environmental activists help corporations audit their carbon footprints and reduce energy consumption. Other organizations demonstrate a caring heart as they invest in philanthropic initiatives. These citizenship efforts underscore values of stewardship and accountability that help employees see how their personal values align with corporate values to make a real difference in the real world.

3. **Whom do I travel with? (Relationships and Teamwork)**
   While leaders must attend to teamwork in complex work settings, the concept of abundant organizations goes beyond teams that produce and perform their tasks well to teams that engender a kind of passion that allows for creativity, focused energy, trusting connections, and mutual respect. High-performing teams come from high-relating people. Research on successful marriages suggests patterns and stages of effective long-term committed relationships that can be applied to teams in organization settings. The best teams work through these stages and use these patterns to combat “organization divorce” characterized by burnout, turnover, and lost productivity. When leaders help their organization “families” move beyond superficialities of getting along to struggle through conflict and understand one
another’s strengths and weakness, they can approach the kind of synergy that occurs in the best of human relationships. They gain a competitive advantage over a less relationally sophisticated competitor. This means that leaders need to learn and model the skills of building good relationships at work. Lynda Gratton has captured this sense of team cohesiveness with the term “glow”, which includes a cooperative mindset, jumping across boundaries, and igniting latent energy.

4. How do I build a positive work environment? (Effective work culture or setting)
Leaders who engender positive work environments promote good communication, development opportunities, and pleasant physical facilities to ensure a positive culture at work. Instead of building routines and patterns that encourage self-reflection, honest sharing, and the kind of consistency that brings people together, many of us build habits, addictions, and compulsive patterns that serve primarily to block out other people. Or, we build few routines at all, leaving us untethered in time and space and making us unpredictable to those who want to connect. Routines and patterns driven by our deepest values help us stay grounded in what matters most and available to those who matter most. When leaders support individual and policy-level routines that help work to work, they create a positive environment that both not only sustains productivity but that fosters connection.

5. What challenges interest me? (Personalizing and contributing work)
The study of talent has evolved from a focus on employee competence (ability to do the work) to employee commitment (willingness to do the work). Employees who are competent but not committed will not perform to their full potential. Commitment comes from building an employee value proposition that engages employees to use their discretionary energy to pursue organization goals. Commitment or engagement grows when we work in a company with a vision, have opportunities to learn and grow, do work that has an impact, receive fair pay for work done, work with people we like working with, and are offered flexibility about terms and conditions of work.

6. How do I respond to disposability and change? (Growth, learning, and resilience)
Research on personal resilience and learning organizations offers exciting insights into what helps people and institutions endure in the face of both suffering and setbacks. By studying what helps POW’s survive and thrive, how Navy Seals can be trained to stay calm under attack, and what abused children who become successful have in common, we get hints about how leaders encourage learning under conditions of stress and challenge. Unlike the assumption of disposability
that governs so much of modern society, resilience and learning principles challenge us to “repair, reuse, and recycle” people, products, and programs rather than tossing them.

7. **What delights me? (Civility and happiness)**
The hostility rampant in modern life is itself under fire these days. The cry for tolerance demands that we outgrow our racial, religious, political, ethnic, and gender stereotypes. The cry for civility also calls upon us to outgrow our we-they, win-lose, right-wrong, blame-and-shame mentality. As we move away from hostility and blame toward problem-solving, listening, curiosity, and compassion, simple civility greases the skids. Delight often comes in small packages, and when money is tight it helps to know that small and simple pleasures spread over time have more impact on our sense of well-being than grand one-time gestures.

See the Video: [http://daveulrich.com/](http://daveulrich.com/)