



Rule No. 49 —People Over Processes.

Processes are important. But people drive results.

Over-relying on systems, procedures, and checklists at the expense of human judgment, initiative, and ownership is a slow march to mediocrity. Organizations thrive when they trust and invest in people, not just when they refine processes. Processes should serve people, not control them.

The Hard Truth —

Processes are tools. People are the point.

When your systems exist to protect the business from its own people, you have a culture problem, not a process problem. Hire people worth trusting, build systems that support them, and stop managing for the worst-case employee. Processes guide people, but people ultimately build the business.

Ask Yourself —

If I truly trusted my people, what process would I no longer need?

Do our checklists exist because we don't trust our people to think?

Are our managers hiding behind procedure to avoid making real decisions?

If our best people constantly have to 'work around' the system, is that a red flag?

Action Steps —

This Week's Task: Demonstrate trust over bureaucracy.

Examine one area of your business where process has become more important than people.

Part 1: Identify the Bottleneck

Identify one process, policy, or system in your organization that frustrates your best people more than it helps them, that slows down capable employees.

Ask yourself:

Does this process genuinely create value, or does it exist because we don't trust people to make good decisions?

Eliminate it, simplify it, or delegate authority so decisions can be made without it.

Part 2: Empower Someone

Remove one unnecessary approval, simplify one procedure, or give a trusted team member greater authority to make a decision without your involvement. Then check in with them at the end of the week to discuss what improved, and what you learned.

Remember:

Great leaders don't build organizations where people serve the process.

They build processes that help people do their best work.

This Rule is important because it is not an argument against structure. It is an argument that structure should exist to enable people, not to substitute for them. This is a principle that acknowledges the uncomfortable truth that no system, however well-designed, can replace the judgment, creativity, and commitment of people who actually care about what they're doing. Invest in the people. The processes will follow.

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Practice the principles.



Recommended Reading —



The Human Side of Enterprise, by Douglas McGregor

*"The ingenuity of people is far more reliable than the ingenuity of systems.
Trust in people is not naïve, it's essential."*

Each day, set 2 specific actions
that move this week's Rule into practice
and help complete the Action Step by week's end.

TOP 3 priorities this week:

WEEK 13

monday

tuesday

wednesday

thursday

friday

saturday

sunday

notes —

this week...