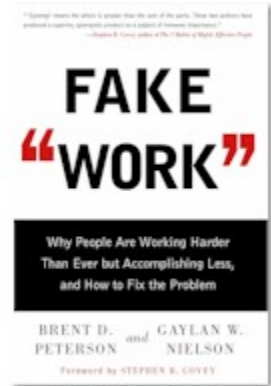


Avoiding Fake Work in Your Work Place

Fake work is the work workers do that is not focused on their organizations’ strategy and goals. It looks like work — it may even feel like **real work** — but it doesn’t accomplish strategic goals. Organizations pay for an extraordinary amount of fake work. Can an organization afford to sponsor fake work?

Suppose you were building a road up a mountainside to your new cabin. And you made a slightly wrong calculation, made a simple turn. The road cuts through the trees, along a rocky ridge and then, just dropped off a cliff. Fake work feels like that. The building of the road seemed purposeful. The effort was incredible. The blood, sweat, and tears were real and the commitment was profound. But it really doesn’t matter! You still have a road to nowhere.



A large percentage of our clients confess to dedicating weekends and long nights on a project, proposal, or presentation that ended nowhere: canceled, ignored, dismissed. According to our research, work in organizations is often not real and just seems to drop off a cliff.

Focus on Doing Real Work



This is a call to every worker and to every organization to rethink who they are, how they fit in the work they do, and to push to avoid fake work and to make their work relevant and real. All workers must first seek to avoid **fake work** and then to do real, strategic work.

Avoid **Fake Work** — The real shock of doing **fake work** is that lots of us know about meaningless tasks and useless meetings, but the real horrors lurk behind long projects, ill-defined jobs, and seemingly great work that derives no value or results that matter. Many workers report that this rampant meaningless work undermines their self worth and motivation and saps their joy and energy. The big problem is: many organizations don’t recognize fake work and many people don’t know that their hard work is fake.

Focus on **Real Work** — **Real work** is blissful work, valued work, and meaningful work. It is about what workers do every day. It is about work choices, about what sustains workers, their families, and ultimately organizations. Work has value when it is strategically focused. We intend to help workers understand how they are often the architects of fake work. We propose simple solutions to work that are strategically linked.

Reasons for Avoiding Fake Work

The importance of avoiding **fake work** is driven by the following issues:

1. The costs of **fake work** are immense. Those costs touch every worker's day and the results they will get. Those costs cascade down through the organization.
2. In **fake work** environments, turnover is high and costly. Organizations love to rationalize that it is expected. Some is. Lots of it is a cost of **fake work**.
3. Every trend says that the demands of work are going up.
4. As organizations flatten out, the need for workers to be more self-reliant is immense.
5. Everyone is working harder, longer hours, and they are doing it to compete and survive in the new global economy. People are being asked to and expected to do more.
6. No one can afford to be doing **fake work** when there is barely enough time to do **real work**.
7. The constant change of business drenches organizations in uncertainty and misdirection. This confusion provides a murky environment for **fake work** to grow.
8. Constant change is here to stay and it means that almost everyone is off track too much of the time. Long hours often display the pattern of misdirected focus and poor productivity.
9. Leadership has hit every place on the target except the bull's eye. There is a faulty belief that organizations can lead themselves out of every problem (oh, and they can if they understand the essence of leadership — **the work itself**).
10. Strategy is important but is static and leads to **fake work** if it is not properly placed in the hands of the workforce.
11. Senior Leaders are lost in the exhaustive efforts they put into mission, vision, and strategy. They should focus more on getting their people to execute the strategy.
12. Execution, alignment, Six Sigma books are talking about processes — but ignoring work and the worker. They are mostly directed at leaders.



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