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The SAIC Solution: How We Built an \$8 Billion Employee-Owned Technology Company

By Dr. J. Robert Beyster



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The SAIC Solution: How We Built an \$8 Billion Employee-Owned Technology Company By Dr. J. Robert Beyster

Can an employee-owned company succeed? Here is the inside story of one that thrived and grew to become a significant force in the nation's scientific and technical markets.

In 1969, Dr. J. Robert Beyster founded Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) with a unique vision of creating an employee-owned organization run according to 12 principles of success that encourage entrepreneurship and accountability. Today, SAIC has grown from a handful of scientists to over 43,000 employees—most of whom hold company equity—and more than \$8 billion in annual revenue, a steadily rising stock price, and top rankings as a contractor to government and business organizations. In this book, Dr. Beyster tells the story of SAIC, and offers valuable lessons to entrepreneurs and managers on how to build a company in which loyalty to values goes hand in hand with success.

Dr. J. Robert Beyster (La Jolla, CA) is the founder of Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC). He served as CEO and chairman of the company for 35 years. Beyster continues to promote innovation and employee ownership through his Foundation for Enterprise Development and the Beyster Institute at the Rady School of Management at the University of California, San Diego.

Peter Economy (La Jolla, CA) is Associate Editor of Leader to Leader, the award-winning publication for the Leader to Leader Institute, and a bestselling author of titles such as The Management Bible (0-471-70545-4) and Enterprising Nonprofits: A Toolkit for Social Entrepreneurs (0-471-39735-0).



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The SAIC Solution: How We Built an \$8 Billion Employee-Owned Technology Company By Dr. J. Robert Beyster Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #412360 in Books
- Published on: 2007-03-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.13" h x .96" w x 6.38" l, 1.16 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 230 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“...one great big good-news story...there are important lessons to be learned here.” (*Management Today*, May 2007)

From the Inside Flap

For more than three decades, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)—the largest employee-owned research and technology company in the United States—has achieved unparalleled success in the areas of science, engineering, and technology, all while flying well below the radar of most casual business observers.

As the founder of SAIC, Dr. J. Robert Beyster has played an important role in the emergence of this company. And now, in *The SAIC Solution*, Beyster—with the help of bestselling business author Peter Economy—reveals how his vision of an employee-owned organization, run according to key principles that encourage entrepreneurship and accountability, allowed SAIC to become one of the most successful research and technology companies in the world.

Filled with in-depth insights and practical advice, this book describes how SAIC evolved as an ongoing experiment and how it continues to grow exponentially—with \$8 billion in annual revenues—by applying counterintuitive operating principles that cut against the grain of contemporary business practice.

With this book as your guide, you'll quickly realize the uniqueness of SAIC's approach to business and discover how the groundbreaking principles and practices used by the company can readily be transferred to almost any industry. Some of the topics discussed include:

- The Culture: People First—hire smart people, encourage their entrepreneurial spirit, let them focus on customers, and reward them for their hard work
- The Glue: Employee Ownership—those who contribute to a company should own it, and ownership should be commensurate with a person's contribution and performance
- The Wild Card: Experiment Constantly—the willingness to constantly experiment with new business entities, corporate structures, and staffing is an essential element of any successful organization
- The Bottom Line: Expect Reasonable Profit with Stock Price Growth—placing greater emphasis on steady growth and customer satisfaction ultimately leads to long-term value and is reflected in the rising price of a company's stock

Written in an engaging and thought-provoking style, *The SAIC Solution* skillfully outlines the philosophy behind SAIC's extraordinary success, and distills important lessons that can help you—whether you're an executive or an entrepreneur—create your own success story in today's fast-changing and technology-driven business environment.

From the Back Cover

Praise for THE SAIC SOLUTION

"I have known Dr. Beyster for more than four decades and have long admired him—as a scientist, a

manager, and as a person. This book provides a rare glimpse of the inner workings of Dr. Beyster's highly effective business practices, and it is essential reading for anyone who hopes to build a business that makes a profit—and makes a difference."

—Melvin R. Laird U.S. Secretary of Defense (1969–73) Senior Counselor for National and International Affairs The Reader's Digest Association, Inc.

"The SAIC story needs to be told, and Robert Beyster is the one to tell it. It is a success story of technical innovation, entrepreneurship, employee ownership, and great business practices."

—William J. Perry U.S. Secretary of Defense (1994–1997)

"A must-read for those interested in improving productivity of their employees in a global economy. Dr. Beyster truly created large-scale employee ownership in the United States."

—B. R. Inman Admiral, U. S. Navy (Ret.)

"SAIC is the exemplar of the 'workers make value' modern business. *The SAIC Solution* is a valuable reminder that firms can be great by doing what is right, and offers lessons on how to do it. Boards of directors, CEOs, and shareholders: read this book and ask if your firm could do better operating the SAIC way."

—Dr. Richard Freeman Herbert Ascherman Chair in Economics, Harvard University

"When the respected founders of today's leading high-tech companies were still in grammar school, J. Robert Beyster had already figured out that sharing ownership with employees would be a critical part of building a company where people worked together at solving problems in teams, backed with knowledge and research. This is a detailed, practical, and visionary description of the company that emerged, just as relevant to the current generation of entrepreneurs as to the next."

—Professor Joseph Blasi School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alan Johnson:

Typically the book *The SAIC Solution: How We Built an \$8 Billion Employee-Owned Technology Company* will bring you to the new experience of reading any book. The author style to clarify the idea is very unique. If you try to find new book you just read, this book very suitable to you. The book *The SAIC Solution: How We Built an \$8 Billion Employee-Owned Technology Company* is much recommended to you to see. You can also get the e-book in the official web site, so you can more easily to read the book.

Wanda Crane:

Reading a e-book tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With reading through you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world may share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. Plenty of author can inspire their reader with their story or their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the publications. But also they write about the data about something that you need instance. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on earth always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some study before they write with their book. One of them is this *The SAIC*

Solution: How We Built an \$8 Billion Employee-Owned Technology Company.

Joshua Dunleavy:

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