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Robert Quinn

## DTE Energy Case (C): A Positive Organization and a Force for Social Good

At the end of 2015, diversified energy company DTE Energy was doing well.<sup>1</sup> Company revenues were \$10.3 billion,<sup>1</sup> and its stock price had almost tripled from its 2008 level.<sup>2</sup> Employee engagement scores of the nearly 10,000 DTE employees were in the top levels of Gallup's global database.<sup>3</sup> The company had won the Gallup Great Workplace Award three years in a row, being the first energy company to do so.<sup>4</sup> Gerry Anderson, CEO of DTE Energy, felt especially proud of that award. Even though many other companies had won the award over the years, they weren't the "nitty-gritty utility companies with large populations of union employees."<sup>5</sup>

Anderson felt good about DTE Energy's progress on its aspiration to "be the best-operated energy company in North America." That was an important step needed for DTE to be able to execute on the second part of its aspiration: to be a "force for growth and prosperity" in the communities it served.

But now that DTE was positioned to focus on that next step, the immensity of the goal gave Anderson pause. "So we have this great goal—our aspiration—but what does it really mean?" Anderson said.<sup>6</sup> The foundational goal to become best-operated had been well defined.<sup>7</sup> It related to the business, "It's the kind of business we are used to," Anderson said.<sup>8</sup> Translating that goal down to the individual worker—connecting each employee to the aspiration—had been difficult, but it was nonetheless much more tangible than the "force for growth and prosperity in the communities where we live and serve" vision. How could he operationalize such a broad vision that had external focus?

<sup>1</sup> For readers who have not read the cases *DTE Energy (A): Becoming a Transformational Leader: Gerry Anderson, Chairman and CEO* or *DTE Energy (B): Transformation of an Organization*: At the start of 2008, DTE Energy had operating revenues of \$8.5 billion and approximately \$24 billion in assets. A diversified energy company, it was the parent of Detroit Edison and MichCon, which were regulated electric and gas utilities engaged primarily in the business of providing electricity and natural gas sales, distribution and storage services throughout southeastern Michigan. The company had about 10,600 employees serving 2.2 million customers across 7,600 square miles. As Anderson moved up the ranks of DTE, he had begun changing his leadership style from a tough, hard-nosed leader to an authentic, purpose-driven one. The events of the 2008-2009 had cemented his personal transformation to being a positive leader, and in subsequent years he worked to transform DTE Energy to a positive organization.

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