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Does your Organisation need to change?

What sort of indicators do organisations look at to see if they need to change?

There are some very obvious circumstances or occurrences that drive organisations to change the way that they are working - or the work that they are doing.

For example when two businesses or institutions such as colleges or schools are forced to or decide to merge and integrate then there is usually a need to change structure and to decide which aspects of the different organisation's culture to

move ahead with. It is very unusual for two separate organisations to have the same processes, rules, procedures or ways of doing things - even though they may have been operating in the same sector.

Market place dynamics often force organisations to re-appraise their products, services or ways of working. The entry of a new competitor with a better product or service or one offered at a better price can jolt a business into reacting and changing how they are working.

Changes to legislation or to a regulatory framework can require an organisation to change their procedures or approach.

Advances in technology can encourage a business to change their approach to gain efficiency or to streamline processes or transactions.

Feedback from stakeholders involved in the organisation can encourage management to change their way of working - whether this is from customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders, tenants or the general public then all or any of these groups may alert you to a desirable change of direction. The funding and financial viability of organisations can often be a key factor for change.

The realisation that "standing still" in business is just not a viable option if we are to keep ahead of the competition is a key driver. This drive often comes out in the form of "continuous improvement" programmes or step by step improvement processes.

A change of leadership at the top of organisations can often provide the stimulus for a change of strategy and approach. This change is often accompanied by a desire to review and re-set the vision, mission and direction of the organisation which in turn produces the need and impetus for a change programme or new approach.

So in summary there are numerous factors which can indicate or drive the need for change in an Organisation. In future articles I will consider how this need can be translated into relevant plans and actions.

Improving your management effectiveness

Most people think that they are a good manager – but how many people ask those that really matter – their staff?

If you are a manager, how effective are you at motivating your staff?

The following pointers may prove invaluable.

- Communicate where the business is going. If you want your staff to be committed to your organisation, they need to know where they are going and why. People need to understand how their work contributes to the company's success. After all, having meaning and purpose in your work is highly

motivating and rewarding.

- Set clear expectations. Be clear with your staff both in terms of 'what' needs to be achieved and 'how' it should be achieved. Setting clear goals and targets with staff can help them understand what needs to be done and keep them focused. However, it is also important to talk to them about 'how' they should go about achieving their goals. For example it is not acceptable to achieve a target but destroy relationships with colleagues or customers in the process.
- Delegate more. Try not to over control your staff's work. The more you control others work it will only encourage behaviour that necessitates control. Most people want the freedom to complete a task in the way that they think is best.

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Improving your management effectiveness Continued.

- Regularly review performance. Employees need regular feedback about their performance to improve their skills and grow professionally. Make sure you regularly sit down with your staff to discuss with them what they do well and identify with them what they should do differently and how you can help.
- Recognise people's efforts. Everybody appreciates being recognized for a job well done. Monetary rewards aren't the only way to thank employees for a job well done. In fact the easiest way to recognise someone's contribution is simply saying "thank you" — simple words but too often overlooked.
- Deal with problems promptly. Stay in tune to your staff so you can be proactive and resolve situations before they escalate. If you notice a change in an employee's work habits, performance or behaviour, try to resolve the problem before it starts affecting the rest of your team.
- Be firm but fair. For example, family emergencies and

other unplanned events will always arise, and its part of a managers role to show compassion by being flexible with work hours and time off so their staff can tend to important matters. Employees always appreciate a sympathetic boss, and will repay your support for them many times over.

- Be a coach and mentor. As a manager, one of the greatest things that you can give an employee is by sharing your knowledge and experience. Showing your employees firsthand how you deal with a task, what works and what doesn't is far more effective than just talking them through it.

It takes time and effort to be a good manager. Too often during busy times when work's piling up, people forget to manage others and concentrate on their own tasks.

However, employees depend on their manager's strength, guidance and support especially during tough economic times and this takes time, time to listen, time to discuss and time to coach.

Assessing the talent in your Business

For many businesses one of the biggest risks to their future success is having the right talent in place as and when key people leave the organisation.

While finding good people may be less difficult during a recession, the demand and competition for talent will increase over the next few years because of a number of factors:

- The global economy will recover.
- Companies are operating more and more on a global scale and can attract the best from around the world.
- Changing demographics means that it is estimated that one in four of the working population is over 45.
- A change in working culture and the choices people make mean that young people are more likely to move jobs.

All of this provides a number of challenges for businesses who wish to find and retain talent. At first glance it may appear easier to hire talent from the outside, to bring in "fresh blood" or someone with a "different perspective", but is this really the right thing to do?

Certainly with competition increasing, this will become a more time consuming and expensive process. It has been estimated that it "costs" between 1-2 times the salary before a new middle management recruit becomes effective. It could cost the company between \$60,000 - \$120,000 before that person starts to be effective. However, this money might be better invested (and less risky!) in identifying and developing "in house" talent.

However, what techniques are available to assess the capability and talent internally?

The first assessment that should be made is how an individual has performed previously. While previous performance is no guarantee of future success it is a good guide to how the individual is likely to perform in the future. However, there are also other factors that should be assessed such as:

- Undertaking an assessment of an individual's critical thinking, numerical and verbal reasoning will provide an indicator of their thinking capability and innate intelligence.
- Psychometric profiling instruments can assess an individual's personality traits, likely communication and leadership styles. How do these fit with what the business needs?
- Giving an individual specific business or organisational problems to resolve will provide valuable assessments of their business acumen and problem solving skills.
- 360 degree feedback tools are valuable for assessing an individual's performance and behaviour in the workplace. This assessment will provide a broader view than one simply based on the line manager's assessment.
- Asking the individual to lead a challenging business improvement project that will take them out of their usual work experiences, will provide a valuable assessment about how they handle new and unfamiliar challenges.

Planning for the future

An organisations strategic vision defines what the organisation wants to be and where it wants to go. An effective strategy guides the decisions made that affect the direction of the organisation.

In order to deliver the strategy it is necessary for managers to incorporate the vision into their plans and day to day operations.

Often the best plans fail either because managers do not develop concrete action plans for delivering the plan, or because they are too bogged down in day to day details and lose site of the big picture.

To develop more effective strategic plans managers should:

- Check to ensure their own teams targets are congruent with the organisations.
- Rank targets to identify the top 2 or 3 that will have the greatest impact in delivering the strategic plan.
- Define their goals clearly and the roles of their staff in achieving them. Who is going to deliver what
- Determine key results areas and identify the steps required to achieve these results.

- Develop measures to track progress to enable managers to know when they have reached their targets.

Document their plans in a clear format that can be seen by the whole team. However, what should a manager do if the organisations strategy is unclear or doesn't exist? The answer is simple - prepare their own mini strategic plan for their team/function.

For example managers should:

- Be clear with their team what the purpose of the team/function is.
- Develop a number of targets/goals that will improve the performance of the team over the following 12 months.
- Create a plan to deliver the targets/goals set out above.

At the end of the day a significant part of a managers role is to plan for the future and more than ever it is time for managers to lead from the front.

HR and Business Consultancy Services Offered

<p>Employment and Industrial Relations Provide support and advice on workplace relations and the relevant legislation that affects the employer-employee relationship.</p>	<p>Change Management A structured approach to transitioning individuals, teams, and organisations from a current state to a desired future state.</p>	<p>Psychometric Assessments We use a range of assessment tools to accurately identify an individual's talents, strengths and weaknesses, and to diagnose organisational problems.</p>
<p>Performance Management Designed to be future-focused, support pay for performance programs, monitor milestones of goal achievement, and systematically improve the measured results of your employees and organisation.</p>	<p>Project Management Training, and resources to help organisations improve performance and deliver critical projects successfully.</p>	<p>Process and Systems Development Professional human resource advice, policy solutions and job description writing and evaluation services.</p>
<p>Talent Management Developing and integrating new workers, developing and keeping current workers and attracting highly skilled workers to work for your company.</p>	<p>Health and Safety Offering both practicable and achievable health, safety and environmental sustainability solutions to suit your organisation .</p>	<p>Professional Supervision and Mentoring A customised programme for Managers and Team Leaders to provide practical hands-on guidance as well as theoretical knowledge in relation to all aspects of management and leadership.</p>
<p>Career Transition/Outplacement and redundancy Managing change and redundancy in a fair and procedurally correct manner.</p>	<p>Investigations We investigate and report on the facts of a case to the person or body charged with making a decision, under the procedure relevant to the case and to the member of staff concerned .</p>	<p>HR Audits Comprehensive report of the audit findings with recommendations prioritized, actionable work plan. Improves compliance, reviews ROI with Human Capital .</p>