

MAXIMISING THEIR POTENTIAL

How to become a high-performing organization.

Overview

If you want to build a high-performing organization, you must maximize the potential of your staff. Staff are not your most important asset, they are your organization. If they don't perform, the organisation doesn't perform. It's that simple.

Helping staff to operate at the peak of their potential requires:

- Inspired leadership.
- Effective people management.
- A process for managing change.

I. Inspired leadership.

Leadership is persuading people that following you is the best thing to do right now.

1. Leaders have a vision. They are on a mission.
 - The vision should be about how the world will be a better place not a self-serving vision.
 - People need to be able to relate to the vision.
 - It should be aspirational.
 - Your mission outlines your organisation's contribution to that vision.
2. They care passionately about that vision and mission.
 - This is not an intellectual exercise. It's about emotion.
 - You may engage the hearts as well as the minds.
3. They communicate the vision constantly.
 - Tell them. Tell them. And then tell them again.
 - Always assume the message has not got through.
4. They lead by example.
 - People will 'listen' to what you do, not what you say.
 - Don't be afraid to admit it when you get it wrong.
5. They have a sense of urgency.
 - There is little time. It must happen now.
 - Show delight when you see people get it right.
 - Show extreme displeasure when you see it go wrong.

II. Effective people management.

People management is a process not a series of disconnected activities.

1. Know who you want to recruit.
 - Develop a generic person specification for each person.
 - What are the attitudes and behaviours every employee must have if you are to be a high-performing

organization?

2. Recruit effectively.

- Take your time. Recruit slowly. Mistakes are costly!
- Ask behavioural-based questions.

3. Induct them properly.

- Meet with them personally.
- Describe your vision and outline the mission you're on.
- Explain your expectations.
- Spread this over time.
- Appoint a 'buddy.'

4. Care for your people.

- Show them you value them.
- Take a personal interest in them and their lives.
- Manage by walking around.
- Create a great working environment.
- Look after the whole person.

5. Coach your people.

- Find out what they would like to achieve.
- Be 50% supportive and 50% demanding.
- Ask: "What are you going to do to fix your problem and what can I do to help you?"

6. Give them feedback.

- Feedback is the breakfast of champions!
- Don't wait to do it once a year in a formal appraisal.
- Catch them doing something right.

7. Motivate.

- Recognize effort.
- Reward achievement.
- Celebrate success.

8. Grow them.

- Don't let them wither on the vine.
- Find out what else they would like to do.
- Delegate more areas of responsibility.
- But remember to take away duties too!

9. Make them successful.

- Let them know that their success is your success.
- Find out what they want to do.
- Help them to do it.

10. Learn from your experience

- Conduct exit interviews with staff who leave.
- If you wished they'd have stayed, what could you have done to make the job more rewarding?
- If you're pleased they're leaving, what could you have done to recruit better or develop them more?

III. The change management process

Change is what you must do when you can't keep doing what you're doing now.

1. People need to understand the need to change.

- This is the most important step but the one usually overlooked.
- Change is scary. People will resist change.
- They need to understand that staying where they are is even scarier!

2. People need to be able to see the Promised Land.

- Few managers are visionary.
- Moses got people to follow him for 40 years but you won't!
- What will the organisation look like when you get there?
- How will that benefit all stakeholders?
- People need to see how the organisation will be better off.
- And most importantly, how they will be better off.

3. A process for getting from where we are to where we want to be.

- This is the part managers generally do best.
- It involves identifying the steps to close the gap.
- Set milestones and timeframes.
- Allocate resources.
- Monitor progress.
- Communicate progress. Tell stories.
- Celebrate success.

Conclusion:

Today you have to change 20% a year just to stay in the same place.

And is that what you want to be known for – He/She was a leader who kept the organisation in the same place while they were on watch?

Is this challenging? You bet.

Is this hard work and time-consuming? Absolutely.

But this is your job. It's what you get paid to do!

Besides, if you don't do it, who will?

If it's going to be, it's up to me!