

As a leader you have substantial responsibilities and managing interdependencies is one of them. This month's newsletter provides tips on how. I hope you and your employees find them useful. And let's cross our fingers for some sunshine in June!

---

## **MANAGING INTERDEPENDENCIES** *A LEADERSHIP SUCCESS FACTOR*

By Carol Bergeron

*Imagine this scenario* - for the last week you have been redesigning a work process that was well received by your work group. Within minutes of sharing your solution with others outside your immediate work group you learn why it won't work. And it is back to the drawing board for you. Frustrating? No doubt this was a disappointing and de-motivating experience for your employee. When this sort of thing happens frequently it could be a signal to you as leader. Do employees recognize the importance of interdependencies that make or break their success? From a bigger picture, does your organization have the skills, abilities and work environment to effectively execute its' business strategy? How can you prevent this from happening again? Try these simple steps.



### **1. Identify inputs and outputs**

One of the quickest ways to determine important interdependencies for any business problem is to create a list of who will impact your work and who will be impacted by your work. Expect clients, suppliers and coworkers within and outside your immediate work group to be on the list. Consider inputs into your work and outputs resulting from your work from several vantage points starting with: data and information, technology and tools, established practices and systems and steps in the process. Recognize the people who are responsible for the inputs and outputs. They represent significant interdependencies from whom you need insight, information and buy-in.

### **2. Scope out work with others**

Given the list of people with critical interdependencies, connect with them to understand the challenges and issues from their perspectives. The more you know about their pain points, the better positioned you are to address their concerns resulting in commitment. Asking lots of questions to get to the heart of the matter and active listening skills are imperative. Use a mix of one-on-one and group conversations. Group forums are a fabulous way to expand learning among many people while creating visibility as to each others' expertise.

### **3. Establish a common goal**

Once you have compiled diverse insights, solidify your vision and goals. Don't stop there, link your project to a broader organizational goal. This accomplishes a few things. First, it reinforces the work you and your colleagues do makes a difference to the organization. Second, it creates a common direction from which to make decisions and resolve conflict. Plus it should help minimize individual agenda setting. Reconnect with others to gain buy-in on the goals.

#### 4. Test solutions with others

Testing solutions with the same folks who helped scope out the work is a natural next step. Testing at critical milestones rather than waiting until the end accomplishes a few things. First, it allows you to refine solutions incrementally rather than encounter substantial delays and rework associated with making all changes at the end. Second, it allows you to more quickly deal with unexpected outcomes. It provides you additional opportunity to reinforce buy-in from others so you can collectively declare the project a success upon completion.

Doesn't rework drive you crazy? What is the cost to the organization? Heightening awareness of interdependencies among people and functions and choosing to do something about them is a leadership responsibility. After all, organizations are comprised of a complex set of interdependencies and success is contingent upon managing them well. Sharpen your leadership abilities and lead by example.

---

### OUTSIDE INSIGHTS

Outside Insights is a service to help executives with complex business problems and challenges. Clients appreciate the fresh perspectives offered by experienced business advisors and the expedient way in which they are delivered. Explore **Outside Insights** to see if it is right for you.  
[www.outsideinsights.org](http://www.outsideinsights.org). If so then contact: [carol@bergeronassociates.com](mailto:carol@bergeronassociates.com).



Outside Insights © Copyright 2005 Alliance for Professional Excellence.

---

### RESOURCES

**2005 Schedule for Educational Workshops** at [www.bergeronassociates.com/calendar.htm](http://www.bergeronassociates.com/calendar.htm).

How to Develop a Talent Strategy, Dynamic Coaching for High-Performance Organizations,  
How to Build a High-Performance Organization - One by One, Hiring the Right People

#### Resource for Workforce Effectiveness Information

We publish articles and an electronic newsletter filled with practical tips on how to enhance the performance of people and organizations. Explore our publications:  
[www.bergeronassociates.com/publications.htm](http://www.bergeronassociates.com/publications.htm)

---

### ABOUT BERGERON ASSOCIATES

Bergeron Associates helps build agile, robust, high-performance organizations by integrating business and workforce strategies.

Bergeron Associates  
101 Middlesex Tpke, Ste 6, PMB 326  
Burlington, MA 01803-4914  
781-376-4071

[carol@bergeronassociates.com](mailto:carol@bergeronassociates.com)  
[www.bergeronassociates.com](http://www.bergeronassociates.com)

---

### NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

If you want to automatically receive future newsletters then subscribe at: [www.bergeronassociates.com](http://www.bergeronassociates.com). Your contact information is stored confidentially and will not be shared with anyone outside of Bergeron Associates. You may unsubscribe at any time.

---

© Copyright 2005 Bergeron Associates. This publication may be redistributed in full or in part provided full attribution and our contact information (company name, phone number and email and web site addresses) are included.