

Bridging the Gap Between Vision and Action

You and your senior leadership team developed a new strategic vision for your business. The team also identified skills and behaviors needed to make the vision a reality. You know linking the skills to the new direction is key to organizational success but you are not quite sure how to get employees to understand and buy into the connection.

The leadership team agreed that the new vision would be shared with employees through a series of group presentations followed by small group input sessions. The picture would not be complete without mentioning the new skills and behaviors expected of all employees. After all, the goal is to get the whole organization moving in the same direction. So, you persuade the leadership team to share the skills as part of the group presentations. Your next step is to record the skills and behaviors and translate them into a simple set of values. Now what? Here are a few ideas that you may find helpful in realizing the new vision.

Prepare a Foundation for Change... at group presentations:

- Summarize the company's current performance. It is good but it may not be good enough to withstand the increasingly competitive marketplace.
- Clarify the new vision, key drivers, overall strategies and desired business results.
- Share the new values. Point out that the value statement was not drafted simply to paint a picture of an ideal work place. It was created as a set of guiding principles designed to connect people with strategy.
- Invite employees to participate in working sessions designed to discuss the vision and values, provide input and figure out ways to put them to work.

Your Challenge

To get employees engaged in the process so that they too feel ownership for the new direction and values. It is you, your co-workers, and direct reports - PEOPLE who must choose to work toward a common vision and operate in a new way. You must appeal directly to employees.

You can accomplish this by providing opportunities for employees to think, discuss and suggest changes to the vision and values as a way of making them their own.

(continued)

Journalistic Jewels

Value and Expectations of Human Resources are on the Rise.

Intelligence, lifelong learning, knowledge comprised of both individual and collective experiences, ethics and passion for the profession are the key components in measuring competence of the HR professional. "*Mastering the Competencies of HR Management*" by Michael R. Losey, Human Resource Management, Summer 1999, Volume 38, Number 2.

<http://www.wiley.com>

Have a great idea? Need buy-in?

Gone are the days of resorting to the up-front hard sell since resistance is often the result. Instead, use a learning and negotiating process that leads to a shared solution. This article is a keeper for anyone who wants to effectively influence others. "*The Necessary Art of Persuasion*" by Jay A. Conger, Harvard Business Review, May - June 1998 edition.

<http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu>

Bridging the Gap *(continued)*

Design Change with Employees

This is the most powerful step in the change process yet may be missed or approached with such speed that commitment never begins. At the input working sessions:

- Reacquaint employees with the vision. Employees want to understand the direction so that providing input is done within context.
- Distribute the value statement. Explain that it is a draft. Talk about the logic behind each value and point out the relationship between each value and the desired business performance.
- Ask the team questions to facilitate meaningful discussion. Record the team's output.
 - What do the values mean to you? Are we missing any important ones? Should we change, delete or simplify any?
 - How can we start building the values and behaviors into our daily work lives? What do they look like within our own team?
 - How can we reinforce the behaviors we want more of and discourage those we want less of?
 - How do we give feedback to each other for modeling and not modeling the desired behaviors?

Implement and Support Change

- Mention the vision and values as often as you can during the day. Link them to accomplishments and problem solving discussions. Reference them in meetings and in correspondence with employees.
- Walk the talk. How can you be a positive role model if you do not lead by example?

Topics you would like to learn more about? Please let us know and send us some feedback while you are at it.
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About CBERGERON Associates...

Using a collaborative approach, **CBERGERON Associates** works with leadership teams to achieve better business results by aligning organizational goals, strategy and people. Learn more about our consulting services: organizational assessment, development and implementation of shared solutions, communications, facilitation and coaching. Please contact us at:

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Fortunately for you, you have a network of trusted colleagues, family and friends from whom you solicit feedback. Use their insight, and your own, as a road map for initiating change in your own work style.

- Provide employees avenues on how to coach each other. Identify types of issues that should be raised at team meetings and those that are more effectively addressed through one on one discussion.
- Measure individual and group performances so all can recognize wins, learn from experiences and target areas of development.

Some employees may be enthusiastic about the changes while others may not. During high-pressure times, or when communication about the vision and values falls off, employees may resort to old patterns of behavior. Continuing the old ways could derail meeting your business goals. So, be patient and persistent.

Final Thoughts

Behavioral change does not happen overnight. Repetitive two way communication about the desired future state, actual improved business results and leading by example are prerequisites for lasting change.

Routing List:
