

CORPORATED MANAGEMENT / HUMAN RESOURCES

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CORPORATE COACH



Q&A

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■ TO TEAM OR NOT TO TEAM

Q : It is obvious to me that team work is better than individuals working in their own slots. But to tear up a traditional organisation for a team-based organisation is not so easy in reality. And of course, there are many pertinent questions to answer as well like does my organisation need it and whether can we do it? I trust you know where I am coming from. Do you think it make sense? Can you shed more light on this before I decide whether to remain where we are or go for it? - *Team Player*

A : Yes, I agree that to introduce a team culture into an organisation requires a lot of thinking, planning and implementing. It is not so simple and straightforward. Basically there are two areas for consideration: the viability and the readiness of your organisation to go for it.

The Bottom Line: If your business requires the final product to be checked through by a few departments before final delivery to your customers, then having a team makes a lot of sense. Another one is when the quality of the product is an important business consideration. This would mean that people need to have a shared commitment to a common business objective. One final one is when the organisation is heading towards reorganisation, where this may entail cutting down jobs or even closing down departments. It therefore makes lots of business sense for team to take over some of the jobs.

On the readiness of the organisation, you will need to evaluate how positive is the workplace climate. If there is any presence of workplace conflict and it is serious, then getting into team will have to wait till this is resolved. Another one is the extent of support from top management for a team-based organisation. Where there is none, it will have a negating effect



COACHING ON TEAM BUILDING

on its full utilisation. The other is the overall attitude of the people working in team. Usually policies and reward system are conducive to team-based culture and getting the support of the people is much easier. Finally, when there is strong financial stability, the readiness factor is further enhanced.

Powerful Questions: Why are you considering team? What do you want the teams to do for your organisation? What is missing in the current structure? What will make

team work for you?

■ THE BIG IDEA FOR THE ORGANISATION

Q : I have been the General Manager of a small medium organisation for 8 months already. I was brought in to stop the bleeding that this organisation had been experiencing for the last 3 years. I know the pressure is on me to perform. So during this time, I have kept a "low profile" as I wanted to focus my time more on

observing and talking to the people there. I have now a fairly accurate impression of this organisation, what it is doing, how it is doing and where it is going. I got to get my facts together and move the organisation to where it should be. It is at this point where I am stuck and I do not know what to do next. The biggest concern is whether the people will be with me in this journey. What are your thoughts on this? - *Change Agent*

A : It is laudable that you are at the starting point of this journey before the others as they will probably be doing what they have been doing. Someone has to be above the trees to see the forest so that a clear direction can be plotted to move it to where it should be. The point is to get as many of them to rise above the trees so that you have a team who is with you. Without them, nothing is going to work.

The Bottom Line: By now, you should have the key people with you. This should be the first place of focus where you build your trust with them. Once you have accomplished this, the next step is to have the best idea on what the "new organisation" ought to be. This is very important as everything starts with a good and strong idea that is supported by your people. So you should bring everyone in and just focus on getting this through a series of brainstorming sessions where you act as the facilitator. Once, this is achieved, get the commitment from everyone to translate the idea into key actions and accountabilities that everyone will take. Keep talking about this idea and track their actions until the entire organisation is "infected" with it. Then there will be momentum to move the idea to become the reality that you and everyone want it to be.

Powerful Questions: What is the big strong idea that you and everyone have about the organisation? What is the vision that will keep everyone together? How do you want to move this forward? How will you want to model the way?

* Public, in-house and online ICF-accredited coaching programmes are available monthly. For details, call 03-62054488 or log in www.corporate-coachacademy.com. Get the latest book "Dialogue With The Life Coach" and read the blog "Stories That Coach" at <http://mikeheah.blogspot.com>.