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Last month, I mentioned a great quote from General Eisenhower: “Leadership is the art of getting people to want to do what must be done.” You, as the leader, are constantly encouraging your people to do the right thing. This month's articles can provide some insight on how to use your language to encourage teamwork, and how to structure an environment where your team can thrive.

Kristin

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USE THIS ONE WORD TO BUILD TEAMWORK

I was having dinner last night with a few girlfriends and we were talking about the increasing focus on self. Yes, it's important to take care of yourself. To be curious about life. To pause, reflect, and meditate. To constantly improve oneself. Yet when do you cross that line and become self-centered – where the universe revolves around you?

So here's a litmus test: Are you using the word “I” or “we” when in discussion about matters that include others?

It's appropriate to use the word “I” when you are talking about yourself. Your dreams and desires. Your accomplishments. A self-centered person will use the word “I” almost exclusively.

However, there are plenty of instances where you can use the word “we.” Especially when you want to build a sense of collaboration and teamwork. For example, “I want you to do this...” can be easily changed to “How about we do this...” “I did this...” can be restated to say, “We did this...”

It's a subtle shift, but shows much more empathy and collaboration with others when you use more inclusive language.

HOW TO SHAPE AND SUSTAIN A HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORKPLACE CULTURE

By Joseph Sherren

Most employees say it is important to work for a company they believe in, and work in a job where they have a sense of purpose. Unfortunately, up to 75% say that their current workplace does not provide this environment. They believe their company only cares about short-term profits and its own self-interest.

Going forward, organizations will have to pay much more attention to culture if they want to survive – and thrive. Lou Gerstner, the CEO who turned IBM around in the 1990's, said: "Culture isn't just one aspect of the game – it IS the game." However, even today most fail to see this as an important part of their strategy.

My colleague, David Barrett, and his co-author Mona Mitchell, have written a game-changing book for creating a strategy that works – Seven Elements of Strategy Execution. This book outlines seven critical elements that will significantly help you execute your strategy and inspire your people to achieve the organization's strategic goals.

Why does this appear to come easy for some companies? They roll out the strategy, communicate it to team members, meet their targets – and everyone's having fun doing it. It is all about creating the right culture that will enable this to happen.

When some people hear the term 'organizational culture,' their eyes glaze over. It's too abstract and ambiguous. It's too intangible, they think, so they move on to dealing with easier more practical problems related to organizational process and structure. Unfortunately, executives often ignore, misunderstand, or are unaware of their culture until there is a problem.

Well, this book explains that organizational culture is not as difficult a problem as you may have thought. There have been many studies, practical research, and years of experience that clearly outlines how to shape and sustain a powerful, high-performance culture. This book combines all this and provides a concise, prescriptive analysis of the links between strategy execution and organizational culture.

Culture is the often-overlooked foundation of an organization, and like it or not, every organization has a culture. It determines how the group retains talent, how it develops and releases new products and whether it meets targets. It affects how happy and satisfied employees are at work. Your people are the force behind the execution of your strategy, and if they're not thinking and behaving in ways that advance your goals, you've got a culture problem.

Strategy execution is dissected into the following seven essential elements so that you, as a leader, can foster a high-performance culture and kick your strategic plan into action.

1. **Clarity:** People must understand the goals, how to get there, and why they're being asked to do what they need to do.
2. **Commitment:** You want team members who are committed to and believe in the strategy.
3. **The Team:** Your organization is your people, and it's your people who execute the strategy.
4. **Accountability:** This drives a constructive culture where employees feel free to hold the CEO accountable for what they do or say.
5. **Synergy:** Links it all together. It's ensuring resources, infrastructure, and capacity are in place to empower your people, which allows your organization's constructive culture to flourish.
6. **The Plan:** Must include a vision, mission, values, and a set of goals – all aligned with one another.
7. **Leadership:** Leaders are vital to strategy execution. A high-performance culture

craves outstanding leadership.
My question for all business leaders:
Have you created a culture within your area of responsibility, which will empower your staff to execute the plan you have created together?

“IF THERE WAS A HELL IT WOULD BE A PANEL DISCUSSION”

I recently noticed a [tweet](#) that said, “If there is a hell, it would be a panel discussion.”
Oh yeah. That would be the panel discussion that sent me on this crusade to make ALL panel discussions lively and informative.

Would you like me to describe a hellish panel discussion?

- The day started with two back-to-back panels.
- The stage was lighted, but the audience was in the dark.
- The room was freezing and never warmed up – even with 200 people in the room.
- The moderator was a pedantic editor of a magazine. Not a great interviewer and certainly didn’t know how to strike up a conversation between the panelists.
- The questions posed to the panelists were not interesting or provocative.
- I think they had the questions ahead of time, so there weren’t any surprises.....or energy.
- There was no audience Q&A.
- The most exciting thing that happened was when the ONE woman on the panel (who was wearing a rather short skirt) crossed her legs.

What’s your definition of hell?

FROM THE BOOKSHELF: MICRO-RESILIENCE: MINOR SHIFTS FOR MAJOR BOOSTS IN FOCUS, DRIVE, AND ENERGY

The word "resilience" sounds yummy...and in this crazy, hectic world, I guess we all need more of it. When life gets you down (which it will...), how do you get back up? Turns out, it's not one big thing. No silver bullets. But a lot of small, "micro" things you can do to recover from difficult situations. I first heard about [this book from Bonnie St. John](#) as she was speaking at a conference I attended. And while there is nothing particularly revolutionary, it is full of small life practices that can make you bounce back from the inevitable ups and downs of life. Well worth the read!

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