

The M.B. Meek Model

The Holistic Management Method

OVERVIEW

Many organizations find today's business climate to be one of increasing concerns and issues that challenge the resources and abilities of the organization to compete. Some organizations reach out for help to attack these concerns and issues, and the help comes in many forms. Over the past two decades there have been many management movements that have promised to solve the problems facing the organization, and to their credit many of these movements have made impact on the problem.

We have witnessed the Quality Revolution of the late 1970's and 1980's. These tools gave the organization the ability to correct processes and procedures to better meet the expectations of the customer and to improve the performance of the company by removing the waste caused by poor quality and rework.

We have witnessed the Leadership Revolution of the late 1980's and 1990's with works by Covey and Bennis. This greatly changed the way leaders think about what message they send to the company, and how that message

should be communicated. The focus of improvement was on the personal relationships that hold the organizations together.

We have witnessed the Process Improvement Revolution of the late 1990's with tools like Lean Manufacturing, ISO documentation, and Reengineering. These tools forced us to look at our organizations for wasted time, and ineffective or unnecessary processes.

Each of these revolutions described has made a contribution to the body of knowledge available to make improvements in our organizations and each is still relevant and important to any organization that wants to compete today. However there has not been one approach that has given the organization what it was really looking for, one approach that was effective at truly solving the core issue:

***“How does the organization improve performance today,
and in the future?”***

In looking at this core issue there are many problems that are identified and must be addressed, but there are several key problems that surface for a remarkably large percentage of the organizations in business today.

Problems:

- The goals of the company are not clearly defined, measured, and communicated to the personnel that are going to make it happen.
- The strategic plan of the company, aimed at defining the tasks necessary to accomplish the stated goals, is either nonexistent or does not involve all functional parts of the company and in either case is not communicated effectively.
- The critical performance measurements that govern the decisions of personnel in the organization are not tied to the goals of the company.
- Improvement efforts are often made in isolated departments and are aimed at improving the wrong performance metric. Often these improvements weaken the performance of another unit in the company and create conflicts.
- The producing unit of the company and marketing unit of the company are not aligned to maximize the performance of the company.
- There are no clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each person in the company.
- Feedback regarding performance and demonstration of supporting the values of the company is poor or non-existent.
- There is no accountability for performance and results in the company.

APPROACH

The M.B. Meek Model attacks these core problems to make long lasting continuous improvement a reality in the organization. The approach is simplistic and follows this layout:

- Implement the DCA model.
- Define and document the *Holistic Strategic Plan* model.
- Identify the Constraint to the implementation of the Holistic Strategy.
- Use the POOGI model to develop a solution to the constraint.
- Develop a Critical Chain project plan to implement the solution.
- Once the Constraint is broken go the next Constraint in the implementation of the Strategy.

THE DCA MODEL

DCA stands for Direction, Communication, and Accountability in the company. The company establishes a platform to insure these critical aspects of managing the company. The steering committee is the platform to deliver these aspects.

DIRECTION

The first step in our process is to establish direction. This can be accomplished by putting together a Leadership Team. The Leadership Team should consist of the president and their key leaders of functions within the company a good-sized steering committee ranges from three to six depending on the size of your organization. In every organization there are three key processes:

- Business Development.
- Business Operations.
- Business Support.

Each of these functions requires a key leader. Leadership Team members must be able to discuss any case or issue of the company including financial, personnel, expansion, systems and processes and so on. The Leadership Team becomes the decision-making body of the organization; no longer will fate of the company rest on one person's shoulders. Many times the

first step in our process is to hire the appropriate leaders to represent their areas on the Leadership Team. Remember, there is such a thing as positive Turnover. Our main objective is to develop the current leadership; we will do everything we can to gain support and total commitment from the steering committee. We spend approximately three months just with the Leadership Team, if during that period anyone on the Leadership Team is uncommitted to this process they will no longer be on the Leadership Team. Some severe examples: in one organization the gentlemen in charge of sales could not make the necessary changes within himself, this 20 year employee was forced into early retirement. Many of these decisions are not easy to make, but necessary. This particular individual was a good person, but that becomes irrelevant when determining if he can manage consistently with the others on the Leadership Team. The most crucial decision you make is who the Leadership Team members will be. How many times have you allowed an employee to stay with the company even though they are a problem or add no value? Within this system that is unacceptable, everyone on a team must add value. This Leadership Team should begin to meet on a weekly basis for two-hour increments; just getting together weekly to discuss big picture issues will have the greatest impact on productivity. Once the Leadership Team begins to meet it never stops, if we want the Leadership Team members to be consistent with each other they must meet weekly to communicate the status within each of their areas.

Some basic management development needs to take place initially covering topics such as leadership, communication, employee involvement, empowerment, conflict resolution, time management, delegation and continuous improvement. Simultaneously, the Leadership Team needs to take action on a few items, beginning with the Goal of the company. The Goal is crucial to establishing the direction of the organization. Many of you have created vision statements, mission statements, values and purpose statements, in my humble opinion this is too much for employees to grasp. Simplify the process by having one statement, the Goal. It should state what you are striving to become, the type of culture you desire that will focus on three issues:

1. The company
2. The employees
3. The customer.

A good Goal will address all three of these issues, the simpler and the shorter the better. Once the Goal is communicated it is important to establish a few ground rules, which I referred to as non-negotiable standards. These standards set the baseline for acceptable behavior in your company and help to establish a positive effective culture.

COMMUNICATION

Without communication no organization can function properly. Everything revolves around communication, more problems can be solved, more opportunities found, and correcting this one component solves more conflicts. It's difficult when you consider that 55 percent of Communication is body language, 38 percent tone voice, and only seven percent of the words you actually use. We spend 70 percent of every waking hour communicating in some way shape or form, whether that is verbal, nonverbal or in writing. Yet, how many people have really been trained on how to communicate effectively, how employees or leaders know how to communicate and talk with all of the various personalities we find in the workforce. In today's society with the technological advances we see only more confusion in Communication not less. Training sessions are being provided for e-mail etiquette, give me a break. We live in a world that perception is reality; your perception is your reality regardless of the truth or the facts. What you perceive to be true is your reality even if your perceptions are inaccurate; you don't know they're inaccurate. Good leaders learn to focus on the perceptions of their team, if they can learn to read perceptions and clearly communicate the facts you can eliminate most misunderstanding's that occur within corporate cultures.

ACCOUNTABILITY

This is the glue that holds the organization together. How accountability is conducted sets the tone for the culture of the organization. The basic principle here is every leader, manager and supervisor in the organization is responsible and accountable for the results of their team. Not just responsible for their daily tasks and assignments, but accountable for the results of the team. The Steering Committee is made up of the team that has final responsibility and accountability for the entire organization. With this team trained, in place, and functioning the organization is prepared to begin the path to make fundamental change and improvement.

THE HOLISTIC STRATEGIC PLAN

The planning process for the company is the critical step in getting the improvements sought and obtaining a long-term competitive advantage. The secret is to plan and communicate in a way that forces the entire organization to focus and accomplish a common goal.

Many plans are implemented that cause misalignment and often competition for resources within the organization. Often it is thought that just correcting the misleading measurements that are used will correct the problem, and to be sure there are a lot of misleading measurements in use in organizations today, but this correction does not provide a complete solution. What is needed is a platform that forces the alignment and communication to

occur as a part of the process. This is what the Holistic Strategic Planning model provides.

ASSUMPTIONS

There are four major areas of focus in an organization that must be included in the strategic plan in order to get maximum performance.

- Corporate Strategy.
- Business Development Strategy.
- Business Operations Strategy.
- Business Support Strategy.

There are two very important measurement and goal areas that must be communicated in order to complete the strategy plan.

- Strategic Objectives
- Tactical Objectives

With all of these strategies and objectives in place, the organization is ready to implement the strategy. The first step in implementation is to identify what is blocking the strategy from being implemented, or what is the organizational constraint to improvement.

Strategic Planning Model

