

The Human Performance Index™

The Necessary Bridge



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Idea in brief

Human performance

Human performance is the sum total of the actions, interactions, behaviors and collaboration of leaders, teams and individuals at all levels of a business that have **direct** or **indirect** impact on business performance.

The Human Performance Index™ The Necessary Bridge

Executive Summary

Organizations measure virtually everything -- and for good reason for the most part. Companies wish to know how effectively they are leveraging resources, how competitively they are operating in terms of costs and effectiveness, the value of their brands, return on capital, market share, customer satisfaction and more. Without measuring and having a base-line, it's hard to aim for real improvement.

Yet one of the primary ingredients of business performance is human performance. In other words, how our human assets act, interact, behave, collaborate and engage with each other in functions, across functions, within and between teams. Yet human performance as an overall component of business results is not explicitly measured or tracked. This seems crazy!

In fact, without measuring human performance, the things we are measuring are likely to be symptoms of what are often human performance issues. After all, who does the leveraging of resources, manages costs, builds and maintains brands, serves customers, innovates, and much more?

$$\text{Strategic Business Results} = \text{Company Assets} \times \text{Human Performance}$$

In algebraic terms, human performance would be the "x" factor. Human performance multiplied by company assets and company capabilities (themselves manifested through the actions and interactions of leaders and teams) delivers business results.

Our 20 plus years of global consulting, research and interaction reveals **FOUR KEY COMPONENTS** to human performance:

1. **Leadership for Driving Growth.** Setting the right visionary goals, allocating and prioritizing resources, mentoring and role modeling, removing obstacles and making sure the right things are done and followed up.
2. **Teams that Win.** Ensuring the right teams are established, in the right roles, with meaningful resources and accountability. Ensuring these teams become net capability multipliers, focused on and acknowledged for progressing meaningful priorities for the business.
3. **Driving for Results.** Making sure we track progress in real-time, test assumptions in the crucible of results, create successful relationships with customers, enable innovative ideas and choose the ones to back.
4. **Talent as a path to performance.** Getting recruitment and induction right, giving people goals that grow both them and the business, coaching and developing them and recognizing and rewarding the right behavior and outcomes.

These permeate all the activities by which a business delivers results. And these constitute the "difference that makes the difference".

In evaluating them, we have to look through **THREE LENSES**. Otherwise we may find only superficial understudies of these fundamental requirements.

1. Are systems and processes present for each of these areas? Have they been institutionalized or are they ad-hoc?
2. Are they acted on as described, and subject to review and continuous improvement so they can be simplified, amplified and made more powerful?
3. Is the quality of engagement present that will make these more than a charade -- that will make them vital, living activities that build relationships, capabilities and results?

Omar Khan – Founder, Sensei International

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Problems

1. Human performance has to be measured and defined.

No one will debate that human performance in an organizational context matters. However, CEOs struggle to know precisely what it is and in what way it makes a direct difference to results and the bottom-line.

Human performance is the sum total of the actions, interactions, behavior and collaboration of leaders, teams and individuals at all levels that have a direct as well as an indirect impact on business performance.

Once defined in this way, how critical it is virtually shrieks at us. But how *do* we measure it?

2. We spend laudable energy, investment and acumen developing company assets, yet they don't deploy themselves!

Company assets include your brand, products, services, capital investments, methodologies, technologies, customer base and the human capital pool you have. All of these represent "potential".

Only human performance activates these assets and converts them to capabilities. (Even the "human capital pool" is a warehouse until people are focused, their efforts integrated and their talent enabled).

3. Capabilities need to be converted into performance -- methodologies by themselves can't deliver this.

"Methodologies" include strategic planning processes, web commerce, HR practices, Marketing campaigns, CRM efforts, balanced scorecard and strategy maps, cost-effectiveness approaches and more. These often represent the best thinking and best experience of the best companies as a way to deploy their company assets.

However, the reason that two companies can apply the same methodologies (be it a quality initiative, IT to drive real-time decision making, succession planning, or marketing-led product launches) and get vastly different results, is that the best methodologies can become nonsense if not vivified and synergized by key people in key roles, volunteering passionate commitment, systematically and in

concert. In short, without human performance, capabilities cannot be translated into performance.

4. Everyone gets used to what seems “normal” and doesn’t notice pervasive limiting logic and paradigms.

You cannot count on people to note their own discrepancies. *Every culture is perfectly designed to deliver the outcomes it currently delivers.* And if the results are not what you’d ideally like to foster, the insidious thought virus of familiarity casting a hue of inevitability over everything, keeps us from seeing alternatives.

One of our clients arrived in Chicago, staying at a top hotel. They arranged a car to meet them. Instructions said the driver would be “at the bottom of the escalator en route to baggage claim”. Unfortunately there are two such escalators at opposite ends of the arrival hall. The driver therefore stood equidistant between them, making himself virtually invisible to someone descending from either one! Also, he had a placard with the name of the hotel discreetly stenciled, rather than the name of the passenger in bold enough print as to be visible. When challenged, he explained that he was following procedure! Clearly no one had ever done a practice run in the actual environment. This is a fabled, award-winning hotel, and justly so on other counts. Blind spots are pervasive, precisely because they are “blind”.

Therefore, we cannot bank on self-insight as a corrective to human performance challenges.

5. The old saw, “If the only tool you have is a hammer, you see the whole world as a nail,” powerfully applies to building a bridge from assets to capabilities and capabilities to peak performance.

Unless trained to look at a company as a web of human performance interactions, conversations and relationships, most people in seeing an issue or challenge, tend to describe its “technical” features. That is to say they describe the “bricks” of the problem, and not the “mortar”.

Let’s say projects are being delivered late, with cost overruns and with undue panic. The technical riposte is: “We’re not using our project management process. We must therefore provide training in the process, and audit compliance.”

Solution

Measure, examine and engage human performance!

Appendix

Please see the appendix for a brief description of each of these constituents of the four main building blocks of the Human Performance Index™.

Nine times out of ten, these actions will take place, and the problem will still loom. People will shake their heads, manage around it, and a few years later, a fresh ‘genius’ will come to the same ineffable conclusion, apply the same blandishments and infusions and round and round we go.

But there is an “adaptive” side to virtually any problem (relating to how human beings ‘adapt’, ‘behave’, ‘grow’, ‘interact’ and ‘engage’). So with a human performance perspective, we always seek for the adaptive dimension as well. This would lead us to explore if the issue is genuinely one of training or poor tracking and accountability, or whether work roles and interfaces are unclear, whether decisions are delayed or whether consultation with key stakeholders is real or cosmetic, whether busy work is intruding on the “prime time” needed by the project, whether the project team is intelligently composed and working effectively, whether projects are poorly scoped and briefed, whether milestones are unrealistic, etc.

Human beings will reveal what is inhibiting them and their performance. They may not know it to express it succinctly and clearly, though often a patchwork quilt of input from a variety of people will shine the spotlight where it belongs. But identify the moving parts and watch what actually happens, study both success and failure with equal zeal, and what was inscrutable becomes almost self-evident.

The Human Performance Model

Human performance can be broken down into four key areas of focus.





1. Leadership for delivering growth

- A differentiating, capability-based strategy translated into action
- Execution of the right priorities
- Guidance, coaching, mentoring, role-modeling
- A culture of accountability and follow-through
- Tackling passion killers
- The leadership cadre being connected meaningfully to the external environment



2. Teams that win

- The right organizational and team structures
- A meaningful cause to further
- Effective use of informal and formal networks
- Quality of collaboration
- Authentic and productive relationships



3. Driving for results

- Customer engagement and partnership
- Continuously raising the performance bar
- Innovation to create the future
- Measures that matter, tracked in real-time
- Studying both positive and negative deviance for applicable learnings



4. Talent as a path to performance

- Recruitment and induction of top talent
- Clarity of goals and strategic focus
- Multi-faceted people development
- Meritocratic recognition
- Building leaders of the future

The Three Lenses

One of the things we've learned in our twenty something years of global consulting with some of the world's top companies on the human performance areas of their business (though at the time we didn't have a name for it – we knew we were linking behavior to results), is that if you look for evidence of the above, you have to look through three lenses for the inquiry to be truly valuable and optimally illuminating.



Lens 1: Presence of systems and processes

In other words, do you have this activity taking place in some institutionalized, structured way?

So taking strategy as an example, do you have a strategy formulation process, a strategic communication and planning process with clear parameters, roles, steps and measures?

Taking performance management, do you have clear goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) for each person, is there a review process, a way to measure and rank performance, some systemic linkage to rewards and career succession?



Lens 2: Execution and application of what is in place

So, taking the same two examples, is the strategy process honored in the observance or in the breach? Do we take the steps outlined, or do we skip steps, take short-cuts, or put most of our energy in one part of the process?

Do performance reviews actually happen? Are KPI's clearly established and reviewed? Is there a career development path for people based on a rationale they understand?

Lens 3: Quality of engagement

This is arguably the most important piece from the Human Performance angle. In other words, do all the human points of contact, the “moments of truth” for each process come alive through the quality of engagement needed to render them meaningful as opposed to anodyne?

So when we align on a strategy- who is involved, what is the quality of briefing, the authenticity and vigor of the dialogues, the depth of listening, and the willingness to treat ideas as prototypes not gospel? What is the quality of performance previews and reviews, is it truly a coaching and development conversation with mutual accountability... or a hierarchical download?

Quality of engagement reveals why superficially similar processes even with assiduous execution can still produce widely divergent results.

The engagement issue

If engagement is indeed so central, let us begin with two provocations. First, “Engagement Surveys” arguably don’t measure “engagement” -- but rather “satisfaction” with various elements of organizational life. Do we have a satisfactory definition of engagement? We would argue that we don’t. We seek to remedy this shortfall below.

Second, a survey done by the Corporate Leadership Council argues by dividing performance into “direct effects” (which they define as job-relevant information, experiences or resources) and “indirect effects” (which they define as emotional and rational commitment coupled with effort), that engagement isn’t the whole story.

Inspiration

Three things that inspired us to break fresh ground:

1. There is clearly such a thing as human performance.
2. It matters to business success (almost axiomatic).
3. It's not currently being measured.

Using this demarcation, their extensive study concludes that only 43% of “observable performance improvement” was owing to “engagement”. We would dispute the implication of their conclusion.

43% is a towering percentage to give to any performance factor. Even if their study was completely accurate, engaging human performance would be clearly established as a huge strategic priority.

But secondarily, the other 57%, according to the study, is owing to “direct performance indicators” listed as:

- Job-relevant information (e.g. training)
- Experiences (e.g. on-the-job development)
- Resources (e.g. a better computer)

This seems almost cartoonish, but shockingly is not meant to be flippant!

But how is “on the job information” conveyed **except** via human interaction? And presumably the level of engagement with which it's conveyed is highly relevant. Anyone who doesn't believe that should visit a typical school-room.

How are “experiences” briefed, monitored, leveraged and built upon if not via quality of mentoring, coaching, relationships, dialogue -- and how therefore is “engagement” not hugely relevant here? Sure, there is value based on the quality of the experiences themselves -- but part of any experience is made up of these human components.

“Resources” are relevant if they are resources to get the job done. This surely includes proprietary methodologies, company processes, ways of working, tapping the cooperation of other functions or colleagues -- all relationship and engagement-relevant areas. And even if we use as pedestrian an example as a computer, surely this like any other resource lives or dies in “value” terms based on the level of passion, imagination, energy and follow-through with which it's used.

Our conclusion therefore is that the 57% is a dud. It's permeated with engagement and interaction issues without which the first two of the three listed elements are nonsense, and the third would lie fallow as “equipment” without “application”.

The equating of “engagement” as a “pure contributor” is illuminating in some ways (showing how important it is even if looked at by

To wit

Meaningfully involved with

– Advanced by Leadership for Delivering Growth, Teams that Win, Driving for Results and Talent as a Path to Performance.

Emotionally believe in and care about

– Advanced by Driving for Results, Teams that Win and Talent as a Path to Performance.

Have a clear path to

– Advanced by Leadership for Delivering Growth, Teams that Win, Driving for Results and Talent as a Path to Performance.

Volunteer commitment to

– Advanced by Leadership for Delivering Growth, Teams that Win and Talent as a Path to Performance.

itself), distorting in others in that engagement (a clear linchpin of human performance) is inextricably interlinked with all the activities that drive a business and its results.

Human performance and engagement

So, as we've said, human performance is the sum total of the actions, interactions, behaviors and collaboration of leaders, teams and individuals at all levels of a business that have *direct* or *indirect* impact on business performance.

Now, the type of engagement that vitalizes human performance is characterized by *edge*, *urgency* and *excitement*. We'll call this "Passionate Engagement".

*Passionate Engagement occurs when people are **meaningfully involved with, emotionally believe in and care about, have a clear path towards and volunteer commitment to**, furthering the best interests of their **team** and organization.*

The HP Index™ and Improvement model advances these necessary components of passionate engagement, the *sine qua non* of organizational performance (no one in their right mind believes disengagement is irrelevant to performance).

So the Human Performance Index™ and improvement process leads to a high passion/high performance organization by highlighting the Human Performance opportunity and improvement areas in the business *and also by helping to build passionate engagement at all the key "moments of truth" for organizational success.*

Applying the Human Performance Index™ as an improvement process

The approach is based on empowering your organization to "own" improvement and for rapid transfer of learning -- not to provide surrogates for your leadership, or crutches. The idea is to grow capability -- not dependence.

The key to the effectiveness of the Human Performance Index™ is that it be done by real specialists in human performance who are also globally experienced consultants and understand business dynamics. The aim is to build a bridge from assets to performance

Idea in practice

(that bridge being human performance). But consulting depth is required to understand both the assets and the components of profitable business growth.

Five key steps are needed to convert this insight into real value:

STEP ONE: We will take a **deep dive:** through interviews, surveys, observation, analysis and assessment based on the Human Performance model and what's actually happening in your business and stress test your human performance (HP) capabilities against your Vision and strategy.

We interact with a chosen population (potentially the entire company, a business unit or a team) and observe what's happening, question processes and execution, interview individuals and teams and almost forensically determine where the obstacles and opportunities are -- based on the human performance parameters and the three lenses above -- and based on an organization's strategic priorities.

With one client, a global personal care powerhouse, they found a large degree of disengagement and attrition in their junior-most leaders, who were being treated as repositories of menial tasks, overloaded with minutiae and overworked in ways that were demeaning and deadening. There had been huge productivity improvements at other levels, but this was a black hole that was inhibiting recruitment and blunting productivity, as choices weren't being made but just "delegated downward" -- therefore also keeping the right answers from percolating upwards.

Tackling both the symptomatic disengagement and the leadership blinkers causing this, released in the Asia team of this global company stronger market results, concrete improvements in profitability as well as share in their three major Asian sub-regions and stronger team commitment. Success in addressing the two issues was shown, both by the aforementioned achievements and, even when measured by a conventional engagement survey, this once trailing region now having the best global results.

Case Study

Global Personal Care Company

Case Study

Global Food and Beverage Company

As another example, a major food and beverage company had a meticulously debated, vigorously aligned upon (it seemed) strategy, but found implementation foundering -- and competitors with less assets and seemingly more limited strategies outperforming them.

It was discovered that the management team was rife with silos, and there was outright hostility between the marketing and sales managers (who would not even sit at the same table together!). We were therefore able to focus the improvement efforts, not in strategy re-writes or expensive renewed market analysis and benchmarking (all of which had been done to generate the strategy in the first place), but in having some critical "radical action conversations", building real alignment and creating implementation paths that demanded collaboration across the value chain. They went on to become the largest and most successful food and beverage company in that major business region in the three years that followed.

STEP TWO: We will identify patterns, possibilities and opportunities that will give you the biggest **return on energy** and that will help you focus your organizational development efforts for **maximum impact**. This will result in pragmatic recommendations and various potential road maps -- all of which can be tangibly and simply progressed.

Based on our experience, our observations and the company's strategic goals, areas of focus (like those above) are highlighted and presented. Often, when the situation is not as monochromatic or the challenges as glaring (say for a successful company which wants to raise the bar rather than "fix" problems per se), there will be patterns, opportunity costs, productivity buckets, ineffective networks, positive or negative deviances to study and exploit. A human performance improvement map is generated from these.

A major logistics company determined globally three key human performance areas to raise the bar in:

- Get the China/Japan region (which they had clustered together), operating effectively in their own markets and in areas of exchange.
- Remove the divide between 'management' and 'front line' which was causing huge rifts, inhibiting learning and leading to huge staff turnover (with not only costs but loss of real expertise).

Case Study

Global Logistics Company

- Model business-building behavior and get people spending more of their time attracting business and delivering on the service promise, and less time dealing with internal processes or ways to shave administrative costs. They had a "positive deviance" in one of their regions that had tripled their market size (in an industry in which scale really matters) and hugely increased profitability, which they chose to study and then transplant the learnings into their emerging markets.

Their focus on these priorities really paid off. As the global downturn began and global cost effectiveness became an inevitable mantra, this emerging market was the only part of the business which, while meeting cost targets, expanded business by signing up new contracts, thereby increasing profitability *and* customer satisfaction despite the overall industry being in a slump. A sharp focus on the human performance tumblers that unlock performance can be dramatic in impact.

STEP THREE: We will engage senior leaders in terms of technical and adaptive elements and help them **align** and **commit** to a game plan. This will usually happen at an "ON" site rather than a typical "OFF" site where leaders are helped to engage, align and activate high priority improvement actions together.

In this way senior leaders commit to a game-plan for tackling the key areas, the bold courageous actions entailed, the leadership required by them, the communication needed, the behavior and attitudes they will have to champion and role-model. These emerge as not "nice to do" but critical adaptations for business progress and success.

A major luxury goods group brought together through their annual conference a disparate team, renewed their strategic clarity, established credibility, and unlike most conferences which are largely cosmetic highs in PR terms and deadening in interaction terms, they liberated energy and generated momentum that was tracked and realized in the year ahead.

The follow through has delivered four plus quarters of double digit growth with the growth of nascent brands and the revitalization of global brands that had been underperforming for a decade.

This was largely achieved not only by the quality of their thinking, but judging by overwhelming stated audience reaction because the

Case Study

Global Luxury Goods Company

senior team was clearly aligned, committed to mutual success, and co-leading! Doing the third step makes all other implementation and execution possible.

STEP FOUR: We will help you sift and select, based on the needs that emerge, the right tools, approaches, interventions or methodologies that **directly relate** and can make the **biggest difference** to the **highest priority areas of improvement**. These will be targeted, results and momentum-furthering interventions that are surgical and catalytic, not chronic.

STEP FIVE: We will help you monitor and measure progress, based on indicators and metrics we all agree are of **greatest relevance** to the **success of your business** and help you to recalibrate and course correct accordingly with actual outcomes leading the way.

We create together ongoing ways to track progress through agreed "positive indicators" and by converting the game-plan into a series of "testable assumptions" where priorities and real results, not rhetoric and hype, pave the way.

Case Study

Brand Category Organisation

A brand category organization had to align with the local operating company in a major market. The brand category organization had not delivered winning brands and had low credibility. One of the testable assumptions was the efficacy of building a real partnership by generating prototypes from the brand strategy in market terms together with the local operating company, ongoingly, and to have the brand innovation teams also be accountable (albeit secondarily) for the success of market launches and execution, rather than washing their hands after delivering a concept.

Two years later, tracking agreed positive indicators for interaction and engagement as well as testing of innovations and market execution, showed that region to have evolved into a relative model of cooperation, business results had soared and new investment had gone into a region that was previously in danger of being "submerged" in a restructuring program.

FAQs

“What is the Human Performance Index™ in a nutshell?”

“Why should I care?”

“How is it different from every other analysis that's done?”

So What?

Here are some frequently asked questions and what we believe are some quite compelling answers to them.

- 1) A model that explains "human performance" in an organizational context and a process which allows you to identify the human performance component to your business challenges and opportunities.

This process allows you to actually measure human performance in real-time as it's showing up in your business -- the impact that actions, interactions, behaviors and collaboration are having at key "moments of truth" in your business.

You can then focus all your development efforts where they will make the biggest difference.

It will also x-ray the key alignment and collaboration opportunities, those interfaces which, if "re-engineered" or strengthened, can make the biggest impact.

- 2) I am sure you are very clear what the return on some of your key assets are -- but your people, and how well they interact and collaborate (or not) are among the most significant assets (in terms of both expenditure and uniqueness) you have. It seems unfortunate that most organizations do not have any clear idea of performance or return on this asset. Where can you raise the bar on one of your most distinctive and significant assets? Finding that out is a very good reason therefore to care, which we're sure you do.

- 3) At the heart of the HPI™ is a powerful model and a unique approach designed to help you have radical action conversations and elicit both "technical" and "adaptive" responses from your people.

HPI™ also has the benefit of key people in your organization, interacting with and being observed in action by, human performance specialists who can give you a read-out on possible breakthroughs and the type of implementation that will deliver most value to you.

“How is it different from a mood survey?”

- 4) In virtually every way imaginable. We focus on observable human performance and the link to tangible business results, not attitudes and opinions by themselves. A mood survey is a "moment in time" snap shot of "satisfaction" -- often defined differently by as many people as you ask.

Mood does not directly relate to organizational results either (a contributing factor for sure, but no more). The HPI™ enlarges the concept of "Engagement" to ascertain how key team/leadership and other capabilities are being deployed at key "moments of truth" for your business in ways that directly or indirectly affect business performance.

“Which organisations have benefited from using the HPI™?”

- 5) This approach is a culmination of working in the human performance space with global clients for almost two decades. It represents the knowledge we have gained from working with top global leaders, teams and organizations from many different cultures.

Elements of the tool have been very successfully utilized with Unilever, BAT, Danone, The Co-Operative Group, 3M, the Shui On Group, American Express and many others. This work is directly based on the work we do with many of the world's leading companies.

“What will actually happen?”

- 6) We will interact with, interview, engage, facilitate dialogue with and observe an agreed population of your leaders, teams and, where relevant, other stakeholders to identify the greatest opportunities for improving organizational performance as it is influenced by human performance -- based on the HP model and our distinctive "three lenses", which provide far richer insight into what is or isn't happening -- and where the levers of improvement actually are.

This will lead to a game-plan that we will engage you and other senior leaders regarding, and we will help you prioritize, commit to and catalyze ways of raising the bar in these identified areas in your team, unit or company. We will then support you as and if desired to make it happen.

So, three key things. A real-time living read-out of human performance opportunity. A game-plan based on our observations, the model, our expertise and experience, in engagement with yourselves. Decisive action where we'll happily coach in the trenches alongside you as desired, rather than leaving you with ponderous prescriptions while disappearing into the sunset.

“What measurable value will we get out of it?”

“We have lots of initiatives and change efforts underway, will this not overload us with yet another undertaking?”

- 7) You will know where the hidden productivity pots are in your business, where the passion killers are, where the effectiveness black holes are...and you'll know the human performance levers by which these can be tackled and transcended.

Hence, the measurable value will be an improvement in key business results via the unblocked and liberated discretionary effort of individuals and teams now focused on the most critical areas of improvement.

- 8) On the contrary, the HPI™ will identify and show you where you can apply scarce development efforts for the maximum ROI and RO"E" (return on Energy). Your scarcest resource is not money, but leadership time and attention, and this allows you to focus it like a laser beam.

Also, we are observing and doing a deep dive into what is currently happening in the first stage, not kicking off bundles of new activity. And then, as a result, the HPI model and process will allow you to see where what you are doing already can be done better, more effectively, with less wear and tear, with greater leadership and team synergy and resulting excellence.

So, everything already underway will benefit...and you will not have to "rework" later or fix things that have been launched but are hamstrung by issues of communication, interaction, misalignment, or other human performance dimensions.



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Value To Be Gained

In a nutshell, the value that organizations and teams gain from this type of effort include:

- Teams and networks throughout the organization with ankle weights removed and galvanized to deliver optimum results.
- Liberated, focused, engaged discretionary effort at the key “moments of truth” for your business.
- Being able to turn the tumblers of your own performance code and thereby having both the confidence and the real ability to be able to set your strategy based on your capabilities, not just the economy, competitors or technology.
- Raising the bar in areas you were taking for granted or hadn’t glimpsed opportunity in before that can help you create the future. Rather than just improving what you’re good at today, creating a “reset” for your performance culture.
- Getting your organization and the teams within it to honestly assess human performance on an ongoing basis, so you can get maximum ROI and RO“E” (return on energy) from your leadership time, attention and development efforts.

Next Steps

To explore these ideas, to understand how to measure and enhance human performance in your specific context, to convert your assets into the capabilities that will drive business growth through human performance, please contact us and we’ll be delighted to help you build a rare and exciting competitive advantage.

Namely, of winning through optimizing the human assets you’ve already invested in and multiplying their value by virtue of how they not only individually perform, but by how they relate to and support each other’s success in the context of your organization and for your markets and customers.

Leadership for delivering growth

APPENDIX

A differentiating, capabilities-based strategy translated into action

A vision for the future and, derived from that, a set of enabling key choices and priorities that will create a competitive differentiation based on organizational capabilities -- expressed in a plan that brings these choices and priorities decisively to life.

Execution of the right priorities

Aligned, focused action in line with the strategic plan, with clear milestones and actions being advanced as per identified accountabilities and time-lines.

Guidance, coaching, mentoring, role-modeling

Ensuring key leaders are overseeing delivery of the strategy and providing direction, input and real-time coaching, as well as expressing the strategic priorities in terms of what they most value and spend time on themselves.

A culture of accountability and follow-through

Where actions trump speech and there is zero-tolerance for excuse-mongering or dropped commitments, unless some issue or challenge was flagged that is being worked on.

Tackling passion killers

Removing those things that blunt our cutting edge; which demoralize people, impede work, distract from the right priorities or are inconsistent with the expressed values of the business and so erode trust.

The leadership cadre being connected meaningfully to the external environment

Ensuring that we bring (in John Kotter's phrase) "the outside in" through a variety of means -- primarily through extensive interaction and involvement by senior leadership in external networks, affiliations and forums that give clarity as to the evolution of markets and opportunities.

Teams that win

The right organizational and team structures.

The right division of responsibilities, demarcation of roles, team membership, accountabilities, access to resources and clarity of reporting lines to advance the strategy and serve your markets.

A meaningful cause to further

A strategy-linked “must win battle” for each team to focus on as their bull’s eye.

Effective use of informal and formal networks.

Understanding, outside the formal organizational chart, the key interfaces by which work gets done, and thereby finding ways to strengthen both the formal as well as these more informal interactions -- replicating elements of the most successful ones.

Quality of collaboration.

Assessing whether interaction time goes primarily to creating, testing, implementing and improving solutions or internal coordination, negotiation and conflict resolution.

Authentic and productive relationships.

A high level of trust, with authentic and candid dialogue, early mutual consultation and a commitment to support each other’s success.

Customer engagement and partnership

Customer listening posts and relay stations (for customer insights from the front lines), involving the customer as a partner in innovation and continuous improvement.

Continuously raising the performance bar

Identifying the most important areas for both continuing excellence as well as improvement from a market, customer and organizational perspective and establishing a base-line, from which we measure and improve.

Innovation to create the future

Activities that allow us to tap emergent needs, generate line extensions, adapt to our own capabilities what others are doing and aim for new markets we can tap or ‘create’ and which we feel we can competitively serve.

Driving for results

Talent as a path to performance

Measures that matter tracked in real-time

What we consider to be the most important “lead” as well as “lag” indicators of current and future success, a living dashboard that guides performance in real-time and is influential in rewards and advancement.

Studying both positive and negative deviance for applicable learnings

Actively looking for “bright spots” and understanding why they are there and disseminating and applying what we can learn from them, looking for negative anomalies (chronic problems in particular) and getting to the facts and issues fast.

Recruitment and induction of top talent

Linking of recruitment to our strategic aims. Having a robust “employee value proposition” and employer brand that allows us to attract relevant top talent. Solid induction to help people feel connected and to be supported to succeed.

Clarity of goals and strategic focus

Clear mutually understood goals, of strategic and tactical relevance, with meaningful links to their role, integrated with those of the larger team, explained, applied and supported.

Multi-faceted people development

Developing people through mentorship and coaching, organizational projects and experiences, learning opportunities and interactions, exposure and stimuli, in a structured way to build their capabilities as well as competencies.

Meritocratic recognition

Recognizing and rewarding people based on agreed goals, priorities and metrics, with real-time coaching opportunities -- taking into account both their business delivery as well as their contribution to their team and colleagues.

Building leaders of the future

Identifying future leaders, current ‘influentials’ (those who have disproportionate impact and credibility irrespective of hierarchical level), and creating opportunities, fashioning experiences, and creating a community that can stimulate, catalyze and fast-track development.

About Sensei

Sensei is an award winning global consultancy which helps organisations worldwide to deliver strategically significant results by improving human performance and by optimising the value of team and leadership interactions.

Our groundbreaking **Human Performance Index™** enables leaders to measure human performance. We focus on areas where our clients can raise the bar on performance, productivity and profit, ensuring that any work we do has clear line of sight to specific business aims. This means that a solid return on time, energy and investment is realised.

Our clients recognise us as experts in the process of unlocking potential and focusing this in the right ways to achieve the right outcomes. By emotionally engaging leaders and leadership teams to own the change, take accountability for it and deliver it ... **'We do the really hard part of the soft stuff.'**

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