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HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY! As you know, St. Patrick's Day is an Irish holiday, yet what you may not know is that the first St. Patrick's Day parade was held in New York City in 1762. Today, the St. Patty's Day parade in New York is the largest in the United States, with over 150,000 participants. Imagine the collaboration and alignment needed to successfully execute such an event with such a large number of people!



I hope you'll be practicing your collaboration skills and enjoy the celebration!

Helanie Scott

Don't Worry About Performance: Align in '09!



Most organizations invest much time and energy into developing clear strategies and goals. However, it is our critical finding that insufficient focus is placed on alignment; alignment of the hearts, minds, behaviors, and actions of employees, behind the profit-generating priorities of business. And an even more insufficient focus on holding them accountable to deliver, and diligently execute, on those priorities.

The Challenge - Mis-alignment

We find the following 4 misalignment practices in most organizations

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1. **Poor distinction between goal-driven requirements and behavior-dependent necessity**
Creating higher performance always requires a mix of strong strategic direction (e.g., expectations, goals, resources) and behavior change (changes in skills, culture).

Question: Are the appropriate mind-sets and skills being understood and applied?

2. **Insufficient engagement to energize everyone in the behavior journey.**
Sustained behavior change cannot be mandated or commanded. Managers need a compelling value proposition (what's in this for me), clear direction (what needs to be done), and guided support (e.g., coaching, training, information, tools, etc.). Creating sustainable behavior change goes far beyond communication, which is a necessary step, but not sufficient, to drive results.

Question: How REAL and meaningful is the case for change? Does a "burning platform" exist? Do managers know what the change looks like, sounds like?

3. **Over-reliance on goal planning to change behavior.**
Strategic goals and process changes help create a new context and orientation. They also have the surface appeal of being visible and fast. However, they rarely result, in and of themselves, in broad-based behavior change or skill development. They can just as often result in confusion and sap energy as people focus on figuring out "what it all means" rather than on "how to achieve business goals in new ways".

Question: Will structure and incentives alone drive the change? What else is required to get the organization performing in new ways?

4. **Leaders' inability or unwillingness to confront how they and their roles must change.**
The major barrier to goal achievement lies in the personal limitations of the senior executives, individually and as a group. Whatever the top team regards as possible becomes possible for the company. Whatever the top team believes impossible, whatever behaviors individual members cannot adopt, become effectively impossible for the organization to adopt.

Question: How clear and aligned is the leadership group on the need to focus on profit-generating priorities and the behavior of driving accountability? How committed are they to the role they must play? Are they willing to model the Leadership essentials they demand of others?

What Next

In reviewing your answers to the questions above, evaluate how sure you are of the answers and whether or not there may be a sense of doubt evident.

As a leader, you are not only accountable for your own action and performance, but for the performance of those you are entrusted to lead. So ACTION is inevitable...Take it! Have the conversation, tap into what motivates your team members as individuals, exercise emphasis on accountability and utilize your available tools and resources, and know that Align4Profit is here to help!

Align the hearts, minds, behaviors and actions of employees behind the profit-generating priorities of business and stop worrying about performance!

Every action of our lives touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity.

~Sean O'Casey