

ACTIVATION GUIDE

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**T H E
B E S T
R O B O T**

IT AIN'T PERSONAL, IT'S JUST BUSINESS

W I N S

WEEK 1

A FIRM FOUNDATION

“Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

—Matthew 7:24-25 (NIV)

Summary

In Chapters 1, 2, and 3, you learned that the companies which will survive into the twenty-first century are the ones that recognize, respect, and respond to the dichotomy of humans and robots. Business is a machine, and while there are many intricacies required to create a machine, there is a basic formula that, if followed, can produce the best robot. Every business needs systems and processes to support and extract the most outstanding value from its human capital, and every business needs humans to accomplish the mission.

As a business owner or leader, it is your job to ensure that the structure of your organization aids your human workers in accomplishing its mission. It is possible for a person to find their purpose, have a fulfilling personal life, and still contribute to the organization. However, for that to happen, your goal must be to create processes and systems that will maximize the value of your workforce. The Parable of the Wise and Foolish builders reinforces the importance of having that strong foundation in the workplace.



Discussion Questions

“Behavioral science teaches us that humans are either more task-oriented or more people-oriented.” What happens when the pendulum swings too far in one direction?

“The best-performing companies find harmony between measurement and meaning.” How do companies manage this?

“Employees not engaged or ingrained in your organization are like seeds scattered on the ground—they can easily be blown around by the wind.” How does your organization work to ensure individuals are mentally and emotionally present and plugged in?

“The cost to retain an employee, volunteer, board member, or customer is much less than the cost to replace them.” How effective are your retention efforts in each one of these categories?

Activation »»»»

What action steps can you take to ensure your processes and systems are maximizing the organization’s foundational value of your workforce?

WEEK 2

SERVICE AND SYSTEMS

“A farmer went out to plant his seed. As he scattered it across his field, some seed fell on a footpath, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it. Other seed fell among rocks. It began to grow, but the plant soon wilted and died for lack of moisture. Other seed fell among thorns that grew up with it and choked out the tender plants. Still other seed fell on fertile soil. This seed grew and produced a crop that was a hundred times as much as had been planted!”

—Luke 8:5-8 (NIV)

Summary

In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, you learned that creating collaborative culture nurtures an enterprise state of mind. Your goal must be to implement processes and systems that strengthen, empower, and maximize the value and output of your workforce. Communication in an organization is the water source for your human capital. Fluid communication is vital for your organization and humans to flourish. When leaders value and seek communication from frontline workers, they foster a culture of collaboration, teamwork, and innovation. The Parable of the Sower reinforces the importance of fostering a workplace environment that celebrates fluid communication, simplified systems, and constructive or creative abrasion.

It is imperative to get the seed (the human workers) plugged in or planted into the soil (systems and processes) that helps them exceed expectations and produce at a very high rate. This also empowers your employees to address and adapt to your consumers' needs. You can hire great people and communicate effectively, yet your systems can stifle creativity, innovation, and productivity. The thorns in this parable represent the processes and systems in your organization that can choke the seed. Be intentional about keeping things simple to foster an environment where your seed can flourish.



Discussion Questions

“Train and enable your team to be problem-see-ers and problem-solvers.” What has been the focus of and values communicated by your company’s culture?

“There is value in information coming up from the customer touchpoints to the individuals making the policy, training, and investment decisions in your organization.” What does your organization do to keep communication fluid?

“Leaders who encourage constructive or creative abrasion as a form of communication can foster an environment of collaborative communication and are more likely to anticipate and leverage issues, opportunities, and threats in the organization.” What is your experience with constructive or creative abrasion?

“Out-of-control systems and processes slow down the machine.” Which of your company’s systems and processes are currently preventing your workforce from providing your customers with seamless, effortless service with a smile?

Activation »»»»

What action steps can you take to foster a workplace environment that celebrates fluid communication and constructive or creative abrasion?

WEEK 3

POTENTIAL AND PERFORMANCE

“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

—Matthew 5:14-16 (NKJV)

Summary

In Chapters 7, 8, and 9, you learned that regardless of the personal beliefs of your employees, their ability to completely align with the desired corporate culture is vital for a unified vision and customer experience. It's important to clearly display, train, integrate, and talk about the values until they are woven into the very fiber of the organization. Leaders must pressure-test their ethics ahead of time through coursework, constant review, simulations, mentorships, communication methods, and more. By doing this, leaders and individuals can avoid ethical erosion over the pressure to perform.

To grow others, you have to fully know and understand the unique gift and skill set you bring to the organization, so you can identify the exceptional skills and talents you need to surround yourself with. Consciously seek diversity on your team. Identifying the right person for the right role, investing in and empowering your people, and recognizing great performance allow you to tap into the complex value that the human mind brings into the workplace. Your workers will be able to let their lights shine freely, their good works will be evident, and the Father will be glorified.

Discussion Questions

“In your efforts to motivate high performance, you may be creating unethical and unsafe practices in your organization.” Assess your organizations methods for evaluating performance. How many key performance indicators and goals could promote unethical and unsafe practices?

“A solid decision-making process is one of the best ways to slow down and ensure that ethical decision-making is happening in your organization at all levels.” What is your decision-making process? How does it align with your company’s values?

“Each person working in your organization has gifts, skill sets, abilities, and talents to pour into their passions. If they are cultivated correctly, your organization can and will benefit.” How are you tapping into the intrinsic “gold” of your human capital?

“People typically don’t leave companies; they leave people. People determine the potential in your organization. That’s why you should hire for personality and train for skill. Get good people and teach them what to do.” What is the process to ensure you are aligning personality and skill set for the appropriate position and role?

Activation »»»»

What action steps can you take to tap into the complex value that the human mind brings into your workplace.

WEEK 4

NOT PERSONAL, JUST BUSINESS

But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

—1 Corinthians 12:25-27 (NIV)

Summary

In Chapters 10 and 11, you learned that a manager plays a primary role in creating a work environment that fosters creativity, productivity, and innovation. Employees who don't feel safe will have a fear response in the workplace. Creativity, innovation, adaptability, and excellent service don't rise to the surface in an organization where employees are fearful. Leaders create a fear space by micromanaging, criticizing, threatening, creating too many controls and processes, being overly risk-averse, and shutting down any new ideas. Without the ability to feel safe at work, it's nearly impossible for a human worker to move higher in Maslow's hierarchy of needs to love, belonging, and ultimately, self-actualization, which is where intrinsic motivation thrives.

Know yourself so you can surround yourself with people that possess strengths that are your weaknesses. You alone are not enough, and a healthy business environment requires both strategy and leadership. You can appreciate the inherent value of diverse humans and foster an environment of inclusion. Self-awareness and inclusion allow the pendulum to rest in the middle between strategy and leadership. With an understanding of the collective power of people, processes, and parables, you're ready to maximize your competitive advantage by rehumanizing your workforce. Business is a machine, and ultimately the best robot wins. Your job as a leader is to create the best machine, aligning people, processes, and systems.

Discussion Questions

"In a fear-based culture, humans are not embraced, confident, or able to flourish and innovate. They're afraid to tell the truth, speak up, and point out problems. Communication is top-down only. Work is micromanaged, behavior is driven through punishment, and mistakes are met with harsh consequences." What type of culture have your leaders established?

"The dichotomy of a successful business is equal parts strategy (systems and process) and equal parts leadership (people)." Toward which do you believe the pendulum swings in your organization and why?

"A business must run, a business must return a profit, and a business may need to make some difficult decisions to survive, but the human element should always be recognized and considered." How is the human element recognized while maintaining a thriving business?

"They can't duplicate your people, your culture, and your ability to empower great people to work in alignment with their calling, passion, and purpose for their lives." Reflect on the areas of your organization that competitors haven't been able to duplicate.

Activation >>>>

Ultimately the best robot wins, and in the end, it ain't personal, it's just business. However, business is accomplished through people, and people are individuals that have the unique ability to create a competitive advantage for your organization. What action steps can you take to strike a balance between processes and people to capitalize on your true competitive advantage?



CONCLUSION

Business is a machine, and while there are many intricacies required to create a machine, there is a basic formula that, if followed, can produce the best robot. Every business needs systems and processes to support and extract the most outstanding value from its human capital, and every business needs humans to accomplish the mission.

As a business owner or leader, you've embraced your job to ensure that the structure of your organization aids your human workers in accomplishing the mission. Clarifying the systems and processes within the machine ensures that you will attract, develop, retain, and engage highly qualified and unique human workers to align their purposes and passions toward your mission. By fostering a culture that creates harmony between people and processes, human workers can have fulfilling personal lives and produce results one hundred times greater than the competition.

Your business is a machine. Your competitors can copy your product, your business model, your menu, or your service. Still, they can't duplicate your people, your culture, and your ability to empower unique individuals to work in alignment with their calling, passion, and purpose for their lives. Create the best machine because, ultimately, the best robot wins.
