

MANAGING PERFORMANCE & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Guide to

BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FOR SMALL COMPANIES

How to get the teams in your business motivated about performance

The Business Plan forms the touchstone for many decisions faced by Directors on a day to day basis. However such plans are not fully exploited if they remain the preserve of only a handful of people in the business.

How many people in your business are aware of the business plan? What progress is being made to achieve it? How their work contributes towards its achievement?

Performance Management

Being able to answer an unequivocal "Absolutely all of us" to the questions above is the very essence of performance management, and a likely characteristic of businesses successfully achieving the targets set out in their Business Plan.

A wise man once said "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it". This is of course very true, but what is often forgotten is that measuring the wrong things can do much more harm than good.

Identifying and encouraging teams to meet the wrong targets is likely to drive the wrong behaviours and decisions, as will the wrong approach to measurement and management. Both likely to manifest themselves as demotivation, in-fighting, "cheating" the results or just apathy.

In both manufacturing and service sector businesses it is vital that all the measures and management system encourage the right behaviours and inform the right decisions.

Key to this is asking the question: "Why will people want to do this? What is in it for them?". Good performance management systems help inasmuch as they ensure that the teams are well informed, involved, listened to and their views at least responded to if not acted upon.

Good performance measures focus on the reasons for the change or variation rather than ticking the box when an output measure is met (or worse still pointing a finger of blame when it is not). It is understanding the variations which is key to Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement is a philosophy that encourages teams to look at their processes in a way that helps them really understand the "causes and effects." The better these causes and effects are understood the more stable

and predictable the Continuous Improvement process becomes. Stability means no more fire-fighting, midnight crises, and irate customers. Being able to predict, gives us control over performance that is sustainable.

Once initiated, this virtuous cycle of improvement, is highly engaging to teams. Improvement gains invariably mean their working lives are made more predictable, are less frustrating and much more rewarding.

If you would like to understand how your business could benefit from an improved Performance Management System and adopt a Continuous Improvement approach please contact us for a no obligation discussion and site visit.

If you are interested in our Business Process Improvement Services please telephone us on 01225 480325 or complete the contact form on our website www.practicalservices.co.uk to arrange a free discussion.

The author of this article is available for group presentations to your business or organization. If interested, please call us on 01225 480325 to arrange.

See the downloads section of our website for similar guides for small business owners.

About Christopherson Associates

Christopherson Associates help business owners achieve their goals by providing a whole range of practical services.

These services include boosting profits, increasing sales and marketing activities, streamlining operations, installing Quality or IT systems, ensuring compliance with Health and Safety regulations or Employment legislation, raising finance, planning and implementing an exit strategy or helping with any business problem outside of the experience of the business owner.

All our associates are seasoned and mature business professionals with decades of relevant business experience either at board or director level of major companies or have run their own businesses.

They are well trained in working with business owners and take a highly practical approach to solving problems and enhancing your business by working closely with you every step along the way.

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