

Refocusing your team.

In their book, "Built To Last", James Collins and Jerry Porras identified a set of common rules of successful companies. In every successful company they analysed, Collins and Porras recognised that success was built on preserving the core ideology of the business (Vision, Purpose and Mission) and driving progress by setting big goals and establishing a clear and focused vision of the future.

When the vision becomes clouded in these companies, the core culture of the business becomes less stable and the reason for undertaking the big goals is lost.

The same can apply in your business. As the driver of change, if you lose focus, you can guarantee your team is going to struggle to maintain the pace of or enthusiasm for change. Momentum can slow and stall, confusion set in and morale begin to fall. Your transformation efforts can become just another unsuccessful attempt at change that simply adds to staff scepticism.

Whether it is transformation, a large job or a challenging situation, to avoid the fall in morale and motivation, it is essential to identify and quickly address the situation to refocus your team.

- Firstly, refocus yourself. Go back to basics and revisit your vision, purpose, mission and goals. It is impossible to refocus your team if you are unclear about your vision and destination
- Get excited again about the future of your business and share your excitement with your team
- Identify where your transformation efforts went off at a tangent. Analyse the causes and triggers. Determine how you can avoid these in the future
- Talk to your team. Draw your vision for your business again. Talk about the role the team will play in building the future business. In other words, you need to answer the WIIFM (what's in it for me?)
- Discuss where you lost the path and how you intend to get back on track. Invite staff members' contributions to this discussion. It might be possible that focus has been diverted because of an issue you have not considered nor been aware of
- Encourage your team to play a part to ensure the business remains focussed on the vision. Ask them all to challenge one another (and you) regularly with the question "How does this opportunity/job/decision contribute to our vision?"
- Hold a mini strategic planning session with staff and focus on the goals and action plan for the next quarter. Ask your team members to take on responsibility for a task
- Help staff stay focused by using team budgets, daily productivity reporting, progress reports and regular team meetings. The tools available to help you work ON your business are also helpful in keeping your team focused on the important matters
- Discourage gossip and immediately correct any rumours that come to your attention. Allowing rumours to flourish will ensure your team remains unfocused

As the captain, it is your responsibility to keep the plane on course in order to reach your destination. Course changes are inevitable whether it's because of bad weather, poor navigation or the whims of nature. If your team is clear on where you are heading, the issues being experienced and offered the opportunity to help, they will remain focused on the goals of the business.

Refocusing your team is about demonstrating strong leadership and clear, concise and timely communication.