

Article

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What's Riding on Your Strategy?

Sometimes the reason for the unsuccessful execution of a strategy or plan is simple. Employees don't actually understand it. They don't "get" the concepts that support the plan. Most often they can't translate the application of the strategy to their part of the organization. This lack of understanding or misunderstanding can exist even within the management team. Tragically, few employees will ever report this lack of understanding as a problem.

Several years ago I participated in a classic case. A prominent North American construction materials company had engaged one of the leading strategy firms. The result was a compelling plan involving most aspects of the business. The CEO immediately undertook a lengthy PowerPoint "dog and pony show". Six months later however, as he toured regional offices, it was obvious that few employees were any the wiser. The CEO's role as champion was undermined by ineffective communication methods.

Consequently, the company hired training specialists to translate their plans into powerful pieces of employee learning. Facilitators were engaged to deliver sessions along with company executives. This investment has generated a more knowledgeable, skilled and aligned workforce. New employees are still receiving the same learning. Reinforcement sessions are regularly scheduled. The impact has gone to the bottom line.

Several questions you may consider:

- How satisfied are you with the implementation of your organization's plans?
- What do you know about the level of employee understanding?
- Is there a lot riding on these plans?

