EEMap Process

Where we are now

Where we want to get to

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How to reduce the risk of failure of any major business initiative

Why do so many business initiatives and ventures needlessly fail to deliver the promised benefits and increases in shareholder value? Any major business initiative or venture that fails to identify and quantify the impact on those people most affected by it carries a high risk of failure. The numbers may make sense but have the political and cultural factors been assessed?

There are several reasons why this is often not addressed: first and foremost because the focus is on getting the deal done; secondly because a corporate culture is hard to see (especially if you are in it) and this is compounded by the fact that there is often more than one culture, and finally because it is hard to talk about. And yet…. the price of failure comes high!

I have developed a diagnostic process called EEMap©. This process allows a company to test the impact of a proposed business initiative on those people most affected by it, to identify why it may fail and to establish precisely what has got to be done to make it a success. There are a number of key benefits to a company and its advisors in employing this approach. In summary: -

- It is low tech and simple to understand and apply
- Does not require large teams of consultants or the purchase of software licenses
- Can be applied strategically or tactically
- Involves staff at all levels and
- Enables them to articulate difficult issues in a non-confrontational way
- Will identify quickly the major “log jams” that will be faced
- Identifies, groups and categorises the issues and exposures that will be faced
- Presents recommendations in a decision–compelling format
- Can be undertaken quickly and before large sums of money are irrevocably committed to the venture or initiative

There are three phases to the EEMap process: -

(1) Situation Analysis – that defines a cultural framework for the company and will also identify all of the significant subcultures within the company that will assist or resist progress towards the business objectives of the proposed venture.

This is created through sessions held with representative groups of all staff at all levels and in all entities that will be impacted by the proposed venture. Examples and previous templates are used to assist and speed up the process, which is also referenced, to vision, strategy and business objectives.

This phase is all about corporate cognition. The Culture Maps provide a common language and a structured framework to get an end result that is a shared understanding of “this is what we look like”.
(2) **Gap Analysis** – plots the positions of key entities within the company and highlights the gaps between this and where the directors say or think the company is, and where they want to get. Then the gaps between all of the various subcultures are plotted. This is used to identify areas of “cultural dissonance” – a euphemism for friction and disconnects. The whole purpose at this stage is to create a simple pictorial representation of the different positions and the gaps between them.

This is not a hard science but a vehicle by which staff at all levels can articulate, visualise and discuss the reality of the gaps within their organisation and to do so in an unemotional and non-confrontational manner.
(3) **Resolution** – taking the output of the Gap Map as the start point, the process now addresses the questions: What steps are needed to close the gaps? What are the implications of this?

An EEMap© is created which shows the tasks, steps and processes that have to be undertaken. But the significant feature of this process is that it also shows the implications, issues and exposures, which will have to be addressed and dealt with at each step before a successful transition will occur to the next step.

The output of this process is used to address the questions: How are we going to manage the transition? How will we know how we’re doing?

All implications, issues and exposures are analysed, categorised and prioritised across all functional areas impacted by the proposed venture. Directors and their advisors can now evaluate the risks involved and determine an appropriate course of action with regard to proceeding (or not) with the proposed venture and at what price.

Should the proposed venture still look viable, this analysis will provide the input to the preparation and delivery of an executable plan against defined milestones.