

CONSULTANT'S CORNER

Building A High Performance Culture

Working with senior management teams to build high performing organizations

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Shared assumptions, values, vision, core strategy, outcomes, and implementation build high-performing teams. I therefore guide executives through a structured process aimed at building consensus on each of these issues. The process itself shapes individual team members into a self-directed team that owns the organization's strategy, is committed to its implementation, and will create a performance-driven culture that continuously adapts to challenges in pursuit of increasing shareholder value.

● **Share the assumptions:**

This involves understanding and agreeing on, in detail, the vital few assumptions about the organization's external environment (society, economy, industry), and the organization's internal environment (strengths and weaknesses). These assumptions define the opportunities and threats that the organization's strategy will be designed to exploit or fend off, respectively.

● **Share the values:**

This involves agreeing on the basic beliefs of the organization, which shape its employees'

norms and behaviors.

Congruence of organizational values with those of the individuals leading the organization is a major element of high performance.



● **Share the vision:**

This involves agreeing on how the organization will impact the dynamics of its industry in a specific way.

● **Share the core strategy:**

This involves determining if the organization's core strategy will be segment driven, product driven, or profit driven — in other words, if it wants to exploit its franchise within a segment or industry; wants to "conquer the world" with its products and services, or is driven to achieve profit from a multitude of products, services and markets. An organization must focus on one core strategy.

● **Share the outcomes:**

This involves agreeing on strategic outcomes. I encourage the organization's leaders to be ambitious about size and growth as well as return and profit, since expectations create environments in which to excel.

● **Share the implementation:**

This involves designing and measuring the implementation of organizational strategy in at least five strategic competency areas: financial, market (customers,

suppliers, strategic alliances, competition), operations (processes), innovation, and employees (the performance system). The senior team must take responsibility for managing the interdependencies.

For more information, please contact Joan Caruso, Managing Director of Organizational Effectiveness Consulting at The Ayers Group — (212) 889-7788.

Klaus D. Oebel has consulted with organizations in the U.S. and Europe for over thirty years. He specializes in assisting senior management in developing their organization's strategy and supporting them in the resolution of strategy implementation issues.