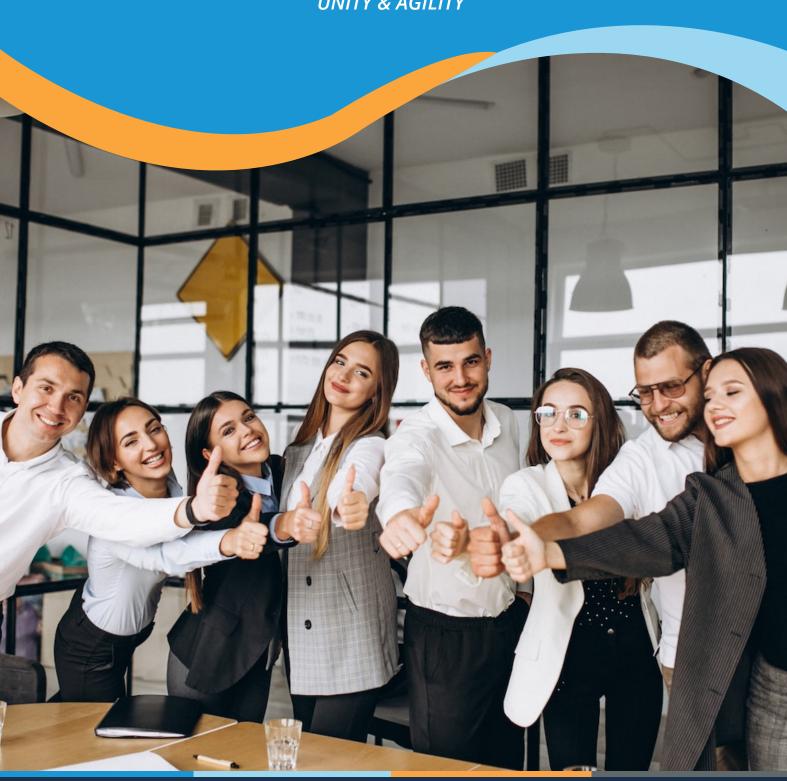RYP
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THE TWO NOT NEGOTIABLE INGREDIENTS FOR TEAM SUCCESS

UNITY & AGILITY

OVERVIEW

Have you ever watched teams self-destructing in front of your eyes? It happens all the time, whether it is business, sport, politics or community.

- The warning signs are obvious and include:

- Tolerating breaches of team disciplines

- Allowing egos to be factored into decisions rather than objectivity

- Not acting on obvious poor behaviours or attitudes of leaders (a poor attitude kills all other positive attributes)

- Allowing different and often unwritten rules for some and not for others

- Being too internally focused and missing external attitudes, approaches and trends

- Not enforcing universally agreed behaviours or disciplines

- Standards being changed to accommodate certain people

- Leader's narrative not supported by their actions and behaviours

- Inconsistent messages from the leadership team

- Bureaucracy getting in the way of swift decision making

- Compliance measures being rated as more important than improved outcome for clients, customers and consumers

These warning signs are usually clear to everyone, except the Leaders!

Unity and Agility are two non-negotiable laws of long term team success.

In this Newsletter we explore these two essential attributes.

THE UNITY & AGILITY TEST

Let's examine the importance of these two attributes through different lenses. For instance:

- Almost invariably an incumbent government's demise is due to disunity of the members of the Government and an inability to respond quickly to community attitudes and/ or needs

- A sporting team's failure to perform on the field and attract and retain a healthy membership base will see the usual justification and laying of blame of poor performance by the Executive and the ritual executions of the Coach, CEO or President. Disunity kills performance and membership engagement

- A school's curriculum and teaching methods has to be agile to keep up with advances in pedagogy around the world

- A complex community issue (such as alcohol fuelled violence, substance abuse or racial intolerance) is best addressed through a collective, united and agile approach rather than via different agencies contributing a siloed response

- An organisation's sustained competitive advantage can only be achieved through a united team approach with its staff, whilst maintaining an agile response to customer feedback and market conditions.

DISUNITY AND BUREAUCRACY KILLS TEAM DYNAMICS!

Teams that are not united and agile tend to be:

- Conformist in nature

- Over-focused on process and compliance which are reflected in their reward and recognition approaches

- Protectionist and conservative in their approach to thinking and planning

- Preoccupied with dealing with internal politics rather than outcomes

- Compartmentalised in their thinking, actions, behaviours and measurement

- Justifying and laying blame for non-performance and never take personal or collective accountability

- Focussed on issues (awareness raising) rather than solving problems (action)

- Often reliant on empirical data to prove an issue rather than understanding and identifying trends, early warning signs and feedback

- Slow to respond to complaints and staff are not empowered to resolve issues when they arise

- Quick to place labels and derogatory descriptors on others

- Not seen as part of a seamless service delivery model and treat suppliers as an expense chain

- Focused more on engagement scores and staff satisfaction ratings rather than on building agile and united teams

- Characterised by a low sense of urgency

- Managed by toxic Leaders.

ONLY THE UNITED & AGILE SURVIVE

Call it culture, call it brand essence, call it community engagement, call it team spirit, call it family, call it anything you like, unity and agility are the core ingredients for any long term success of any collective group of people.

Unity and Agility are the two macro elements that all other team attributes then stem from. It is the DNA that fuels humans to perform.

From Unity stems:

- A common sense of purpose, with a common vision andreason for being

- Clear Communication channels and mechanisms

- A sense of belonging across the team

- An understanding and acceptance of diversity in all its forms

- An atmosphere and environment of Respect and Trust

- Commitment, passion, enthusiasm and support from staff and hence volunteerism.

From Agility stems:

- A sense of Team and proactivity

- Strong situational leadership and decision making (empowerment)

- Effective and transparent communication and feedback loops

- A clear connection with stakeholders and staff

- An ability to respond to key triggers and feedback

- A action orientated on the job approach to learning and development.

SO WHY IS IT THAT UNITY AND AGILITY IS SO ELUSIVE?

This is the 64,000 dollar question! Is it egos? A clash of belief systems? Incompetent management? Toxic leadership? A lack of will and empathy? Complacency? Bureaucracy? …. it's all of the above.

Unity and Agility requires a sustained commitment anda genuine platform of goodwill. It requires a degree of familiarity with everyone on the team and the people with whom you are aiming to positively impact.

It requires people to be able to identify the issues and symptoms which are causing disunity or inertia in order to better respond to the needs of customers, clients, constituents, staff members, followers and the community.

If there is an acceptance of the status quo, almost invariably agility is slow.

TEN TIPS TO ENHANCE AGILIY & UNITY

Teams and Communities that are United and Agile exhibit a set of recurring attributes.

1. A genuine belief and commitment to an agreed vision or set of outcomes.

2. Leadership with a genuine intent to achieve their stated objectives through and with people. This requires an inclusive approach, and actions and behaviours which mirror their stories and narrative

3. The organisation is focused on trends with regular feedback loops which provide clear, responsive, current and unambiguous feedback from stakeholders.

4. If leaders are not focused on a collective and united approach to engage stakeholders you can bet staff or supporters are not.

5. Any feedback is good feedback. How it is received, shared, processed and acted upon in a timely manner will provide a pretty good indicator on whether a team is united or agile.

6. Having a "sign off" mentality by the Leadership creates a bureaucratic and compliance mentality with staff, which will stall the speed of decision making.

7. Leaders adopt an agreed code of conduct and communication so they are seen as being united and consistent. There is a commitment to absolute solidarity of the agreed direction, priorities, feedback and sequences in the eyes of all key stakeholders.

8. Leaders actively seek feedback from staff on what they are seeing, and act on their feedback to reinforce that their input is important, valued and crucial for the organisation's success

9. Importance is placed on what staff or colleagues do not do or do not act on. This is often a key factor in organisational inertia, people seeing things which obviously are not right, and ignoring it. By ignoring it, a sense of lethargy and complacency will prevail.

10. Reward and recognise publicly teams and staff which role model good practice. This helps affirm the desired behaviour and showcase what is valued.

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence is a habit not an Act

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