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The Impact of Global Trends

Ever felt like a gerbil in an exercise wheel running around without really knowing why you are running around?

Without the capacity to step back and look at things from a more detached perspective, it is hard not to fall into a state of maintaining the status quo. Unlike the gerbil you have the option of standing back, stepping out of the current and taking a good look at what is going on.

Easy to say, but what if the best you feel you can do is keep one foot on the wheel to keep it spinning while you focus on gathering the information necessary.

HRMA Competency: II. Business Acumen-3: Gathers, analyzes, and reports relevant business and industry information including global trends.
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Tips to developing competency in seeing the big picture:

1. Know how you tend to think. If you naturally connect the dots then all you need are some good information sources and reflection time to pull the pieces together. If you are a detailed person then you may want to team up with a visionary type. That way both of you draw on your strengths and two heads are better than one especially when it comes to teasing out the key threads that hold the fabric together.
2. If by day you are putting fires out it is a bit of a leap to become a visionary, wide angle lens thinker. Reserve some time to spend outside of the bombardment of noise to hear yourself think. It is a skill called de-focalization. This is a fancy way of saying that your best thinking is likely to happen when you are not thinking or focusing on the problem. Insights, flashes of genius, and images come when you are ready to receive them, not when required. Pay attention to thoughts that jet in when you are gardening, showering, driving (yikes), or on the toilet (few admit that!).
3. Practise changing perspective. Consider that the situation is a scene in a movie. You can either be an actor in the movie or be holding the

camera. Shift from one position to another in your mind. Notice what you see from the two different vantage points. You can only spot the impact of global trends on your organization and its people when holding the camera. It requires objectivity and detachment.

Complementary and Critical Competency: These are times of rapid change, compressed time, and information overload. Analysis is helpful but it is not the tool that will help you see the dynamic trend threading its way through the information you gather. Pay attention to your gut instinct, gut feel, intuition....call it what you will. That is the guidance system that will cut through the noise and point the way.

Information Sources:

- www.magportal.com
- www.management-issues.com
- www.bnet.com
- Navigating the Badlands by Mary O'Hara Devereaux or www.globalforesight.com
- www.bsr.org
- An Inconvenient Truth - Book and DVD by Al Gore See also the interview in Special Features.
- <http://www.frominsighttoaction.com/radical-retention.html> Download: The Business Case for Radical Retention at the top of the page.

The Heart of the Matter

HR Competencies:

- Effectively handles disagreements and conflicts;
- Plans for and manages the HR aspects of organizational change, e.g. mergers, acquisitions, divestitures and downsizing, in the context of organizational strategies and legislated requirements;
- Promotes a productive culture in the organization that values diversity and equity goals.

It may not look like it but these competencies are totally inter-related along with a few others. Normally people assume that the conflict is the problem. It is only the indicator. Secondly, it is the reaction or response to conflict that offers the real opportunity.

When presented with an apparent conflict usually cause-effect thinking is applied to find the root cause and treat that. There are a couple of challenges with this approach. First, rarely does the thinking go deep enough. It is more easily applied to fixing leaking buckets than the complexity of human dynamics. Secondly, people react unconsciously to pressures felt on deeper levels. You, as the mediator, change agent, and culture builder, cannot help

people past a point you have not gone yourself. For example, if your strategy is to repress your emotions, you will freeze, flee, or fight when conflict presents itself. To master this set of competencies requires a dedicated commitment to achieving higher levels of personal mastery especially as they relate to dealing with apparent contradictions.

Tips for Developing Personal Mastery with Conflict

1. **Listen to yourself think or speak.** If you find yourself sorting out (or drifting toward right or wrong) who is right and who is wrong then you probably need to step back. There is no right or wrong (unless it is an ethical issue, in which case look at the system). There two different interpretations, perceptions serving to inform. Seeing into the heart of the matter starts with asking questions before arriving at a conclusion.
2. **Strengthen your questioning skills** so you can assess the emotional temperature. In rapid fires times where results are rewarded people become trained to take action before thinking. Jumping to conclusion before understanding the situation can develop into an organizational habit which must be converted into curiosity before real progress can be made.
3. **Monitor your own reaction or response.** To really elevate your own level of personal mastery requires engaging your 'witness.' This is the same witness mentioned above who is holding the movie camera only this time you are the main star in your own movie. Notice what you do in different situations.
4. **Ask:** What are the things that sit beneath the surface impacting personal safety and security? Short answers would be fear of..... These are the underlying triggers for conflict used destructively.

The ideal state to move toward in dealing with conflict is FLOW! This is where you are using powerful energy of difference and diversity to fuel creativity.

Conflict Resource: Tom Crum: Magic of Conflict

Personal Mastery Guidelines:

Utilize the four principles from The Four Fold Way by Angeles Arrien. These are universal principles that serve as valuable touchstones for mastery.

1. Show up. Choose to be present. [This informs your listening.]
2. Pay attention to what has heart and meaning. [This informs your intuition.]
3. Tell the truth without blame or judgment. [This informs your capacity to detach emotionally and see things from a caring and objective place.]
4. Be open to outcome; not attached to outcome. [This informs your own ability to flow, let people be who they are, empower versus direct.]

The Culture Container

No matter how big your organization or company it there is always an invisible set of values and beliefs that guide results. These can help or hinder effective working relationships and performance yet most organizations are not aware of which ones are operational or what the impact is.

HR Competency: Contributes to an environment that fosters effective working relationships.

Tips for Seeing the Invisible Belief System

- **Notice:** What happens when employees try something different, say what no one dared say before? What is the environment for honest, risk taking?
- **Observe:** Where is the talk about one thing and the walk different?
- **Reflect:** If there were no limits in place, what would be done differently?
- Where are we doing things by habit? Where we have forgotten what purpose the action serves?

How and where is the environment supporting the emergence of effective working relationships?

Ask, notice, observe and reflect and you will see where you can formulate or tweak systems and procedures to create a rich environment for expression of initiative or cooperation.

Finally, everything is energy. It can be used to create, destroy, hinder or help. Make every choice an aware choice and you will systematically elevate your self-knowledge to the place where diversity of thought is the platform for innovation and stability in rapidly moving and uncertain environments.

Feedback? Any questions? Observations? Comments? Please email dawna@FromInsightToAction.com Your question could be covered in the next article or ezine issue. For past issues go to: www.FromInsightToAction.com

This handout includes content from a manual on **Increasing Employee Retention and Closing Performance Gaps.**

Want to know more? To receive the topic index email Dawna H. Jones at dawna@FromInsightToAction.com or call at 1.866.605.0880.