



## **The Group of 7**

**CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT INSIGHTS**

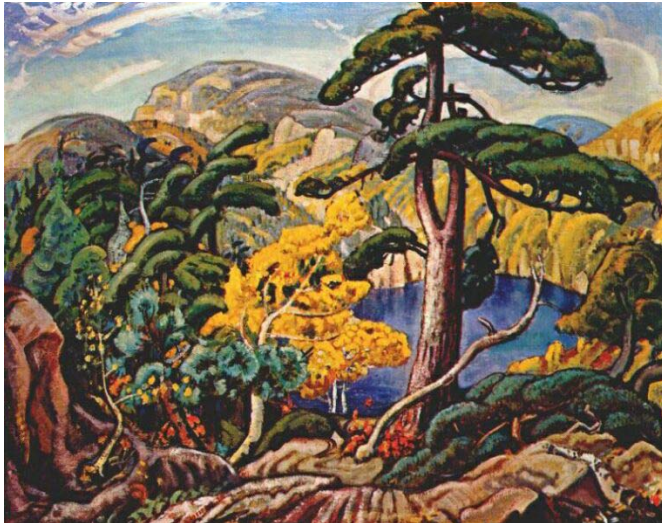
*Can Your Organization Survive and Thrive Meaningful Change?*

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## Can Your Organization Survive Meaningful Change?



I am often asked why the same great strategic initiative works for some organizations and fails miserably for others. My answer is always the same; your potential for success is directly mapped to the health of your corporate environment. Yet unfortunately I do not think I have met a company yet that consciously shapes and determines their corporate environment. Any meaningful transformation or business decision relies heavily on 7 key elements that determine the state of your corporate environment. Appropriately named *The Group of 7*, they are *foundation, communication, culture, community, transparency, awareness and values*. Whether you are implementing a new IT system, starting a Customer Experience Management Practice, or simply rolling out a new corporate policy, your corporate environment determines the level of effort as well as your potentiality of success.

This [Corporate Diagnostic Chart](#) is a tool to help you evaluate the health of your corporate environment. It provides the typical problems with each element as well as what to do to address the problems and why it works.

First we will explore each element in more depth and then we will review the best way to get started depending on some key characteristics of your organization including your level of influence within your organization. Finally we will review some best practices that will optimize your efforts.

I hope you find this Insights Report enlightening and empowering, providing you with actionable steps to move forward. Please contact me directly in the event you are interested in discussing this further in context of your organization.

Note: "[The Group of Seven](#)" is a group of 7 Canadian artists that formed their group in 1920. They wanted to better the Canadian Art movement and formed their group to develop new techniques to better their art. Each one of them on their own would most likely have achieved a certain level of success as individual artists but it was as a cohesive group that they transformed Canadian Art and became legendary. This holds true for the 7 elements of your corporate environment.

## Foundation - What is Your Companies Basic Potentiality?

First we will examine the base element, *foundation*. This element governs stability, security, ownership, accountability and basic potentiality. This is where it all starts, any gaps in your foundation will negatively permeate through all other 6 elements. Typical gaps are a vague brand, vague mission and vision, dysfunctional leadership, lack of ownership and passion, poor financial results, and challenging sales. These gaps directly limit your companies potential, it is important to be clear on this, a company can still have very strong perceived success (aka financial results), however they may not even be scratching the surface of their full potential representing a large missed opportunity.

Let's explore some things you can do to develop a healthy corporate foundation.

Does your company mission and vision have meaning? Does it accurately articulate your purpose? If not, refresh them. If your leadership team and employees don't know where they are going, that is where they will end up. And if they can not envision it, then they cannot help shape it. Do not underestimate the importance of a meaningful mission and vision. Then weave your mission and vision into every other element and every decision you make.

We've all seen companies that appear to believe a re-org is the answer to improved financial performance as well as those that seem to re-org just to stir things up. I'm less concerned with the frequency as I am with the purpose and design. The authors of HBR's [The Decision Driven Organization](#), share six steps to reorganize around decisions. "First, be clear about which decisions are the most important to your company. Second, figure out where in the organization those decisions need to be made. Third, organize your structure around sources of value. Fourth, figure out the level of authority your decision makers need, and give it to them. Fifth, adjust other parts of your organizational system to support decision making and execution. And sixth, equip your managers to make decisions quickly and well." This approach gives purpose to your organizational structure and "ultimately, a company's value is the sum of the decisions it makes and executes".

Finally measure what matters. What does your company measure to determine performance? For many companies it starts and stops with financial results. Your measures need to reflect the importance of each element of your corporate environment as well as the outcomes of all of the decisions made and executed upon. For example, if customer experience is not reflected in the performance measure of your employees, it will not shape their actions. Measure and reward what matters most.



The [Business Foundation](#) has a powerful tool for developing your business intelligence blueprints. These blueprints are key in:

- allowing focus and strategy alignment across and down the organization
- creating a Business Intelligence Road Map that can be used by the business to communicate solutions and systems requirements to IT
- a clear, transparent process of documentation and alignment for Business, IT and Finance alignment
- a way to manage the critical company-wide metrics in a logical, cross-functional and business centric manner

## Communication - Does Every Company Struggle with it?

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Forrester twittered "half of large companies have an executive focused exclusively on customer experience" from their Forrester Customer Experience Forum 2010 in NYC. My first thought was "all large companies worldwide?" if so, that surprises me, in a very pleasant way, but perhaps they meant of the companies attending the forum? My second thought was "of those companies, how many of them are pleased with the progress they are making?" The challenge with this question is that most leaders would not have the courage to provide an open answer.

We need to encourage more transparent discussions around the impact the corporate environment is having on customer experience initiatives. Why do some of the best customer experience management strategies and road-maps struggle or worse fail? The reality is that developing a solid plan and effectively implementing that plan are entirely at the mercy of your corporate environment. Your customer experience transformation requires a healthy corporate environment for sustainable results. What we tend to see today are isolated customer experience grass root efforts that yield results isolated to their area of influence and power and that is where it stops.

Let's examine the second element, *communication*. This element governs knowledge, collective ownership, teamwork, and respect. This element is a corporation's equivalent of the human nervous system, in constant transmission and interpretation of information from multiple sources in numerous forms. Typical problems are deficient and conflicting information, excessive rumours, a lack of trust and loyalty, poor collaboration and inadequate compliance and governance. Communication problems resurface in every other element causing additional referral problems.

I have yet to discover a company that does not struggle with communication. The human nervous system analogy illustrates that frequently people feel information before they process it. Communication stimulates emotion as does lack of communication. It is important for leaders to recognize this and face it head on. Organizations should invest in developing a clear communication strategy with extensive training and coaching to all leaders and employees. As part of this, commit to re-occurring communications both written and verbal and stick to them. Make your communications clear and creative and validate interpretation.

Effective communication is highly dependent on your IT team. Tools provide you with the means to share, track and reference information to a broad, organizational audience with ease. At minimum your company is communicating via email but most are now leveraging their customer relationship management systems, social media tools, knowledge management tools, learning management systems, and mobile devices all with varying degrees of maturity and results. This represents an enormous opportunity but it is also highly subject to failure and exorbitant costs without a solid plan and highly skilled execution.

All communications need to reflect your corporate *values* (the 7th element). They need to be *transparent* (the 5th element) and whenever possible they need to be referencable; if it is true that we can only retain 7 pieces of information at a time, then we need a means to remind ourselves.



Finally, an open door policy is a powerful way to effectively acquire the voice of your leaders, employees and customers. It breeds trust and reduces misinformation. Of the smart companies that have an open door policy, few think to extend this to their customers, yet it makes perfect sense.

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."  
-- Winston Churchill

## Culture - What Does Your Corporate Culture Reveal?

Let's explore the 3rd element, *culture*. Your culture governs the authenticity of your business environment as a whole. In other words, a corporate culture magnifies the gaps across all 7 elements and amplifies what is working well. You cannot fake culture, it is a result of your company's collective intentions, words and actions. Typical symptoms of an unhealthy corporate culture are lack of employee pride and motivation, employee segregation and dysfunction, lack of identity, high levels of absenteeism and entitlement issues or the opposite, job security issues. The financial cost of cultural problems might surprise some leaders, but it is the impact that really needs to be understood. Poor employee experience = poor customer experience plain and simple.

Let's go a little deeper on that, poor employee experience = poor customer experience. So many customer experience management initiatives begin with the voice of the customer, this makes perfect sense but only when you add the voice of the employee do you have the full picture. I find it painfully ironic that it is usually the customer service department that suffers the lowest employee experience. When Zappos CEO, Tony Hsieh was originally evaluating outsourcing their customer service call center he was smart enough to recognize that the cost savings would come at a much bigger cost. "As we thought more about it, though, we realized that it wouldn't be matching our actions to our words. If we were serious about building our brand around being the best in customer service, customer service had to be the whole company, not just a single department." The take away here is to make employee experience a critical factor of your customer experience initiatives.

Back to the broader topic of corporate culture. Bruce Tempkin's "#1 new management imperative" is to "invest in culture as a corporate asset". I highly recommend reading Tempkin's [The 6 New Management Imperatives](#). His key message being that culture can amplify the value of your business and needs to be recognized as a real corporate asset. Take this literally, it truly belongs on the balance sheet. Bruce shares four great ways you can do this: track employee goodwill, develop a voice of the employee program, establish a vocabulary around culture and to actively manage your culture. "Bottom line: don't squander your corporate culture asset."

Adding to Bruce's "establish a vocabulary around culture", there are powerful tools and resources available that can amplify your culture, establish a common dialog, stimulate open creative communication, and drive awareness and appreciation of all 7 elements of your corporate environment. For example, [DISC is a model for understanding behavioral styles](#), it was developed by William Moulton Marston, Ph.D. over 75 years ago, and has become one of the most widely-used models for understanding the behavioral differences in people. The Language of DISC is a tool that leads to behavioral change, it builds mutual understanding, communication, teamwork, trust and respect among team members. In application you can tailor the training to shape cultural beliefs that reflect your company core values.

## Community - Is Your Company Socially Responsible?

Next we focus on the fourth element, *community*. Your community governs corporate social responsibility (CSR), compassion and development of a higher sense of purpose. Historically, social responsibility was left to the not-for-profit companies but this is no longer the case, there are many organizations today that are very passionate about giving back to their community in creative meaningful ways. Investing in a CSR strategy benefits much more than the community, it has a positive impact on your brand, employee experience, customer experience, communications and customer loyalty. Without a CSR strategy you are more likely to encounter a lack of teamwork and team spirit as well as a general lack of compassion for one another and your customers.

In 2008 Chris McClean of Forrester published [How The World's Leading Businesses Address Corporate Social Responsibility](#). Chris says "Corporate behavior is approaching celebrity status. Executive scandals, product recalls, unethical labour practices, and environmental disasters are more closely scrutinized than ever, and the information age does not permit incidents to be swept easily under the rug. As employees, investors, customers and partners pay more attention to corporate responsibility, companies are responding by strengthening and reporting their efforts related to environmental, social, and economic issues. "

One such company is KPMG, they have made their CSR strategy a priority. A few years ago Forrester completed a [case study on KPMG's CSR strategy](#), the study shares that "In 2008, KPMG set a number of corporate wide environmental goals, including a 25% reduction in carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions by 2010." Their CSR strategy is aligned to their vision, mission and values. "We have a clear vision of the role of KPMG firms. We believe we should use our skills and our resources to become fully involved in finding sustainable solutions to global and local issues, working alongside governments, civil society groups and international agencies. This vision is in line with our values — where we make a commitment to the communities in which we work." Says Micheal Hastings, Global Head of Citizenship and Diversity, KPMG International. KPMG has numerous key leadership roles dedicated to corporate citizenship world wide.

[Adobe](#) is another company with a demonstrated commitment to the social community. I think many would be pleasantly surprised to learn the extent to which Adobe has invested in their corporate social responsibility. "Adobe supports strategic programs and partnerships that help make our communities better, stronger, and more vibrant places in which to live, work, and do business." They have community giving programs that include grants, an employee volunteer program and a software donation and training programs. In addition Adobe has it's own foundation " [Adobe Youth Voices](#) their global signature philanthropy program designed to provide youth in underserved communities with the critical skills they need to become active and engaged members of their communities and the world at large." A powerful example of this at play took place on [February 5th 2009](#) when the Adobe Foundation, the Black Eyed Peas and the Entertainment Industry Foundation announced a new partnership to help underserved youth access and learn to use multi-media production tools, including those for video, dance, music and art, to comment on critical issues and spark social change in their communities. The collaboration was highlighted with a benefit concert hosted and performed in Los Angeles by the Black Eyed Peas and other musical artists. This is corporate social responsibility at it's best!



Anne Lewnes, SVP Global Marketing at Adobe recently blogged "CSR is a great opportunity for all companies to strengthen their brand and connection to their customers. Companies should choose a cause close to their product and culture, so there is good alignment, and they shouldn't be shy about promoting their CSR cause to their customers. Our own research has shown that our customers really want to know more about what Adobe is doing in the CSR space, so we're going to continue to get the word out."

There are many more companies doing great by their community but where do you start if you have not yet developed a CSR strategy? Or if you do have one and want to improve it, what is the best approach? On the highest level you need to ensure it is aligned to your corporate mission, vision and values. Here are a few helpful tips to help shape your strategy:

- Ideally it should leverage your core products or services
- Invite your employees to actively participate
- Be sure to consider your employee community, solicit what is important to them, you can extend this to your customers as well
- Consider what would improve your own internal environment, it is ok to benefit from your CSR strategy
- Explore partnering with other corporations
- Develop and invest in your CSR strategy the same way you would approach a for-profit strategy, it is important to measure and validate the impact

## Transparency - Are You Ready to Get Naked?

My personal favourite element is *transparency*. Transparency governs your corporate honesty, openness and vulnerability. It requires being completely authentic and humble without pretences with your customers, employees, partners and peers. It takes courage to practice transparency and we are all susceptible to the fears that go hand and hand with being open and vulnerable. Patrick Lencioni, author of [Getting Naked](#) brilliantly captures the challenges and value of transforming your corporate environment to embrace transparency.

Not only is this ethically the best approach, customers today are demanding it. The good news is that transparency breeds loyalty. Not just with your customers, but also with your employees, partners and your peers. When you pretend to know something, people see right through that, when you cover up mistakes, people feel manipulated. So why is it so hard to say "I don't know" or "my apologies, I made a mistake"? The reason is fear, fear of disappointing or losing trust, yet ironically owning it, being transparent, builds trust.

That said, there is an art to "telling the kind truth". Transparency requires mindfulness and respectful communications in order to be effective. It does not mean you need to air your dirty laundry for the sake of being fully transparent. It means being mindful of when you are misleading others. It also does not mean you have a license to be hurtful or insensitive for the sake of being direct. It means demonstrating respect and tact in your approach for communicating delicate matters. A naked approach has a pervasive impact on your corporate communications, culture and values. This is the most untapped element that has the most potential to foster loyalty.

If you are still sceptical, read Patrick's book and try it yourself at your next meeting. I read Patrick's book in one sitting, it is simple yet powerful.

Bottom line, transparency breeds loyalty. Yet the practice of transparency is not common, nor is it easy for many to implement. Consider adopting Patrick's "Getting Naked" approach as core to your corporate environment. Provide training and coaching and introduce "naked" dialog into your corporate language.

## Awareness - Is Your Company Aware?

Next let's examine *awareness*. Awareness governs your corporate capacity to see, seek, share, use (and reuse) honest, open, meaningful information. It is really the self awareness of a company as well as the collective self awareness of all of it's employees. The self awareness of the leaders within a company determines the potentiality of self awareness broadly. John Baldoni from HBR illustrates this in his [blog](#) back in 2009, "To bring people together around a common cause, it is critical that a leader be self aware". Awareness also encompasses a company's collective customer awareness and industry awareness. (Community awareness is also relevant, this was explored as it's own element earlier in the series).

How does a company achieve awareness? The first step is acknowledging the significance of awareness.

Here are some tips for developing awareness and then harnessing it:

Self awareness: In an [article](#) from Inc. Chris Musselwhite shares the benefits of self awareness and offers some steps to begin to increase your awareness "...seek feedback on your performance from others by asking good questions and listening without justifying or defending your actions. Remember, organizations benefit far more from leaders who take responsibility for what they don't know than from leaders who pretend to know it all."

Customer awareness: In Bruce Tempkin's [The Four Customer Experience Competencies](#), his 4th competency is "Customer Connectedness". The message is simple, embed deep customer insights into all decisions and operations within your company. Two of his suggestions are great ways to increase your company's customer awareness, the first is to built a voice of the customer program and the second is to make customer insight widely available to your employees.

Industry awareness: Social media is a great tool to help you keep up to date on industry trends and insights. Companies have some valid concerns with regards to promoting employees to spend excessive time with the abundance of information to sift through, however by assigning ownership to this responsibility and setting in place guidelines and governance you can share targeted industry intelligence with your leaders and employees that will empower them to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

It is important to make all of the intelligence generated from your collective awareness widely available within your company, it is also important to provide guidelines and governance to develop consistency and alignment to all of the other elements in your corporate environment. To do this I recommend assigning ownership of this to your PMO and ensuring they have the required skills to employ awareness broadly.



Finally, once you have started on your path of corporate awareness, recommend that your employee's spend 15-30 minutes every day developing awareness. An enlightened team will out perform exponentially.

"Enlarge your consciousness. If your consciousness is small, you will experience smallness in every department of your life." - Robert Pante



## Values - What Are Your Corporate Beliefs?

Last but not least we will focus on *values*. *Values* govern your corporate beliefs, they provide a higher sense of shared purpose and shape our words and actions. A companies' values reveal what is important to them and their words and actions validate the importance. Value driven actions and words breed respect and loyalty from your employees and customers.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter from HBR recently posted [10 Essentials for Getting Value from Values](#), in the post Rosabeth summarizes what smart companies do to bring values to life. Values tend to be similar from company to company and passive in nature, but that does not mean they do not matter, in fact values can have a very powerful impact on your corporate environment. There are 3 things I would add to Rosabeth's post, 1st is to invite your employees to help develop your core values and then again as you tune them along the way. Your values should be shaped by your aspired customer experience. The 2nd is to her statement in closing "In short, it's not the words that make a difference; it's the conversation." I agree with this statement but would add "and actions" to the end of the sentence. Values need to be common dialog and common action. My 3rd add is that your customer experience based values should shape performance reviews and rewards. Most performance reviews are shaped by corporate, divisional and individual goals, incorporate your values and this will bring further purpose and empowerment to your employees.

Trust is a value that has been profoundly shaken in the business community at large, yet it is what the majority of us and our customers value most. I could not be a loyal customer to someone I did not trust. Trust is about integrity and is earned through consistent transparency and confident humility and vulnerability. ClienteerHub has a powerful video posted [The Truth About Trust](#), smart companies will incorporate values that inspire trust.



## How Do You Get Started?

The answer depends on a few preliminary key questions:

- What is your level of influence within your organization?
- What is the size of your organization (# of employees)?
- What is the level of maturity of your organization?
- Do you have the right resources to initiate meaningful change?
- Is your organization open to meaningful change?

How you answer these five questions will determine your potentiality for positive change and shape the best way for you to get started. We will examine each question and derive a recommended course of action. Making changes to your corporate environment is not a prescriptive process, each organization is unique and will have its own nuances that need to be taken into account. If after reviewing these recommendations you would like further guidance to tailor your approach I can assist you with this.

### What is your level of influence within your organization?

#### **Executive leadership:**

If you are at the executive decision making level then you have a great advantage and you can proceed to the next question.

#### **Middle management:**

You may not have the authority to initiate a corporate level initiative but hopefully you have direct access to senior or executive leaders that do. Begin with a dialog, ask probing questions that explore an element that your organization struggles with and share this Insights Report with them to initiate your awareness campaign.

The beauty of this framework is that it can be scaled right down to the team level. If you have autonomy of your own team, then begin to educate your own team, be open with them about what you are doing and make them a part of the solution. By demonstrating these principles within your own team this will provide you with concrete results to draw from on your broader campaign with your peers and organizational leadership team.

#### **Associate and other:**

If you do not have decision making authority and you have not previously been a front line change agent then now is the time for you to start. Start the dialog with your peers and managers. Ask probing questions that explore an element that your organization struggles with and share this Insights Report with them to begin your awareness campaign. Be sure to leverage any channels that you organization has established for communications and idea generation.



## What is the size of your organization (# of employees)?

### **Small (1-50 employees):**

If you are at a small company then you have a great advantage and you can proceed to the next question.

### **Medium (50-500 employees):**

If you are at a medium size company consider taking a blended approach. For elements that your company excels with seek corporate level sponsorship and for elements that your company lags in target a progressive division or business unit. Then you can leverage your demonstrated success to attain corporate sponsorship to scale your efforts. This incremental also approach breeds change more organically.

### **Large (500-5000+ employees):**

The best approach within a large company is to set your sights on a division or business unit to focus your initial efforts. Some behavioral changes may be adopted quickly beyond your initial focus, be sure to embrace this and celebrate it when it happens. Being a part of a large organization is not a reason to accept defeat, large companies often have more resources available to assist you in soliciting like-minded support and sponsorship. Leverage your companies' social media tool and communication channels to start the dialog.

## What is the level of maturity of your organization?

### **Start up (Years 1-5):**

The paradox with a start up organization is that it is much easier to develop a healthy corporate environment from the beginning than to fix it later, yet few take advantage of this unique opportunity. In an ideal world we would get it right from the start. However, the reality is that this is often when you have the least amount of resources and capital available coupled with pressures and goals narrowly focused on "short-termisms". Resist the temptation to postpone developing your Group of 7 until "there is more time" or "more resources and capital". Your start up is a marathon, not a sprint. All seven elements will profoundly impact your potentiality to move forward beyond start up mode into growth mode.

### **Growth (Years 5-10):**

If you are at a small company then you have a great advantage and you can proceed to the next question.

### **Mature (Years 10+):**

It can be challenging to teach an old dog new tricks but chances are that if this is the case for your organization you are on a narrow path to extinction. A healthy corporate environment is essential for longevity of mature companies. As we navigate through and beyond the age of transparency mature companies will need to embrace meaningful change to survive. You will need to be audacious and tenacious to ignite and enlighten a mature team. Pay attention to what motivates your company's leadership team and adapt your dialog to map the importance of your corporate environment to them.

## Is your organization open to meaningful change?

### **Change resistant:**

This is more common than you might think. While fear driven leaders are a dying breed, they still represent the majority of business leaders today broadly. Typically these leaders are egocentric and resistant to meaningful change if it not tied to an immediate reward to them. This is the only scenario that I recommend a rather unconventional approach. Try your best to enlighten your leadership team to broaden their mindset, apply to their hunger to maximize their potential for success. If it resonates then celebrate this and move forward. If you are met with strong resistance then you need to make a personal decision. Do you want to work for a company that refuses to consider meaningful change? Followers exceed in this type of environment, change agents typically do not thrive and grow under these conditions. It's like growing a palm tree in the North Pole.

### **Adaptive:**

Unquestionably the lesser evil but you will still need to ignite your company and then diligently keep them ignited. Keep the dialog at the forefront and leverage all social media tools and communications channels available to you. Invite everyone to be part of the solution to ensure collective ownership.

### **Change opportunists:**

If you are at a company that has a proven track record for embracing meaningful change then you have a huge advantage and you can proceed to the next question.

## Do you have the right resources to initiate meaningful change?

### **Ideal mix:**

Do not underestimate the importance of having a blended team. The ideal mix to start with would include a sponsor, an evangelist, an external advisor and a driver). Too few resources will take too long and struggle to attain essential the required momentum. With an external advisor you will minimize your potential to reinvent and maximize your potential to leverage proven practices. The right external advisor will also be far less subject to political influences and empower you with the kind truth.

### **Half the engine:**

If you have half the equation; either some skills required or some capital to acquire new skills and a trusted advisor, then begin with an adhoc initiative focused a corporate environment element that is lagging. Select a progressive team, division or business unit to demonstrate the returns that would ultimate provide tangible justification for further investment and sponsorship.

**Lack of skills and capital to acquire new skills:**

This is one of the top challenges. In this scenario a Strategy Prioritization Assessment would be in order. This entails identifying all key initiatives that are active and applying a basic score to capture measures such as customer ROI, internal ROI, cost, effort, complexity, and any other key measures critical to your organization. Add any pending key initiatives including improving your corporate environment. This is not a science but it will reveal your companies readiness to invest in their overall potentiality for success.

## Approach and Best Practices

Regardless of your level of influence, the readiness of your organization or if you have the means to right resources, applying the following practices to your approach will assist you in your mission:

- **Know your customers and your employees;** know their goals and know what motivates them. This is an ongoing process, monitor changes closely and adapt.
- **Be respectfully audacious** to gain awareness and momentum. Resist any temptation to take negative scepticism personally. Show gratitude for positive and negative feedback and examine it closely for opportunities to strengthen your approach.
- **Have the courage to move from the “how” into “doing”** without full consensus, many sceptics become believers only when they witness positive results, consensus will grow organically.
- **Avoid self doubt,** it is important to practice confident humility. As you encounter barriers, and you will, remain open to learning, this is not about YOU.
- **Make smart sexy;** do not fall into the fear trap of short-termism thinking (short-termism = feel-good, me-based, immediate gratification disease). Be authentic and transparent at all cost and embrace the vulnerability of not having all of the answers.
- **Have a fun factor;** fun and meaningful change are not mutually exclusive. Make anything that matters fun and people will give it a chance.
- **Practice risk management;** even if something is recognized as a risk there can still be compelling reasons to move forward while proactively mitigating chances of failure. Monitor your risk closely, investment in risk management profoundly reduces the occurrence of costly, time consuming preventable issues.
- **Keep the saw sharp;** never stop learning, always consider your toolbox half full and be on the hunt for new insights.
- **Iterate and communicate;** make no mistake, harmonizing your corporate environment can quickly become a large scale initiative. Resist the temptation to do it all at once, take an iterative approach. Learn from each iteration and adapt accordingly. Provide consistent, open communication as real-time as possible.
- **Practice agility;** anticipate change, plan for it, and embrace it.
- **Spread the word;** Leverage social media tools and communication channels, Keep the dialog alive.

## The Group of 7 - Corporate Diagnostic Chart

	Problems	What to Do	Reason it Works
FOUNDATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vague brand</li> <li>• Vague mission and vision</li> <li>• Dysfunctional leadership</li> <li>• Lack of ownership and passion</li> <li>• Poor financial results</li> <li>• Challenging sales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in determining who you are and refresh your mission and vision</li> <li>• Assess your leadership team and organizational structure – make sure it supports a decision driven organization</li> <li>• Measure what matters</li> </ul>	<p>A healthy foundation is essential. An organization cannot survive the elements without a solid foundation that supports and thrives in good and challenging times.</p>
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficient and conflicting information</li> <li>• Excessive rumours</li> <li>• Lack of trust and loyalty</li> <li>• Inadequate compliance and governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a social media strategy</li> <li>• Commit to re-occurring communications both written and verbal</li> <li>• Offer an open door policy</li> <li>• Be clear, consistent and creative with all communications</li> </ul>	<p>Effective communication is a necessity. It will develop engaged passionate employees that act like owners. It will foster a culture with respect and trust. A wealth of efficiencies are realized when your organization is empowered with knowledge.</p>
CULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of employee pride and motivation</li> <li>• Employee segregation and fighting</li> <li>• Lack of identify</li> <li>• Entitlement issues or fear of job security</li> <li>• High absenteeism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define your culture, it must be meaningful and capture what is important to the organization</li> <li>• Business ropes programs transform culture and ignite spirit</li> <li>• Personality assessment and training ie. DISC</li> </ul>	<p>Creating your corporate culture is as important as creating your business plan. In fact, your corporate culture should be woven into all elements of your business plan. It is pervasive and reflects who you are to the world.</p>

<h2>COMMUNITY</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Void of social responsibility</li> <li>• Lack of teamwork and team spirit</li> <li>• Lack of compassion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a social venture strategy</li> <li>• Explore meaningful pathways to positively impact your community that are connected to your foundation</li> </ul>	<p>Good karma is an obvious benefit but it also fosters responsibility and compassion for your employees and gives a much bigger sense of purpose. It can also create new pathways that drive positive results and brand awareness.</p>
<h2>TRANSPARENCY</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secrets and misinformation</li> <li>• Low trust and loyalty</li> <li>• High employee turnover</li> <li>• Silos and poor communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice “Living Naked” by Patrick Lencioni</li> <li>• Even when it is tough to do so, always, under all circumstances, be transparent with your customers and employees</li> </ul>	<p>Not only is this the right way to do business; our business environment today demands it. The good news is transparency pays forward resulting in loyal employees and customers. The most valuable competitive advantage you can acquire.</p>
<h2>AWARENESS</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of accountability</li> <li>• Disengaged employees</li> <li>• Lack of process and best practices</li> <li>• Inefficient operations</li> <li>• Lack of innovation</li> <li>• Poor customer experience</li> <li>• Poor planning</li> <li>• Insufficient action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an “Experience” practice driving the Voice of the Customer and the Voice of the Employee (VoC and VoE)</li> <li>• Invest in a Project Management Office (PMO)</li> </ul>	<p>Consciousness breeds connectedness. Organizations need to listen and seek to understand their customers, employees and other industry influences. Awareness will empower your decisions and outcomes.</p>
<h2>VALUES</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low integrity and work ethic</li> <li>• Poor customer experience</li> <li>• Lack of passion</li> <li>• Lack of pride and ownership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite your employees to develop your “core values” and weave them into everything you do and say</li> <li>• Reward and incentivise use and reference to core values</li> </ul>	<p>The value of values cannot be under estimated. Values shape the decisions and actions of your leaders and employees and reflect who you are to your customers. Your preferred values need to match your true values.</p>

## About Dawna MacLean Consulting

Dawna has repeatedly developed and implemented successful business strategies that have resulted in sustained revenue growth, increased margins, decreased operational costs and improved customer experience. She has proven achievements in leading mergers and acquisitions across numerous global diverse business environments and extensive expertise in customer experience management and operations management.

- First and foremost, a client advocate providing insightful and forthright advice and support to ensure goals are realized.
- Extensive experience and focus on customer experience transformations and building trusted relationships and partnerships.
- Performance driven with a sharp eye for process optimization.
- Highly effective critical problem solving and risk mitigation skills.

**Mission:** To transform limiting barriers and enable customer centric strategies through insightful, collaborative and forthright partnerships.

**Vision:** To profoundly impact the quality of customer experience while ensuring all business goals are realized. To be your trusted partner through strategic business transformations.

**Core Values:** Transparency, Integrity, Passion, Awareness and Results

