

If your people survey results are dreadful, what should you do?

Situation

- ❖ The Regional Managing Partner (RMP) -- -- when relatively new to the region -- -- was handed some dreadful people survey data, which showed his region to be the poorest performing region in the United States.
- ❖ These results were wholly unacceptable for a firm that aspired to be the world's premiere professional service firm.
- ❖ The region was being taken to task for its survey results in such areas as integrity, teamwork, mutual respect, and accountability.

Objectives

- ❖ The Regional Managing Partner would settle for nothing less than having himself and his partners live the firm's Core Values on a daily basis.
- ❖ The view was that the partners must accept total ownership of the historical problems and of the ultimate solution.
- ❖ The RMP expected substantial progress within 18 months.

Solution

- ❖ The first step was to conduct an organizational audit -- -- one-on-one confidential interviews were conducted with 45 partners and 85 staff members.
- ❖ The powerful findings were cascaded throughout the region -- -- at first the RMP was given a day long briefing; then all partners

attended a one day retreat; and finally, a 30-page installation of the findings was presented to every staff member.

- ❖ The RMP was coached on how to convert his command-and-control management style to a more collaborative and empowering style.
- ❖ The professional staff members were invited into the change process, and several dozen of them volunteered for spots on the three task forces, or Core Change Teams, that were constituted.
- ❖ Partners participated on all Teams, but none was led by a partner.
- ❖ The Core Change Teams identified the fundamental themes (for example, work/life balance, mentoring, and performance feedback); all deliverables were based on these themes, and each of the themes has a combination of short-, intermediate-, and long-term solutions.
- ❖ Prior to the launch of the eight thematically-driven initiatives, the Core Change Teams presented their findings and recommendations to the entire region.

Results

- ❖ The Core Change Teams identified 55 objectives, and 48 were accepted. (Concerning the seven that were not accepted, specific reasons were given -- -- most were already being implemented in a similar form.)
- ❖ Two years later progress was assessed, and substantial progress had been made on a host of fronts:
 - People Survey data has dramatically improved.
 - Work/life balance was measurably better in the region had staffed up in key areas.

- A successful Ethics and Diversity program had been integrated into the life of the region. Results were being seen in recruiting and in promotions.
 - Financially, the region was doing better than ever, and morale was strong.
 - Professional staff members were found to be talking about integrity and the Core Values on a regular basis.
 - An Ombudsman role had been implemented and was having a strongly positive impact on morale.
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- ❖ The CEO was coached on how to be supportive of this move, including retaining a consultant to assist the COO in setting up improved HR systems and processes.
 - ❖ The HR consultant was a refreshing change as a mentor – he was gentle, supportive, and avuncular—quite different from the CEO.
 - ❖ In the end, the candidate handled the human resources role measurably better than the operations role. Our consultant was not convinced that it was the optimal outcome, but it was certainly a vast improvement over where she had been twelve months prior.