SILOS, POLITICS and TURF WARS

Destroying the barrier that turn colleague into competitors

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INTRO TO SILOS

- Silos are nothing more than the barrier that existing between departments within an organization, causing people who are supposed to be on the same team to work against one another.
- It is one of the most frustrating aspects of life in any sizeable organization.
- In most situations, silos rise up not because of what executives are doing purposefully but rather because of what they are failing to do: provide themselves and their employees with a compelling context for working together.
Even the most well-meaning, intelligent people get distracted and confused amid the endless list of tactical and administrative details that come their way every day.

They pursue seemingly worthwhile agendas under the assumption that their efforts will be in the best interest of the organization as a whole.

Overtime, their confusion turns into disappointment, which eventually becomes resentment, even hostility, toward their supposed teammates.
But the fact is, most employees have a profound and genuine interest in working well across departments.

Every departmental silos in any company can ultimately be traced back to the leader of those departments, who have failed to understand the interdependencies that must exist among the executive team.

Thankfully, there is a simple and powerful way for those leaders to create a common sense of purpose, and a context interdependency: they must establish, for the executive team as well we the rest of the organization, a **rallying cry. A thematic goal.**
The model for combating silos consists of four components:

- A thematic goal
- A set of defining objective
- A set of ongoing standard operating objectives
- Metrics
A single, qualitative focus that is shared by the entire leadership team – and ultimately, by the entire organization – and that applies for only a specific time period.
In an organization, there can only be one true thematic goal in a given period.

Every organization needs a top priority.

Fighting the temptation- finding the most important priority

“If everything is important, then nothing is”
Qualitative

- It is a general statement of a desired accomplishment. It requires a verb, because it rallies people to do something.
  - Key words: Improve, reduce, increase, grow, change, establish, eliminate, accelerate.
Time-Bound

- The Thematic goal does not live beyond a fixed time period, because that would suggest that it is an ongoing objective.
- It is a desired achievement that is particularly important during that period, and must therefore be accomplished in a corresponding time frame. Ex: 3mos-12mos.
- University vs. Start-up
Shared

- The Thematic goal applies to everyone on the leadership team, regardless of their area of expertise or interest.
- It is critical that all team members take responsibility for the goal, and for doing anything they can to move the company – not just their own department – toward the accomplishment of that goal.
Defining Objectives

- The actionable context so that members of the team know what must be done to accomplish the goal. They are the components or building blocks that serve to clarify exactly what is meant by the thematic goal.
Qualitative

- Executives are often tempted to over quantify defining objectives because it gives them a sense of closure and certainty.
- This part will serve as a collective point of getting the entire leadership involve to impact the desire goal.
- **Shared**
  - It is vital that all leaders assume a very real sense of accountability and responsibility for achieving it.
  - Often the best suggestions and ideas about an issue come from people not closely involved in that issue. They bring valuable objectivity to the table.
Time-Bound

When the thematic goal is no longer valid, the defining objectives also change.
Standard Operating Objectives

- These are the ongoing objectives that don’t go away from period to period. They vary from one company to the next depending on the industry.
- Often include topics like revenue and expenses, as well as other items like customer experience, productivity, market value share, quality, and the like.
Metrics

- Without establishing the others areas, metrics have little or no context.
- Even metrics are not always quantifiable numbers. Often they are dates by which a given activity will be completed.
- It is unwise to artificially assign specific numbers to unmeasurable activities.
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