

7 Strategies for Building and Sustaining a Great and Vibrant Organization

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What does it take to build and sustain a great and vibrant organization? What are the keys to organizational success? What can you do as a business or other organizational leader to achieve organizational excellence?

The answers to these questions are as varied as the multitude of stars in the universe. But, I have found that most successful leaders will generally agree that the following seven steps are fundamentally necessary.

- 1. Know and constantly articulate your mission and purpose for existing.** Having a written mission statement that accurately, simplistically, and concisely conveys the core reason for the existence of your organization is a fundamental and highly desirable step that leads to organizational success. A mission statement is a strategic tool that when properly developed and shared with employees, can guide, focus, and drive purposeful organizational behavior-keeping people aligned and motivated at a personal level. Questions that lead to the development of a good mission statement include: What is it that you do? Why do you do it? For whom do you do it? What is unique or special about what you do? Why is what you do relevant to the market place?
- 2. Develop and articulate a specific vision of what your organization aspires to become in the future.** This step requires more than simple aspirational statements of becoming a “leader in the industry,” or being recognized an “employer of choice,” or as “the best at what we do.” A great corporate vision includes detailed statements of specific organizational attributes of what your organization’s condition will be in the future. It should tell people what you “see” and “intend” to create by way of revenues, profit margins, product and service lines, operating facilities, market presence, market share, employee characteristics, and customer types. These kinds of statements sharpen and make clear your image and promise of the future. This degree of specificity and clarity about the future focuses people on the outcomes they are to create and leads to the production of specific results.
- 3. Create a sound business strategy and model of how the business will generate revenue and profits.** This third step involves developing, creating, considering and choosing highly effective strategies that will produce the results, outcomes and future that are desired. A strategy is a cleverly contrived, intelligently designed, and consciously employed plan to achieve a desirable result. Your basic strategies should include how you will: organize and lead the organization; deploy assets; produce goods and services, promote, market, sell and distribute your products and deliver your services; finance the organization and manage cash flow, including taxes; recruit, retain and compensate your work force; grow the business; manage and minimize risk; and finally how you will exit, transfer, or sell the business.

4. **Provide the necessary resources.** You have to have startup and working capital. It is up to you, as the leader of the organization, to find money and bring it to the organization. You also are responsible for providing facilities, equipment, tools, employees, and of course, leadership and management to the enterprise. Without the proper resources, tools, people, facilities, systems, processes, and intellectual capital success cannot be achieved, particularly on a shoe string.
5. **Keep people focused on the critical factors of success.** Every endeavor is dependent upon a few essential and fundamental items that lead directly to the success. The fifth step to success is that you have to know what these factors are, master them, and keep people focused on performing them, including the specific goals, results and outcomes that define success. Furthermore, you have to keep track, monitor and provide feedback so that people stay aligned with the things that lead to success.
6. **Create a corporate culture that leads to success.** Every organization has at its root—people—human beings with feelings, dreams, goals, agendas, aspirations, issues and problems. People produce at their best in organizational environments that encourage independence, growth, mutual support, a sense of purpose, and collaboration. These elements of corporate culture do not occur without a dedicated effort to bring them about. You as the leader have to provide the necessary emotional components— the work place feelings, attitudes, values, principles, and leadership behaviors that lead your employees to feel inspired to perform at their best.
7. **Take care of yourself.** You can't be successful in the long run without taking care of yourself— your health, your body, your mind, and your soul. Balance is the key. Focus on yourself and take the time to cultivate each of these aspects of your being.

So, as you read these suggestions, what appeals to you? What makes sense for you to consider at a deeper level? Which of these items need your attention? What do you need to follow-up upon to achieve greater success in your organization?