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## **Performance results must be aligned with business**

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AS A BUSINESS coach, my roots are in behavioural science and I often use this background to help clients examine options and opportunities to manage their organization more effectively.

One strategy with some executive leaders is to look at the organization as a whole and explore the relationship of individual performance behaviours to organizational performance results.

The logic for this approach is that demonstrative effective or ineffective behaviours jump out. However, changes in an organization, whether effective or ineffective, are often not understood or it's not obvious how they directly impact overall performance.

Every organization experiences some kind of change all the time and the consequences of changes in behaviour (simple or complex) can have a global impact on the organization. Stimulus response psychology teaches that people can become conditioned in the workforce, based on the responses provided from their environment.

Both positive and negative stimuli can impact behaviour. This creates conditioning and learning as to how things are and will be.

Assumptions about how things are or limiting beliefs, when put under a microscope and opened for examination, can facilitate a process for leaders to look at new opportunities and options to add new behaviours and remove old ones.

The 3-D approach outlined below is a way for leaders to do a critical behavioural path review of their organization or team. Professionals trained in behavioural science can be helpful in facilitating such a process.

Whether an organization is an operation with 100 people or 100,000, the below logic has utility when supported by key decision-makers. The only change is scale and approach; the fundamentals are the same. This process helps ensure all the parts are connected to their full potential.



## **Discovery**

What is the critical behavioural path for success? All business operational processes have a clear beginning, middle and end. Reviewing the individual performance behaviours in each of these processes is an important review and educational step.

What is the reality of how day-to-day performance is achieved? Even with well-defined policies and procedures, operational flow charts and work standards with the best intentions, sometimes things are not the way they were designed. This process is a simple functional gap analysis.

What options and opportunities are there? Answers to questions, such as "We have always done it this way" or "just because," can be a potential sign for new opportunities and options. The goal is to challenge assumptions and to look for new opportunities to add or remove behaviours from the critical behavioural path.

## **Decisions**

The first step is deciding what opportunities and options have been discovered and make sense to think about and consider.

Examine how the new options and opportunities will create organizational change and determine the risks and rewards, as well as the timing.

To achieve change, organizations need to build in a process that provides new conditioning and learning until the change becomes automatic and ingrained. Before considering making change, senior management must be on board and committed.

## **Direction**

Before implementing the new direction, the behavioural critical path (e.g., job function changes, quality control checks, metrics, feedback systems) needs to be reviewed to ensure the path is complete, and if followed to the standards and expectations, the organizational performance results will be improved.

Rolling out a new critical path may require communication strategy, training and a tracking system.

Implement the new options and opportunities. Repeating this process each mid-year can be a precursor for strategic planning and business planning.

