

Culture Change for a Large Shipping Company

Challenge:

Three mergers, increasing costs, fifteen nationalities, increasingly difficult and changing competitive scenario were few amongst the many challenges facing this shipping management company. The company had hired a world class management consulting company to help design a strategy for the new conglomerate. And a strategy was formed and a strategic map drawn. Six months into the plan but there was no action happening. Senior leaders were just not taking any actions on the new strategy.

Problem:

- Lack of ownership at the senior most level.
- Lack of collaborative mindset at the top level. People working in silos created by nationalities, partner companies they came from etc
- Lack of trust

Intervention:

Diagnostic: We conducted meetings with senior leaders to understand their pain points. We conducted focus groups to understand how management was being perceived by the organization.

Circles of conversations: Intensive workshop with top 20. Team of two senior facilitators (one senior facilitator and a psychologist) conducted an intensive workshop. The intent was to create safety for the senior leaders to talk authentically and honestly. People shared what was in their hearts in a non threatening environment and CEO listened. People listened to each other and understood each other and for the first time understood each other's perspectives. This resulted in creating instant bonds at senior levels.

Large group Lab: This was followed by three days workshop for the top 55 people in the company. These were the heads of departments/countries/functions who were responsible for auctioning the strategic plan. We used Appreciative inquiry methodology to create positive conversations and make people sensitive to other people, make them see the good in others; make them appreciate what organization was doing for them.

Four projects were born out of this workshop:

- Seamless integration of divisions at function level
- Enhancing customer delight
- Leverages scale and scope of the organization
- Creating internal and external brand loyalty

Follow up Coaching and Review:

Psychometric tools were used for individual assessments and feedback was given. We conducted one –o-one coaching sessions with all the participants to ensure learnings were imbibed, actions taken.

The Impact:

People reported higher ownership and excitement, Better communication channels, people are free to speak and are listening to each other. This led to accountability for the new projects. The organization reported that they moved from a stuck position of negativity and cynicism to hope and creativity, from lethargy and no action to individual ownership and accountability.