

4 THINGS THAT DIFFERENTIATE A LARGE CORPORATE FROM A SMALL COMPANY

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"Successful people do what unsuccessful people are not willing to do. Don't wish it were easier; wish you were better."

This quote by Jim Rohn brings us to the most essential and hottest topic of discussion amidst the MSMEs which is "what makes a Corporate different from us?" How can we become 'A' Corporate? We have the Product, the idea and the ability to do what it takes; then, what is it that gets us stuck?

There are 4 major aspects that we need to think of when we speak of building an enterprise! They are:

I. STRATEGY

II. EXECUTION

III. HUMAN RESOURCE

IV. LEADERSHIP

Let's understand each of these on detail.

I. STRATEGY:

"Success is 20% skills and 80% strategy. You might know how to succeed, but more importantly, what's your plan to succeed?" Jim Rohn

Like this wise man said, what is it become entrepreneurs. Their entrepreneurial mindset is so strong that they are even ready to forsake their regular, well-paid and stable jobs, and opt for their desired start-ups woven with the threads of their visions; and why not? It's the age of start-up! Having said that, do we know that 90% of start-ups fail? Why?? that you're out to get- not just that, how do you plan to get that! Most millennials today want to

As second, third or even fourth gen entrepreneurs, we might want to know what is the

- PROBLEM THAT WE'RE TRYING TO SOLVE (through our product or services). Our business idea must stem from the problem!
- There must be a PAIN that we're trying to HEAL (through our product or service) &
- This SOLUTION should be such that it is UNIQUE (not too many solution providers that exist) as well as it can SCALE!

- Then, most importantly, who are the people who will consume this product or service- how will you ensure that your solution reaches many- 'more people in less time' which would require an EFFICIENT SALES & MARKETING STRATEGY and a TEAM who will run on the word GO!!

Like they say, "Without strategy, execution is aimless; without execution, strategy is useless." So true right! What would you execute in absence of a strategy! How would you know if the strategy you plan behind closed doors with your team is 'the' one and will reap benefits? We recommend that if you want to 'plan' your strategy to begin with, go where your customers are- I can almost see a grin on your face- "How can I practically meet all my customers? There are so many?" We'll cover that in latter part of this book. Wouldn't you feel delighted if your favourite or most preferred brand would approach you and request you to give you feedback so they could improve! I'm assuming here that you'd fill the survey form very diligently and not randomly, uninterestedly! Why can't you do that to your customers?

Which customers would you meet? Most likely one would select those that they're comfortable meeting, or those that have great payment history or those that are more like 'friends'. We are saying this is not completely incorrect however we definitely suggest that you go back to you 'historicals'- Your past sales data. That will tell you the right, unbiased story. What do you see in your data? How recent should your data be- Atleast 3 to 5 years to get the right trends and story. If you've just started, atleast a year's data is what we recommend. What do you see in the data? Look closely, do you see a trend? Do you notice if a customer who had been giving you consistent business, has suddenly stopped, or the volume of business has dropped or the invoice value has reduced or has be completely stopped giving you business without any apparent reason that you might know of? You then plan your customer meets (with a prepared questionnaire so that your time is utilized well and there is a healthy discussion). Mind you, when you reach there, the customer should be aware of your arrival and is prepared to give you sufficient time (and it shouldn't be a 'surprise' or a 'cold call'). LISTEN to him and that should be ACTIVE and not PASSIVE listening- do not justify what you did and why- simply absorb and take notes (with his permission or else some introverts might 'shut-off').

While we digressed a little from the strategy, I thought it would be helpful for you for the upcoming topics. Coming back to the point: how do you build a sturdy strategy to ensure you reach the customer first with the right product that he is looking for! We have a unique method which we call BUSINESS MODEL! Sounds like a simple strategy right, been there, done that types! Let me share the details with you and leave you with an Aaa-hhhaa moment! So, there are 9 blocks to this business model and here they are:

- 1) Customer Segment: Define your customer- what kind of people are you going to serve. Their demographics or profile; imagine, that sale that happened easily. Why did it happen so? You have been doing the same thing day in-day out, then how was it that this time, it was done rather

swiftly! I'm sure all of us would want such a sale to happen repeatedly!! You were facing the right person at the right time with the right product- so what was that right! Remember, NOT EVERYONE is your customer (for example- we say, my product or service is for manufactures, or interior designers or MSMEs! If that was the case, you would have achieved your financial and personal and every other type of goals). Hence its important to WRITE done your customer profile with the minutest details. Why should you do this? Sounds cumbersome already! You must do this to ease your further planning such as type of product to be manufactured or type of service to be given, the type of people to be hired etc.

They say that there are 5 basic human needs namely:

- Acquire (one takes pride in owning it),
- Bond (the relationship or connect one feels),
- Learn (gathering more knowledge),
- Defend (one would want to protect themselves and their loved ones from a probable danger) and
- Feel (feeling generated by owning that product or experiencing that service).

They say that for your customer to be associated with you, your OFFER must tap either of the above. So what will you offer them- (IT DOESN'T MEAN DISCOUNT)

- 2) Offer: when you meet your customer for feedback as mentioned above, you will understand that PAIN they're going through (this isn't the physical or emotional pain); pain arising out of unfulfilled need, want or desire. Most of our clients would tell us (even before attempting this exercise) that their customers will only and only talk about greater discounts! This may or may not be true. Once they attempted this exercise, the feedback we got was that their customers were elated to meet them, a lot of old memories were recollected, it was a heart to heart talk about the good, bad and ugly and not just cash discounts! A lot of times, a personal touch is needed to encourage right behaviour. Once enough 'interviews' are done, you will see a trend in the pain areas of your customer. Can you make that you Gain as well as the customers'? If yes, create a UNIQUE PROPOSITION, GET IT DONE!
- 3) Approach: Now that the OFFER is ready, how will you approach your prospective customer? Where will you find such a customer who could have similar pains such that when you go to him with your offer, the conversion happens automatically!
- 4) Relationship: All of want our customers to stay with us for long right? How would you ensure this happens? What will you do so that you customer stays connected with you? Here is where maximum innovation happens- will you 'keep in touch' over social media (you have analysed that your customer segment would be such that they would be young, between the age group of 14 to

34 and would be present on different social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter etc) hence, you design your content accordingly and post it such that it reaches the TARGET AUDIENCE and you can start to ENGAGE with them!

I'd advise you to research about KidZania at Mumbai or take your child there (but be prepared for the flip side of addiction). It operates like a real city that is built-to-scale for children, with paved roads and cars, city buildings, recognizable establishments, a functioning economy and its own currency. Designed for children aged 4 to 16, KidZania Mumbai houses more than 60 real-world establishments (Yes Bank, Coca-Cola, The Times of India, DHL, etc.) and 100+ activities to help children develop real life skills. At KidZania, children perform 'jobs' and are either paid for their work (as a stylist, fireman, radio jockey, surgeon, dentist, etc.) or pay to get a service (university, culinary school, department store, driving school, etc.). Unique to KidZania Mumbai, children can also experience local establishments like the Bollywood Acting Academy, Pottery Studio and the Dabbawalla service (boxed lunch delivery).[5] KidZania gives kids the opportunity to play adult roles by allowing them to emulate, re-enact and participate in adult activities and experiences. Almost all children who go there once will want to go there again. Why? Research and do share your findings with us!

CUSTOMER SEGMENT, OFFER, APPROACH AND RELATIONSHIP FORMS A PART OF BUSINESS STRATEGY.

Once that is done, we'll need to EXECUTE it too right? Here are the rest of the blocks which will enable you to execute the above. They are:

- 5) Key Activities: Those activities you'll need to do to execute you offer. These activities must be OUR TOP PRIORITY, we must ensure we NEVER LOSE SIGHT of them! Small the smallest to the largest activities must be written down.
- 6) Key Resources: Once you know your activities, you'll need tools or resources to complete those activities right? What is it that you need to do those activities?
- 7) Channel Partners: who are those external resources, companies, businesses whose help you would need to fulfil your activities and get your resources in place to execute the strategy- for example a software company to design your software or a recruitment consulting company to fulfil your recruitment needs or a process consulting company who would help you stop your company wastes such as over production, manufacturing defects, inventory etc. (there are 8 types of process wastes which stops you from delivering value to your customer as well as drains you off your capital).

- 8) Cost: None of the above would be free of cost to you- it shouldn't come as a surprise to you hence you must also write how much would each of the above cost you for you to budget it in as well as prioritize the activities).
- 9) Revenue Streams: the most important aspect of the business model is the Revenue- after all the cost that is incurred, how much are you finally going to take home!

KEY ACTIVITIES, KEY RESOURCES and CHANNEL PARTNERS for the EXECUTION elements of this BUSINESS MODEL. COST & REVENUE are the ACCELERATOR... that's the fuel you would need to get to where you want to be!

If you aren't happy with the outcome of step 8 & 9, feel free to go back to steps 1 to 7 and see what you can tweak.

How do I know if the above is a full proof strategy? As process consultants, we always believe that what gets measured, gets done. So there also is a FEASIBILITY TEST that you can run to check. There are another 10 blocks. You need to give a rating between 1 to 9 on that particular block relating to the model that you have just designed. It'll make sense once you know the 10 blocks. Here they are:

- 1) Urgency: If you introduce this model, how soon do you think will your customer sign up
- 2) Market Size: what size of the market will enrol or purchase this product or based on the offer, who will it be applicable for in terms of absolute numbers.
- 3) Pricing Potential: How much can we charge our customer versus our competitors? If you can charge higher than your competitor, give a higher rating or vice versa.
- 4) Cost of Customer Acquisition: How costly is it for you to acquire your customer- higher the cost lower the rating.
- 5) Cost of Value Delivery: How much do we have to incur to deliver that value to the customer
- 6) Uniqueness of the Offer: How unique is your offer in comparison to your customers.
- 7) Speed to Market: How soon can you take this product to the market to get the 'first mover advantage'
- 8) Upfront Investment: What is the upfront investment you would need to design and deliver or manufacture and market this product for it to reach your customer? Higher the investment, lower the rating and vice versa.
- 9) Up-sell Potential: Does this product or service have an up-sell potential? Will your customer have another opportunity to purchase something else too from you and keep purchasing from you?
- 10) Evergreen Potential: In due course of time, will your product or service need revamp or would it serve generations to come or will it be displaced by your competitor's product?

A total of all the above will give you a final Feasibility score. Here is the interpretation of the same.

Below : 50 :(You can't implement this model. Go back to th drawing board and check what you can change.

Between : 51-75 :) A do-able strategy (from 50 – 55 would mean an OK strategy though- Just about paying your bills types)

Above : 75 :) :) GO FOR THE KILL. Do not waste a single moment in launching this one!!

	Customer Segment	Offer	Approach	Relationship	Key Activities	Key Resources	Channel Partners
Corporate Travel: (MICE, Intl Trade Fairs, Business Travel Leisure)	<p>to start with: SME / MSME : MSME define: companies with a Turnover of 150 to 500 Cr, with about 70% white collar employees (30% Blue collar), industries such as - Media, Advertising firms, small pharma companies</p> <p>SME definition: Turnover 25Cr to 150 Cr, no. of employees min. 20, industries such as: start up companies, manufacturing companies, packaging, eye wear, plastics, jewellery, diamonds, wholesale trading businesses etc Yr 2, 3: any industry, large corporates, such as banks, cement, insurance, paints, FMCG etc</p>	<p>A) create packages for people attending Trade fairs (of their respective industry) (we pre-book the hotel, transfer to and from hotel to venue, and flights such that they fly & stay together)</p> <p>B) business travels (ticket, sighseeing, hotels) -> through the website we enroll MSMEs / SMEs and organize travel for them</p> <p>C) MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and events for staff meetings, incentives, company offsite, expos, dealer meets),</p> <p>Pain- individual bookings v/s bookings of ticket, hotel, transfer in one go</p> <p>Gain: we're doing it with the backing of technology-using website, shortening time to process bookings, by using data to understand their booking pattern and</p>	<p>through sales people on ground, who will meet companies and initiate a relationship</p> <p>attend conferences / exhibition, get leads and set appointments,</p> <p>connect with promotional councils of different industries and give small advertisement in their in-house magazine, leaflet distribution & make presentation, bulk emailing,</p> <p>attending local trade bodies, associations etc</p>	<p>regular visits by the sales people,</p> <p>individual accounts get created for all the employees who will inturn make all their travel bookings on our platform, they'll get certain benefits such as special offers, i</p> <p>t'll be an online TRAVEL CARD thing like a loyalty program where the travellers (employees) get points that they can redeem on their personal travel (clause - only if that person is working for that company that company is travelling with Nirvana) at certain lesser cost that way they will stay with us and so will the company be associated with us,...account is linked to the wallet (on the website) and the pts will be</p>	<p>get the companies (prospects) signed up for the website,</p> <p>make a beat plan and set meetings accordingly,</p> <p>visiting trade fairs in the city to get database,</p> <p>visit associations to get a database of companies,</p> <p>make a brochure, email content for bulk emails,</p> <p>recruitment (sales & operations staffs),</p> <p>design a sales pitch</p>	<p>dedicated staff,</p> <p>website,</p> <p>sales brochure,</p> <p>corp sales presentation</p>	<p>Website design</p> <p>company, brochure design company,</p> <p>recruitment agencies, travel partners,</p>

		<p>suggest (flight, hotel, sightseeing etc) accordingly...(Client has done his research- visited websites of other suppliers to see what their offering is and there is a difference in the way we're offering)-</p> <p>Getting it done in a much more efficient manner</p>		captured there....			
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Feasibility Test:

Urgency	Market Size	Pricing Potential	Cost of Customer Acquisition	Cost of Value Delivery	Uniqueness of the offer	Speed to Market	Upfront Investment	Up-sell Potential	Evergreen Potential	Feasibility
7	6	4	3	9	5	8	9	10	9	70

II.EXECUTION:

“The thing that keeps a business ahead of the competition is excellence in execution.” Tom Peters

Execution is one’s ability to put into action anything that one does in his business. That’s one of the key differentiators that makes you different from your competitors. Like they say, in the end, all that matters is customer experience which gets them hooked to you!

Execution consists of 3 parts. They are:

- a. Systems & processes
- b. Monitoring,
- c. Change mgmt

- a. Systems & processes

In W. Edwards Deming words, “If you can’t describe what you are doing as a process, you don’t know what you’re doing”

Systems & processes are a step by step ways that u do anything in your business. It about what needs to be done & how. Most of the times entrepreneurs complain that their people ‘miss-out’ or ‘forget’ important

tasks that they had been asked to do causing grave errors or leading to customer complaints. Having a systematic process flow encompasses passing of information from one department to the other- extremely smoothly- no finger pointing & blame game-just pure business! Every department knows what their job is and hence they're accountable for the good & bad!

The benefits of having an organized, documented process flows are huge! Let's take the example of Mc. Donald's. How is it that you have the same taste of a burger or fries across any outlet across the world! Isn't that fabulous in an era when people did business in more mundane and traditional fashion! Having robust systems & processes helps you scale. How is that? Most entrepreneurs today boast of having 'old' staff around who 'know' what needs to be done- but what if they decide to move out to pursue higher dreams! I can sense that you're already uncomfortable at the thought! Once you have superlative processes, you move from being people dependent to process dependent. You can manage larger volumes with ease. You need only 'experts' at the top and 'trainable' staff below in order to function efficiently. You will need people only to run & operate on that system- the output will be right irrespective of them. Hiring will become easier since minimum skilled people will be required to run the process. "In order for any business to succeed, it must first become a system so that the business functions exactly the same way every time down to the last detail"

In a scenario where there are many suppliers there will be a cat fight on who reaches the customer first. Let's admit it, most of us want customers who stay with us for long- they consistently buy from us (only) but do we also know that having robust systems & processes will bring in CONSISTENCY in every channel of your business. By providing consistently good product & service, your brand name will become synonymous to that. Customers will find you the most reliable and dependable service providers! **PROCESS IS WHAT MAKES THE OUTCOME CONSISTENT!**

But, how do you DESIGN a process? When I say Design, I actually mean designing one that is UNIQUE to your business. We do understand that you have been running your organization for the longest however, in the recent past, you have either stumbled upon some error or witnessed repeated errors or have been stumped by some information which you never knew was floating around. As the organization grows, the Entrepreneur becomes distant from the usual rut of the business to pursue higher goals- while that must be done, but when- when you know that your people are capable enough to handle any hiccups on the way or are aware and in sync with what needs to be done and HOW!

Errors usually occur when a process step is missed and these errors sometimes can be extremely risky! How do you ensure that the process is followed to the T. Here are some tools which could be of help to you.

- Flowchart: It's the important work of recording, mapping and explaining the ongoing processes occurring in an organisation. Be that a process for arranging a foreign sales trip or hiring a new CTO. The point is to ensure you understand the process – the flow of work – that needs to be done. For

this, you need a process diagram – ideally connected with visual work instructions in the form of video, images and files easily accessible from it. It adds a lot of value as this process documentation. It gives you a clear overview of what happens in your organisation. How information flows from one department to another. Goal is to know the complications by drawing them first and resolving them to make it lean and simple.

In order to make your process lean, we must know what those redundant actions that needs to be eliminated. How would you know what is the problem really? There are certain INFLUENCING FACTORS that'll tell us what the problem really is. Influencing factors are those that lead to the problem at hand (that we're currently facing). For example: Despite having a team in place, the customer repeatedly calls and there are escalations in every phone call. What is the problem here? Is it that skills of the sales person, TAT of product to be manufactured, availability of the product at the right time and place!

- Inorder to identify this problem, we must EVALUATE every process that exists in your business by interviewing the people involved in the execution of that process as well as observe them in action! This will tell us the GAPS- between the real and the deemed process that is being followed (caution: while you make these observations, chances are you'll end up forgetting what the actual process was; jokes apart, it will be a good revelation exercise).
- When we interview and observe, the things to look out for are non-value adding steps, unnecessary approvals, steps added when a particular issue had happened and now it's a norm etc. Our goal at every step is to understand if the PEOPLE, PROCESS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND MEASUREMENT (these are the fours things we must evaluate to understand the problem in a process) are adequate, skilled, efficient, useful, up-to-date and giving us results as expected; any observation other than these and we need to work on that process to make it crisp and tight! Even the time it takes on each step is important and is analysed. The idea here is to make the process standardized (like the taste of Mc Donald's burger or Fries) and see if the way that step is done can be improved to reduce variation. Automate to make it easy and make the system reliable.

	Parameters	Current Status	Expected Status
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many people - How to select - How to keep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 assumed (don't know exact) - Adhoc selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WFM process (work force management...factory management...how many people are required to execute the task and deliver the required output in the allocated time) - Recruitment Process
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is required - Procurement - Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Price list available - Comp available 	
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making - Approving - Training - QC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defined & documented process - People Trained 	
Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Productivity - Efficiency - Business Reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amount of sales - Penetration (spread) 	

b. A lot is already said about the benefits of HAVING systems & processes but what happens when it isn't monitored! Let's consider this analogy of parent & child. A child being the company and processes being the clothes worn by the child. As the child grows, would we feed him the same quantity of food or make him wear the clothes of the same size as he was may be 10 years ago! Of course not, right! Just as the child grows, and you will make the necessary changes to his nurturing, so would we to the systems & processes designed for the company!! You can't give the company the same processes as it was when you initially started- as the organization grows, so will the processes hence they need to be monitored.

Talking about monitoring- simply asking the redundant and repetitive questions won't help! One must know what needs to be monitored. Sales Management for example; just as how important sales are to the company so is managing why the sales is or isn't happening! Let's say your sales team isn't able to achieve their target- what would you do! Most likely give them a pep talk, fire them or worse, hold their salaries!

c. 2 most essential variables that we recommend you study while discussing sales performance of your team is Penetration & Productivity- penetration is the efficiency of the sales people, their ability of going to newer clients & getting them onboard while servicing ot of changes within the organization. Some will like it, some wont, some will continue to do what they did and how completely ignoring the new ways! At such a time, managing this change is extremely crucial. Get the people on-board, induct them with the new ways of 'reviews' and allow them an opportunity to prove their mettle.

Looking at data & asking the right questions to your team who isn't used to will cause discomfort causing unlikeable things but an as entrepreneur, you mustn't drop the ball- hold on to it and think why you started to begin with! When you handle change, don't give up! Persistence is the key!

One of the most frequently asked question to us is should we implement 6 Sigma, Kaizen, TQM, COPC, ISO (the most relatable)- we're confused there is so much they say- some say they have an ISO but gave up on following the compliances due to too many changes which was thwarted by the people! We say you don't need to implement all of them all together- understand what each one is for-answer WHATS IN IT FOR ME and then go step by step and them follow it to the T.

When we speak of EXECUTION, measuring the output or the result of that process is extremely crucial. How would I know if a certain task is done and the result is achieved? A lot of our clients would tell us that their sales team would go on the field and come back empty handed most of the time, some would also say that "then suddenly there would be one big order so we can't even tell them anything", some would complain that their Operations team isn't very efficient especially while taking stock or filing etc.

We suggest first you create and deploying trackers which would give you the intelligence you need to receive from your team. Let's understand Trackers as GPS tracking system fit in a vehicle; why is it done- its done because you want to check against rough driving or over speeding or tracking breaks or even for that

matter the TAT for product delivery. Likewise, deploying trackers (which are not copied from Google but customized based on what do we want to measure or the output we want) will give you the right information which will help you correct or modify the process or action as well as acts as a mirror for people regarding their efficiency and effectiveness.

Once you get enough data on the Excel Trackers, you can create pivots to draw meaningful reports of the measurement. A Pivot Table is a summary of a large dataset that usually includes the total figures, average, minimum, maximum, etc. Let's say you have a sales data for different regions, with a pivot table, you can summarize the data by region and find the average sales per region, the maximum and minimum sale per region, etc. Pivot tables allow us to analyse, summarize and show only relevant data in our reports which can be used to conduct effective weekly or monthly or yearly reviews.

We'd like to warn you here that you will face a lot of resistance from your team members- right from the managers to the front level officers- Truth is Bitter and not many can digest it well. However, on the other side, a lot of entrepreneurs would suddenly feel a surge of power. While knowledge is power (you will discover many truths through these trackers), our motive isn't and shouldn't be of harassing our people but to hone the qualities of honesty to ensure overall growth of organization- if they put the data truthfully in the tracker, the results can be corrected!

III.HUMAN RESOURCES

Irrespective of whatever is said, you aren't going to do it all by yourself! You will need a team who will execute like we mentioned earlier. "Individual commitment to a group effort--that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work." This is one more challenge most entrepreneurial outfits face! They say that Human Resource is the most underutilized and undervalued department in the entire organization! Let's first discuss the basic-'where do I get the people?'...'right' will happen next!

1. How to get the right resource:

□ Sources of getting resumes

There are various sources where one can hire people from such as newspapers or advertising your requirement in relevant newspapers (we'll discuss that in the next post ☺), LinkedIn, various job portals or visiting institutions (their placement cell) where u get such type of resources (if your requirement is as specific as jewellery designer, interior designer etc).

For white collared requirements, we prefer to go on LinkedIn and put an advertisement there- it not only searches for the type of people that you need, it also allows them to apply for the job opening. This way you can get a lot of resumes & invite them for an interview. For niche professional requirements, we suggest go to relevant institutions that teach the profile you're asking for.

Here most entrepreneurs freeze. They say we don't have the time to do it ALL....please leave us for strategy and not ALL THIS!!! Ok, we have an answer for you- go to the recruiters. Out of desperation, most likely we fall back on the references-which in our arena is the most poor performing channel because it gives us only what is available while we're looking for people with right skills. A recruiter or a recruitment agency will help you get resumes based on the job description you have shared from various sources. Yes, they won't work for free- you will have to pay for their services but you can be assured that you get the right person with ease. They will search by key words, designations you have given them. The key here is the a profile which you share- and here we take the liberty to say that 99% of them fail to give the right job description- it usually is a generic piece, copy & pasted or mix of 2 profiles- only confusing them. What to do next?

□ Interview them- most likely the subsequent manger or the team lead doesn't even know that interviews are lined up for them! Please avoid that faux pas if you want to look like a decent company to work with in the eyes of the recruiting agency- Impression Management you see!! We must be prepared for the interviews lined up. We recommend 2 types of interviews to be taken:

Basic Information gathering round: This is for gathering information about the prospective employee- his past experience, academic back ground, family back ground, personal values etc. We WON'T evaluate his skills here. We CAN'T the existing ones. Productivity is how many prospects they're meeting daily, weekly, monthly in order to reach their target! When you change the way you look at the overall performance, you create more responsible people who will know they'll be questioned! You give them an opportunity to do better next time onwards, plan better and perform better.

d. Let me warn you here that doing this will lead to a lot of discomfort amidst your people (because they aren't used to such sharp questioning)

○ Everyone can talk and say they can do whatever you ask them to do but that is the recipe for failure; you haven't really seen them DO it REALTIME! For this, we have the next round which is:

○ Technical Testing round: Here we must give a technical test or give him a job that you really do in your organization and see if he can perform well. For example if you're hiring a designer, make him work on certain software like 3D max or AutoCAD. This will tell you whether the candidate is competent and efficient. Observe his body language, comfort, response to the question and the solution. Hiring the right talent is extremely important because you're going to invest on them after which they'll reap the fruits!

2. How to keep them:

□ Provide an environment where he can work comfortably. Get the basic hygiene right. Don't make do with shabby chairs, old softwares, old computers etc. Just get it right. It need not be expensive change! Just make sure it is good enough & clean.

□ Make sure they have a designed place where they can sit and work- make sure you give them all that they need to function uninterrupted- you don't want excuses for poor performance.

□ How is the boss? They say that a bad manager or a bad boss can take a good staff and destroy it, causing the best employees to flee and the remainder to lose motivation! We're all monkeys & we evolved from them- one of the key things that monkeys do is- imitate- as an entrepreneur, you look up to a coach, a trainer, a family member who you think is very successful & you almost start to mimic them- it's almost automatic- these r the people who u think are doing good in your eyes, if its contrary, you won't mimic them or look up to them- now imagine, making this 'good' new hire report to a person who isn't really looked up to in the organization, will he stay in the company?? May be NO! It's important that we understand what 'good' is!

□ What is good- certain traits such as coming on time, has an impeccable dressing sense, has the right attitude & aptitude, never bad mouths customers- this will encourage the new hire to follow suit. Remember, people never leave companies, they leave bad bosses- it's time we look within- most of us feel we never end up getting the 'right' guys- but how will you- are you doing it all right yourself?? If you don't do it right, so will your people- it's all about creating a culture & leading from the front. Let's move to the ecosystem you provide your team- their peers / colleagues!

□ Others around the candidate whether it's people in the same team or within departments is as crucial- why?? Go back to your list of friends- who are you closest to? Now ask yourself Why?? Did you get a quick answer- As Vir Das puts it, "Surround yourself with a bunch of like-minded people, and you'll soak up their habits like a starved sponge. Fat people with fat friends care less about their weight". When there are likeminded people with matching wavelengths team work happens almost automatically because they can relate to the conversations with them, ideologies match, tastes are acceptable. Remember, they'll be spending close to 8 to 10 hrs of work- least they would want to people they can work with- good company in your company! It's all about recovering from blows. Teams that are able to recover together, also possess the unique trait of harmoniously working together through tough times.

□ Another extremely crucial aspect is Compensation- we want to hire the best but pay the least- we all talk about good or bad 'pay masters' but when it comes on us, we shy away from paying the person what he is worth! If you throw peanuts, monkeys will come but that doesn't mean you pay beyond your means...no! There must be budget allocation. You can check the market pay scale for that role over the internet or may be on glassdoor to arrive at the allocated amount. We recommend you may offer the compensation in 2 parts- a fixed & a variable component. This will be more performance based. Most entrepreneurs jump up to excitement with this idea but we must be mindful of not misusing this weapon- human mindset, we end up squeezing the person of the basic so much that it no more excites him- he will take up the opportunity as a stop gap arrangement and go away once he gets what he wants!

□ The next pertinent issue that we have noticed entrepreneurs go through it providing Growth opportunity to the candidate- what's in it for him in coming few years? It's one thing to TALK and the other to DEMONSTRATE!!! Present the person the organization chart and showcase the vacant positions. This is done typically during the second or third round of the interview when the candidate has proved his mettle.

Share with him the logic why those vacancies will need to be filled quickly, he will gun for it and give it his best. If you dream of growth, nothing stops them from dreaming of it too. Remember, as an entrepreneur, you got to give first then receive. If there isn't a growth path created for the employee, do you think he'll stay along?? Show them where u see them, share your plan with them, commit to an action & action that commitment.

3. It's usually tough for both the employee and the employer to see an employee go! Especially after you have invested so much on them as well as had the connect with them. Despite all of this, if time comes, how to let them go & disconnect

□ We must let the rational mind take lead here- let them go if they want to-yes you try to retain them, if they have done it all right. However, we must not fear of going through the cycle again! If you have a good strategy and processes, then hiring trainable people won't hurt you much.

□ Extend help to the employee and ask for feedback for your organization. This might raise some eyebrows but its true; if the employee goes elsewhere, let them know that you'll be happy to give them your reference if they ask for it- Remember to never burn bridges- this you do even if an employee is terminated for performance reasons. Give him the benefit of doubt unless it's an ethic or disciplinary issue.

□ Ask for feedback from them- DO NOT JUSTIFY your stance, ACCEPT the feedback as genuinely as it is given! Remember, this employee isn't going to get much since he is anyways leaving! Some may even have an emotional outburst, handle it maturely and objectively!

□ Most of us want to HOLD THEM RANSOM by CONTROLLING their Full & Final Settlement. Never do that!!!! Clear the Full & Final settlement as soon as you can- we don't want to leave a bad taste- it's ok to lose a little bit of extra against the benefit of getting more in future! Here, your time is worthy rather than that little amount. Such strategies prove fatal in the long run!

□ When the employee is holding a key position in your eyes or within an organization, we're tempted to request him to extent his notice period- if the employee accepts it willingly, it's ok...but even if he is a little hesitant, you don't want him to work half heartedly- he can influence others around causing an attrition that was uncalled for!

IV. Leadership

"Leadership is a way of thinking, a way of acting and, most importantly, a way of communicating."

• A leader is someone who has the ability of communicating, directing, motivating a group of people toward a predetermined goal- growing an organization is like nurturing a child- every milestone that a child achieves brings a lot of excitement amongst the family members and especially the parents, but the effort taken to reach here are far greater! Each parent inculcates values they they got from their parents and the child grows with it! Just like that, an organization needs different people with varied skills sets for it to grow and reach certain milestones (goals) to reap results & celebrate!

- Let me share a story with you. This is a story of a Captain of a ship. So there was a lot of hue and cry about this particular captain around the town. A journalist decided to approach him to cover his story of noble and bravery deeds. The captain was happy to do so but suggested that he accompany him to go along with him on the sea instead of interviewing him. The journalist jumped to the opportunity- the moment they set sail, they are surrounded by a group of pirates- the crew informed the captain- he asks for his jacket- meanwhile the captain communicates the goal to the employees of getting rid of the pirates. They were aware of the nuances to be followed to fight this small group. He motivates them and pushes them to do their best. The journalist was noticing all this and was constantly making notes; shortly, another set of pirates attack the ship, this time, it was a bigger group- the captain asks for his red uniform leaving the journalist thinking- why a change in uniform- however, the team puts up a great show and emerged victorious. He asks the captain the same question- why red? the captain replies that he wore a red since this time they were attacked by a more ferocious and experienced group of pirates, during the attack, if he got shot, he would bleed and break the team's morale- they may not action the way they must do! What's the moral of the story! Write to us and let us know.

- It's extremely important to communicate with people what they're doing, how they're being valued in the bigger scheme of things- how they're of value you, how is the company performing etc- all this communication may happen through your actions which builds a perception in the mind of the employee. If a leader communicates everything but the positive- verbally or non-verbally, the people will never be a part of the whole plan! Remember, Monkey see, monkey do! If they see you ACT what you SAY, they'll know they're expected to do just that!

- After communication, the 2nd most essential skills that you must possess is Decision making- your business is an outcome of all the decisions you've made in the past- you may have decided to launch a particular product in a particular geography and that is why your company is reaping the benefits, you decided to hire an employee of a certain kind hence you were able to do things differently, you may have decided to market your products differently hence your customers know you exist.

- There are various such decisions that one needs to make in order to become a large corporate- here are a few

- Decision to make an investment: Let's take an example of purchasing software. Human tendency is we start bargaining (ofcourse once you know that the vendor is capable of executing what the plan is) after hearing the price tag. We forget the value it'll add to the existing set up. When you make your investment decision, look at the value first then negotiate in the price- this same strategy can be used for almost any kind of decisions you take- whether you hire an employee, marketing, sign up a course- if the value isn't understood, the overall objective of having that investment done isn't served- and mind you, that too will eventually be compromised (because the value, importance of it isn't thought out).

- How quickly should you stop doing something that you started earlier- everything has an ROI but we forget that that ROI is in relation to time! One can't expect a fully developed & a fit baby in 3 months-

and if such a baby comes, we know that's called a premature delivery- there will be a lot of pain that both, the mother & baby will have to go through to cover up (if it stays alive). In relation to an organization, they say you can become a sustained business in about 3 yrs, one can't expedite that, you must go through the grind, encounter failures and learn from them to move on. Everything has a time line. Understand the value of that decision and then arrive at conclusion. Maintain a balance between very quick & too slow decision-Procrastination is no way a good sign of a mature entrepreneur- a decision must be taken!

- Knowledge- is the key to decision making process! You can't communicate and of course can't take informed decisions. We say there are two types of knowledge: Internal knowledge & external knowledge-

□ internal knowledge is being on top of things- the happenings about your organization- what's happening in your company, in different departments, what are the employees talking, what are they feeling-

Now, there are 2 ways in which this can be done-

a. The right way &

b. The most used way!!!!

Let's talk about this to bring in some familiarity and ring a bell in your mind- the most frequently used way to get this internal knowledge is by keeping spies in different department. That special person who has grown with you in the organization, or that 'old' employee who only thinks in the favour of the company (atleast you think of it that way) - let's admit it, we pride on the fact that we have such jewels in the company (so much so that our own decision making gets clouded and smoggy) .We don't recommend you continue to do this- because, remember we're all monkeys- monkey see, monkey do! If the subordinates feel that you believe what the 'news channel' provides, they'll all also have an input to give...let's not forget an outlet too..they'll have their spies who could leak critical and classified info- which isn't supposed to be leaked in the manner that it did! Conclusion- NO SPIES...let's talk about the first way, the recommended way and the only way one can get knowledge and i.e by falling back on DATA, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT- Like John Sculley puts it, " no great marketing decisions have ever been taken on qualitative data". Simply means that what gets measured gets done! Now if that's absent in your organization simply means there is work that needs to be done- start with designing processes & then measuring people on efficiency & productivity- there may be some qualitative aspects for which you might not have direct numbers- for such numbers there are different techniques such as 360 degree feedback- this is a discreet method to know the people related aspects- that you connect to a score card which is another performance management technique such that people can be incentivized accordingly. This way, you'll be on top on things, you'll make effective business decisions and therefore get internal knowledge.

□ External knowledge is any knowledge required to understand your industry better. Move from I know everything to I'm open to learning and knowing how things can be done differently- you will achieve only that much by doing just that much- by constantly living on the cloud of 'I know it all', you won't change anything-If you're an entrepreneur who is open to learning, you must know how to get external knowledge-

subscribing to industry related journals, membership of association, attending networking sessions etc. Another super successful way is by talking to your customers. Should you speak to every customer? You must be smirking in your mind right now- "thinking what technique is this- our business is X yr old, some of my customers don't even know me but are still doing business or I'm the fourth generation entrepreneur and speaking to every customer is next to impossible".

Here is what we recommend- we understand all of the above but you can do this: You can divide your customers in 3 categories-

1. Customers who're giving you more &more business as they grow and as the time passes by,
2. Customers who're giving you the same business (same as the first order they started with)
3. and lastly, those who're shying away from giving you business or are reducing the business they're giving you. Remember, this isn't only limited to your direct customers, you can likewise, meet your distributors, dealers etc.

How will this help? They don't say Customer is a King just like that isn't it?? It's them who will love giving you genuine feedback (if you ask for it genuinely)- most of you would already be thinking "my customer will only ask me to reduce the price which I'm not going to do"....let me tell you, we have done this and hence we recommend- try it once and come back to us with what you got!!

If you've agreed to ALL that we have told you, it's time you start ACTIONING!!

If you've smirked, I suggest you read it again....and start ACTIONING!!

And, if you think you're leader, YOU MUST TAKE THE FIRST STEP. You must be in the forefront of your business.....start ACTIONING anyways!!!

To conclude, i'd like to say that to ensure the efficiency and consistency of results that your people give, systems and processes are essential. This also improves the employee performance and creativity. It opens a new avenue of personal engagement between the employees as well as the clients as well as between employers and employees making them better manager and future leaders! Business systems have the capacity to reduce costs and boost revenues by producing consistently high quality work. Combined with all the above factors, it is clear how systems and processes help grow a business.

Keep Propelling!