

Most Regrettable Business Decisions

ERRORS - MISSED OPPORTUNITIES - PITFALLS - TAKEAWAYS

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Leadership Disconnect: Uncovering the Hidden Challenges in Organizational Alignment

Many organizations experience a disconnect between leadership and the workforce due to traditional top-down business planning, leading to miscommunication and misaligned priorities. Implementing a Business Outcome Driven Enterprise Architecture (BODEA) framework can bridge this gap by enhancing visibility and collaboration, ensuring employees understand their roles, and improving overall organizational performance.



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key points

- **Business As Usual:** Traditional top-down business planning often leads to a significant gap between executive leadership and the workforce.
- **Great Question:** Seeking employee input and acknowledging their expertise bridges the gap and aligns them with organizational goals.
- **Empower The Workforce:** Visualizing business plans and using Citizen Development provide employees with clear, actionable insights, improving engagement and performance.
- **Connecting The Dots:** The BODEA Framework enhances visibility, alignment, and collaboration, leading to better decision-making and organizational success.

In many organisations, the annual business plan is a cornerstone, laying out objectives, goals, and initiatives for the year ahead. However, the traditional top-down approach often creates a significant disconnect between the executive leadership and the workforce. This gap can lead to misaligned priorities, miscommunication, and a lack of understanding at the employee level, ultimately hindering organisational success.

The Disconnect Dilemma: Challenges in Implementing Business Plans Across Organizations

Many organisations follow a process where the leadership team develops an annual business plan outlining objectives,

goals, and initiatives, which is then shared company-wide. Implementation is then transferred to the various organisational departments, managers, and employees to achieve success. During this “**Business As Usual**” phase, challenge arises when the implementation of these plans filters down, creating a disconnect between the executives and the workforce. This gap is often caused by the cascading of information and expectations through various layers and silos within the organisation.

Challenges include management’s different interpretations of priorities, physical distances between employees, the transfer of information between shifts, and high workload expectations. In most cases, workers do not have a clear understanding of why they are instructed to do certain tasks, so they simply

follow orders without understanding the reasons behind them.

Value of Engagement: Bridging the Leadership-Workforce Gap

My boss once asked me, “What can YOU do to help us meet our objectives this quarter?”. This “**Great Question**” really resonated with me. It made me feel appreciated and valued because my boss sought my input, acknowledged my expertise and engaged with my work. However, it wasn’t an easy question to answer. It got me thinking - if an employee simply follows instructions, are they genuinely aligned with the organisation’s mission, vision, and goals? Are they engaged in meaningful work or just keeping busy? Do they feel valued and appreciated? Will the organisation be able to retain them in the long run? Essentially, is the organisation benefiting from the full potential of its workforce, getting the value it expects and needs?

This unintentional disconnect between leadership and the workforce is a widespread challenge many companies face today. It is often not acknowledged until it escalates and it’s too late. Vital feedback and insights from employees who are closest to the day-to-day operations often fail to reach the executive level. Valuable feedback tends to get lost in the communication gap and differing priorities between the executive team and the various levels of departments. This disconnect severely impacts organisational culture, employee motivation, retention rates, buy-in, acceptance of decisions,

and the organisation’s ability to deliver on expected outcomes.

When leadership is transparent with priorities and expectations, and clear about expectations, organisational culture becomes deeply connected to

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the overall mission, vision, and goals. Consequently, the workforce feels empowered and motivated to engage in meaningful work. This positively impacts organisational performance and the ability to meet objectives.

Empowering the Workforce: Leveraging Visualization and Citizen Development

Asking the “**Great Question**” at all levels of the organisation is one way to determine if there is a disconnect and to bring awareness to the multiple layers and departments. Once there is awareness, organisations can take steps towards resolving them. One solution to consider is to outline the Business Plan architecture through visualisation. By doing this, the connections between employees, their processes, expectations, and contributions will be visually revealed.

Many tools are available to provide visibility, but I believe the best way to start is with a few dedicated individuals and the use of Citizen Development. Citizen Development is a way to translate data into information and information into data, or to be more specific, bring the objectives, goals, and initiatives from the Business Plan to life by making the employee-required information transparent and focused on actionable insights. Citizen Development helps provide visibility both individually and cross-functionally to empower employees to get the relevant information they need to perform at a high level. Citizen Development assists employees to break silos and stay connected and on task while providing them the opportunity to use their experience to improve business processes and outcomes. This approach can genuinely ignite and “**empower the workforce**”.

Connecting the Dots: Enhancing Organizational Alignment with BODEA

A Business Outcome-Driven Enterprise Architecture (BODEA) framework is a visual representation that defines how everything in the organization is connected: “**Connecting The Dots**”. Implementing a BODEA framework is a way to strategically bridge the disruptive disconnect between leadership and the workforce. It provides visibility, awareness, alignment, and connectivity. This, in turn, leads to increased employee motivation, dedication, and a stronger drive to achieve organisational goals, as individuals across all levels understand the impact of their contributions and the significance of their work.

BODEA builds operational efficiency by breaking down silos and fostering collaboration with cross-functional teams, a necessity to meet organisational goals on budget and on time. Additionally, executives will be able to solve challenges by making decisions and setting priorities based on facts & figures from real-time information. The pace of change in business today is unrelenting, and the need to make well-informed decisions, pivot quickly, and retain good people is essential to survive. Implementing a BODEA framework is a great way to stay attuned to the organisation’s pulse and be prepared for the unexpected. Don’t regret your business decisions; begin **Connecting The Dots** between leadership and the workforce today.

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Conclusion

Bridging the gap between leadership and the workforce is crucial for organisational success. Implementing a Business Outcome Driven Enterprise Architecture (BODEA) framework can provide the necessary visibility, alignment, and connectivity. By fostering transparency and collaboration, organisations can ensure that every employee understands their role and contribution, leading to higher motivation, better performance, and improved business outcomes.

Conflict of Interest

None.