

Tribal Knowledge, Culture and Spiritual Leaders KNOW THEM, USE

Change within an organization is not dependent on the number of methods you deploy but rather it is based on the Culture Speed of absorption to make them effective. This then becomes reflective of your culture or intended culture. Intended culture is often not accomplished because it has been stymied by the Spiritual Leaders of the organization.

I do not mean Spiritual Leaders in a Biblical sense, but it is those leaders acknowledged by others often informally that will either endorse or sabotage an initiative or not allow it to accomplish its full potential.

You as a person, emit a “culture” of one ... when you add another individual to your circle your culture expands and may now blur with that other person's culture ... being their thoughts and beliefs ... as the circle grows so does the definition of the groups' culture. If the group becomes large enough then often as a reminder the guiding principals of aspirations and beliefs become documented as touch-points for the group to follow.

Tribal Knowledge begins to emerge within an organization as it grows ... when one or two people are the group, we can attribute Tribal Knowledge as Artisan, which is something we admire ... but in larger organizations Tribal Knowledge becomes deemed as a vulnerability. To minimize this vulnerability is through documentation, hiring of supervisors, managers, directors and a ton of bureaucracy. But Tribal Knowledge can be good for the organization and often is a strategic differentiator. This Tribal Knowledge has been developed over years invested by an employee honing their muscle memory. For example, heart surgery ... you would not want a rookie performing a procedure on you for the first time after reading it in a text-book.

Then we have least understood and least valued influencer within your organization ... that Spiritual Leader !!! We all understand the statistical dynamic profile of your organization ... your automatic 20% raving fans and your 20% negative force who you typically give too much focus towards in fear of potential failure and then we have that 60% critical mass that we need to buy-in if we are going to succeed. This is where your Spiritual Leader plays a crucial role and ultimately is the accelerator or the brake of the Cultural absorption adoption of change.

Your Spiritual Leader can also often also be your primary keeper of your Tribal Knowledge. You will need to hunt them down in order to identify them. They are frequently stealth hence they become very difficult to identify. To find them you may need to sit and observe for a Significant period of time before they emerge, or you may have to toss some bait to see who will bite ... that wonderful rumour mill will do the trick.

I know that the success of instilling change is reliant on me embracing those Spiritual Leaders more important than understanding the formal Organizational. Chart.

Where Lean Thoughts can become Reality

"Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow."

Ronald. E. Osborn

SPIRITUAL LEADERS AND TRIBAL KNOWLEDGE ARE THE DIFFERENATOR.

Although Spiritual Leaders are stealth, they also tend to be very mobile or very accessible. So often you find them in the form of material conveyance operators like fork-lift drivers. They of course travel everywhere, and they always love to stop and have a short chat ... that chat is an exchange of information, verification of ideas or the latest update or fabrication related to the rumour mill.

On the other hand, ... that senior person ripe with Tribal Knowledge whether it is product or process related is the “go to” for all employees for information and direction.

But remember those Spiritual Leaders are survivors that have most likely weathered many storms but have remained because they have been identified as an essential service not necessarily because of tenure ... but often the two are inter-twined so don't be fooled.

They are the ones that after you launch new program ... will be the ones to be subtle, stealth and without doing it with malice ... state “we tried that years ago and it did not work” or “Joe may play along for a few weeks, but he does not actually believe in empowerment, and will return to micro-management” ... as that happens you and your change are destined for the trash heap along with a lot of cash and a future major roadblock built.

Counter that by identifying your Spiritual Leader before you launch change ... bring them close and mentally anoint them as your primary Change Agent ... solicit their input, inquire why if the idea has been tried before? Why did it fail? How can we deploy it better this time and ultimately make it part of our DNA? In this manner do not only control absorption but also the manage the culture speed of absorption. Harnessing these Spiritual Leaders is vital, and they in essence become your Angels of change ... and usually they are pretty cool people ... because like any other leader they have built an army of followers.

Once you have this harnessed don't blow it by installing meaningless KPI's to monitor progress. We recently toured and observed a retail organization that is a prime example of a veneer application of methods across the organization. Ultimately, they look good, and the leadership feels good and employees have found ways to comply, but they ultimately are not delivering their full potential. Why? Because they lack a methodology of collaboration and layered accountability ... even though they were very passionate about insuring me how much they listen regularly to their employees.

But I attended meetings where those employees were more engaged texting on their smart phones than listening to the supervisor or they completed checklist assembled in a binder that I can guarantee are never double checked ... but they are making excellent positive cash flow ... so why change?

In this situation, some simple enhancements ... so simple it will make me sound stupid and have a lack of understanding but could result in making them additional Millions ... yes millions of dollars !!! Easy? Yes ... because a big part of their Brand is built on having those Spiritual Leaders and Tribal Knowledge of the industry.

Imagine the powerhouse they could become if the acknowledged these attributes formally and then leveraged them?

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