

Find Whatâ??s Right and Recreate It. (Some Questions That May Help)

Description

Have you ever noticed that when things donâ??t go well, thereâ??s always a meeting afterward? Itâ??s typical for companies to do a deep dive, analyzing step by step what went wrong and how to fix it. We spend a lot of time, energy, and heartache focusing on what goes wrong.

There is nothing wrong with this: troubleshooting problems, creating solutions, and infusing them into your processes and procedures is critical to helping your business get better and better. However, itâ??s only one side of the story. We should also do the same thing when things go *right*.

Instead of just moving on after a success, we can make it a practice to take a closer look. We can ask ourselves what elements contributed to such a great experience or outcome. When we get in the habit of breaking down these elements and capturing them we will be able to recreate our greatest successes again and again. Click here to learn more about this subject as well as other aspects of growing a business.

By nature, human beings look for whatâ??s wrong. Mistakes are painful and of course we want to avoid them. But I realized a long time ago we need to focus as much attention (if not more) on whatâ??s right. When we look at whatâ??s going well in one department or company or community we can benchmark their best practices, modify as necessary, and apply them in other places.

Almost every organization or community has bright spots. Itâ??s part of the leaderâ??s job to study these bright spots, learn from them, and then scale them. It makes a lot more sense than struggling to reinvent the wheel every time. Plus, the more we focus on our successes, the more feel-good moments we create. This lets us build up a powerful emotional bank account with employees so that, when we do need to make withdrawals, the balance is still positive.

It may require a big mindset shift to get into this habit. As mentioned earlier, itâ??s more natural for us to focus on whatâ??s not going well. Barriers like ego and fear can prevent us from seeking out and moving best practices. People may believe theyâ??re â??terminally uniqueâ?• and that what works for one department or branch, or town wonâ??t work for another. (We need to get in the habit of relating, not comparing.)

Here is a good model for breaking it down. The next time something great happensâ??whether itâ??s a successful initiative, event, new product launch, customer experience survey report, etc.â??sit down and take a good look at what went well and why. When you capture what drives success, you can repeat those steps over and over again. Here are some questions you might ask:

Did it go well for everyone? Have people rank and rate the event. Perhaps it went well for part of the group but not all. Youâ??re looking for the complete picture here.

What did people enjoy most about the event or project? How can you recreate these conditions in the future? The more engaged and happy people are, the more successful youâ??ll be.

What was it that worked so well? Did we do anything new or different? Talk through the processes and see if you can isolate any new steps, employee behaviors, etc.

Was a particular manager working? Is the success specific to them? Look at the managerâ??s track record, including performance reviews, sales numbers, or other metrics, etc.

Were there particular staff members there that made things work so well? You will probably want to talk to the manager first, and then to the staff members. On future projects you may want to make sure these people are assigned similar tasks.

What are the habits of the highest-performing team members? Figure out what they do consistently thatâ??s different from everyone else. Then, harvest and share their habits.

Did we do some planning that allowed things to run more smoothly? If the answer is yes, you might want to devote more time and resources to the planning phases of future projects.

Did we simplify a complex process to make it easier? If so, how best to get it repeated in other situations?

What was the timeline for the project? Did people have more time than usual to get things done? Or was the time frame more compressed, creating a needed sense of urgency? The answers can serve as guidelines for future projects.

Did we come in under budget? If this is unusual, take a close look at the factors that made it happen.

Which suppliers, vendors, or partners played key roles in the success? Youâ??ll want to remember them for next time.

Was the success weather-related? While you may think itâ??s a minor detail, itâ??s worth noting.

Was a special event taking place (either in the business or the community)? If so, maybe it drove traffic. When you start paying attention to external circumstances you may find patterns youâ??d previously missed.

Was the success around a new product launch? If so, was the excitement linked solely to the new product or were there other factors? Could the success be re-created in other ways?

How can we leverage the satisfaction of clients and customers for the future? See if they would be willing to give you a reference for a future RFP. Perhaps they would be willing to be quoted in your marketing materials.

These are only some of the questions you might ask. The key to get in the habit of focusing on whatâ??s going right, leveraging it, and looking for ways to do things even better. Get others in the company involved also.

Eventually, youâ??ll find looking for whatâ??s right and repeating becomes a part of your culture. Others will catch your attitude and emulate it. Over time, this can spark a powerful turnaround for a company.

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