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High Performing Organisations Research – CORE Areas of IMPACT

The research study aimed at identifying the factors which have a positive relation with organisational performance, through a literature review of 290 research studies into high performance and subsequent testing in 1470 organisations worldwide. The research yielded 35 characteristics—grouped into 5 core factors that have a significant correlation with high performance for all types of organisations, industries and countries. Here is an overview.

Hi-Performance Factor 1. High Management Quality

The primary factor is the quality of management of the organization. In a HPO management combines many characteristics. It maintains high-trust relationships with people on all organizational levels by:

- valuing employees' loyalty
- treating smart people smart
- showing people respect
- creating and maintaining individual relationships with employees
- encouraging belief and trust in others
- treating people fairly

Managers of a HPO live with integrity and are a role model by being

- honest and sincere
- showing commitment, enthusiasm and respect
- having a strong set of ethics and standards
- being credible and consistent
- maintaining a sense of vulnerability
- and by not being self-complacent.

They apply decisive, action-focused decision-making by avoiding over-analysis but instead coming up with decisions and effective actions, while at the same time fostering action-taking by others.

HPO management coaches and facilitates employees to achieve better results by being supportive, helping them, protecting them from outside interference, and by being available. Management holds people responsible for results and is decisive about non-performers by always focusing on the achievement of results, maintaining clear accountability for performance, and making tough decisions.

Managers of a HPO develop an effective, confident and strong management style by living and communicating the values and by making sure the strategy and action plans are known, understood and embraced by all organizational members.

Hi-Performance Factor 2. Openness Coupled with Action Orientation

The second factor concerns characteristics that not only create an open culture in the organization but also focus on using the openness to take dedicated action to achieve results. Management values the opinion of employees by frequently engaging in a dialogue with them and by involving them in all important business and organizational processes.

HPO management allows experiments and mistakes by permitting employees to take risks, being willing to take risks themselves, and seeing mistakes as an opportunity to learn. In this respect, management welcomes and stimulates change by continuously striving for renewal, developing dynamic managerial capabilities to enhance flexibility, and being personally involved in change activities.

People in an HPO spend much time on communication, knowledge-exchange and learning in order to obtain new ideas to do their work better and make the complete organization performance-driven.

Hi-Performance Factor 3. Long Term Commitment

The third factor indicates that long-term commitment is far more important than short-term gain. And this long-term commitment is extended to all stakeholders of the organization, that is shareholders but also employees, suppliers, clients and the society at large.

A HPO continuously strives to enhance customer value creation by learning what customers want, understanding their values, building excellent relationships with them, having direct contact with them, engaging them, being responsive to them, and focusing on continuously enhancing customer value. A HPO maintains good and long-term relationships with all stakeholders by networking broadly, being generous to society, and creating mutual, beneficial opportunities and win-win relationships. A HPO also grows through partnerships with suppliers and customers, thereby turning the organization into an international network corporation. Management of a HPO is committed to the organization for the long haul by balancing common purpose with self-interest, and teaching organizational members to put the needs of the enterprise as a whole first.

They grow new management from the own ranks by encouraging people to become leaders, filling positions with internal talent, and promoting from within. A HPO creates a safe and secure workplace by giving people a sense of safety (physical and mental) and job security and by not immediately laying off people (until it cannot be avoided, as a last resort).

Hi-Performance Factor 4. Focus on Continuous Improvement and Renewal

The fourth factor is very much in line with a trend which has been keeping organizations busy for the past two decades: continuous improvement and innovation. This starts with a HPO adopting a strategy that will set the company apart by developing many new options and alternatives to compensate for dying strategies.

After that, the organization will do everything in its power to fulfill this unique strategy. It continuously simplifies, improves and aligns all its processes to improve its ability to respond to events efficiently and effectively and to eliminate unnecessary procedures, work, and information overload. The company also measures and reports everything that matters so it rigorously measures progress, consequently monitors goal fulfillment and confronts the brutal facts. It reports these facts not only to management but to everyone in the organization so that all organizational members have the financial and non-financial information needed to drive improvement at their disposal. People in a HPO feel a moral obligation to continuously strive for the best results.

The organization continuously innovates products, processes and services thus constantly creating new sources of competitive advantage by rapidly developing new products and services to respond to market changes. It also masters its core competencies and is an innovator in them by deciding and sticking to what the company does best, keeping core competencies inside the firm and outsourcing non-core competencies.

Hi-Performance Factor 5. High Workforce Quality

Complementary to the first factor high management quality, the fifth factor addresses workforce quality. A HPO makes sure it assembles a diverse and complementary management team and workforce and recruits a workforce with maximum flexibility, to help detect the complexities in operations and to incite creativity in solving them.

A HPO continuously works on the development of its workforce by training them to be both resilient and flexible, letting them learn from others by going into partnerships with suppliers and customers, inspiring them to work on their skills so they can accomplish extraordinary results, and holding them responsible for their performance so they will be creative in looking for new productive ways to achieve the desired results.

Your Good News - The HPO study shows that there is a direct relation between the HPO factors and competitive performance.

Leaders who pay more attention to HPO factors and score high on these consistently achieve better results than their peers, in every industry, sector and country in the world! Conversely, it is also true that..., organizations which score low on HPO factors rank performance-wise at the bottom of their industry.

The difference between HPOs and non-HPOs is particularly significant in the case of HPO factor Long Term Commitment: HPOs pay considerably more attention to the designated aspects of long-term commitment than non-HPO organizations, and are therefore able to improve their performance significantly. All of this requires competent, committed Leadership. Ready for a thorough transformation – mindset, attitudes and skills on all levels? Call us before your competition does. ☺