

Dear All

Last week, I had to do a session at one of our group companies on High Performance organizations. I have been thinking about what this means for a company, for a team and for individuals. A high performance company doesn't happen on its own. Today's high-performance company is tomorrow's low performing company.

1. The first serious book on high performance companies or titled 'Excellent' companies was in 1984 – In search of Excellence – by Tom Peters and Bob Waterman. 34 years later, very few of these companies are still in the 'excellence list'. Their inability to change or look ahead or just sheer arrogance made them lose.
2. In the late 1990s there was a study done on why some football teams are more successful than the others? The consulting team that did the research started with stars, salaries, fanbase, critical positions etc. etc. When the research was done, it was found that there was a high correlation between the number of passes a team made and their success in winning trophies. This for a company means teams that share information liberally, everyone in the team has all the information needed to make decisions and move forward. This sounds simple but doesn't happen in many companies.
3. High performance organizations by definition are the best in their domain. A company cannot be high potential if its teams and individuals do not want to be a high performing bunch. Let's look at characteristics of high performing employees. High performing employees tend to display three capability pools in my experience. Let me detail the three streams.
4. Capability Pool No 1: Their basics.
 - They are very good at their basic job and keep stretching to get better and better.
 - They continue to learn every day and never stop at seeking fresh information
 - They are able to take criticism well, and reshape their behavior and attitude based on feedback
 - They work well in teams, they lead when tasked and follow when needed
 - They trust others and seek to build trust from others
 - They take ownership in all situations, this ownership is not conditional, i.e. I will take ownership if I see a benefit for myself
 - They have resilience, they do not crumble under pressure
 - They challenge their colleagues and the system to improve, they do not accept mediocre work or behavior
 - They balance IQ and EQ based on the context
5. Capability Pool No 2 : Task management
 - They don't need follow up
 - They are proactive
 - They take initiative for the good of the business
 - They always place the company interests ahead of everything else
 - They help others to succeed in every task
 - They set a high bar in every task, not just in some tasks
6. Capability Pool No 3: Looking ahead
 - They stretch themselves to get ahead for the future, hence time is not a constraint or an excuse
 - They put up their hand, they volunteer for new tasks
 - They develop new skill sets
 - They want to do well, many people are comfortable doing what they know, but these people are hungry to do well.

So, that's my take folks

Happy to get your feedback

Wr
Shiv