

Communications Issues

Issue 18

A Community Service of Harley House Consultants Inc.



New Year's Resolution – Improve Key Relationships

Introduction

Welcome to 2013. If you are like me and many of your family, friends and colleagues, you have most likely made resolutions to eat healthier, exercise more, lose weight, be a better person, etc. These are all great **personal improvement resolutions**. But what about resolutions to improve your business or organization. What about making resolutions that impact on where you work or volunteer.

Over my thirty years of experience as a business owner, consultant, communications instructor, media junky, politician, community activist and volunteer, I have seen many organizations succeed, survive and flounder. In my experience, the variable that has the greatest impact on success and growth can be traced back to how organizations manage their relationships with key stakeholders.

Maybe you should consider making **corporate improvement resolutions** that focus on improving relationships with key stakeholders.

Have the Right Focus

Many organizations focus their efforts on managing the variables that are outside of their control of influence. While it is important to recognize that the state of the economy, the value of the dollar, unemployment rates and commodity prices have to be factored into management decisions, it is also important to acknowledge that the organization has little control over these variables.

What an organization must do is manage the various variables that they have control over that impact the organization every day. This focus enables you to differentiate your organization from your competitors.

Many organizations focus only inward, and fail to recognize the importance various external stakeholder groups have on their success and in fact, their survival.

Then there are the organizations that focus only on some of their internal or external stakeholder groups and fail to recognize how even one ineffective relationship can adversely affect their success.

Key Relationships

There are six key relationships that every organization, (whether they are a private sector firm, public institution, or not for profit organization) should focus on.



Each of these six relationships is critical to the short and long-term success of the organization. Each of these six relationships impact the organization as well as each of the other five relationships. If your community relations is poor, you can be assured that your media relations will be impacted, which will in turn affect your government relations.

It is important to remember that all organizations are only as strong as their weakest relationship.

Making Communicators Better Managers—Making Managers Better Communicators



2. New Year's Resolution – Improve Key Relationships

Juggling Relationships

Managing these six relationships can be compared to a juggler keeping six balls in the air at once. If you focused too much on one, chances are you will drop one or more of the other balls and the whole act will fail.



With today's social media, it is easier and more likely that a disgruntled stakeholder will make their concerns known to others. Fortunately the reverse is also true. Satisfied stakeholders are also more likely to recommend an organization to others using social media.

Relationship Centered Model

The Relationship Centered Model (RCM) has been adopted by winning organizations to examine all of their various key stakeholder groups to ensure the long-term success and effectiveness of the organization.

The Relationship Centered Model empowers you by focusing on the variables that you can control and maximizing your organizations success, instead of disempowering yourself and blaming the variables that you can't control for negatively impacting your organization.

The Relationship Centered Model has proven to be effective at rehabilitating and improving relationships in private sector firms, public institutions, and not for profit organizations.

Should improving your organizations relationships not be a priority for 2013?

Why You Should Adopt This Model

Why should your organization adopt the Relationship Centered Model? The answer to that question is both complex and easy. For organizations that are close to their stakeholders and who are focused on meeting their needs, the Relationship Centered Model serves as a refresher regarding the importance of building strong and ongoing relationships in order to maximize the potential of the organization. It will, as Stephen R. Covey's *Habit 7 – 'Sharpening the Saw'* outlines, provide readers with a mental self-renewal tool for learning, reading, writing and teaching.

For the organization that ignores their stakeholders, and focuses on the bottom line, the Relationship Centered Model will teach you the importance of building and nourishing relationships that have an impact on your organization so that you in fact maximize your success. The Relationship Centered Model also supports the teachings of Stephen M. R. Covey who in *Smart Trust* outlines for us the dividends of trust, increased prosperity, energy and joy.

Whatever your interest, The Business of Relationships will create growth and change your life by increasing your capacity to manage the relationships that impact your organization in a holistic manner, respond to the challenges around you and take advantage of the opportunities presented so as to maximize your organizations potential.

In Conclusion

Improving key relationships should be a priority of your organization in 2013. Over the next six weeks I will outline each of the six key relationships and provide you with checklists to assess the strength of your relationships and identify steps to take in rehabilitating and strengthening your organizations key relationships.

For more information on how Harley House Consultants Inc. can assist you in:

- Managing internal and external relationships with key stakeholder groups; and
- Improving the effectiveness of your organization's communications and consultation programs,

Please visit our websites at:

www.harleyhouse.com

www.RelationshipCenteredModel.com

or contact Dale Harley at 613-882-5684, or email dale@harleyhouse.com