

WHAT IF....?

What if You Could Produce More Profitable Results—doing more valuable work—in least amount of necessary time—with as little energy as possible?

CUSTOMER SERVICE TURN-AROUND

From: It's them over there; view from each side of the ocean

To: It's them and us; view from both sides of the ocean

SITUATION

The European producer's market share for components used in on-highway and off-highway mobile equipment had suffered significantly and U.S. corporate management was uncertain of the direct cause and what action was needed. The U.S. based people expressed expectations that the European People would be straightened out. Likewise the European people expressed expectations that the U.S. people would be straightened out.

ACTION

Results-oriented European Team formation: A team of European managers was formed and facilitated through a “results-oriented leadership development process” to:

1. Investigate and discover country-by-country circumstances and conditions for end-user competitive preferences as well as equipment manufacturer competitive preferences;
2. Investigate and discover sources of conflict between the European and U.S. functions.
3. Investigate and discover sources of conflict within and between functions of each of the European countries.

Wants and Needs Discovery: From the ‘where are we’ and “what we want” market data the Results-oriented European Team was able to make a comprehensive analysis to define common and unique customer expectations and reasons for customer and manufacturer behaviors. Likewise from the “where are we” internal customer/supplier relationship data the team was able to pinpoint sources of conflict and what was wanted by each function and what was needed to bring about positive behavior change and improved performance in the way work flowed throughout the whole organization independently and interdependently and delivery results to European marketplaces.

Strategic Plan Development: Central, internal customer/supplier supply chain and country-by-country customer/supplier supply chain strategies were developed and implemented by the Results-oriented European Team to

1. Exceed European customer demands and competitive performance
2. Exceed on-shore and off-shore manufacturers' expectations
3. Establish Central European Free-trade-Zone and Bonded Warehouse
4. Establish the European Results-oriented team leadership capacity to effectively lead and support all internal functions engaged in delivery to the various country markets.


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Strategic Plan Implementation: The Results-oriented European Team members took leadership and management responsibility to implement the central, country-by-country and internal customer / supplier supply chain strategic plans. Specific goals were set for each part of the strategic plan and actions steps planned out to achieve the goals. Progress was monitored against goals, positive and negative variances to plan were analyzed to capitalize opportunities and make course adjustments to adapt to changing customer [external and internal] demands and competitive reactions.

Results:

Customer Service Performance:

1. Parts and Components Availability was categorized according to least necessary time to remove and replace on customer sites and positioned in central and local distribution points according to population and known usage rate.
2. The traditional distributor structure was restructured to locate people, material, and information to maximize availability within necessary time frames.
3. Central Technical Service center was setup to provide technical support in least amount of necessary time to the Results-oriented European Team and country-by-country distributors.
4. The psychological and physical distance conflict between functions on each side of the ocean was overcome by taking actions to increase understanding of each others environment, functions, responsibilities and capabilities and behaving and communicating in ways that built trust and improved decision-making and motivation and replaced two-way destructive criticism with two-way constructive criticism and support.

External and internal customer satisfaction:

1. Points of connection were moved from disappointing and unsatisfactory to extremely satisfactory / elated in the marketplace and workplace on both sides of the ocean

Market share:

1. Demand on the services of the free-trade-zone / Bonded warehouse changed from being service parts only source to both service parts and sort-lead time new customer order source of supply
2. Competitiveness moved from worst of market to best of market
3. Market share improved over three years from being worst to best.



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