

WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION LOOK LIKE?

Observations from Successful Organizations¹

	Proven Successful Behavior	Action Statements
1	Almost everyone is proactive in ensuring the safety and well-being of others.	Assume that all injuries are preventable and act accordingly. Insist on orderliness. Install equipment and facilities to suit individuals. Provide facilities and resources to address personal problems which impact on job performance.
2	Almost everyone understands and works towards a clear consistent, focused vision.	Involve people in Business Plan process. Set linked/agreed goals at all levels. Deploy the Business Plan through all levels.
3	Almost everyone ensures that they only do meaningful work.	Work groups meet to discuss improvement opportunities. A structural review of tasks is used to eliminate trivial work. Process mapping of key processes.
4	Almost everyone participates in an integrated learning program, which balances classroom and on-the-job training relevant to people's needs.	Components of training packages are linked, and logical program exist. A program of learning for each person exists and is pursued. Training programs are conducted on site.
5	Selection of people is based on a good fit between the values, attitudes and required behaviors of the individual and the organization.	Select people for interviews based on skills and technical knowledge; select people for the job based on ethics and attitude. Incorporate focus on attitude and interpersonal skills in interviews. Select for promotion those people who demonstrate required culture/behavior.
6	Almost everyone trusts and is open with others.	Demonstrate the acceptance of an environment of candor. Divulge all possible information. Answer questions openly.
7	Almost everyone adopts team-working as a normal means of achieving superior performance, including where they are not members of a formal work-team.	Almost everyone chooses to take a teamwork approach for most issues.
8	Almost everyone encourages and supports cross functional and self-directed teams.	Issues which are division wide are often tackled by cross functional teams. Organizations provide trained facilitators to assist teams with process. There is no 'one model' and the degree of self-direction is relevant to the situation.
9	Teams accept accountability and authority for their actions.	Teams are informed of the resources available to them. Teams exercise discretion themselves as to how they use the resources. Team members develop an understanding of the skills each member brings to the group. Team members develop an identity with the team and its purpose.
10	Almost everyone is willing and keen to be involved in contributing to the success of the organization.	People actively seek opportunities to be involved.
11	Almost everyone encourages and values the inputs of others.	Leaders provide support and encouragement to everyone to contribute and be involved. Structured meetings and informal discussion to seek ideas on improvement. Feedback decisions and progress on suggestions. Implement ideas quickly. Provide recognition.

¹Benchmarking survey 1995 BHP Steel, McKinsey study of 9 Co's, ABM, Du Pont, GE, Sollac FOS, Kodak, Motorola

12	Almost everyone values and respects others as individuals.	Design systems to suit individuals (rather than fitting people to systems). Capitalize on individual talents. Allow people to identify their own training needs.
13	Leaders provide good working conditions for everyone.	Provide people with adequate tools and equipment. Insist on orderliness and cleanliness.
14	Almost everyone agrees to a code of conduct.	Adopt a common code of conduct and live by it.
15	Almost everyone is able to learn from past mistakes as well as successes.	Treat mistakes positively as opportunities for learning. When a person points out that they have made a mistake, empathize with them by describing a similar mistake. Build critique points into projects and critique each project when it finishes. Conduct "benchmarking" visits to demonstrate better practices in line with key goals. Reward the acquisition of knowledge. Create an awareness of the need for continuing learning to become/remain best. Management lead by seeking knowledge, attending training.
16	Almost everyone encourages the identification of non-conforming behavior and willingly works to learn from it.	Management facilitates the steps required to achieve conformance. Reward/recognize people for finding non-conforming behavior in leaders. Leadership has to create the environment for candor and critique. Regular reviews of performance include discussion and focus on improvement opportunities. Provide linkage to Business Plan goals. Management provide recognition for those adopting the change. Vision and values are clearly stated or deployed. Management define the desired change and model the change. Recognize successful improvement actions. Quarterly performance reviews.
17	Leaders ensure that goals are clearly defined, and results focused.	Management team provide clear guidelines on the key issues for the business. KPI's are set. Review mechanisms are aggressively implemented.
18	Leaders effectively deploy Business Plans.	Management uses the Business Plan Deployment process. Each level of management ensures the Business Plan has been deployed two levels lower. Individual's objectives support Business Plan goals.
19	Leaders provide consistent focus & direction.	Develop focused Business Plan. Effectively deploy Business Plan. Conduct regular formal one-on-one reviews. Vision and values are clearly stated and deployed. Clearly communicate your vision for the future.
20	All levels of leadership are prepared & trained to adopt leadership style appropriate to the situation.	Management team agrees appropriate leadership style. Personal Job Goals reflect this style. Engage managers/supervisors in leadership training. Appropriate style is modelled by others. Engage in ongoing feedback with colleagues to guide performance. Allocate time for impromptu visitors/discussions. Organize and participate in social events with work teams. Allow colleagues to identify personal training requirements. Use Job Goal Review process and HR review process to document training needs. Allow adequate release for attendance at training courses. Develop schedule of training for all leaders.
21	Leaders continually seek out opportunities for improvement.	Incorporate improvement in Job Goals. Emphasize improvement in all formal and informal communications. Encourage experimentation. Incorporate stretch targets in Business Plans. Supervisors talk to their teams about benefits to teamwork and improvement, on a day to day basis.

22	The actions of leaders support the rhetoric.	<p>Participate in improvement teams. Provide support and encouragement to teams. Be present and involved in improvement forums. “Walk the talk” Talk to people about improvements. Remove barriers to change. Be a mentor to others. Help others to achieve. Conduct/participate in schedule audits. Seek people’s views/opinions (and action/feedback suggestions) Train everyone in interaction and/or interaction management.</p>
23	Senior managers frequently visit workplaces, to reinforce the key issues.	<p>Conduct frequent visits to all business units, departments, teams, crews, individuals to discuss improvement activities on the job. Conduct/participate in scheduled audits. “Walk the floor” frequently.</p>
24	Leaders at all levels engage in coaching and counselling, not only directing and controlling.	<p>Say “let’s do it” more frequently, and “do it” less frequently. Coach and counsel more, direct and control less. Call your management team a “leadership team”. Select supervisors with relevant capabilities. Provide appropriate training. Clearly define the role of the supervisor – rewrite position descriptions. Use Job Goal Reviews to develop and reinforce.</p>
25	Leaders are personally involved in improvement activities.	<p>Actively participate in improvement teams. Engage in management improvement teams. Individual managers “sponsor” and / or lead improvement teams. Job Goals identify specific personal involvement. Attend formal review sessions of teams’ progress. Be in the habit of asking “What have you done today to improve the business?”. Remove barriers to implementation of improvements. Allocate sufficient resources for improvement teams and their tasks.</p>
26	Leaders are willing to learn as well as teach.	<p>Critique successes and failures to learn from experience. Seek knowledge from best practice organizations. Encourage people to discuss failures and mistakes in a non-threatening environment. Extend Job Goal Review process to include discussion of learnings without fear. Include “stuff-ups” on meeting agendas.</p>
27	Leaders ensure that successes are celebrated and ensures that everyone who contributes is involved.	<p>Publish good news stories. Openly and publicly acknowledge good news stories. Conduct special ‘party’ celebrations with management support/involvement.</p>
28	Leaders freely provide appropriate rewards and recognitions.	<p>Leaders implement a recognition policy. Hold “formal” presentations of awards for outstanding performance. Be consistent in distributing awards, i.e. not “flavor of the month”. Be positive and excited during deployment of rewards and recognition. Develop and regularly review a rewards and recognition policy. Regularly review rewards and recognition policies/practices against core values.</p>
29	Leaders ensure that promotion/demotion and rewards/remuneration are directly linked to performance.	<p>Ensure appointments are made using previous performance as criteria. Demote consistently poor performing employees. Note previously recognized good performance on appointments memos. Include good performance as criteria for salary/wage review. Do not give all (including poor performing) employees the same rewards and remuneration.</p>
30	Leaders ensure that physical and organizational barriers to communication are removed.	<p>“Open” office layouts. Establish communications forums. Minimize layers/levels in the organization. Open door policy, and employees “welcomed” to interrupt supervisors/managers.</p>

		<p>Supervisors offices to be in, or as close as possible to work areas. Necessary communication between departments is undertaken. Communicate decisions quickly and update on implementation. Regularly test and monitor if organizations actions are consistent with the words. Senior management should informally, at the workplace, talk to individuals/small groups on a regular basis. Small groups should regularly present their improvement efforts to management teams.</p>
31	Leaders ensure that real need to change is clearly established and communicated.	<p>Use more than one communication method. Communicate the “why” as much as the “what”. Check for understanding of communicated ideas.</p>
32	Almost everyone is receptive and responds to communications.	<p>Incorporate feedback into decision making. Have a process in place to manage the feedback, and monitor effectiveness. Briefing sessions should allow plenty of time for questions clarification/understanding. Effective two-way communication channels are in place, and a schedule maintained.</p>
33	Almost everyone in the organization seeks opportunities for, and is accountable for, continual improvement.	<p>Regular reviews of performance include discussion and focus on improvement opportunities. Employees are trained in improvement techniques.</p>
34	Almost everyone embraces and adheres to a systematic and recognizable approach to improvement.	<p>Standard procedures are regularly updated with focus on improvements. Deploy the Business Plan. Improvements are consistent with Business Plan goals. Annual improvement targets set.</p>
35	Almost everyone is positively motivated to change.	<p>Communicate a clear message outlining the benefits of “the change” Regular work crew meetings to discuss improvement ideas. Recognize people who identify ways to improve. Effective communication of “why it is needed”. Supporting mechanisms allay fear of change. Explain the “Reality”. Provide clear instructions and sharp focus on how to achieve results.</p>
36	Achievement is communicated & publicized in a way that promotes excitement in almost everyone.	<p>Publish good news stories with exciting vocabulary. Be excited when presenting awards and communicating achievement. Be generous with positive feedback in both formal and informal forums. Make a point of commenting on positives every day. Be quick to praise good performance.</p>
37	Leaders ensure that training is provided and utilized as needed.	<p>All employees are aware of available training. Training is conducted coinciding with specific problems to be solved/issues to be addressed. Specific training programs are conducted using specific business issues as working examples. Employees are able to select training packages/courses for themselves. All people are encouraged to attend training programs. Organize for replacements to allow people to attend training programs. Encourage and allow people to attempt new things.</p>
38	Performance measures are displayed and understood by almost everyone.	<p>Notice boards, in appropriate situations (e.g. work area or meeting area, with a nominated employee managing them.) Performance measures for that department are displayed in a simple, easily understood format. Results are updated on a regular, consistent basis. The local/department supervisors are updated; they then discuss it with their work teams. Actions are agreed, recorded and displayed on the notice board – and are the basis for future discussions. Overall business performance (probably only 4 or 5 major goals) could be</p>

		<p>displayed separately, on the same board.</p> <p>Out of date information should not be on the board.</p> <p>Align communications processes and content with Business Plan context and objectives.</p> <p>Translate business impact issues into the local context, and terminology.</p> <p>Business Plan goals are translated / transferred through the organization using individual performance objectives and strategies (with associated regular performance reviews.)</p>
39	Leaders empower their people to progress improvements and agree on accountability.	<p>Provide the time for employees to have meaningful involvement.</p> <p>Expectations are clearly defined and agreed to.</p>