

Case Study

Managing Growth Strategically

A Swedish medical device organization encountered challenges when it started to establish a US-based operation. Business was conducted on an ad-hoc basis and centered on individual agendas as opposed to what was best for the organization. Efforts to make changes through a new senior-level leader were met with resistance by the staff. Workwise Communication began working with the new leader to define a strategy for growth and standardize business processes. We initiated a multi-phase project, first focusing on getting the company on track and then onto longer-term goals.

Research Reveals Key Issues

Through preliminary conversations, we realized there was a lot of secrecy and talking behind one another's backs with gossip circulating among staff members. To foster a more transparent, inclusive environment and stem resistance to the senior-leader, we formally interviewed all employees, including the sales force and the home office. The sales force said that they felt isolated and detached from the company.

The absence of a company vision caused frustration and rumors. Employees approached their jobs in an entrepreneurial way, following their own rules. A lack of effective internal communication had led to low morale. Employees felt the new leader had been directive rather than inclusive and introducing things too quickly. It had been too great a leap for staff members to go from making their own decisions to being told what to do, without feeling that they had been asked for input.

Engaging Employees Through Communication

By providing opportunities for employees to voice their concerns and actively seeking their ideas in targeting areas for improvement, the leader sought to help them feel invested in the company's future. The lack of a vision, mission and clear objectives made it difficult to both attract high achievers and retain current employees.

At a corporate town hall meeting, staff members were asked to develop action plans around new business processes and growth opportunities. New employee engagement initiatives would become the basis for more effective communication strategies.

Defining Mission and Strategy

Using employee input as a foundation, Workwise Communication designed and facilitated a workshop, "Finding Our Culture," for the management team to define the company vision, mission and values and assisted the company in developing a three-year plan, supported by guiding actions. Using a task-force approach, one or two employees were assigned to give input and help ensure that new strategies were properly implemented.