



MANDRIEN CONSULTING GROUP
REAL ESTATE SERVICE INDUSTRY



Anatomy of a Reorganization

Fact Pattern

The service provider wanted to “jump start” people so that a new manner of working cross-functionally—in a matrix organization—is not merely accepted, but is exploited as a high-productivity way of life. **Matrix Management** is a type of organizational management in which people with similar skills are pooled for work assignments. For example, all title readers may be in one department and report to a title manager, but some or all of these title readers may be assigned to different specialized projects and report to a project manager while working on that certain project, for instance a large commercial transaction. Therefore, each title reader may be required to work with supervision from several managers under this new process model. Because reorganization is not the norm, there was likely to be “push back”. A key factor—perhaps *the* key factor in the success—was the ownership and appropriate behaviors of all key managers and exemplars, so that people have the proper leadership, and accountabilities will be accepted.

The primary transition was from a project-oriented transient approach, to a program-oriented permanent approach in managing the business. Standards, measurement, tracking, feedback, and ultimate ownership would have to be created and embraced. The *process* of ownership is central to success. Collaboration in a matrix structure with accountability thrust downward are important goals.

Objectives

Among the results to be achieved were these key objectives:

- Managers’ skills are developed and behaviors are directed toward achieving and exploiting results that the new organization affords.
- Accountabilities are clear at the individual job (micro) level.
- Communications flow is rationalized so that people are able to deal within the “matrix” clearly, easily, and willingly.

- Key exemplars develop and exhibit collegiality that demonstrates support for and participation in the new organization.
- Group interactions are facilitated and continually honed.
- Obstacles presented by systems, procedures, and culture are identified and removed as appropriate.

Measures of Success

We knew we were successful when the following were manifest:

- New programs were introduced in a synergistic fashion.
- Personnel accept and utilize the new structure.
- People were focused beyond merely getting something working toward getting it working to a degree previously designated which constitutes success.
- There was group approval, and a lack of cynicism; the programs demonstrated multiple sign-offs from diverse team members.
- Meetings and discussions clearly reveal that others were included—and valued—in the decision-making process, and that such inclusion was mandatory for success.

Value to Provider

The value to the organization in meeting these objectives included:

- Focus was on the customer, not on internally perceived “threats,” and consequent productivity loss.
- Senior level people can now focus on strategic issues and not have to micro-manage.
- Rumors are minimized as is their “default” position of “bad news” when people are uncertain.

- Rapid identification and removal of real obstacles.

The company estimated that the total value of this project's success translated into well over one million dollars in reduced "failure work," saved productivity, and retention of good people.

Methodology

The assistance in achieving the objectives included, but were not limited to, the following activities:

- One-on-one assistance for all key managers in skills and behaviors required by the new organizational relationships.
- Group facilitation where needed in meetings and cross-functional teams.
- Group observation and feedback, with recommendations on how to improve the process.
- Assistance with written communications and meetings, so as to maximize ownership and accountabilities and minimize resistance.
- Recommendations for procedures, cultural norms (i.e., meeting types and durations) which will remove obstacles and strengthen the matrix structure.
- Assistance in creating ownership that encompasses standards, measures of success, monitoring means and feedback to those accountable.
- Observation and recommendations for interactions with "non-matrix" groups whose adherence to the new system is key to overall success.
- Attendance at large (off site) and small (on site) meetings to provide feedback on acceptance and recommendations on follow-up actions.

If you are considering a process change in whole or part, contact Mandrien to discuss feasibility in your given circumstance.