

Case Study – Global Functional Harmonization Project



Problem issue and scope

A Chicago based multi-national market leader in the Washroom Solutions industry, the client was experiencing an expansive scope of issues resulting from a lack of global operational, technological, administrative and cultural harmonization between its international offices. Over a 4 year period, the organization had seen a reduction in output and functional cohesion while experiencing escalating turnover, supply chain and other operational costs associated with low morale, inter-office technology compatibility issues and considerable reduction efficiencies in globally shared work-tasks.

Methodology

'Interlaced Relationship Consideration', the core of our consulting model, was simply integral to this project. With such a broad canvas of segregated yet interrelated problem issues, it was essential to closely examine a vast selection of harmonization scenarios to ensure complete cohesion of each facet while also focusing on optimizing their individual long-term performance. The tailored approach comprised:

1. Employing a comprehensive group-wide program management approach with auditing techniques and tactics, a full review of financial, operational, leadership, workforce, technological and cultural systems for each site to garner functional as well as integrated functionality success levels per location.
2. Quantify results and compare each location to establish global wide functional benchmarks. Ascertain current systems re-engineering opportunities and new systems introductions where appropriate.
3. Full operational, workforce and leadership performance, technological and financial systems scenario testing of global site strategies to achieve company wide optimal metronomic practices.

Case Points
Organization & Market: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Washington, D.C. based global health NGO
Situation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Operational Bottleneck issues› Required Communication Framework to report problem issues, KPIs and harmonize network partners
Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Full stakeholder communications audit› Third world telecommunications analysis› Workflow audits› Thorough post-diagnostic scenario comparisons
Recommendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Introduced SharePoint Portal› Re-engineered workflows and KPI metrics› Created framework for harmonizing Global, Regional and Country level NGOs› Network scale training-plan introduced
Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Completed within scope, time and cost› Created organic framework to support mission objectives

4. Decide upon re-engineering and systems replacement requirements, outline correct training systems and workplace performance metrics.

Recommendation and Outcome

In order for the project to succeed, it was imperative to once again discover what the company had lost sight of – harmonization.

It was key to delicately balance leadership and functional system development hand-in-hand. Lack of a common uniform organizational culture across the global operations meant ‘stakeholder buy-in’ was to be the cornerstone driving force for all changes to be accepted by the workforce.

Firstly, by focusing on workforce and leadership development soft-skill development via introducing revised communication systems and meeting platforms, we were able to establish a common ground for healthy internal relationship development. It was imperative to create a more transparent understanding of company culture not just to reduce worker role ambiguity and improve leader trust, but critically, acceptance of the operational changes to follow.

This comprised of a transition over to SAP ERP to ensure full operational, financial and KPI management systems and a revised hard-skill training plan to accommodate the new systems and improve efficiency. With full systems, workforce training and leadership style harmonized, the resulting achievement was a first 12-month company wide efficiency output increase of 39% and operating cost reduction of 17% or \$19.4 million.

Client Quotation:

“simply put...our systems were a mess, our offices were almost like separate companies in how they were ran and overall lack of mission objective understanding. What was achieved over 8 months was wonderful. We have a company that works as a family rather than distant relatives, systems that allow us to monitor and analyze every aspect of the business and a much stronger workforce/leader relationship paradigm”

-- Group CEO

Consultant Quotation:

“This projects success was dependant on the initial two key stages – thorough holistic systems mapping and detailed functional auditing and analysis. The 3i One-Shot model necessitated clear understanding as to where the problems where and their consequential effect on output, we were able to blueprint a map for each location and provide a crystallized comparison between functions. The real trick, if any, was to carefully scenario test every system suggestion coming out of the diagnostic consulting stage and finally discover an optimal ‘fit’ for the entire organization”.

-- AOP President