



Simma Lieberman Associates

Successful Client Results

1- Situation: A Fortune 500 Company contacted us because some of the most talented women were leaving the organization. Some of them were starting their own businesses but others were being hired by the competition. They were worried about the loss of talent and reputation. They also wanted to position themselves in the female market and be known as a place where women could succeed.

Our process: We conducted an organizational survey, and interviewed senior leaders. We interviewed women in their workforce and women who left, in order to identify key reasons why women were leaving.

Findings: Senior executives had very narrow views of leadership methods. These views interfered with their ability to see women as leaders in their organization, so women were not being promoted past a certain level. This thinking permeated the culture of the organization. Senior leadership was methodology based as opposed to focusing on the outcomes.

Solution: We helped the CEO develop and implement an inclusion and utilization strategy that was more outcomes based. This included a new plan for recruitment, and retention of women in the company. As the organization's mindset changed, more women were given opportunities for promotion. Women are now in senior leadership and they have increased market share in the female market.

2- Situation: The Director of a public agency contacted us because the organization older employees starting to retire and there were not enough new hires to take their place and those that were there were not yet qualified. There was tension amongst the younger new hires and the older more experienced employees that were interfering with succession planning and implementation. The Executive Director recognized the potential to increase productivity but knowledge sharing was at a standstill.

Process: We shadowed the executive director and other managers and employees to observe interactions, lack of interaction and reaction. We conducted generation-based focus groups.



Findings: Older more experienced employees had assumptions about younger employees. They were concerned that the younger people would be leaving. Younger, newer hires thought they couldn't ask questions or makes suggestions to the older employees.

Solution: We created a facilitated dialogue process between younger, newer hires and older, more experienced employees. As a result, older and younger employees are now sharing information, experience and technical knowledge. They are able to get more work done in shorter times and better serve their customer base. A formal mentoring program was established to improve succession planning. The agency continues to do well despite budget issues in this economy.

3- Situation: A national trade association had a decrease in membership and income. The association still had to serve their membership, and develop and implement a strategy for growth. The Board of Directors was suggesting they start lay-offs in order to cut costs. The CEO contacted us to help with maintaining productivity during this time.

Process: We met with the Board of Directors, the leadership team and human resources to review the current state of the association, future business objectives and identify challenges. We also surveyed the employees

Findings: Staff was not doing all they could to bring in new members. There was a lack of participation and communication between leadership and employees, and morale was low. During the survey process we saw that employees had ideas and suggestions to improve the organization but they didn't think that input was being valued.

Solution: We worked with the Board and Association leadership to meet with employees, discuss their business challenges and employee generated solutions. Employees were willing to work fewer hours if it meant that people could keep their jobs. Individual employees had undiscovered skills and experience that would help streamline the process of communicating with membership to identify their needs. They also planned a way to improve membership involvement through the use of online resources.

4- Situation: A company in the hospitality industry noticed that there was a decrease in employee performance and increase in employee errors at one of their locations. Where there had been stellar customer service, there was now an increase in complaints. There seemed to be a lack of focus by the employees and an increase in conflict amongst individuals and groups. There was already a loss of revenue due to the economic downturn and they knew that if they didn't take immediate action it would only get



worse.

Process: We spent two days shadowing the regional director and observing interactions with staff at every level. We also interviewed several managers, employees and key influencers to determine what the issues were, what was in the organization's control and what was not.

Findings: The regional director was feeling pressured to increase revenue and bring in more customers. He was also feeling pressure and stress in his personal due to the job loss of his spouse. The way he managed his stress was to pass it on to his employees and spend most of his time in his office silo.

The level of stress in the organization was palpable. Employees felt that they didn't know the current state of the organization and that information was being kept from them. In the absence of information, people fill in the blanks with their own fears. Employees were having a hard time focusing on customers.

When the regional director was on-site he spent most of the time criticizing everyone, and giving one-word answers to questions. Employees were disempowered and afraid to make decisions concerning the customer needs. There was a culture of stress.

Solution: We knew that the regional director needed to lower the organizational stress level and return the power to meet customer needs to the employees. We taught the regional director how to manage his own stress, make decisions under pressure, and share information with employees. We taught the employees how to manage their stress, take care of themselves under pressure and communicate their concerns.

We helped the executive director develop a plan to lower the stress level of his organization and communicate his concerns with the CEO.