



Getting everyone rowing in the same direction

Case Study

Curiousmind (CM) works with an executive team to improve alignment and efficiency

EXECUTIVE TEAM ALIGNMENT

THE CHALLENGE

With poor alignment and invisibility to most of the workforce the executive leadership team had a long history of friction amongst several members that was impacting on efficiency, effectiveness and morale.

THE SOLUTION

CM personnel attended a scheduled three-day offsite to observe and then offer training and coaching as the meeting progressed. Rather than teaching theory the focus was to use our observations of their process to show them more effective, less stressful ways of relating, running meetings and dealing with conflict.

THE RESULTS

Immediate, observable improvements in the way the team listened to each other, spoke to each other and approached difficult issues.

A much stronger sense of an aligned team that were able to lead the organisation through change.

With many years' experience working at most levels of management the CM facilitator was able to use the conflict that arose in the room to help the participants "let go" and engage in more supportive conversation



THE CHALLENGE:

This was a group of high functioning executives with strong engineering backgrounds. The style of their meetings was very fact, information focused with a strong adversarial, debating approach.

Team work, by its' very nature, is about cohesion and the synergy that occurs when the focus moves from competition to collaboration. Where understanding different points of view is valued more than simply winning an argument. Egos, win lose mindsets and debating are all factors that get in the way of high performing teams achieving their potential.

Like many organisations this leadership culture was deeply steeped in beliefs, attitudes and habits that are diametrically opposed to the stated intent of high performing team work.

The challenge therefore was to help the leadership team members develop awareness of their bias's and to start building trust, respect, commitment and accountability.

It took less than 10 minutes for the first friction to arise and make apparent that there were many legacy issues at the table.



Building a sense of team

THE SOLUTION

With already high levels of trust with most in the group, the Curiousmind facilitator stepped in as soon as conflict arose. Then, after introducing a little theory on leadership and intra and inter-personal awareness he proceeded to help the group reflect on many of their assumptions.

With trust slowly building and with the group prepped on taking some risks to change the status quo, the CM facilitator asked a question that caused everyone to pause and reflect on some of their deeply held assumption

s. (it's important to note here that the question was not scripted – it was purely a response to what was presenting in the room at that moment).

The conversation that ensued resulted in a significant shift in attitudes as team members opened up and began sharing more about themselves and what drove them to think as they did. By opening a traditionally taboo issue – their relationship with conflict (and an elephant in the room) and inviting a little vulnerability the group began trusting each other's motives more. This, in turn, led to cycles of improved candour, acceptance and ultimately trust and respect.

With the relational side of issues improved the group then went back to their meeting with more open minds, more generosity of spirit and improved curiosity about different points of view. At the end of day one the team were already commenting on how much faster everything was going.

By the end of day three, with inter-weaving coaching and deepening experience of behaving as a high functioning team the group made a commitment. With the value trust now clear to them they agreed to set aside time each month purely devoted to them as a team. The Curiousmind facilitator attended many of these sessions helping them continue to deepen cohesiveness that led to improved effectiveness and morale.

“Low trust is the highest tax most organisations will ever pay.” (Steven Covey)

When trust is low every single activity that involves people will take longer.

ABOUT CURIOUSMIND



Curiousmind is the coming together of a team of passionate educators and change agents. With many years' experience in the personal and professional development sphere and diverse career backgrounds CM facilitators and coaches have unified around a desire to re-engage people with their innate curiosity.

We see curiosity as the catalyst for all forms of engagement leading to improved exploration and discovery, creativity, problem solving, team bonding and learning.

We have uncovered several key educational and managerial assumptions that actively suffocate people's curiosity. By unveiling these assumptions, we help engage and empower people to learn and change.