



# How Capable is Your Senior Management Team?

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# Characteristics of a Senior Management Team

- Will consist of between 8-20 senior executives
- The CEO will be the most senior person
- The balance of the team will consist of:
  - Regional / Business Unit / Divisional Heads
  - Functional Heads
- Most frequently represented functions:
  - Finance
  - Marketing
- Least frequently represented functions:
  - Human Resources
  - I.T.
  - Legal

# What is the Purpose of Your Senior Team?

- At first glance it seems a very naïve question but it always causes a great deal more debate than anticipated
- Indication as to what the answer(s) might be, include:
  - Ability to deal with “adaptive change” proactively and reactively
  - Custodian of the values and culture of the company
  - Subjects to be covered by the team
  - Balance between “discussions” and “decisions”
  - How each individual member sees the purpose of the team
  - How the team is perceived by the rest of the company
  - How the team communicates with the rest of the company
  - Criteria for deciding the effectiveness of the team

# Leadership Qualities: Personal Traits

- Ability to inspire
- Integrity
- Balance between EQ and IQ
- Willingness to devolve responsibility
- Possess Cultural Empathy
- Ability to create trust
- Resilience – Physical, Emotional, Mental, Social
- Courage
- Humility
- Life Long Learner

# Leadership Qualities: **Skills/ Experiences**

- Deal with Adaptive Change
- Pursue simplicity rather than deal with complexity
- Ability to Influence
- Understanding of communications
- Customer orientation
- Balance creativity with innovation
- Balance strategic thinking with implementation

## Senior Executive Team – Modus Operandi

- Likely to be based in different locations
- Frequency of meetings varies
  - Every week
  - 1 or 2 days monthly
  - 2 or 3 days quarterly
- Efficiency with which they operate as a team in between formal meeting varies enormously
- Agenda for meetings tend to have the following characteristics
  - Too many items for the time available
  - Attendees not well prepared
  - Mix of operational / strategic
  - Clarity of decision making and accountability often one of the weakest elements
  - Few other people in the company know what they do - Communications

## Senior Executive Teams – Team Roles (Hogan IPS)

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Results</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People who organise work, clarifying roles, coordinate and provide direction for others</li></ul>   |
| <b>Pragmatism</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People who provide hard headed evaluation of ideas and proposals</li><li>- Offer pragmatic solutions and not driven by need to maintain harmony</li></ul>                                   |
| <b>Innovation</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People who recognise when conditions have changed and when the team needs to adapt</li><li>- They spot emerging trends and patterns quickly</li><li>- Generate creative solutions</li></ul> |
| <b>Process</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People concerned with implementation – use of processes – reliable, organised, care about following procedure</li></ul>   |
| <b>Relationships</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People concerned about morale – how team members are getting along – positive, optimistic, attuned to people’s feelings – good at building cohesive relationships</li></ul>                 |

## Career Path to Being a Senior Management Executive

1. It will vary from person to person
2. Increasingly a number of the team will have joined relatively recently
3. Check that “experience map”
4. Leading as an Expert and leading as a Generalist will give individuals a very different perspective
5. May well be competition within the group



# Out of the Comfort Zone

## Leading as an Expert

Detailed knowledge and experience  
 Knowing what to do and how to do it  
 Being right and Being in control  
 IQ driven  
 A seat at the table because of expertise

## Lead Outside Expertise

- Not having expertise of all
- *Giving up some control/detail*
- Influencing and motivating
- Being strategic

**10 Times  
Scope Change**

## Lead a Team as the Expert

- Solving problems
- *Keeping others on track*
- Knowing more than others

## Leading as a Generalist

Emotional competence  
 Winning hearts and minds  
 Ability to work with all types  
 Vision and Enabling others  
 Executive presence

## Individual Contributor

Develop expertise

## What Does It Take to Engage in Healthy Debate?

- A reason to talk to each other and a belief that they need each other at least in some way in order to succeed as an organisation
- Adequate time together that isn't just about the immediate agenda
- A willingness to show a degree of vulnerability with each other
- A variety of perspectives that have a voice in discussions
- An acceptance of collective responsibility
- The Power of Randomness

# Senior Management Team – Decision Summary Document

Date of Meeting -

Subject Matter Discussed -

Purpose of the Discussion -

Who Presented/Sponsored -

Key Decisions/Actions -

Next Steps -

Responsibility for Next Steps -

## **Communication Required**

→ Message

→ Target Audience

→ Timeline