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Executive Search & Board Advisory

AS A LEADER YOU ARE TASKED WITH ASSESSING AND BUILDING THE TEAM – 7 POINTS OF REFLECTION



"When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity" John F. Kennedy

Blenheim Partners is an Executive Search and Board Advisory firm. We specialise in top level executive placement and succession planning. From our engagement with many Chief Executive Officers and Chairmen, we thought we would provide some points to consider when being appointed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO):

1. Your approach to your executive team

How you communicate your message is crucial to your success. All styles will create a certain reaction in the short and long term. Your one on one approach will be instrumental in your efforts to achieve the desired outcomes you seek. The table thumper, direct and to the point, or relaxed and calm method of engagement will be something you need to consider. Each will have its own repercussion.

2. Motivating

How will you motivate your Executive team? Do you inspire through praise or do you rely on fear? Again, both will bring about a result. Praise has to be genuine and appropriated. Over

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praise is not good either, the effect of praise is then lost. You need to be authentic and timely when giving praise. If it is genuine, it can raise spirits very quickly.

3. Learning from your failures

You will need to encourage your team to make decisions and take risks. You will have to delegate responsibility and establish an atmosphere of trust. You will need to create an environment where the team can discuss their mistakes in open dialogue.

4. Bringing out the best from your team

Bringing out the best from your Executive team is never easy, but it is essential. This requires you to sell your vision. You have to inspire the team through your stories, language and consistency of focus.

5. Managing the egos

This takes leadership; this is where discipline and alignment of team is greater than individual ego. If members of the team do not match your expectations, then the team has to expect that those individuals will not be required to play their role any longer. This is the difference of having the talented superstars who can disrupt the team, verse having a functional working team that combines well. They are decisions for what you have in mind for the short and long term, and where the company strategy is sitting. If someone is overseeing a major deal, would you let them go if they have an overzealous ego, or do you pick your timing? It is a fine balance, and comes back to whether you are building a team of champions or a champion team.

6. Creating the best team

Being prepared to rotate people and broaden them can be very effective if done well. It can create a high level of energy and shake up the dynamics to create a powerful and loyal executive team. It can also be a major blunder if done incorrectly. It requires an understanding of the individual executive's talents.

7. Moving on your executive team

You may need to make change early. It is never easy, but if performance from some is starting to dip, then you need to ask where you will be in two to three years' time if they are still in the Executive team. They may well be blocking other very good talent. Letting people go while they are still good can benefit them as well as you, and if you set the appropriate tone, there will be others willing to take their place.

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- Board Strategy and Structure Consulting;
- External Succession Planning; and
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