

The Recession Busting Driver

A Practical Evaluation Tool
for Surviving and Successfully
Moving Beyond Recession



For Executive Management Teams

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*“You don’t ever want a crisis to go to waste
– it’s an opportunity to do important things you would otherwise avoid.”*

The dictum of Rahm Emanuel, Barack Obama's chief of staff

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The idea of creating this tool originated from Derek Brimley at British Airways. As the Manager of Professional Training and Development together with his extensive knowledge of the BQC Network's range of products, he considered the development of such a product as both timely and essential. His view was that such a product should embrace and build upon the core qualities of existing BQC Network publications, which combine the development of in depth awareness of key issues with practical application.

This tool is specifically designed to be used at a one day facilitated workshop. It provides a platform upon which to build a detailed profile of actions that need to be undertaken to survive the current downturn/recession and innovate into the future. The recent changes in both the UK and International economic environment demonstrates how increasingly difficult it is to plan for the future and how essential it is to adapt quickly. However, in the words of Charles Darwin,

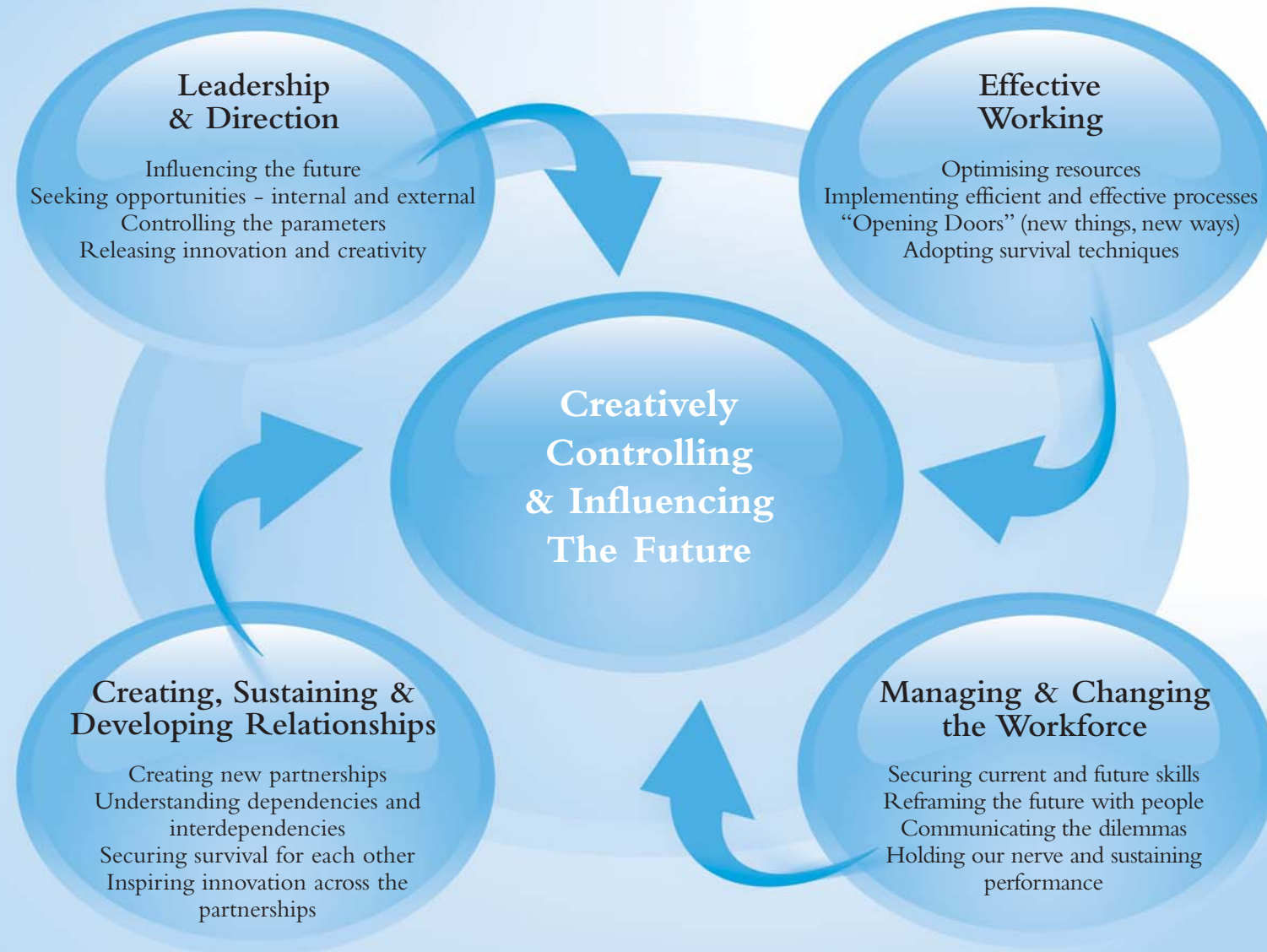
*“It is not the strong or the intelligent that will survive,
but those that can adapt to change.”*

Whilst the content of the tool is detailed, the facilitation provides the additional focus and specific interpretation of the issues an organisation is facing. This deep dive approach works equally well in both the private and public sectors.

There are five top Questions for Chief Executives and Political Leaders to consider:-

- 1 Where is your organisation now and where will you and your organisation be in 12 months time?
- 2 What have you got to do to get there?
- 3 Are all your stakeholders pulling in the same direction?
- 4 Do you feel you are in 'control' and able to influence the future?
- 5 So what are you going to do now?

The Recession Busting Model



Completing the Questionnaire

The “scoring system” shown below is designed to enable you to consider both how well you do things and how widely you do them. Read each question and tick the box under the graphic that best describes your organisation for each question. Try to make your decision based on the evidence you have available to

you rather than just “gut feel”. There is a sheet at the back of the “driver” that can be used to capture notes on why you have positioned your organisation where you have, if you wish to use it.



Don't Know



No



Yes some areas,
some extent



Yes some areas, to
a great extent



Yes most areas,
some extent



Yes most areas, to
a great extent

1 Leadership and Direction

When times are difficult your stakeholders will expect you to provide the leadership to see the organisation through the crisis! They expect you to focus on current survival and securing the future for the organisation. They look to you to provide clarity of direction, the context and environment for them to succeed. Your personal values and behaviours are critical in influencing organisational culture and need to underpin

difficult decisions about efficiency savings, downsizing etc. How you behave will have a significant influence on morale and productivity; ultimately, the way you lead and manage people and projects will have a significant impact on whether your organisation will succeed.



	?	NO	Y	YES	YES	YES
1.1 Do you and the leadership team remain constant to your organisation's Mission, Vision and Values during these difficult times?						
1.2 Have you as a leadership team been ruthless in ensuring you are focusing your resources on only those activities that are critical to your future survival and success?						
1.3 Do you as a leadership team dedicate time to "getting your head up" and look around to absorb new ideas, working practices and thinking?						
1.4. Have you as a leadership team identified the short, medium and long term efficiency gains and opportunities that are possible?						
1.5. Do you fully understand how your market or field of operations is changing during the current recession?						
1.6 Do you constantly evaluate how changes in the economic, social and environmental climate will affect your future direction, policies and strategies?						
1.7 Have you made an assessment of worst case scenarios and reviewed contingency plans?						
1.8 Do you maintain and regularly review your strategic and operational risk, taking mitigating action where appropriate?						
1.9 Do you understand what has caused you to be successful to date and how you need to exploit that in the future?						
1.10 Do you understand which are your key performance indicators (KPI's) in the current business climate and set/meet targets for your KPI's (e.g. ROI, Pension Investment Portfolio's)						
1.11 Given the recession have you identified the factors that represent the biggest threats to your organisation in the short, medium and long term?						
1.12 Do you have contingency plans with identified "triggers" in place which are appropriately communicated and understood across the organisation?						
1.13 Do you have a full understanding of potential issues caused by the financial commitments and obligations the organisation is facing in the short medium and long term (e.g. pension funds, equal pay)?						
1.14 Do you ensure you are optimising the use of all potential communication channels? (e.g. Social Media)						

2 Effective Working

During difficult times you need to ensure you are working in the most efficient and effective ways. You need the right knowledge and information to understand how well you are doing and where you should be improving. You need to be open to innovative ideas and challenge traditional thinking. You need to embrace change and be prepared

to take managed risks. You need to be quick to adapt to new environments and challenges whilst also ensuring you deliver your products and services. You should continuously ask yourselves “are we doing the right things, in the right way at the right pace?”



	?	NO	Y?	YES	YES	YES
2.1 Do your management systems and methods focus on improving efficiency and effectiveness?						
2.2 Do you understand how effective your core processes are and how robust they are in the current environment?						
2.3 Is your market intelligence and management information capacity sufficiently responsive to current volatilities to help you plan in short, medium and long term timescales?						
2.4 Do you use performance management data to inform policy and strategy and reassess corporate risk?						
2.5 Are you aligning your processes with partners' processes where relevant?						
2.6 Do you maintain and regularly review and update a range of financial scenarios to cope with the unpredictability of the times, and do you have contingency plans to address them?						
2.7 Do you have a strategy for optimising the use of current technology/software and exploiting free technology/software to reduce new investment costs?						
2.8 Does everyone understand and acknowledge the importance of their role in process improvement and how this relates to specific efficiency targets?						
2.9 Are you optimising the use of utilities and other resources (e.g. comparing charges and prices, sharing resources with neighbours etc)?						
2.10 Do your ways of working together generate creative conversations that can lead to innovative solutions?						

3 Managing and Changing the Workforce

Most people want to do a good job (and keep their jobs in the current climate!) You can help colleagues excel by the way you manage, support and develop them. Ensuring they understand the context to events, especially in difficult times, is a key task for leaders and managers alike. Future success depends on securing the right people with the right skills, knowledge and experience. This involves reskilling, giving people opportunities to change and adapt, encouraging participation and allowing those that can to take appropriate decisions and share credit for success. This creates an

organisation that people will want to work for, with the kind of spirit that develops real creativity and success giving you the best chance to survive. You need to have the mechanisms in place to support people impacted by organisational changes, whether they leave or remain with the organisation. For some people these changes will represent a major crisis in their lives and could affect them emotionally and psychologically.



	?	NO	Yr	Yr	YES	YES
3.1 Do you and the leadership team have effective ways of keeping your people fully informed as honestly as commercial confidentiality will allow?						
3.2 Do you have the right balance of people with the appropriate skills knowledge and expertise to secure survival and create a stronger organisation?						
3.3 Have you ensured that everyone is involved in the drive to greater efficiency and each individual understands their personal and organisational roles and responsibilities?						
3.4 Is individual/team performance evaluated regularly against the organisational objectives?						
3.5 Do you ensure a high level of engagement with trades unions, professional organisations or other employee representative groups?						
3.6 Do you provide appropriate support to the workforce when uncertainties occur and anxiety levels are high (e.g. restructuring, redundancy, mergers etc.)?						
3.7 When considering reducing employment levels, have you identified the true cost to you, both financial and non-financial (e.g. skills loss)?						
3.8 Do you know your employees well enough individually to ensure you are making best use of human resources, including those skills and talents which may not have been revealed during recruitment processes?						
3.9 Do you know what your employees views are on the key factors which affect their motivation and satisfaction?						
3.10 Do you know what current concerns are emerging among groups of employees about the future of your organisation?						
3.11 Are people increasingly willing to become involved in considering, planning and implementing new working methodologies?						
3.12 Are middle and frontline managers achieving the balance between leading change and innovation and maintaining and managing existing arrangements?						
3.13 Do you actively manage absence levels?						

4 Creating, Sustaining and Developing Relationships

In the drive for increased efficiency and effectiveness, (or in some instances survival), future organisational success will depend on your ability to maximise the way in which you manage not only your resources, but also your ability to work with and through your partners. Through joint working with a range of partners, using their experience, knowledge and expertise to complement your own, you will avoid duplication and be

able to deliver a more efficient complete service. Working collaboratively in partnership could be your only means of securing your organisational existence! The interdependency of organisations comes sharply into focus during a downturn in the economy.



	?	NO	Y?	YES	YES	YES
4.1 Are we good at seeking out and developing relationships with new partners to secure and propel the business forward?						
4.2 Do you have ways to generate innovative collaborative solutions with your stakeholders based on customer needs?						
4.3 Do you and the leadership team maintain close working relationships with partners and other key stakeholders, involving them in decisions on how to get through the recession?						
4.4 Do you fully understand your stakeholders' requirements of you and their expectations of you as a result of the current economic environment?						
4.5 Do you have sufficient knowledge of those aspects of the changed climate for your partners, customers and suppliers that might impact on your organisation?						
4.6 Do you work collaboratively with partners to improve efficiency and effectiveness?						
4.7 Are you confident that partners have the commitment and processes to deliver their side of the partnership?						
4.8 Are you regularly reviewing your approach to procurement to ensure appropriateness and efficiency in the supply chain?						
4.9 Have you effectively communicated your commitment and arranged sufficient alignment of your own processes to make your contribution to the objectives of the partnership?						
4.10 Given the economic climate do you have confidence in the effectiveness of your customer engagement and relationship management processes?						
4.11 Do you know how your customers, partners and stakeholders view you, especially during these times of uncertainty?						
4.12 Do you ensure you manage your business ethically especially in the current economic situation?						



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