



Corporate Agility, *the* competitive strategy for the “e-world”

Background & Purpose of this paper

BQC Performance Management Ltd (BQC) is an international management consulting company that has been improving the performance of organisations, public or private, large or small, for over a decade. We help clients develop responsive organisations and build the resistance to marketplace and societal cycles, that creates advantage in today's changing world. Our track record embraces organisations public and private, in most industrialised parts of the world. We specifically help our clients to:

- Enhance their strategy formulation and deployment processes
- Commit (and equip) their entire workforces to an excellence agenda
- Communicate and obtain recognition for their achievements

Driven by globalisation, price pressure, industry consolidation, and such like we believe the traditional concepts of strategy development and business planning, as an annual activity are increasingly challenged. Many organisations are developing “Sensing & Responding” organisational capabilities to address these strategic uncertainties in a rapidly changing world. We assist organisations to maintain & improve such capabilities by helping them to develop highly responsive organisations. From our client experiences, our global networks and our research we inform our thinking. Currently we believe “Agility” is one of the biggest challenge facing organisations as we enter the e-world. We table this paper to help define such thoughts and terminology and to provoke debate. We seek to establish ongoing, global, dialogue on the key strategic challenges of the future. If you would like to comment or join our ‘e-news’ network on ‘Corporate Agility’ please contact helpdesk@bqc-network.com .

So what is 'Corporate Agility'?.....

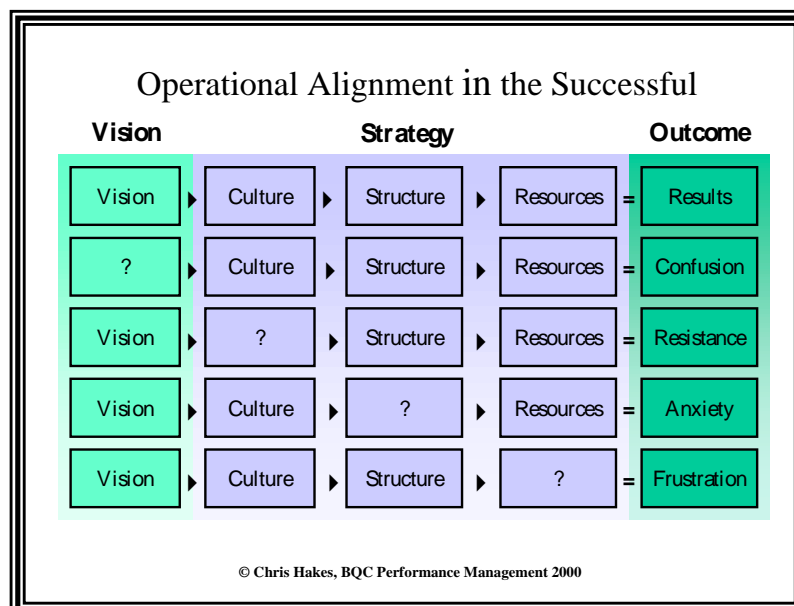
Put simply we believe that this is a key differentiating, strategic, factor - based on the capability of an organisation to identify strategic opportunities, and then subsequently to respond with speed and ability. Agility coupled with appropriate "sensing" and "alignment" skills will be the "table stakes for organisations" of the future.



In the e-world, it can be argued that it matters little how well an organisation has performed in the past, what does count is that it is equipped to respond to the changing demand of today's 'global market place'.

What are Good Practice Companies doing?

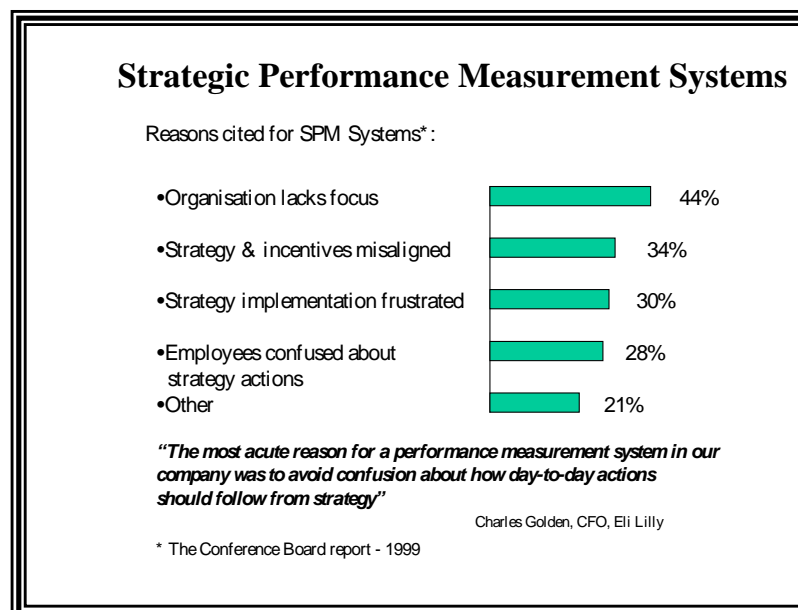
It is clear that successful organisations of the future are going to be managed very differently from today. The centralised "corporate" planning concepts of the past are in continual decline and much planning is now being initiated at the 'chalk face' – where the action is. Already it is clear that many successful businesses underpin their operations with highly integrated, fast and flexible strategic management systems, that can both sense and respond to opportunity in an appropriate timeframe.



Typically managers in most organisations will have little disagreement with what we have proposed to far, it is our experience that they will often have little consensus amongst themselves on how to address all the opportunities that may exist. Clearly an analysis of current performance will lead to views on current strengths (to exploit) and areas for improvement (to address) but this can be overwhelming and without a clear consensus on 'what good looks like' will not typically lead to appropriate change. Experience has taught us that change can only be effectively driven when an organisation can both **assess** clearly where it is currently at and then **define** where it intends to go. The means having both a 'handle' on current performance and an accepted consensus view on what you should strive to achieve and how to move forward.

Measuring Success

A key aspect of many excellent organisations is their ability to know what drives the bottom line results – to identify causal chains. With this in mind current strategic thinking has emphasised the relevance of the internal origins of competitive advantage. Good practice companies are demonstrating this by their success in defining performance indicators and linking them into causal trees.



Improving performance management systems and putting the "Measures that Matter" into their scorecards or other or such like is key to success.

What could you do next?

We hope this brief paper will have provoked a few thoughts, and confirmed for you what good practice organisations are doing.

If you would like to register for our 'e-news' network on such matters, please send your 'co-ordinates' to helpdesk@bqc-network.com

If you would like to know more about BQC services, drop us a line to sales@bqc-network.com and tell us of your challenge.

We leave you with eight key questions to test your 'future' readiness:

- 1. Have you a management consensus on which model(s) will successfully analyse the business environment in which you do and might operate?**
- 2. Are you able to quickly assess when to get into, and when to get out of, new business opportunities/models/markets?**
- 3. What informs your strategy with respect to organisational agility (your ongoing competence to sense and respond quickly to future opportunity)?**
- 4. Has your Vision(s) been translated into linked objectives and ultimately relevant metrics and goals?**
- 5. How much time per month do you spend reviewing performance in relation to strategy?**
- 6. Are your budgets linked to strategy?**
- 7. Are your incentive schemes ultimately linked to strategy?**
- 8. Do employees have a clear focus and understanding of your plans, strategies, values and what is required of them?**