



Organizational Coaching Works!

Keep Your Employees From Waltzing Out The Door!

New Research Indicates a 65% Increase in Productivity Over Training Alone



The focus of Tango Consulting is on building work cultures where people can do their best work. Tango works with organizations that want to build high trust work environments and with individuals who want to work and live authentically.

The approach is meant to reinforce an all too often forgotten truth: that management and leadership are deeply personal undertakings. Managers and leaders typically internalize their situations; they hunt for innovation and creative solutions to often challenging problems. In addition, in our work, we often find managers at all levels openly discuss their issues, fear, hopes and desires.

Many organizations use written surveys as helpful tools in discovering issues, but they are not necessarily reliable in finding a greater truth to identifying key issues and challenges. Through building relationships, interviewing and focus groups, I am able to identify and pursue critical and often private issues that cannot be discovered or fully appreciated through written analysis. By maintaining a

respect for these personal concerns we are able to maintain an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality, which are crucial elements to building high performance teams.

Tango's approach is based on five tracks. These are customized according to each organization's needs. Sometimes the best approach is training or consultation and coaching; many organizations choose a combination of all three approaches. These five tracks are:

Values & Mission Track:

Working with a core group of managers and leaders that look to realign the organization's mission with customer need and organizational purpose. Training integrates values and practice, streamlines management practices to move towards values coherence and achievement, analyses of internal policy and procedures and initiates realignment to satisfy stated values-based organizational objectives. A variety of group exercises, employee and customer forums and one-on-one sessions move stated values and practice together.

Corporate Culture Track:

This track integrates well with the previous track in that it examines how personnel interact, how the unstated rules of the company impact employee behavior and how the company strategically promotes and/or reacts to change and innovation. We examine how actions are rewarded or punished, how new or outside ideas and influences are addressed, encouraged, feared, implemented or hidden from each other and expose decision-making processes and power relationships. Over the course of this approach, this influence of new techniques and an analysis of procedures and beliefs causes Corporate Culture to unfreeze, change and capture new organizational standards.

Management Skills Track:

Management skills cannot be effectively taught and implemented in a rigid corporate culture. This is why the preliminary tracks are introduced to open managers to new ideas, methods and possible outcomes. These skills are taught in classroom sessions, one-on-ones and small group sessions, through

materials developed for each company. All classroom training is competency-based and our approach is continuously evaluated for content, presentation and relevance. The teaching of management skills places a significant emphasis on the use of strategic and structural supports available to the manager that foster implementation success. In other words, the basis of management and the infrastructures created to support it are integrated in a manner that is consistent with the stated organizational values and direction.

Team Building Track:

This phase integrates value, culture and skills in overlapping approaches to team identity building, problem recognition, problem solving, consequence evaluation, quality improvement and building trust and support among management and employees throughout the company. Quality improvement is especially powerful in this phase, as is personal/professional growth, cooperation and innovation in teams. Significant here is the attention given to the movement towards team reward and task accomplishment, and the redefining and eventual elimination of traditional top-down management structure. Team building emphasizes the development of heterogeneous groups of employees, supervisors, managers and others with a stake in a well-run company.

Reward System Track:

Too few companies clearly identify through words, practice and evaluation, the results employees should achieve. Often, lean incentive programs and a failure to recognize and promote self-motivation and organi-

zational rewards lead to high but avoidable turnover. Reward systems do not have to be based solely on salary increases or bonus systems, although the savings derived from motivated employees will more than pay for typical cash incentive programs. This track integrates the management skills taught regarding understanding human behavior and introduces incentive programs that integrate culture and team functioning. The focus is to objectively measure personnel performance, establish measurable and attainable objectives, teach managers how to recognize employee support and training needs that make the organization and the individual successful, minimize competitiveness and mediocrity, slow turnover and move toward continuous employee evaluation rather than on an annual basis. Setting up an effective reward system promotes team success over individual success and information hoarding. Managers and supervisors learn how to give systematic constructive and corrective feedback to those being supervised and facilitate information flow to appropriate levels, establishing clear guidelines or performance and behavior.

Some of our observations from doing this program over the years are:

If Nothing Changes . . . Nothing Changes.

Generally, we find that change is acceptable, it is being changed that causes friction and resentment. This situation leads to an "Us & Them" culture. We have found that the building of trust and reduction of fear-based management is critical to change.

Achieving New Outcomes Requires Learning New Skills.

The reason front line and management staff do not always perform well is often related to recruitment, hiring and training procedures and practices. The preferred method for classroom training is for a cross-section of representatives from all levels of the company to be involved, including top management. Sometimes we encounter reluctance by people who feel overworked and underpaid to learn new skills. The United States is quite anti-intellectual in nature. Much of this has to do with our antiquated educational system that serves as the model for our dominant management design. That is, management is primarily hierarchical, just as classrooms are in this country. One person, the teacher (boss) makes the decisions, assignments and doles out rewards of their design and choosing. Education can be an unempowering process in this country. Americans are not taught to be team players and yet our management systems believe teams form naturally. Teamwork takes training and rehearsal. In order to accomplish new goals and perform new tasks, new skills must be learned. An anonymous saying clearly underscores the essential necessity for organizational learning: "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got."

Bigger, better, faster is the American Way.

Therefore, it is no wonder managers expect quick and easy solu-

Katherine Carol's *Tango Times*

tions. The fact is that management systems are very complex. Situations change and evolve at lightening speed and at least two strategies are necessary for managers to adapt and prosper. The first requires learning new ways to think and problem solve; the second requires anticipation of issues by creating an early warning system throughout the company so surprises are kept to a minimum. Management's Function is to Lead, Not to Control. Far too much emphasis is placed on creating and managing systems that restrict or eliminate change. We often treat workers, customers and product ideas as interchangeable component parts. The dominant theme is control. Control staff, control the budget and control customer desire. The fallacy, of course, is that human systems are generally uncontrollable as are natural systems. Organizations are "organic;" they are made up of human beings who bring conflict, new ideas, joy, sorrow and a thousand other emotions into the workplace. These emotions create fluid demands upon management and

supervisor systems that cannot, under any circumstances, maintain control.

It is advisable to create flexible systems that encourage shared personal expression that work toward building the business. Channeling this expression within a reasonable framework cultivates innovation and loyalty.

Finally, we have learned that companies need to pay attention to the infrastructure, the brains and knowledge it possesses and the soul of the company. Too often we neglect the why of our business, what we hold sacred and how we treat people connected to our business. The issues and challenges companies face will be in large part human problems, and thoughtful, caring human designs will be required to build the future success of any company.

I know that you need to share this information with people who might not be familiar with my work. Currently, my business is with a wide range of companies and non-

profit organizations. I frequently keynote conferences and meetings throughout the country. I have worked with companies as big as United Airlines, as well as, new start-up venture capital companies, and non-profit organizations that focus on helping people who are not typically considered for employment find employment. It has been my privilege to work with the business community to promote more diverse hiring practices.

I have included additional information to assist you in understanding all that Tango Consulting is undertaking. You will love the article from Colorado Woman's News and my new book, *Tango: Dance of Self-Discovery*. Also included are few examples of strategies used with some of my clients.



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