

White Paper: Site Purpose, Values and Strategy development within the context of the wider business

Purpose:

To promote a clear and simple process to transform and uplift Factory unit performance so that the colleagues at all levels who make up its teams become empowered through a common sense of Purpose, Values and Strategy.

Ultimately it is all about developing that “performance leap” which will capture people’s imagination and relate keenly to business performance and results. The approach outlined below articulates how to achieve this and provides some useful tools to help with implementation.

The Challenge:

A manufacturing site can lose its balance at any time. Some suffer a slow erosion of leadership, clarity, accountability and self-motivation others a more immediate shock following a significant event (business loss, change of owner, loss of key team member). Others still have been poorly managed for a number of years to the point that there is no cohesion left to bond teams while defined procedures have been replaced by uncontrolled custom and practice.

On the flip side of the coin high performing businesses and teams will want to step back regularly and take stock of their situation, re-assess their assumptions and share their findings with their teams to generate new interest and energy behind their common goals.

In the end it comes down to people. People play a huge part in every business process and like any other element generate inefficiencies and waste. These can be personal (motivation – why do what I do?), situational (lack of clear structures, processes, support, guidance and leadership) and capability driven. It is therefore the goal of this paper to provide the leader with a blueprint to pull together the various strands of accepted strategy development practice into a format that is practical, engaging and inspires you, your teams and the business to deliver the improvements you want to see.

The Performance Leap Model:

It is well known that purpose, values and strategy are vital ingredients for success in any business and if just held at business level it is, to the vast majority of the workforce, at risk of being a hollow set of statements. In his book ‘Grow: How Ideals Power Growth and Profit at the World’s 50 Greatest Companies’ Jim Stengel argues passionately that the businesses that thrive are the ones with a clear brand and message i.e. purpose and values. His chosen top 50 companies, called the Stengel 50, have outperformed the rest of the market by 400% when compared against the Standard and Poor’s 500.

To generate that buy in and genuine adoption by all staff these 3 elements need to percolate all the way down the organisation keeping hold of the original message while making it relevant to the person on the line doing the job or in the office at the computer. The model below illustrates the point and the intrinsic need to link purpose to team delivery.

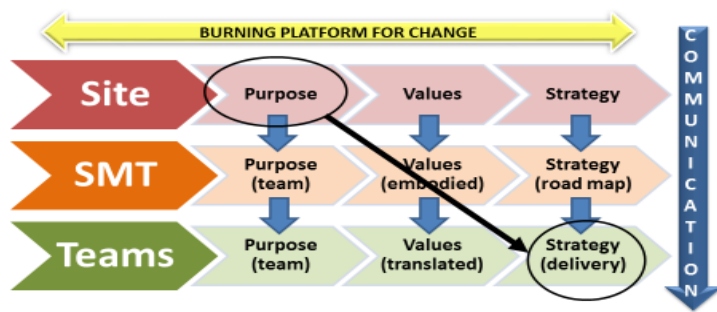


Figure 1: The link between Purpose, Values and Strategy within a business unit

In undertaking the journey to high performing excellence it is important that each stage is mapped out individually and linked to an effective communication plan as it is rolled out. To be clear – this is not a simple top-down activity; each element requires involvement and engagement from managers and employees alike. It is the role of the General Manager and his/her Leadership Team to facilitate the translation of purpose into daily or even hourly goals that give meaning to the staff doing the work. If this can be achieved the rewards will be magnified. Staff will feel pride and push themselves harder; they will escalate and take ownership at the right time; they will even tell managers when they have got it wrong and what it will take to get it right.

Who to involve and how:

To experience that true light bulb moment and that utopia of engagement involvement must be as open and candid as possible. This will naturally narrow as you go down the layers to afford greater clarity in the message while still offering a level of individual involvement. Before any questions can be asked though staff must feel they are in a safe environment. This can be facilitated in the following ways:

- Create an informal environment of peers – a good example of this is to take advantage of manager training days where sections of each module can be allocated to the development of the transformational strategy.
- Sponsorship from the site GM/Site Director or MD – there will be little interest to engage if the most senior manager at site is not at least sponsoring the programme.
- A strong rapport between the facilitator and employees/managers – This can be achieved by...
 - Good listening skills (actively involve people in the business SWOT analysis, of which more later, or demonstrate that concerns have been translated into action)
 - Try asking managers/employees to offer the SLT feedback. The key is to be gracious in receiving this and relaxed. Doing this in small groups takes away pressure to make comments individually. In organisations where trust is still shaky this could be done anonymously.
- Don't pre-judge any outcomes – provide the right level of steer for discussions but don't interrupt the flow of debate
- Be personally vulnerable – share stories about yourself where you may not have been at your best. This will help encourage greater honesty when considering the business' current situation.

The process flow below highlights the discrete stages incorporating engagement and communication all the way through. By setting up a safe environment it will be much easier to draw out the responses you want

(and sometimes don't want) to hear. The left hand side of the model shows the points at which you would involve your managers/employee forum while the right hand side focuses on site wide communication.

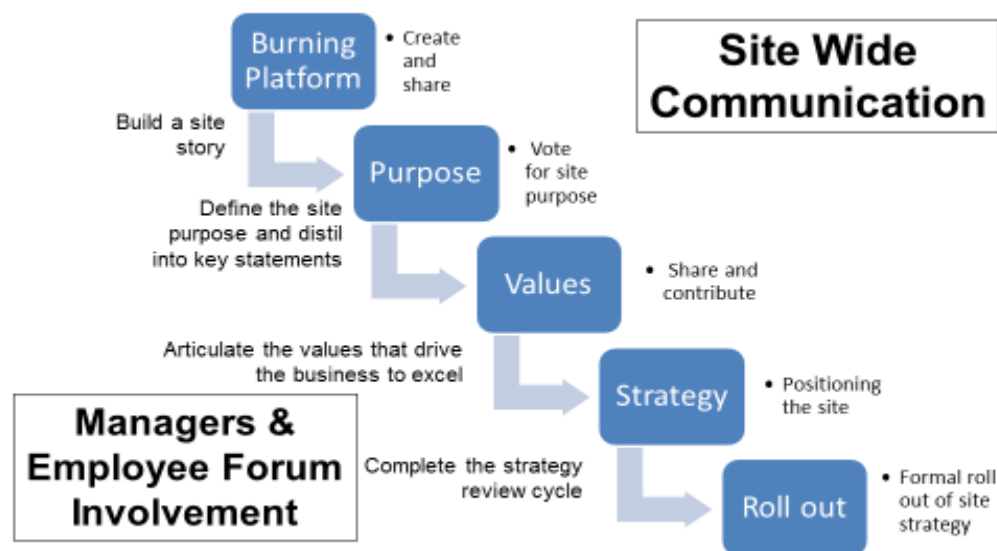


Figure 2: The stage by stage engagement process for developing and communicating Purpose, Values and Strategy



As has been highlighted in the first box no exercise can be conducted unless there is a reason to do so. This is where developing a burning platform is essential. Without an understanding of what the absence of purpose, values and strategy means to individuals there can be no engagement in the change journey. Conversely even a well-established vision and strategy needs revisiting at set intervals to avoid complacency and staleness.

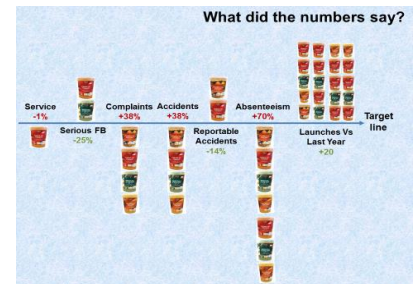
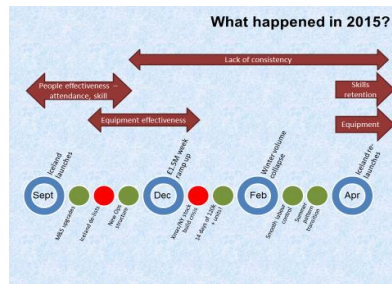
The burning Platform for change:

People have to really see the need for change before they can actively participate in the change journey itself. The approach here should be two fold. Firstly it is about understanding the situation. This can vary from a straight forward SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis to a full blown situational diagnosis. How you approach this will depend on time and whether you are already part way through a 3 year business cycle. In either case talking to as many people as possible as far down the organisation as possible is critical.

This White Paper is not designed to explain the various diagnostic techniques that can be used to support this process as there are excellent books on this subject the best of which is 'How to Think Strategically: Your Roadmap to Innovation and Results' by David Sola and Jerome Couturier. It is the conversion of this information that really interests us here. This is where converting it into a simple SWOT summary that can be plainly understood by all staff really helps. Not only does it help consolidate your thoughts into 4-5 key points under each heading but it also helps to explain it to everybody.

However a dry SWOT is not enough. To really launch a programme requires more. A thought provoking presentation; a colourful beginning; a few challenging questions pinned up around the site. Below are a few thoughts on how to bring a burning imperative to life:

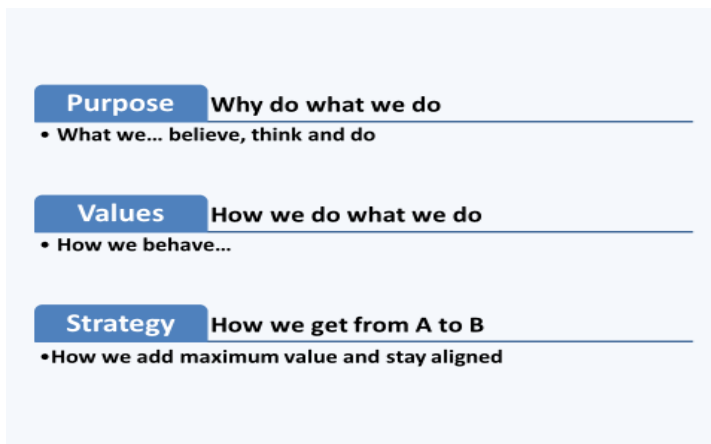
- Meal Solutions
Making Every Meal Moment Special
- # Welcome to 2SFG Grimsby
- 
- Where are we?
What is our purpose?
Who are we?
How are we going to win?
- Let's find out...**
-  **2SFG** MEAL SOLUTIONS
- Making Every Meal Moment Special



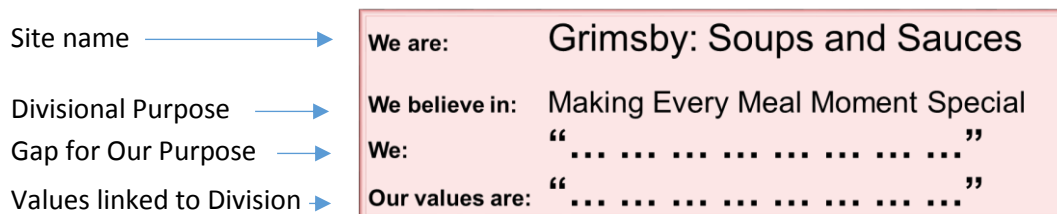
- 
- ## The compelling reason to change
- 1 Restore credibility
 - 2 Secure future investment and sales
 - 3 Accelerate engagement



- 



For Grimsby Soups and Sauces we started with a partially filled in 'plaque' which we wanted to fill in and make us all feel like we belonged to a business that did more than just make soups and sauces... in fact we wanted to feel part of a business that made the best and most creative soups and sauces in the country and that this was reflected in our purpose and how we acted!!!



A great way to approach the purpose question is to ask your 1st and 2nd line managers and Employee Forum the following questions as part of a facilitated session:

- **First 2 questions (to complete individually):**
 - Why work here? – What is the difference between working here rather than at any other business where terms and conditions, pay and hours are similar?
 - What would make you want to work here more?

Now ask everybody to share their thoughts before moving on.

- **Finally (in teams of 3 or 4):**
 - What makes us as a site and team stand out from other manufacturers of soups and sauces? (What is our edge?):
 - Now capture all this in 1 powerful statement for the site

It is worth setting aside one and a half hours for this exercise. Some groups will go straight to the level of detail and openness you want others will need a bit more time and support from the facilitator. The important thing is to break people up into smaller discussion groups before bringing them back together again to share their thoughts. If there is a site leadership programme being facilitated at the same time even better; it allows the course trainer to delve further into their answers or help prepare people for the session where they may not have been involved in such an activity before.

Once you have covered this with all of your 1st and 2nd line managers you can do exactly the same exercise with your Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Once the SLT have completed the exercise themselves it is time for the big reveal. They can then compare their thoughts with those of their direct reports and first line managers before taking time out with you to develop a short list of powerful and engaging purpose statements from the rich material that is available to them. This is a hugely motivating moment as it really brings home how creative and engaged people have been and how aligned they were as well.

Now is the time to really start involving the full site. The best way to open this is through thorough staff briefings, engaging site poster campaigns and email pop ups. The more you invest in time, effort and ongoing dialogue the more people will be convinced by your passion and that of your team's. Finally do a site wide ballot on the short listed options and do a grand reveal as you start to introduce them to the next stage in the process... values.

Articulating your Site Values:

Values drive the behaviours of a site. Many businesses have developed their own core values which they splash on their company literature and websites. How well they are lived and breathed really depends on whether they are considered important by the leaders within the business whose responsibility it is to cascade these through the layers and bring them to life alongside their strategies.

For the individual site it is a balancing act. In businesses with far flung site locations and differing work force backgrounds and culture it is always going to be hard to find unanimity behind a Company's core values when presented with them at face value. Once you have clearly defined your site's purpose it is time to connect with your site culture and the company's values to create a set of statements that everybody passionately agrees is the way success is delivered and how people interact with each other on that journey.

The best place to start is to go back to your 1st and 2nd line managers and ask them what they think. The questions below offer a great way of obtaining their thoughts as part of another facilitated session:

How we deliver is important. It sets the behaviours and culture of the business. It makes people want to work here... or not.

So...

- How do we need to behave to deliver our purpose? Create 4 Value statements in the table format below in small teams of 3-4 before coming back together and sharing your thoughts.

Value	Statement	What does good look like?
One team	A team where everybody counts	Each member of the team supporting each other through a crisis

- Next (in teams):
 - Identify what you believe the top 3 values for the site are based on what you have run through and ask for each choice

- What challenges you expect to face holding people to this value?
- How would you regularly exhibit this value?
- If your value was an animal, bird or fish what would it be?
- Draw what you believe the site's values represent to you
- Once you have completed the exercise come back together and share your outputs

Once all teams have gone through this exercise the SLT can go through an identical process. Once all the managers and employee forum have been through this process the values should be written up in bright, easy to read formats so that they can be splashed around site like the examples below where the animal is depicted in the centre and the value plus its explanation is arranged around it. Crucially the relevant Divisional or Group value can be depicted alongside it (see black logo in examples here) so that everybody can see how it links up the business.



With so many great ideas the next step is to share them across the site. The purpose of this activity is to engage staff in the journey to define the values that make the site stand out from the crowd. Being as visual as possible really emphasises your commitment to the journey.

First splash everybody's ideas around key routes across the site and back it up with a journey board that outlines how far you have come since the start of the process when the site first shared its story, situation and purpose.

Second, the ideas will need whittling down to a manageable number. Don't be surprised if you have 20 – 30 great ideas to choose from as a starting point. This process will start with asking for more though!!! This can be achieved in the following way:

- Set up small workshops with colleagues to give them insight into what has been created and providing time to create ideas of their own
- Back this up with carefully policed free hand walls for other ideas to be put on over the course of a couple of weeks (have post it notes available, pens etc).
- Encourage your first and second line managers to be the ambassadors and come up with the best ideas with their teams for submission
- Finally it is time to gather the amazing data together and draw them into key themes (this can be around the values articulated by the wider business) and work with your SLT to capture their essence into single, all-encompassing statements
- Once this is complete you can go back to your teams and request their feedback. The best way to achieve this is through an open voting opportunity at the end of team meetings where people get to select their favourite values from the broader shortlist.

Finally take time to step back and ask yourself whether you are really happy that these values reflect the behaviours of the site (or the ones it wants to aspire to) and complement its driving purpose. If the answer is no tackle the individual values in question head on by taking them back to the team with your concerns and seek their inputs to improve on them.

Integrating the Site Strategy with your purpose and values:

Having a clearly defined purpose and values offers a unique additional facet to the strategy development process. Figure 3 below highlights a simple flow to optimise your strategy development. For purpose and values to have meaning they must form a strong part of the process from the initial analysis to strategy development phases and deployment amongst site teams.

How to Tackle the Strategy Review Process

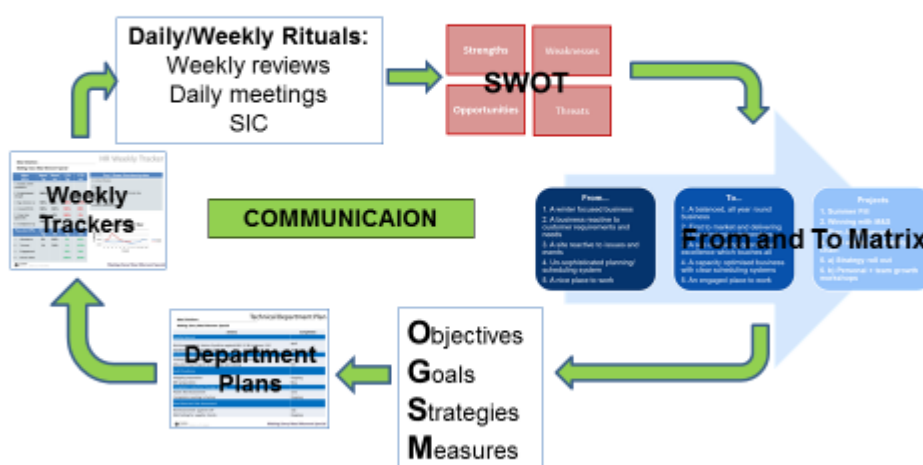


Figure 3: The strategy planning cycle from SWOT to daily rituals

The translation of top line strategy into meaningful department plans is important here and goes further when matched with weekly and daily KPIs that drive business performance on an hour by hour basis. More important still is ensuring that the site's purpose and associated values thread their way through the full process. At each stage of the process different questions can be asked to draw out the essentials of whether you are living by your brand purpose and the values by which you intend to deliver it to the customer.

Consider the following statements:

- Where does your purpose and values currently sit in your SWOT analysis?
- How can your purpose and values support the deployment of some of your key strategic goals? Where are they central to success?
- What measures and goals can be set for furthering your purpose and values?
- How does each department translate the site's purpose and values into its plans for the next 12 months?
- What can be done with KPIs and daily rituals to keep your purpose and values at the core of everything you do?
- What communication techniques (boards, posters, emails and presentations) can be used to share the site strategy that makes it true to your values?

When developing your From and To matrix you will be taking inputs from a number of sources including your SWOT, marketing data, sales growth plans and much more. For Sola and Couturier in 'How to Think Strategically' the From and To matrix with its associated projects are central to the success of any strategy. The resolution of these top business challenges, according to them, will lead to overall business success by solving the gaps and opportunities that you have identified in your analysis phase. They also stress that there should be no more than 5 challenges within any strategy otherwise resources cannot be committed effectively in their resolution. The follow up planning and KPI development by your SLT will all link back to these top 5 activities.

What's next?

Every high performing journey is unique to the individual site that undertakes it. The great thing about it is the uniqueness of each path trodden and self-awareness developed both for teams and individuals. But it never ends there. To stand still is to allow others to overtake you and regular review is critical to on-going success. Strategies can be reviewed every quarter and while purpose and values will only be properly reviewed every few years they form a vital part in shining a critical light onto how you are delivering and whether the results meet up to your high expectations. Equally they are a good litmus test to assess how teams and individuals are performing.

Then there is the on-boarding of new employees. A strong introduction to the site purpose and values is a sure way to engage them with the culture you want to nurture or strengthen. They also provide a great set of criteria for selecting and interviewing candidates against and as key elements to Personal Development Plans thus continuing to reinforce the winning culture you are in the process of creating.

Good luck!!

Mark Carnaghan
General Manager

Bibliography:

'Grow: How Ideals Power Growth and Profit at the World's 50 Greatest Companies' by Jim Stengel; New York USA, 2011

'How to Think Strategically: Your Roadmap to Innovation and Results' by David Sola and Jerome Coutourier; Harlow England, 2014

'Legacy' by James Kerr; Croydon UK, 2013