



Culture AND Strategy: High-Engagement, Strength-Based Planning Gets Results

by amandatrostenbloom | Jul 15, 2014 | Blog | 1 comment

#PeterDrucker said, "Culture eats strategy over breakfast." #FastCompany magazine said it was over lunch. Though they may disagree over the meal, they agree on the concept: brilliant #strategy means nothing, without a culture to back it.

Traditional #strategicplanning was a closed-door activity. Senior executives thoughtfully considered current and future conditions, market position and opportunities, and organizational capacities. They set a direction then "drove" it through the organization. (At best, think *persuade*. At worst, think *steamroll*.) Some of the best laid plans sat on shelves, while the same senior executives spent countless hours and dollars on change management systems designed to build commitment to and capacity for implementation.

But it doesn't have to be that way.

High-engagement, strength-based planning processes forge compelling, creative strategies for growth and innovation *and the culture needed to implement them*.

Why high-engagement? In the words of Marvin Weisbord, people commit to what they create. If you want someone to do something, *involve them*. Help them form a compelling picture of where they want to go. Give them the information and tools they need to make good choices. And build the relational infrastructure – the collaborative capacity – that assures they will resource one another and work together in service of the whole.

Why strength-based? For many people, change is challenging. But strength-based change stimulates confidence and curiosity, rather than resistance. Neuroscientists describe it as whole-brained (vs. old-brained) thinking. @DianaWhitneyPhD and I say in *The Power of #AppreciativeInquiry*, strength-based processes "tie people to both the past and the future—to history and positive possibility."

High-engagement, strength-based strategic planning gives people the shared experience of creating the organization of their dreams. It puts them to work on the business of the business ... enables them to build *culture and strategy* at the same time.

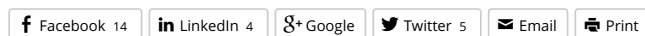
In his article, "Culture Eats Strategy for Lunch," @bulldogdrummond CEO Shawn Parr speaks to the benefits of a vibrant culture:

- **Focus:** Aligns the entire company towards achieving its vision, mission, and goals.
- **Motivation:** Builds higher employee motivation and loyalty.
- **Connection:** Builds team cohesiveness among the company's various departments and divisions.
- **Cohesion:** Builds consistency and encourages coordination and control within the company.
- **Spirit:** Shapes employee behavior at work, enabling the organization to be more efficient and alive.

All of this and more can be achieved through high-engagement, strength-based strategic planning. Build your strategy *and the culture needed implement it*. You will ignite inspiration, accelerate action, and *get the results* you're looking for.

Want to learn more about strength-based and high-engagement approaches to planning? Join @tonysilbert and @ATrostenBloom in Colorado for our upcoming one-day [Rapid Strategy Development](#) workshop on Sept 29th.

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