

# The Competitive Advantage

## P Squared Management Consulting

*Maximizing the Synergy of People and Process Improvement*



### *The Competitive Advantage* debuts....

P Squared Management Consulting welcomes you to the inaugural edition of *The Competitive Advantage* - the newsletter focused at helping you achieve sustained competitive advantage by maximizing your most valuable resource - your people.. This quarterly newsletter will provide articles that will help you in many areas throughout your organization. Articles will focus on:

- Process Improvement
  - Developing Leadership
  - Employee Motivation
  - Work Life Enhancement
- ... and a variety of other topics

You have been selected to receive a free subscription to this newsletter for an introductory six month period. If you received this via regular mail and would like it emailed to you (or vice versa), please drop us a note at [p2mc@wt.net](mailto:p2mc@wt.net).

We welcome your comments and suggestions to make this newsletter a valuable tool for your day to day use.

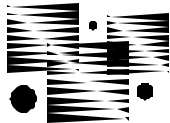


### Tips to Simplify Your Life....

Think about your values and write down those that really matter to you. What is most important? Spending time with family? Accumulating wealth? Achieving powerful influence? Acquiring possessions? Expressing yourself? Learning new ideas? Experiencing adventure and travel? Maintaining excellent health? Socializing with friends? Contributing to the community?

***You can't do them all!*** Cut out activities that aren't consistent with your core values.

- Write a list of goals you'd like to achieve. Focus on doing a few really well rather than a lot in a mediocre way. You can't add hours to the day, but you can cut down on activities.
- Say no instead of yes. People agree to requests from others because they like to please them. Instead, realize that you have a right to say no. Creating plans or policies makes saying no easier. ("I'm sorry, I already have a financial planner." "I'm sorry, we already have a plan for giving to charities.")
- Stop being a slave to communication tools. Do you really need an office phone, a home phone, a cellular phone, pager, fax, e-mail, and internet technology?
- Give away clerical tasks to others who can handle non-priority activities.
- Stop spending time to save money. Instead, spend money to save time. Don't drive across town to save a few cents on a grocery item. It's not worth your time. Do hire someone to do chores you're not fond of.



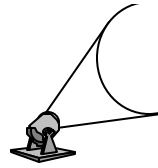
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## Tips to Simplify Your Life, cont'd

- Cancel subscription to magazines you never get around to reading. Only read one newspaper per day.
- Cut back on television time. Only watch those shows you decide on beforehand. Circle them in the television listing magazine. Then turn off the television when the program is over. Cancel extra cable television packages for channels you rarely watch. Go for broke. Give up watching television altogether.
- Clean out your basement or your office. If you're not using something, get rid of it. Put an expiration date on items you can't decide to keep them or not. Get rid of them when the expiration date arrives.
- Quit organizations that aren't contributing to your advancement, your network or your fun.
- Automate repetitive, clerical, mechanical tasks. For instance, set up automatic bill payments. Include your automatic savings plan as part of your monthly spending.
- Make a plan for the weekend that doesn't involve work. Plan to spend more time with your family or with people who make positive contributions to your life. Stop spending time with people who are a drain on your energy or vitality.
- Carry a smaller wallet or purse. Start by cleaning out the one you've got. Get rid of unnecessary credit cards and other clutter that you don't regularly use.
- Stop checking up on your financial portfolio every day. Most people invest for the long term. Checking your results daily adds to stress and might lead to expensive and unnecessary changes.
- Make time for yourself. Set aside time each day to reflect quietly, go for a walk, plan for your future or meditate. Visit the park instead of the mall.
- Consider renting a vacation home rather than buying. You won't be burdened by time (and money) spent in maintenance. Also, this allows you to visit a different spot each year.
- Plan time for a vacation every year. Some people claim "I haven't had a vacation in three years" as if it was a badge of courage. It isn't!
- Cut back on your children's planned activities. If they have to use a time planner to schedule their activities, and you spend all of your time taxiing the around, they're probably too busy.
- Live closer to your work so you don't have to drive.
- Take a moment each day to be grateful.

Source: Pace Productivity, Inc., 350 Sunnyside Avenue, Toronto, Canada, M6R 2R6



### Spotlight Article ... *Motivate Your Employees and Increase Your Productivity*

*This article is an excerpt of a published paper written by Scott Playfair, President, P Squared Consulting.*

Any company in today's complex business environment is driven by three critical success factors – all focused on customer satisfaction. These three factors are:

- People
- Process
- Technology

A healthy, profitable company has equal emphasis on each of these critical factors. However, it is not easy to maintain that balance in a world of constant and rapidly changing technology combined with fierce global competition. Yet, this balance is the key to business success.

Of these three, most often the "people" element is neglected. As change impacts employees in both their personal and professional lives, the assumption that they will naturally be okay can be a serious mistake. This mistake can generate great employee dissatisfaction when people are in a state of change overload. Morale, productivity, and attitudes can decline. The change itself isn't the problem; the important issue surrounds the ability of people to handle the change. An employee who is dissatisfied with his or her job can cost a company plenty without management ever knowing it!

Here lies one of the biggest challenges faced by business today:

## Spotlight Article, cont'd

*How do organizations rapidly implement the changes necessary to survive and prosper in today's complex business environment and not lose the help and support of their people in the process?*

This poses an even more important question:

*How do companies motivate, empower, and engage their employees in this environment to generate **competitive advantage**?*

Every business today is in the same boat facing the same challenges. When thinking about the three critical success factors mentioned earlier – people, processes and technology – only one of the three offers true competitive advantage – the “people factor”. Why is this the case?

Any company with enough money or financial backing can obtain state of the art technology driving state of the art processes. However, even the highest bidder cannot buy the motivation, caring and passion of the people who will use that technology and manage and perform those processes. These traits must be nurtured and developed by a caring and knowledgeable management team. As a result, the companies that can tap into and leverage the human resources in their organization will be the winners!

The commitment and work ethic of the people in an organization represent its only unique competitive advantage.

Therefore, the all important question that must be answered is as follows:

*How does a business motivate, empower, and engage the human element (their human capital) to generate and sustain significant **competitive advantage**?*

The following findings are based in part on the work of Frederick Herzberg and his Motivation Theory.

Seven key human needs or triggers must be addressed in order to generate peak performance and leverage human capital for competitive advantage. These needs are universal and apply to all levels of an organization from the boiler room to the boardroom. Although the “method” of need satisfaction may vary at different levels of the organization, the needs remain the same.

The better these needs are fulfilled, the greater the competitive advantage an organization will generate.

The seven key human needs that will give any organization tremendously improved morale and productivity are:

1. Basic Survival
2. Empowerment/ Freedom to Act
3. Variety
4. Feedback and Positive Reinforcement
5. Wholeness and Meaning
6. A Team Based Environment
7. Room to Grow and Succeed

Each of these seven needs falls into one of two categories - “satisfiers” or “motivators”. Before examining the key needs in detail, it is important to understand the difference between these two categories.

### “The Satisfiers”

Satisfiers are needs that must be satisfied above all others because human survival is dependent upon them. As Gandhi said, “Even God cannot talk to a hungry man except in terms of bread.” These needs do not motivate in and of themselves, but their absence definitely can demotivate. When they are missing or inadequate, they consume all the thoughts and emotions of an employee. As a result, nothing else will matter to an employee with unfulfilled survival needs. The only “satisfier” on the list of seven key needs is 1) Basic Survival.

### “The Motivators”

Employees are driven by other higher level needs called “motivators”. Motivators comprise factors 2 through 7 on the list of key human needs. There are two types of motivators:

- Optimal
- Maximal

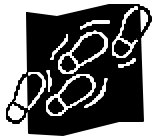
*Optimal* motivators include 2) Empowerment, 3) Variety, and 4) Feedback. They must be offered at an “optimal” level since too much is just as dangerous as too little.

*Maximal* motivators include 5) Wholeness, 6) Team Based Environment, and 7) Room to Grow. The more of these to which an employee is exposed, the better. They cannot be overdone.

A final comment on motivators is that human beings cannot motivate one another. They can only provide an “environment” for motivation. Therefore, the goal is to provide an environment that will allow employees to fulfill the needs that motivate them.

## Spotlight Article, cont'd

Next newsletter issue, we will examine the seven motivators in greater detail. For a copy of the complete article, "**Seven Proven Ways to Drastically Increase Workforce Productivity in 3 to 6 Months**", please contact P Squared Consulting.



### The Path to Leadership....

Take a moment to paint a mental image of someone you hold in esteem as a leader. Focus on appearance, actions, habits, and life style. When your picture appears sharp and clear, ask yourself these questions:

- What specific personality characteristics does this person possess?
- How does this person relate to others, professionally and socially?

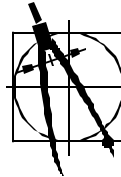
When you've examined thoroughly the qualities that you feel make this person a leader, ask yourself one more question: Was this leader born with such well-developed leadership traits? The answer is an emphatic "no!". Characteristics like being a good communicator, a motivator, a mentor, or coach are and can be developed. Being decisive, determined and effective when planning and reaching goals are qualities and skills that can be learned, improved, utilized and honed.

Erase from your mind now, any traces of the myth that "leaders are born, not made". Instead, recognize the exciting realization that everyone is born with the same potential for achievement, leadership and success. How you develop that potential and channel it into a specific direction will determine your future. The degree to which you succeed and achieve lies in your hands. You are the pilot of your ship and the architect of your future. Your ability to lead yourself and others will enhance the quality of your work as well as your life.

The quality of your leadership not only determines your future, it determines the future of your company.

To learn more about ways to develop your leadership skills and those of the people that work for you, please contact P Squared Consulting.

Information/excerpt taken from "Leadership" and printed with permission by Resource Associates Corporation, 31 Hickory Road, Mohnton, PA 19540



### A Case Study .... Leadership Training for 62 Thought Leaders

When a Texas based manufacturer of cast iron equipment decided to offer leadership development to enhance their management team, P Squared Consulting was selected to lead the effort. Using state of the art training methodology, sixty two management personnel and thought leaders, including union leadership, were trained in a ten week course that resulted in maximum learning retention with minimal job disruption.

Benefits derived by the participants included:

- Improved attitudes which resulted in permanent behavior change and prevented backsliding during stressful times.
- The creation of powerful goals and action plans that were measurable and completely aligned with company goals.
- Participants developed, both personally and professionally, creating more productive and balanced employees. This had the side benefit of enhancing company loyalty. Employees felt the company was helping them become more well-rounded human beings. In addition, several actually took the material home to use with their children and church groups.

The President of the company commented: "*This training allowed us to enhance our leadership abilities as well as set tangible and measurable goals both professionally and personally. This program had a great impact.*"

The training culminated in an employee feedback session which surfaced issues that were addressed to improve employee morale and productivity. As a result, P Squared Consulting was selected to conduct additional training for this company, whereby the President went on to say, "*We looked*

## A Case Study, cont'd

*at other trainers for our ongoing needs, but felt our relationship with P Squared could not be equaled because they ... came to know our company and our needs and concerns. ... In addition, they have given us feedback that has helped us better communicate with our people."*

Source: P Squared Management Consulting, 6 Spiceberry Place, The Woodlands, TX 77382



## The Process Improvement Tool Box....

We are entering a new business age. This new age has characteristics unlike any that we have experienced before. The defining elements are technology, information, customer expectations, and competition. The differentiating factor is speed. We not only will have to respond to each of the defining elements to survive, we will have to do it quickly. We are already seeing this in shortened life cycles of products, rising consumer expectations, global competition, and information instantly communicated through the World Wide Web.

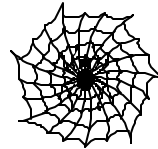
Rapid change in product life cycles (the time from development to obsolescence) is changing the way we do business. This places even more pressure on continuous innovation and flexibility. In addition, customers are demanding increased quality and responsiveness. These major market changes and trends will continue and will keep putting pressure on organizations to respond. Those who do, will win. They will win because they provide their customers with well timed quality products or services.

**Competitive advantages** will be defined through flexibility, responsiveness, time to develop and market new products or services, innovation, and service excellence. To survive in today's environment, business leaders must re-examine and in some cases reinvent, how they conduct business. They must also validate what they define as indicators of success.

Next issue, we will continue our examination of developing a continuous process improvement environment by looking at a historic perspective.

For more information about developing a continuous process improvement culture at your organization, please contact P Squared Consulting.

Information/excerpt taken from "Cycle Time Reduction" and printed with permission by Total Quality Institute, P.O. Box 621102, Orlando, FL 32332



## Web Site of the Quarter....

**P Squared Management Consulting** is pleased to announce just *one more way* we can help you with your management consulting needs - our web site is now on-line! Visit us at **www.p2mc.com** to learn more about our services:

- Organizational Development
- Change Management
- Training and Development
- Team Building and Effectiveness
- Process Improvement

Please stop by investigate our many valuable products and services now available to maximize your human resources, create a culture of customer-focused continuous process improvement and achieve true **competitive advantage** at your company!



## Synergy Snapshots....

Even if you are on the right track - you'll get run over if you just sit there.... **Arthur Godfrey**

Discussion is an exchange of knowledge; argument an exchange of ignorance.... **Robert Quillan**

It is those who make the worst use of their time who most complain of its shortness.... **Jean de la Bruyere**

While we pursue the unattainable, we make impossible the realizable.... **Robert Ardey**

Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the men of old, seek what they sought.... **Matsuo Basho, 16<sup>th</sup> century Japanese poet**



## P Squared Consulting.... Scope of Expertise

P Squared (P<sup>2</sup>) is a nationally known management consulting and human resource/ organizational development firm based in Houston, Texas. We have helped small, medium, and Fortune 100 companies with equal effectiveness. P<sup>2</sup> has a staff of seasoned professionals, highly experienced in its areas of expertise.

Our president and founder, Scott Playfair, worked in industry for over 20 years before founding P<sup>2</sup>. He held management positions in Fortune 100 companies such as General Motors, Alcoa, and Champion International Paper as well as several rapidly growing, mid-sized companies. Scott is a dynamic trainer, facilitator, and consultant. He has successfully combined his unique knowledge into a powerful blend of Continuous Process Improvement and Human Resource/ Organizational Development.

P<sup>2</sup> sets the new standard by providing value-added products and services that propel companies to achieve world class status in their industries. We serve as your business partners on this rewarding journey. Our vast experience in a multitude of

industries enables us to work effectively within the framework of any organization.

Our offerings include:

- Management Consulting
- Process Improvement
- Training and Development
- Team Building and Effectiveness
- Meeting and Event Services

We believe that people are your most valuable resource. Our focus is getting people to do more (improving productivity) and helping them develop an insatiable desire for continued personal and professional growth and improvement.

P<sup>2</sup> provides the vehicle and the implementation process to help you and your people expand and develop the skills and attitudes necessary to achieve a higher degree of success. And to sustain true .....*Competitive Advantage!*

Offices in Texas and South Carolina.  
Contact us by phone at (936)-271-0712  
Or email at [p2mc@wt.net](mailto:p2mc@wt.net)  
Visit our web site at [www.p2mc.com](http://www.p2mc.com)

**We look forward to hearing from you soon!**  
.....*Scott Playfair, President*  
*Jan Barnett, Director, Sales & Marketing*

**People do not make a difference**

**They ARE the difference.**

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