

CHANGING THE MIND OF THE PARENT COMPANY

Case Study 107

The Situation

A major bank was **threatening to outsource most of the services of its IT division of 3,000 people**. Nearly everyone in the division was **consumed with fear** that they'd soon be losing their jobs – including those at the top of each major team.

The bank's viewpoint was easy to understand as the **division's performance had fallen to 64% of their annual objectives**. Managers and staff knew that severe downsizing was coming. Although the new General Manager was taking the situation seriously, most of the **key people were blaming the parent company for their lack of "understanding and appreciation"**. Pervading the halls was a victim mentality – no one was able to find the strength for a fight to change the minds of the bank leaders.

Work of Best Year Yet

For their first team planning session, the General Manager gathered the managers at the top of each department and clearly described the challenges. However, this initial communication was **not enough to generate the needed commitment**.

After an exhaustive review of the seemingly hopeless situation, several of the team began to *consider* the possibility of taking responsibility for the situation. They examined all possibilities and aligned on the ten results that they knew had the best chance of reversing the decision of the bank. However, at this early stage the **underlying sense of hopelessness was still driving the behavior and attitude of most of these managers**.

Despite their doubt, **each of the top team then made sure his team replicated the review, learning and planning process and key priorities were agreed throughout the division**.

As the months went by, the top team realized that their disappointing results were responsible for their current dilemma and they made **a commitment to deliver their annual goals to the bank – no matter what!** That mindset was now driving the business. Charts were placed on walls throughout the division – each target was graphed and tracked with a weekly status update of red to the desired green. This focus infected the staff with the slim hope that they could deliver every one of the key results to the bank.

The Results

By the end of the year they had done it! **Performance had risen from 64% to over 100% delivery** of each key target. Although some downsizing was necessary, outsourcing was minimal and in every case initiated by the division itself as way of improving both service and profitability. They had **succeeded in changing the minds of the bank's leading authorities in the only way possible – by solving the problem for them!**

Dealing with letting go of some people and finding a way to make outsourcing work were small challenges compared to **the pride of working in the performance culture they had created**. They came to enjoy being part of a team that delivered what they had promised and becoming a solution instead of a problem to their parent company.