110% Success
Essential Questions to Move Your Company Forward

David M. Shedd

Management Basics

1. Do the managers communicate the Who? What? When? and How Important? for every task or goal that they have given to the team?
2. Do the managers follow-up to ensure that the team is on track with their tasks?
3. Do the managers provide support and feedback to the team to help them achieve their tasks more effectively?

Leadership Basics

4. Do the managers lead each individual in the way in which he or she needs to be led? Or do they lead everyone in the same way?
5. Do the managers know and consider the preferences (what they like to do) and abilities of the individual?
6. Do the managers lead by their own impeccable example? Do they do what they say?

Ethics and Integrity

7. Does the leadership team set the example and live a high standard of ethics and integrity?
8. Does the leadership team regularly talk about ethics and ethical situations to infuse high ethical standards and clear up any potential ethical gray areas?
9. Is the leadership team unrelentingly assertive in chasing down ethical violations and then airing the dirty laundry?

Honesty

10. Are individuals honest with themselves about their own strengths and weaknesses?
11. Does the company face reality?
12. Does the leadership team see through flattery and BS and not believe its own PR?
13. Are performance reviews candid?
14. Do managers seek out the "true truth" (not matter how painful) at all times?

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Goals and Values

15. Is the culture in the company clear?
16. Can the culture be described in five words or fewer?
17. What are the core values of the company?
18. Are they no more than 3 – 5 values that the company is committed to?
19. Does the company fully understand the 3 – 5 critical issues that it is facing?
20. Are the brutal facts being confronted head-on?
21. What are the three major goals of the company?
22. Do the company goals revolve around the critical issues facing the business?
23. Is there a simple, written, 1 -2 page plan on how to achieve the most important company goals?

Alignment

24. Are all managers managing with a leadership style that is in sync with the company culture?
25. Are people at all levels of the company in alignment with the company goals and culture?
26. Are the right people doing the right jobs that are necessary for the success of the company?
27. Is there agreement within the company on the answers to the following two questions?
    a. What are the three critical issues facing the company?
    b. What are the three biggest priorities?
28. Does the leadership team communicate and teach the values and the company goals repeatedly?
29. Is there follow-up to ensure that all employees are doing what they say?
30. Has the leadership team translated the overall company goals into three specific goals (or tasks) for each employee?

Consistent Execution

31. What thing (that everyone knows needs to get done) does the company most fear doing? Is that one thing getting done?
32. Do employees review what they have done each night and prioritize and schedule their tasks for the next morning?
33. Does the team accomplish the most important tasks first thing in the morning?
34. Do employees consciously ignore what is not important and avoid distractions, such as phones, E-Mail, internet surfing, etc.?
35. Do employees batch work by creating blocks of quiet times to get tasks finished?
36. Is communication aggregated (e.g. communicate one time about five items instead of five times each time with one item) ensuring that interruptions are limited and only for truly important matters?
37. Do employees get out of their comfort zones regularly?

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38.   Does the leadership team work to simplify and reduce tasks to the essential (80 / 20)?
39.   Do employees get to work at once and get tasks done speedily?
40.   Do employees address promptly those items that are on other employees' critical paths so that they are not holding up the work of others?
41.   Is decision-making pushed down to the lowest possible level where the person making the decision has accountability for the results of the decision?
42.   Does the company allow for failures only requiring that everyone learn from the failure?
43.   Does the company act decisively, making 80% of the decisions on the spot?
44.   Is the company focused? Is what is happening in the company right now moving the company closer to achieving its three most important goals?

Change and Change Initiatives

45.   Does the leadership team first ask the employees what they consider the critical issues?
46.   Does the leadership team then ask the employees what they know about the problem and how to solve it?
47.   Is the current team with its current abilities really able to achieve the proposed change initiatives?
48.   In order to complete the change initiative, are other tasks re-prioritized to free up time and attention span for the team?

Communication

49.   Do employees listen undistracted to what other people are saying?
50.   Do management and employees listen to the meaning behind the words and considering what the other person wants to get by what they are saying?
51.   In communicating, are all messages kept as short and simple as possible?
52.   Are key messages or themes repeated as often as practical so that they truly sink in?
53.   Do management and employees clarify and confirm to ensure that the listener has understood what has been communicated?

Accountability

54.   Is everyone in the company held 100% accountable for their actions?
55.   Does the company avoid blaming outside factors and focus on what is under its control? Or is producing excuses one of its best-selling products?
56.   Are unaccountable non-performers dealt with expeditiously?
57.   Is accountability consistent across the company (especially with upper management and staff)?

Motivate and Engage the Team

58.   Do managers work hard to control themselves and to not get angry?
59.   How does the leadership team really come across to the employees?
>   a. Positive, proactive?
>   b. Or cold, distant, rude or unfriendly?
60.   Do managers BS the team telling them things that they do not really believe?
61.   Is top management more concerned about their own welfare than that of the company?
62.   Does everyone always remember to check facts before jumping to conclusions?
63.   Is there a culture in the company of being responsive in returning phone calls and responding to E-Mails?
64.   Does management always support employees publicly, even when they make mistakes?
65.   Does the leadership team admit to mistakes and take the blame for failures?
66.   Is recognizing and thanking employees common within the company?
67.   Does management first ask and then really listen?

Recognition

68.   Do managers (and employees) try to find someone doing something right every day and give them recognition?
69.   Do managers remember to both criticize in private and recognize in private?
70.   Does management try to recognize improvement (even if the work is not yet perfect) in order to encourage and support the people?

Continuous Learning

71.   Does the leadership team value and support continuous learning?
72.   Does the leadership team first work on improving themselves?
73.   Do employees keep up-to-date on what is happening in the industry?
74.   Are alternative viewpoints read and thoughtfully considered?
75.   Does management try to assess the learning and knowledge gap among the employees?
76.   Is peer to peer learning prevalent among the team?

Customer Service

77.   Are the customers truly valued?
78.   Is the leadership actively involved in customer activities at the company?
>   a. Do managers know the five most significant customer service problems in their area?
>   b. Do managers go out and personally visit with customers?
>   c. Does management attend sales meetings?
79.   Does the leadership team lead by example in customer service?

Current Customers

80.   Does the company love its current customers?
81.   Does the company measure customer churn (turnover) and act on it?
82.   Does the company survey its customers to know where it stands as a supplier?
    a. Does the company ask its customers how likely (on a scale of 1 to 10) they are to refer the company to others?
    b. Does the company then ask what it can do as a supplier to become a 10?
83.   Does the company maintain a consistent presence with the customer and in the marketplace?
84.   Does the company (and its sales staff) really listen to the customers' wants and needs, getting close to them to serve them better and find new ways to satisfy those wants and needs?
85.   Does the company deliver? Does it do what it says when it says that it will do it?

Business Growth

86.   Does the company work hard to viral market out to new customers through referrals and word of mouth?
87.   In ten words or fewer, what is the differentiable brand image of the company?
88.   Do the employees know what this brand image is and how it relates to their jobs?
89.   Does the company build and leverage this brand image?
90.   Does the company deliver on the brand promise?
91.   Does the company use social media to engage in conversations with its customers?
92.   Does the company work with its current customers to determine new product and service opportunities?
93.   Does the company mine its data?
    a. To determine its sales and customer trends?
    b. To discover new potential customers and markets interested in its products?
    c. To determine where and why it is successful?
94.   Is the company easy to do business with?
95.   When customers contact the company, is the company open to them?
    a. Does the professionalism of the company employees shine through?
    b. Are the customers served properly?
    c. Are the customers' phone calls and E-Mails returned promptly?
96.   Does the company work with potential customers even if it is on something slightly out of the ordinary?
97.   Does the company pursue new product and market opportunities as just one part of the business development continuum?
98.   Who are the company's target new customers?
99.   Do these customers want to buy what the company is selling? How is that known?
100.   Does the company seek out new customers that are in the right markets (growing and profitable)?

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101. Does the company look at complementary markets and industries to the ones it currently is in?
    a. Other industries that its suppliers sell to?
    b. Other industries that companies in the chain of purchasing sell to?
    c. Complementary product and service offerings?
    d. Industries that may compete with the company indirectly?
102. Does the company consider the mega-trends and try to think about pursuing industries and markets that will benefit from these trends?
103. Does the company ensure that it is solving a customer's problem and delivering something that the customer really does want and value? Or does the company offer a solution that the customer **should** want?
104. Does the company compete only where it has a competitive advantage?
105. Does the company focus on markets that the leadership team and employees are passionate about?
106. Does the company know well the strengths and weaknesses of its competition?
107. Does the company have an acquisition strategy?

Work-Life Balance

108. Do employees work to fill the time or do they work to get things done and then get out of the office and go home?
109. Is the company a sweat shop or do employees have a life outside of work?
110. Do employees want to be part of the company? Or do they just work for the company?

About the Author

David M. Shedd is an experienced President / CEO level executive, an author, an award winning speaker, and a business consultant. David's passion and mission in all these activities is to help your company move forward and succeed through an unrelenting focus on the fundamentals.

As an executive, David has more than 10 years' experience as President of an up to $200M group of manufacturing and services companies. In this time, he has overseen a total of 19 different companies, including start-ups, business turn-arounds, and hyper-growth companies.

As a business consultant, David has advised more than 25 different small to middle market clients (both domestically and internationally) in delivering growth, improving operations, and developing people.
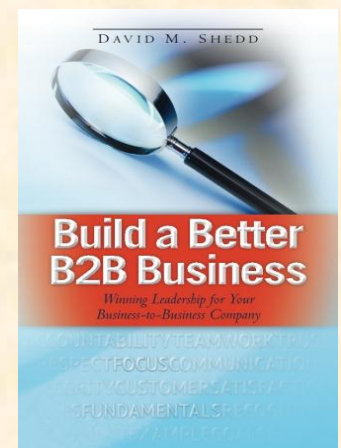
David holds a BA in Mathematics and an MBA degree with Distinction from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, where he graduated as a Palmer Scholar in the top 5% of the class. Prior to earning his MBA, David had broad international experience. He worked at the World Bank / International Finance Corporation, and he taught Mathematics and European History at an international high school near London, England.

David's first book, ***Build a Better B2B Business***, is available on Amazon.

David lives in Chandler, Arizona with his wife and three children. He invites readers to E-Mail him at davidshedd@cox.net and to visit his website at www.MoveYourCompanyForward.com or www.110percentsuccess.com.

David's website is chock-full of information to help businesspeople move their companies forward. It contains:

- More than one hundred of his on-going blogs on business success and leadership.
- A bibliography (and book summaries) of excellent business, leadership and success books.
- Yet even more quotes on business and success.
- Referrals to other insightful business thought leaders.

If you are looking for more hands-on, in-depth assistance, such as:

- Executive Leadership
- Interim Leadership
- One-Day Strategic Business Review
- Consulting Engagements
- Business / Strategy Critique
- Personal One-on-One Telecoaching Calls
- Speaking
- Training Seminars

Then E-Mail David at **DavidShedd@Cox.Net**.

Thank you for your interest. I wish you the best of luck in building, growing, and improving your company, moving it forward and propelling it (and you) to greater success!