

BLACKMORE FOUR

Insights from Blackmore Four

DEFINING AN EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

Outstanding Business Performance. Powered by People.

DEFINING AN EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

This guide offers an introduction to developing an effective organisation, what it involves and why it is important to make this a priority.

INTRODUCTION

Challenging times inevitably brings increased pressure and greater emphasis on the effective use of resources across an organisation.

Great and improving products or services can be imitated by competitors, as can go-to market strategies, but your people are likely to be both the most costly asset you have and the only one that can't easily be replicated.

Getting the right talent in the first place is important but creating a successful organisational system is about developing appropriate structures, processes and behaviours that allow people to thrive. Guided by clear direction and strong alignment between people and teams, it also then has the tolerance and flexibility to embrace change.

In this guide we take a look at defining attributes of an effective organisation and why it is important right now.

THE NEED TO BE AGILE

Creating an effective organisation is not something you achieve and then move on to the next thing. The world never stands still. Technology evolves, people change and with it their demands and expectations alter. It takes time, effort and determination to ensure the people in your organisation remain focused and aligned on your specific business goals.

Keeping the way in which your team(s) are organised under regular review and examining whether it is still the best approach to achieve your business goals is vital.

Recent events have illustrated just how unpredictable the future is and how crucial it is to have an agile structure. Having a framework in place that can withstand the most turbulent business environment is imperative to both survival and future success.

Embracing a flexible approach to organising people and their work equally accommodates the desire of employees to have more autonomy and freedom. This will not only make the most of your current talent, but will help attract the best candidates in the future.

An effective organisation is about putting leadership, structure, processes and behaviours in place that allow people to thrive.

WHAT DOES AN EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION LOOK LIKE?

The way in which people are organised should be focused on making it easier for everyone to contribute. It should enhance the employee experience, provide a clear sense of shared purpose and give the feeling that individuals and teams are actively contributing to the overall success of the business.

Effective organisation of people is about finding clear structures, processes and expected behaviours that best fit the unique ambitions of your business. It is not about following perceived best practice.

Focus areas:

- Shared understanding of purpose
- Goal clarity and alignment
- Strengthening links between relevant people/teams
- Relevant levels of communication
- Decision making, action and learning
- Re-enforcing role model behaviour

CORNERSTONES OF AN EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

Shared purpose

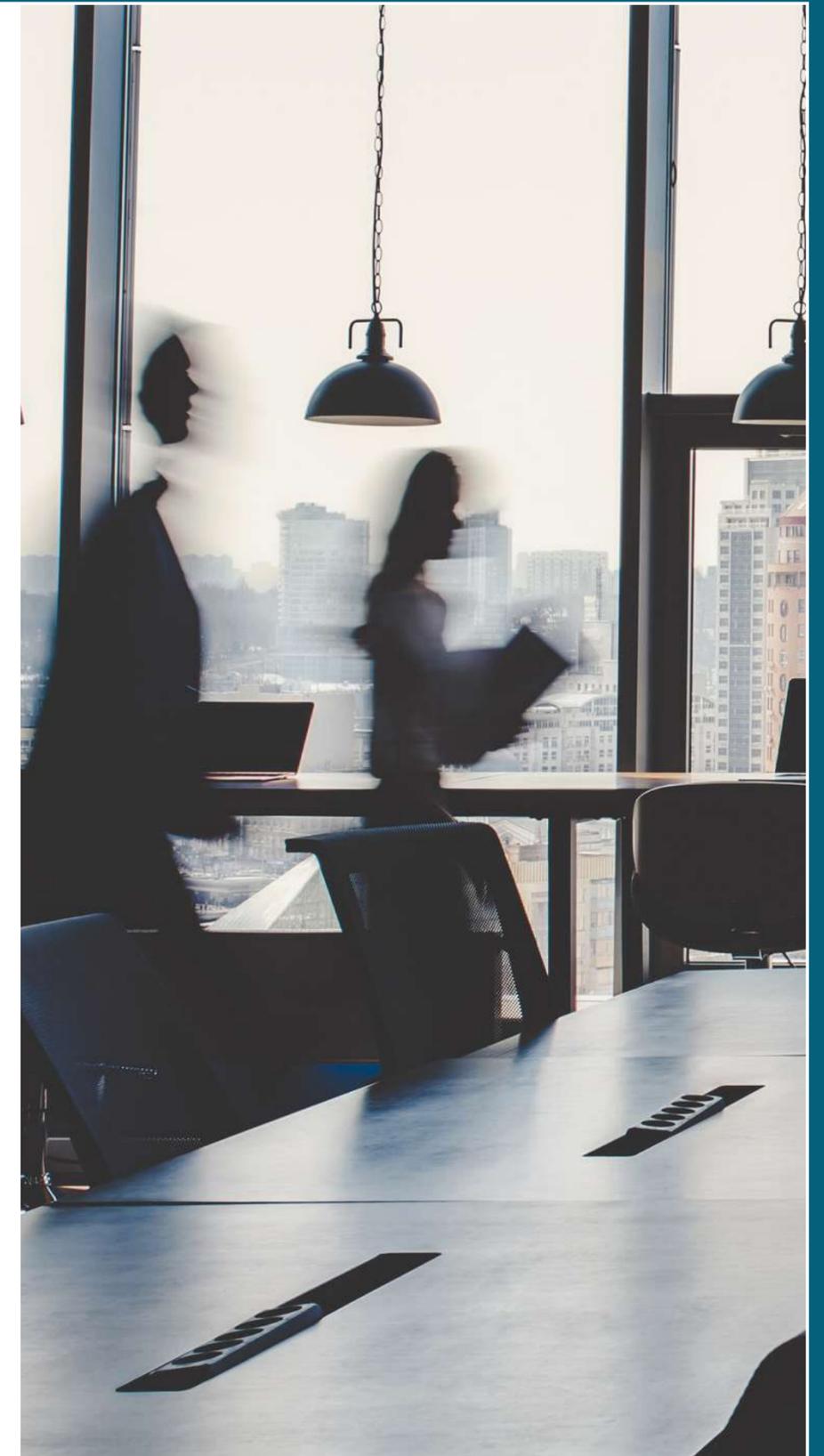
This is the identification of shared aspirations, common interests and issues of mutual concern that form the basis for productive, high-performance teams to thrive.

Strategic narrative

A common vision across the business is key and why there needs to be a strategic narrative. Focusing on shared purpose, ambition and values, these should act as the bedrock for prioritisation, decision making and adapting for all employees.

An agreed approach

It is vital that guiding principles for developing an effective organisation are agreed and adhered to by key stakeholders, who need to be on board.



EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION STRUCTURE - REDEFINING CONVENTIONS

For smaller organisations, with only a few employees - usually based in one location - they can achieve close cooperation and collaboration without thinking too much about this. However, as a business grows, this gets more difficult to achieve.

Structuring your organisation around location, product or services can create silos and result in a more fragmented business.

There is a tendency to default to traditional structures around axes such as location, function, market, or products and services. Whilst on the surface this appears to be a logical and common approach, structuring a business in this way creates division and competition between different areas of the business, rather than bringing together diverse skills in close collaboration to tackle complex issues.

EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION PROCESS - ENABLING AND RESPONDING

The introduction of processes to facilitate the smooth operation of your business is inevitable, but developed in isolation of the wider organisation system can lead to unintended stifling and overly prescribed ways of working that limit the potential contribution of your people.

Develop processes that are appropriate for enabling improved communication, decision making and action, and that can be easily changed to meet evolving business demands.

There is a tendency to establish process in growing businesses to maintain a level of control or increase standardisation. However, sufficient attention is not always paid to the manner in which those processes are likely to be operated and the impact on performance of those being asked to operate them. Developing processes that enable your people to respond to the evolving business challenges they face increases their personal and collective effectiveness.

EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION BEHAVIOUR

The underlying norms, values and behaviours of a company are often embedded through common acceptance rather than direction. Identify the behaviours that develop naturally and focus on changing specific collective behaviours where required.

Company values help convey ways of working that are considered important but very seldom provide the sole or predominant guiding force for unobserved behaviour.

Collective behaviours are developed as part of the complex social system that exists when you ask people to work together. The accepted norms are constantly tried and tested in real time, determined by the personal values, personality, experience, ambitions and relationships of those involved. To address behavioural change, you first need to understand the root causes of existing behaviour or barriers to desired behaviour.

A COMPETITIVE EDGE

The ability to effectively lead, manage and organise people in a way that aligns and empowers individual and collective contribution is what provides crucial competitive difference. This is especially true in industries that rely on human knowledge, behaviour and expertise.

Organisational capability

Developing and organising expertise that aligns directly with the goals of your business can be a powerful driving force. Creating an organisation that amplifies these talents, whilst encouraging collective creativity and innovation, is what produces outstanding performance.

Collective behaviour

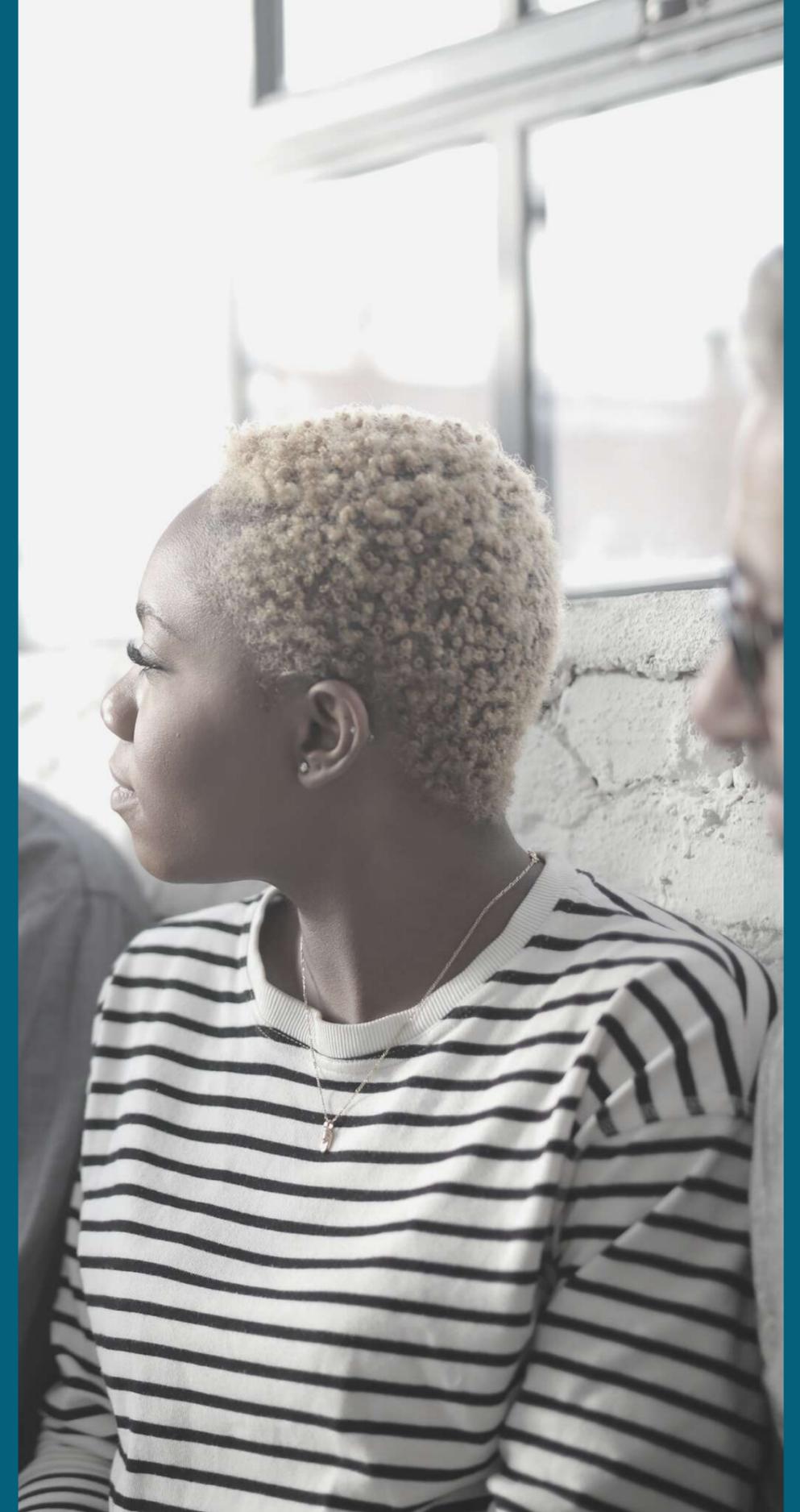
This might be what you refer to as company culture. Identifying, defining and understanding collective behaviour - and the values that underpin this - helps reinforce the drivers of positive behaviour.

A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Organisation enablement

This is designing your organisation with the capabilities, skills and behaviours of your people in mind. Processes and systems should make it easier for people to contribute. They should also be flexible enough to adapt to changing demands and be robust enough to sustain performance through any organisation change or pivot.

There are many factors that go into creating a successful business – funding, technology, logistics to name but a few, but the one thing all companies depend on is people.



NOTES

THE EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION CHECKLIST

The aim of this checklist is to provoke thought or discussion around the current effectiveness of your organisation. Is it working well or is there a need for change?

Defining what is most critical for your business:

- Does your business operate effectively?
- Are your collective efforts yielding the intended results?
- Does the current team structure facilitate valuable collaboration?
- Do employees see their individual efforts contributing to the overall success of the business?
- Has the organisation adapted as the business has grown and/or priorities have changed?

Let's talk

BLACKMORE FOUR

With over 20 years' experience working with complex organisations and businesses on the cusp of change or rapid growth, we know and understand the need for organisation effectiveness to help you achieve your goals.

We focus on the future of your business and its ability to grow.

Through actionable insight, we focus on your future ambitions rather than historical challenges. We help you navigate change and develop leadership and organisational capabilities to improve the overall effectiveness of your business.

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