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The Customer Centric Organization



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Shifting from pushing products to captivating customers!

Following a product leadership discipline necessitates relentless innovation, organic talent and continual investments; indeed an expensive equation in times of recession. While pursuing this discipline is one way of achieving growth, the latter is unfortunately short lived as rivalry today has built the capability to fairly duplicate almost any innovation in a matter of months. Accordingly, the cornerstone for continued profitability or what is better referred to today as sustainability, remains in establishing long-term customer relationships by understanding and meeting their real needs.

Making the move from pushing products to addressing real customer needs through tailored solutions is a winning strategy in a mature industry. While some companies in the region have already engaged the designing of a product or service based on customer needs, the latter has proven insufficient as a standalone practice. The reality is that the whole organization should be repositioned and redesigned based on customer unique needs. Promoting a truly customer centric organization is critical for mature businesses.

What are the challenges?

The move is not simple nor mission impossible. The intervention begins at identifying true customer needs and concludes at aligning all customer facing departments with those needs. A major challenge to

building the customer centric organization is the incompatible goals of the customer facing departments such as sales, marketing and customer service. While marketing is focused on creating brand awareness and increasing market share, sales are focused on acquiring their targets and earning their bonuses. In contrast, customer service is focused on satisfying customers after the transaction takes place, irrespective whether customer needs were met during the sales process or not. Those eventually end up controlling costs rather than helping customers.

How to pull it together?

Clearly, the obvious answer is to shift the focus back to customers and align goals across all departments in parallel with customer needs. The solution is an Organization Design Intervention which aims to create a future state operating model that is aligned with a thoroughly analyzed and quantified customer segmentation strategy. Such a model institutionalizes customer needs across all facets of the organization and therefore standardizes goals along the value creation meta-process from product development to marketing, sales, and customer service. However, it is imperative to point out the need for true leadership necessary to plan the change, empower people and eventually make the leap.



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