



NEWSLETTER

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From here to there

Occasionally *Drivingforces* is offered projects that fall outside the 'usual'.

One recent example was a request by a national sports organisation to develop a model for the optimum resources needed to service a modest growth in membership by the organisation's regions.

Although the client was a sporting body, this type of projection could be applied to other not-for-profit organisations and small-to-medium sized businesses.

The project was a follow-up to previous work carried out by *Drivingforces* on regional capability (where resources play an important role). The client wanted to know the type and amount of resources its large, medium and small regions would need to adequately service 5% – 10% growth.

The project highlighted a number of issues likely to be of interest to other organisations:

1. It broke new ground. There were no templates or precedents to refer to. It seems no one of late has done any modeling in sport in NZ. The closest would be the NZ Rugby Union's eligibility criteria for its Premier and Division 1 competitions.
2. There was a lack of awareness, interest and understanding in the need for the project and its benefits.
3. There was a lack of knowledge about the link between strategic plans and models – the fact that a good model can help set the organisation's strategic direction.
4. There was a lack of forecasting skill and an inability to extrapolate current baseline data.
5. In a few instances current baseline data was either missing or unreliable. This resulted in guesswork and invalid assumptions, which had to be corrected.

6. The process was time-consuming. It involved over 3000 calculations and several different types of models before the most appropriate one was found.

Notwithstanding the above, the regions now have a far clearer picture of what their resource needs will be to successfully service a growth in membership over the next five years.

As they persevere, they will become more familiar with the concept, their database will grow in sophistication and their forecasting skills will improve. They will find themselves on a pathway of steady improvement.

The more I practice ...

Drivingforces is often asked about the qualities that successful people share. As someone who has worked with many of New Zealand high achievers in sport and business, my observations are these:

1. Their whole attitude is governed by striving to be the best. Near enough is not good enough. Excellence is their benchmark They will do whatever it takes to achieve it.
2. They are good listeners. They may not agree with what you say but they listen, they analyse, they select what is relevant to them, their team or their organisation, and they apply it.
3. They do not justify their mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes but unlike the majority of us, top performers do not invent excuses or apportion blame. Instead they learn from them.
4. The difference between their approach to their sport/business and that of the weekender is stark. The latter want to succeed without putting in any practice or preparation. Top people expect to win but they know that won't happen without practice. As the saying goes "The more I practice the luckier I get"
5. They plan – to the nearest detail. As far as possible they leave no stone unturned. They assess risk and opportunity- the "what if scenarios". As little as possible is left to chance.
6. They are flexible and capable of adapting quickly to changing circumstances.
7. They are forward thinking – ready to move to where the game is going to be, not where it is now.

Reading Challenges

Two books, same conclusion.

The first is *The Future of Management* by Gary Hamel, a leading US business strategist –

Sometime over the next decade your organisation will be challenged in a way for which it has no precedent.....What is even more worrisome is that decades of

orthodox organisational design and decision making provide no real hope that your organisation will be able to avoid faltering and suffering painful restructurings.

The second, *Mobilizing Minds* by Lowell Bryan and Claudia Joyce, arrived at a similar conclusion but from a different perspective -

The 20th Century model of designing and managing organisations generates unnecessary complexities that work at cross purposes to innovative management and competitive advantage.

Drivingforces is able to assist organisations to structure themselves into modern, professional 21st Century models.

“The most important thing when you grow and learn is being able to play at a high level, at your best, for long periods of a time, no matter what it takes.”

Maria Sharapova, winner, 2008 Australian Open.



“A desire for Peak Performance is the force that must drive any successful organisation.”

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