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**Managing your Tornado**

Ask yourself, what is the real reason you feel that you continue to fail in your goal of smooth, crisp, and strong execution of your company’s goals? …… Hint … it’s your day job!

First you have to make sure your team understands what your goals are. What is it you’re trying to accomplish in your company? Many times people don’t take to time or feel the necessity of creating a company culture, Mission Statement, Vision and Core Values. The best way I have come up with of explaining the “why” of their necessity is to think of it as a road trip, there is many ways to get there but wouldn’t it be nice if you were all going to the destination together in one single bus instead of everyone taking their own cars? Otherwise you never know what the majority of the team is doing, you’re waiting on people to show up because they took their own cars on a different route.

So let’s assume you have your culture statements written down somewhere, now the questions is how to stay focused on them. Somehow we have to avoid the winds of the tornado that can overtake our lives every day. It can steal your focus that has to be maintained to keep everyone moving in the right direction. Understand, the tornado of life isn’t necessarily a bad thing, it’s what shows your company is alive. You can’t ignore the things flying around but you can set practices in place that can help you manage them without losing focus.



I won’t go into a lot of detail as there is tons of information that you can read online or at that place they call the library, but instead point you in some directions and toss out a few things that work for me and you can do some reading on them. Number one to bear in mind is not everything works the same for everyone. There are my top 5 basics, but people work differently, figure out what works for you and then work that in to a process so that it fits within the goals of your company.

1. As something comes across your desk, take a hard look at it, is it REALLY something YOU need to handle or does it really fall under someone else’s role. Remember, just because it fell on your desk doesn’t mean it’s yours to fix! IF you can reasonably let it go …. LET IT GO!
2. Keep a list. Sound’s simple, sometimes for some of us it isn’t. Find a way that works for you. For some a shirt pocket spiral notebook works, others swear by the 4 square method of Franklin Covey, or the Eisenhower Box. There are many. I started using One Note a while back. I can keep things tabbed by Projects and kind of keep a 4 square in each one. It’s also nice as I can drag emails and files to it so they are at my fingertips. If you’re not using some type of a list, I can tell you that your productivity can be boosted immediately doing this. The key? find one that works for you and the way you think and work, it will be easier to stick with it.
3. Meet with your team frequently and make sure people are on the same page and headed the same direction and not overlapping each other and that there also are no gaps, keep it tight. As well, make sure your team leaders are meeting with their teams! Nothing is worse than having multiple people trying to fix the same problem or do the same task, it reflects to clients you have no clue to what’s going on.
4. Follow up on those delegated tasks at the end of each day until completed. Note, I said end of day, don’t get bogged down in chasing details you have delegated, let people do their job. A once a day check in should be enough. If once a day isn’t enough you might want to check who is setting in what seats on your bus.
5. Limit your time checking emails and taking calls as much as you can. Respond to those critical issues and move the rest to your “List”. Most of the time I find I can limit this to in the morning when I get to work, 10 o-clock, when I return from lunch, 3 o-clock, and right before I leave for the day, but I try not to “camp” in my email. Same with phone calls, if you’re needing to focus on something, turn off the phones, if it’s critical, people will get in touch with you.

That’s my top 5. I would love to hear what works for some of you out there. Will this stop all the tornado’s … naaa, just like the weather, there will always be an occasional storm blow through and create a mess that needs to be cleaned up. But I can promise you if you put some of these in to practice you will start feeling like you moved out of tornado alley to a more temperate climate.