HOW TO FORGE AHEAD

Here are eight tips to get your organisation through tough times

1. **Embrace the core mission**
   Every company has a core mission anchored around its purpose for being in business — the purpose of its existence.
   Living the core mission should begin with a mission statement that is not just hung up on the boardroom wall but also has everyone in the company understanding and embracing it, from senior management to newly joined junior staff.
   All activities, policies and systems must be in line with the mission statement, lest it end up just being lip service.

2. **Inspire a clear vision**
   Why is it important to have a vision? Because the clearer the future that is mapped out, the more defined your actions and the more specific your decisions geared towards it.
   A clear vision also inspires people to break new ground, like an athlete who constantly strives to break his record and achieve new heights.

3. **Build a strong culture**
   When you have enough people embracing certain philosophies and practising a particular style of doing things, then it becomes a culture — for better or worse.
   Leaders can shape an organisation’s culture through strong-arm policies or by remaining silent in the face of poor management practices.
   Or, they can shape a culture anchored on values such as the pursuit of progress, integrity in business, excellence in work and respect for all.

4. **Create a high-performance organisation**
   To have the organisation performing at optimal levels, it is necessary to have clear accountability at various levels through specific key performance indicators (KPIs).

5. **Get the right people on board**
   People are not the most valuable asset, but the right people are.
   There are employees who may not suit your company’s culture as they have values that differ from your company’s, or they turn in performances that fall below the firm’s expectations.
   In such scenarios, the senior management may need to find them alternative roles.

6. **Encourage the pursuit of progress**
   Companies need to be growing constantly, and that means all employees need to embrace a mindset geared towards change.
   Leaders must continuously build a culture that challenges everyone to practise new approaches to doing things.

7. **Take calculated risks**
   An organisation’s leaders need to take risks all the time to keep the company growing.
   Commission research and gather statistics to substantiate business decisions, but do not overdo it to the point that it causes the managers to suffer from “analysis paralysis”.
   This will cause them to become too afraid to make any decisions.
   The mark of a great company is that it is always prepared to seize opportunities when they arise.

8. **Have determination and commitment**
   Finally, encourage a “never-say-die attitude”. There will be good times and bad, but it is perseverance that will determine whether a company succeeds or fails.

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