

“Why management have to create a culture where staff believe that they can be world class” by Nick Bishop

As modern business strives to find ways to elevate both brand and reputation, price and technology become less of a differentiator.

Price differentiation while attracting attention will only last for a period of time and can be matched by competitors creating a price war which in turn will merely reduce margins. Similarly, while technology will improve both service and typically profitability, it soon fails to hold the “competitive edge”.

The one asset that business should focus on is the “human factor”. While all companies will strive to be “best in class” and offer “world class service “, it is all too easy to overlook what has to be done to achieve that aim. As a typical company may expect to see 25% of its operating costs being spent on staff (and far more where the business is very labour intensive) it becomes even more important to get a “world class” return on that investment. People “make the difference” in every business.

Each company will have its own culture and likewise should develop its “values and vision”.

Values shape the behaviour of the business and what is important in helping to create both the internal culture and the external brand of the company...the Footprint!

Vision is needed to both change and improve the future. The vision of the business generates energy. It helps to motivate employees. It sets the direction of corporate and marketing strategy. To be motivated as individuals, we all need goals.

To perform at *just a high level* before “world class” is even contemplated, the values and vision of the company have to be totally aligned to the individual beliefs of each person .Everyone must have personal goals in place that they believe in with a passion. This requires a strong “Performance Management “culture. Having the belief that they can be “world class” requires more and needs a shift in management attitudes.

Half a century ago, Harvard University identified two distinct management styles: COP and ACE.

COP: Control ...Organise ...Police

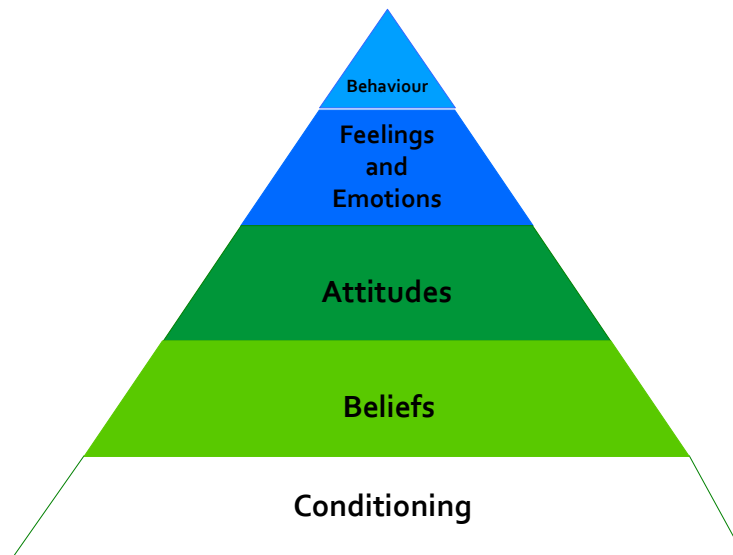
ACE: Align ...Challenge ...Evaluate

As companies strive to get a better return on their people investment, too often they revert to the “COP” style and stifle the creativity and potential that everyone should possess when a proper culture of “people development” exists.

ACE allows management the chance to align the values and vision of both company and people in an environment where everyone believes they contribute, free to challenge “best practice” and to evaluate the available options to create a “world class performance”.

Adding value to the business is every employee's responsibility.

With values and vision aligned, a proper "performance management" system in place where management fully embrace a "modern coaching" style, the ability to instil the fundamental belief in all that they can be "world class" becomes the key.



Management need to understand that the self belief it's people possess stems initially from their "conditioning" and as a consequence how they are coached ...They can then start to change the limiting or accepting beliefs that most people possess and which prevents the development of a "world class performance".

Perceptions and pre-conceived notions will too often influence beliefs and as a consequence attitudes. "World class performance" cannot be developed until the behaviours and performance are fundamentally altered by challenging inherent beliefs, attitudes and ultimately "feelings and emotions"...The mindset.

The way management helps to develop their teams to change their attitudes to one of "I can be world class" and then offer a culture that embraces the changes necessary, will ultimately decide whether the dream becomes reality. Too often we assume that the beliefs necessary will happen by a few well chosen "sound bites"...If only it were that simple: Companies that achieve "world class" will always have the consumer as king. The bar is constantly raised and they find new ways of clearing it ...Gold medal style!

Author: Nick Bishop is an internationally recognised professional in developing both individual and team talents in such a way that allows them to believe that they can become "best in class". Nick has many years Management experience with leading UK "Blue Chip" organisations and is the author of The Certified International Customer Service Professional (CICSP) which has been receiving very positive feedback in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and South Africa.