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# People First in Action: The Cure for Silo Sickness

## Executive Summary

The cry coming from leaders in C-suites throughout corporate America is, "How can our organization achieve a sustainable competitive advantage?" One vital competency that leadership must master to achieve this goal is the ability to lead across geographic and interdepartmental boundaries so that their organizations consistently operate as one seamless, unified team and not like a field of disconnected silos.

The American Management Association (AMA) strongly underscored the pervasive nature of this silo mentality and its debilitating consequences when it reported that 83 percent of executives stated that silos exist in their companies. And 97 percent of these business leaders believed that these silos have a negative effect on their businesses.

Unfortunately, business schools have not prepared our corporate leaders with the proper mind-set, the right skill-sets, or effective tool-sets that equip them to lead their organizations toward developing a more collaborative spirit between different departments and business units, which would result in greater enterprise-wide cohesiveness.

*Cont'd ...*



In other words, our educational system has not equipped business students to intellectually grasp a whole view of things thought out together. This lack of interdisciplinary teaching has fueled the creation of the silo mentality in the minds of most business students.

Unless corporate leadership teams mature with respect to embracing the importance of systemic thinking as a key business driver, they will fail to see the need for developing cross-group leaders who are armed with an abundance of highly effective cross-group initiatives. If this systemic mind-set is not instilled throughout the entirety of a company as a fundamental guiding principle for governing business efficiency and effectiveness, the silo mentality will stubbornly remain as one of the greatest threats to organizational sustainability.

The Business Dictionary defines the Silo Mentality as, "A mind-set present in some companies when certain departments or sectors do not wish to share information with others in the same company. This type of mentality will reduce the efficiency of the overall operation, reduce morale, and may contribute to the demise of a productive company."

The AMA survey previously cited clearly reveals that a silo mentality is alive and well in every industry in America. It constantly manifests itself in the behaviors of individuals, teams, departments, and different business units, creating inertia and even turf wars in many organizations. The provocative question to ask is this: *How can business leaders permanently immunize their organizations from silo sickness?* Countless leaders have asked me this question throughout the last four decades. They work in healthcare, manufacturing, transportation, technology, education, religion, hospitality, banking, construction, retail, and government. Every organization that we have consulted with has been afflicted by some form of silo sickness. And none of these clients had been equipped with any proven, how-to skills to help them effectively rid their organizations from the chronic pain of silo sickness stagnation.

Here is the good news: People First International has developed the cure for the silo sickness. The purpose of this white paper is to provide serious-minded business leaders with the necessary mind-set, the best skill-set, and an effective tool-set to put People First into action and eliminate every silo in your organization.

In addition, it is my sincere hope that this paper will help you to initiate a caring conversation that examines the very real possibility that silos exist in your organization. I hope you'll discuss how this silo sickness is impacting your performance, eating into your profitability, and increasing unnecessary levels of stress for your purpose partners' jobs and their families, which dramatically impacts the quality of the experience that your client/patient/customer will have with your fragmented organization.





In "People First in Action: The Cure for Silo Sickness," you will discover:

- 1. The Cause of Silo Sickness**
- 2. 20 Silo Sickness Busters**
- 3. 20 Questions to Eliminate Silo Sickness**

MIT Sloan Management Review boldly proclaimed, "Future advantage will go to those that can stimulate and support inter-unit collaboration to leverage their dispersed resources."<sup>1</sup> It logically follows that the lifeblood of every organization consists of three key components: communication, cooperation, and collaboration. When there is a breakdown in any of these vital areas, an organization inevitably begins to suffer from silo sickness.

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## A scarcity mind-set always robs an organization of the continual harvest of abundance that everyone could benefit from.

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All too often, organizations unwittingly sacrifice interdependent success on the altar of independent success. This attitude reinforces a silo culture, in which the right hand doesn't communicate, cooperative, or collaborate with the left hand. And when collaboration isn't celebrated or respected, one of the most damaging effects of the silo mentality reveals itself: scarcity. A scarcity mind-set always robs an organization of the continual harvest of abundance that everyone could benefit from.

However, the scarcity and discord that silos inevitably produce are not inevitable. A People First culture of caring communication, compelling cooperation, and consistent collaboration will eliminate all silos sickness in your organization while

concurrently producing abundance. This seamless, one-team culture fosters a cohesive, *purpose partner* mentality. This collaborative mind-set will unite your organization around common, company-wide goals that will enable everyone to see how their department's individual efforts effectively contribute to fulfilling the company's mission and vision and the systemic success of the entire organization. This is how you will ultimately accomplish your best business results, thereby making your competition irrelevant.

I want to encourage you to do a soul-searching deep-dive into this paper, and use the ideas and strategies presented here to create more love, joy, and harmony within the hearts of the people in your organization. Remind everyone in both your personal and professional life never to forget the truthfulness of this ancient saying: "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for people to dwell together in unity!*"

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<sup>1</sup>Morten T. Hansen and Nitin Nohria, "How to Build Collaborative Advantage," *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Fall 2004.



## Table of Contents

- 
- 1-2 When Thinking “Success” ... Don’t Think “Cylinders”
  - 2 The Cause of Silo Sickness
  - 2-3 What Is the Belief that Precedes the Behavior?
  - 3 A Metaphor to Explode the Folly
  - 4 Unity in Our Diversity
  - 4 The Profitable Power in Ideas
  - 5 The Professional Playground
  - 6 Putting People First into Action:  
What Must Our Organization Address?
  - 6-7 20 Silo Busters
  - 8-9 20 Questions to Eliminate Silo Sickness
  - 9-10 The Ultimate Goal:  
Blend the Best Human Systems with the Best  
Business Systems!
  - 10 Become a People First Certified Organization
  - 11 Contact Us
-



## When Thinking "Success" ... Don't Think "Cylinders"

Many organizations suffer from silo sickness. Is yours one of them? No organization is immune; I have worked with both non-profit organizations and for-profit corporations which were severely afflicted by the debilitating effects of silo sickness. I write this article, however, to bring you good news: there is a People First leadership vaccine that will forever inoculate your organization from the injurious, sub-optimizing effects of silo sickness.

If you have ever driven through America's Midwest, you can't help but notice the giant grain silos

that punctuate the landscape. These huge cylindrical structures were built to separate different grains from one another. Business consultants have employed the term *silo* as an apt metaphor for departments and business units within an organization which behave as if they were just as self-contained, independent, and disconnected from one another as the silos in the Corn Belt.

Used in corporate conversation, the phrase *silo mentality* is heavily freighted with negative connotation. An organization is not designed to function like a grain silo in Kansas, and thus a company is ill-served when silos begin to spring

up within. Corporate silos create barriers between departments and business units which can grow to be as steep and as impenetrable as the massive steel cylinders that house grain. Left unchecked, these barriers mark the boundaries of disconnected, vertical business units which ultimately weaken the overall strength of the organization and frustrate every attempt to create synergistic outcomes. Silo thinking is a philosophy of failure. Its acceptance as a viable business model is the harbinger of accelerating decline for any organization.

Organizational silos often become very strong and self-sufficient. The more well-developed the silo, the more deeply mired it becomes in insular thinking and turf protection. Moreover, this independent growth

creates a self-reinforcing belief among the silo's residents that communication and collaboration with other business units will only impede their own segregated development. These notions are tragically false; the more optimized a business silo becomes, the more sub-optimized the overall organization becomes.

It is important to note that the individual business unit (the silo) may be functioning very efficiently. However, organizational sub-optimization necessarily occurs when individual departments and business units no longer honor, support, and value one



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another's interdependent purposes; at this point they begin behaving at cross-purposes. Worse still, silo thinking, in order to maintain its insular, elitist reality *must* ignore the goals and downplay the value of other departments and business units. This devaluation cripples the organization, due to the mistrust that is fostered between departments. The old adage, "The right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing," inevitably becomes an oppressive, distrusting, disempowering, discouraging reality for all internal and external customers.

### The Cause of Silo Sickness

The presence of silos within any organization is a natural outcome of human nature. Most human beings have an innate propensity toward selfishness. Therefore, the silo effect is the product of the way we *think*; self-absorbed, non-inclusionary thinking is the foundation upon which every silo stands. In other words, a self-serving mentality that puts Me First is the noxious taproot that sustains a silo's existence. As I gather others around me who think the same way, the silo will develop and flourish; it grows taller and thicker. However, far from protecting the grain within, the silo only serves to spread rot throughout the organization.

It follows then, that the only way to permanently purge silo sickness from your organization is to address the root cause of the problem. The "Me-First-others-last" devaluing attitude must be displaced by a new People First philosophy. Leaders must put People First into action if they wish to create the solid interconnection and interdependency that is so vital to organizational success.

The inevitable pushback against advancing this new cultural philosophy is that it requires a change of thinking that is contrary to human nature. Leaders must help the silo builders to see the self-destructive nature of their thinking. The silo builders must be patiently and logically taught that their belief system is false and that it will invariably demonstrate itself to be counterproductive and self-defeating.

### What Is the Belief that Precedes the Behavior?

What is the false belief system of the silo leader? As I've said, the root cause of silo sickness can bluntly be described as arrogance. Too many men and women in leadership positions are unwilling to humble themselves and admit that they need other people to help them fully realize their potential. These leaders *must* abandon the notion that they are self-contained, self-sufficient, self-satisfied, in need of no one ... if they ever wish to achieve sustainable success.

Until we understand that we are partners with a common purpose, we will always think in terms of exclusion, rather than inclusion. I often remind audiences that belief precedes behavior. Corporate silos exist because of the beliefs of the inhabitants of the silo. And the belief within the silo is that thinking is exclusive; we are not going to include other people and other departments because they don't think like we do! We will not collaborate, cooperate, and communicate ... except with our "homies" who live and work within our sheltered silo. There is an "us versus them" mentality of segregation and even suspicion.

As the silo subculture continues to develop, we often work very well with one another within our insulated business unit. And, sadly, as our silo becomes more optimized, the idea that silos actually work is reinforced! We begin to believe





that sustainability, success, and growth are only accomplished within the walls of our silo. So we work to make the walls even higher and thicker, in order to keep others from intruding into our comfortable space. "Don't change my thinking; don't bring in new ideas; don't challenge me! Everything's working fine! No one would do it like us; no one thinks like us!" We never learn from anyone else, because we have marooned ourselves on an elitist island.

### A Metaphor to Explode the Folly

The human body provides a powerful metaphor which explodes the folly of silo thinking. The human body contains millions of diverse functions which operate within one interconnected, unified whole for the benefit of all of its members. Because

all of the parts function in an interdependent and mutually supporting manner, the necessary outcome is the mutual health of the entire body. Just think how absurd it would be if the foot were to declare, "Since I am not a hand, I am not part of the body."

Would it be any less illogical for a silo sales department to announce, "Because I am not the operations department, I am not a part of the entire corporation"?

There are many departments in a corporation, just as there are many systems that comprise the human body. The body and a corporation each represent the concept of a unified, interdependent whole, composed of many different parts that will not function properly without the support of the other parts. So one part can't say to the other, "I have no need of you." If the human body were nothing but



one gigantic eyeball, how could there be any sense of hearing? If the whole body were one huge ear, how could there be any sense of smell? Clearly, if all the parts of the human body were exactly the same, the organism would be utterly incapacitated; it could not function as a body.

In the very same way, if the whole corporation was nothing but one accounting department, how could there be any marketing? If the whole organization was one marketing department, how could there be any Human Resource function? As with the human body, if all the different departments within an organization were identical with respect to their function, it would be impossible to operate as a profitable corporation. Therefore, the diversity of form and function is *essential* for healthy life and operation!

Let me draw one final point from the human body: if there are no parts of the body that are "redundant systems"—i.e., unnecessary for the overall operation of the body—in the very same way there are no departments within a corporation that should be regarded as insignificant

to the success of the entire organization. The attitude that there are "Big I's" and "Little You's" in a company should never be tolerated. The first sparks of silo rivalries and adversarial activities must be immediately extinguished. The prevailing thought *must* be that there are only Big People in Big Places serving a Big Purpose! Every member of the organization should highly esteem every other individual as powerful purpose partners, who are vital to the successful, sustainable outcomes of the company.



## Unity in Our Diversity

What I believe is missing in far too many families, clubs, communities, and organizations is that we've not been taught that *difference is good*. Yes, we often pride ourselves on ethnic diversity, but we fail to celebrate diversity of thinking! That is, we don't rightly value cognitive diversity.

When we look at the universe we live in and the environment around us, we see both unity and diversity. I believe that the undeniable wisdom in creation is expressed in the interconnectedness and interdependency of the diversity. A tree is not the sun. The sun is millions of miles away from the tree, yet the tree derives its life from the different variety of life that is the sun. Photosynthesis takes place in an intricate interaction between the sun and the plants. Bees are not flowers, but bees pollinate the flowers, each contributing to the existence of the other. Everywhere you look, you see splendid diversity within the interconnections and interdependencies. The diversity in creation doesn't take away from the unity; it magnifies the beauty of the unity!

Therefore, when executives tell me they want a more engaged company, I promptly reply that companies don't change, people do! When companies do change, it is because individuals have taken responsibility to engage with one another and celebrate the diversity of their individual minds and individual thinking, which constantly contributes to organizational development and unity.

## The Profitable Power in Ideas

Reader, let me ask you: Are you engaging? Do you always ask for feedback? Do you consistently say things to others like "What do you think?" and "I'd like to hear your thoughts"? When we consciously and consistently work to tap into the marvelous innovation and ideation that exists within *each one* of the purpose partners within our organization, that's when we begin to become solution-seekers, silo-shorteners, and sponsors of synergy!

### **Leaders must begin to take responsibility to encourage and celebrate collaborative creation.**

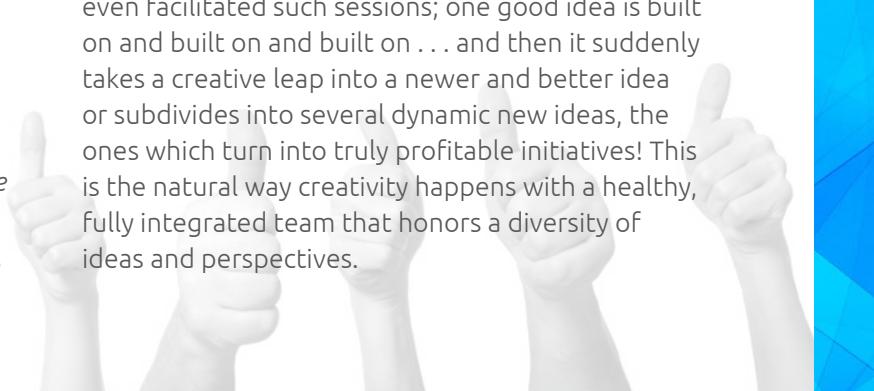
We must work together to build the mindset that *nothing* happens from one person; *everyone* contributes. We all need each other!

Perhaps the most harmful thing about organizational silos is their failure to solicit ideas from every possible source. Silo dwellers fail to understand that everyone has ideas for improving the entire company. Every person, by virtue of being human, has a mind that is chock full of ideas—many of them marvelously practical and innovative! We create vigorous synergy when we leverage the exponential power of our individual strengths.

And power resides in ideas! Business leaders talk about profitability, but they frequently ignore the truth that profits are directly related to the generation of profitable ideas. What becomes most meaningful in reference to the growth of a company is sharing and expanding on those ideas.

Did it ever occur to you that if you don't foster a culture that generates more ideas, your competitors will fall in love with your lack of ideation? Your innovative stagnation will allow your competition to move to the front of the line.

One section of my *People First Leadership* training program is devoted to teaching four of the phenomenal creative thinking skills devised by the incomparable Dr. Edward de Bono. We encourage our students to employ Dr. de Bono's creative thinking skills and "Have fun frolicking in the playground of your minds!" I have seen the spectacular results that occur when a group is intentional about honoring the creativity of all its members; you see the static electricity of creativity break out in meetings. I've sat in the rooms and even facilitated such sessions; one good idea is built on and built on and built on . . . and then it suddenly takes a creative leap into a newer and better idea or subdivides into several dynamic new ideas, the ones which turn into truly profitable initiatives! This is the natural way creativity happens with a healthy, fully integrated team that honors a diversity of ideas and perspectives.





# The Professional Playground

You don't have to teach children this kind of collaboration; they do it naturally. Watch a group of children playing a game; the various participants add different layers of complexity and challenge and fun, and the team shouts its approval. "Yeah, I like that! Great idea! Let's do it!" They're cooperating with ideas and sharing their thoughts and they're having fun! Why should we budge one inch from that mindset as adults? It is in that collaborative model where possibilities, innovation, and profitability are found!

Tell me one good reason why the workplace can't be more like a playground! Sally in Accounting says, "Let's go ask Sales to come out and play!"

"No way!" Bill groans. "They talk too much! They'll want to take over!"

"Bill," the department head says calmly, "we'll just have to teach them how to play in a way that's more agreeable. We're all going to grow if we do. Great idea, Sally! Give Sales a call!"

When every department and business unit truly view all others as interdependent purpose partners, this philosophy spawns a supportive culture that breaks down barriers and builds cross-functional bridges of

cooperation and edification. It is a culture that sees others' differences as a reason for celebration, not a source of irritation. People think less of titles and territory ... blaming and shaming ... resentment and resistance ... protecting and preserving; they think more in terms of communication and cooperation ... synergy and service ... energy and empowerment ... recognition and celebration.

This type of participative culture eliminates inferior decision making, prevents duplication of efforts, and removes any perception in the customers' minds that the company is disconnected or disorganized. Finally, this collaborative mentality is highly engaging, because it encourages synergistic support between departments. Business units give and receive the necessary information and support that equips their purpose partners to exceed the expectations of *all* customers—both internal and external. Through this serving and sharing interdepartmental reciprocity of caring and collaboration, the right hand always knows what and why the left hand is doing, because both hands are always working together—never at cross-purposes within conflicting, insular, silo sub-cultures.



## Putting People First into Action: What Must Our Organization Address?

The following set of 20 silo-busting outcomes and 20 probing questions will give you crystal clear, 20/20 vision that will enable you to identify the silos in your organization and intelligently assess what you need to do in order to put People First into action and eliminate any and all silos in your company.

I suggest that you work through this in two phases. First, read through the 20 Silo Busters below and identify the top three initiatives that you believe must be pursued in your organization in order to improve your interdepartmental communication, cooperation, and collaboration.

### 20 Silo Busters

1. Our interaction within and between all departments is characterized by dignity, respect and honor.
2. All department heads meet regularly to ensure that there is no misalignment or disconnection between departments regarding the execution of our Key Business Imperatives. Our department heads serve as cross-group leaders who seamlessly connect all of our departments together with their cross-group goals and initiatives.
3. All departments freely and openly share successes *and* failures, information, and creative ideas with each other so that the entire organization collectively benefits and learns from each department's knowledge, experience, and innovations.
4. We encourage, reward, and celebrate collaboration, cooperation, and caring communication within and between our departments.
5. We understand how all our roles and responsibilities in the context of our human systems and our business systems should fit together

into one well-integrated, interdependent system of thought for the well-being of our internal and external customers.

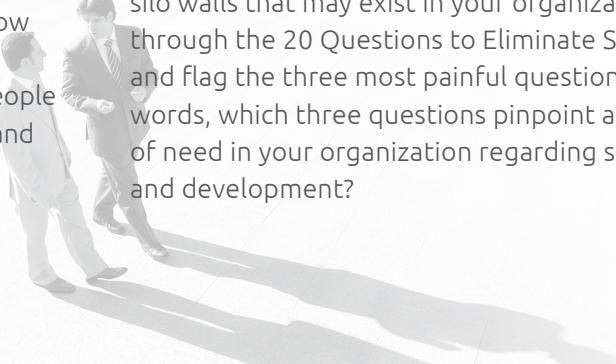
6. We respectfully, joyfully, and cooperatively see to it that all appropriate information flows out of one department into the next to meet the needs of our internal customers, so that they are fully equipped to meet the needs of our external customers. In other words, we make sure that our departments are fully transparent and that there are no locked, autonomous, silo gates that block the flow of information into and out of all departments.
7. We put all of our requests in writing so that we are very clear concerning the assistance that we need from other departments. Also we do not demand unrealistic time commitments from other departments to meet our needs, because we know this can create undue stress on other departments.





8. We invite members of other departments to come and see how we function within our own department. We conduct cross-functional training within our department in order to learn from each other better ways to solve enterprise-wide problems.
9. We are aware that we are completely responsible for the kind of cross-channel experiences that our internal and external customers are having with our department.
10. We have established internal and external customer journey maps to learn more about the needs, wants, challenges, and frustrations of our customers so that we more effectively meet them where they are as individuals in order to give them a more joyful and rewarding experience with our department.
11. We have created integrated, cross-team collaboration platforms and we use data sharing systems such as Google Drive, Google Docs, Dropbox, Egnyte, Trello, Slack, Skye, Zoom, and GoToMeeting so that all new information is available, understood, and transparent to all departments so that we can more effectively work together as one unified team.
12. We take time to get to know the people in other departments as human beings—not just as human doings—so that our interactions are not “close encounters of the impersonal kind.” We learn about their talents and tears, their experiences and emotions, and listen to their personal stories of good and bad times. In other words, we don’t see Mark in marketing, Sally in sales, Helen in HR, Olaf in operations, or Frank in finance. We deliberately work at viewing human beings as individual *people*—that is men and women with families, friends, hobbies, and hearts.
13. We set aside time every week to discuss how well we are living out our organizational values—as stewards and models of our People First philosophy—within our department and interdepartmentally.
14. We celebrate both the accomplishments of our departmental and interdepartmental goals and successful interdepartmental collaboration.
15. We hold each other accountable for not willingly and joyfully serving and supporting one another within our own department and interdepartmentally.
16. We apologize to one another and ask forgiveness for any disrespectful or inappropriate attitudes or actions both within and outside our departments.
17. We discuss the harmful effects of turf wars and insular thinking.
18. We discuss the enterprise-wide benefits of thinking systemically. In other words, the need for more inclusive thinking should become top-of-mind for everyone as a guiding principle which will help our organization become more unified in thought and practice so that we become more caring, competitive, and innovative. As each department matures in its understanding of the importance of systemic thinking, it will act as a guard against any silo sickness behaviors that may be taking root and bearing noxious fruit in our organization.
19. We always discuss our ideas and plans with other departments to get their feedback on the impact that our decisions and actions will have on *their* departments before we continue developing our strategy.
20. We all constantly strive to become more self-aware with reference to the possibility that *we* may be the problem that is hindering our organization from effectively working together as one cohesive team.

Once you have selected the three initiatives that you believe are most important to lowering any silo walls that may exist in your organization, read through the 20 Questions to Eliminate Silo Sickness and flag the three most painful questions. In other words, which three questions pinpoint any areas of need in your organization regarding silo growth and development?





## 20 Questions to Eliminate Silo Sickness

1. What is fun, frustrating, and fulfilling with respect to your interaction with other departments? In other words, what is working well and what isn't working interdepartmentally?
2. Which department frustrates you the most and why?
3. Which department is the best one to work with? Why do you enjoy working with that group more than other departments?
4. Do you know when your department's priorities are not aligned with other departments' priorities? And once you perceive a misalignment in your interdepartmental priorities, do you seek to effectively work together with other departments to correct any misalignment?
5. Do you understand how you should support, serve, and care for one another in order to effectively meet the needs of your external customers? Have you had this conversation with other departments and business units?
6. Have you asked other departments to give your department a performance appraisal concerning how well your department is respecting, serving, supporting, and caring for them as your internal customer?
7. Does every department you work with see your department as a group of empathetic team players who are truly seeking their internal customers' well-being in every interaction? In other words, do they truly believe and trust that you have their back?
8. Do your decisions and actions consistently convey to people in other departments that your department recognizes that you are all on the same corporate team, working together to accomplish a common mission and vision by means of the same organizational values?
9. Do you strive to maintain high levels of trust with every department that your department interacts with?

10. Do you realize when you have damaged your trust capital with other departments?
11. Do you know how to authentically restore high levels of trust with other departments with whom you have depleted your trust capital?
12. Do other departments see your department as a model of humility, grace, and accountability? Or do they see you as living examples of hubris, impatience, and irresponsibility? In other words, do other departments perceive your department as being difficult to work with? Or do they believe that your department provides others with a greater sense of joy, peace, and harmony?
13. Do other departments believe that you value their individual perspective and seek to understand their viewpoint before you engage in a particular course of action that may unwittingly create a negative impact on their department?





14. Do you see how your department fits within the context of one overarching core process map? That is, do you understand if your department functions as an upstream, downstream, or cross-stream process in a core process map?
15. Do you discuss the possibility that a communications barrier may exist between senior leadership and management that could create vertical silos that would cut off the critical feedback that is so vital to the growth and development of your organization?
16. Does your department fully grasp the significance of how the interdependencies of every department create a trustworthy, end-to-end value chain for your external customers? And do you understand how the ultimate end-product of your interdependent and cohesive organization satisfies customers' needs ... which keeps your customers coming back for more fulfilling People First experiences ... which keeps your company profitable and competitive?
17. Do you make sure that everyone who attends your interdepartmental meeting is clear concerning the specifics of their roles and responsibilities? Do they understand how
- they will be held accountable for their part in the effective execution of your interdepartmental goals and strategies?
18. Do you give members of your interdepartmental team permission to speak the truth in love if they become disenfranchised over the lack of follow-through and missed deadlines with regard to the goals and strategies that were developed in your interdepartmental meetings?
19. Have you had a discussion with your department members concerning how certain information that you have or create could be delivered to other departments in a more timely manner in order to improve interdepartmental communication, collaboration, and trust?
20. Does every member of your department realize how every choice they make has a profound impact on the level of joy and happiness that other departments will experience in their interactions with your department? In addition, do they understand that the joyful and happy experiences that they created with other departments will have a positive spillover effect into the entire People First culture, which in turn will contribute to the emotional and financial health of the whole organization?

## The Ultimate Goal: Blend the Best Human Systems with the Best Business Systems!

Are you concerned that silo sickness may be infecting your organization? It really is easy to administer the antidote: make a deliberate decision to begin putting People First!

I often tell our clients that the People First philosophy can be crystallized into just two words: ***relationships*** and ***results***. The phrase *People First* is a reminder that building solid, trust-based relationships is the most important function for every leader in every organization. All the plans, all the processes, all the accountability will not elicit peak performance if the members of an organization feel relationally disconnected and disengaged. So working to develop genuine caring and nurturing



## White Paper



relationships within your organization—creating the best human systems—is the rock-solid foundation for achieving a People First culture.

But there is a second phrase I've used for decades now: *Purpose Partners*. That phrase captures the importance of results. As critically important as it is for all members of an organization to feel connected to the other members of their team by bonds of trust and respect, they also must be engaged in a clear and compelling, overarching organizational *purpose*. In other words, they are partnering together with their coworkers, so that they effectively work together to achieve a common purpose: the sustainable business *results* of their organization!

This is why all our People First Master Coaches frequently emphasize that People First is most definitely not about "just being nice." People First is a *leadership* philosophy.



### Become a People First Certified Organization

At People First International, we're nothing short of DRIVEN to bring about total transformation in the workplace. We're passionate about building a better world ... one person, one family, one organization at a time.

And we want you to be next!

Our diagnostic tools, coupled with our leadership training and certification, provides you with everything you need to enrich the spirit and increase the effectiveness of everyone in your organization.

There are no shortcuts here ... just real, solid progress and true transformation.

As you embrace the People First philosophy, you'll watch as your entire culture is revolutionized, becoming a wildly successful breeding ground for inspiration, innovation, and enthusiasm! Suddenly, your competitors begin to seem irrelevant—not even on the same playing field!

People First leaders consistently work to build and maintain the best human systems within their organization because they know that whatever they want their external customers to feel, their internal customers must feel first. But they don't stop there; People First leaders also work to create the best business systems as well, so that the communication, cooperation, and collaboration spawned by those solid internal relationships will generate the best business results.

When purpose partners are working together in a People First culture—when the best business systems are blended with the best human systems—your organization will be forever inoculated from silo sickness and you will reap all the rewards of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage! *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for people to dwell together in unity!"*

*"My message to my Senior Team is that this has the potential to have the most transformational impact on our lives and our company that we will ever encounter, and will create a culture gap between MiTek and our nearest competitor that is so wide, it will be inconceivable to imagine them ever coming near to us culturally."*

**Thomas J. Manenti**  
*Chairman and CEO*  
MiTek Industries – A Berkshire Hathaway Company  
*A People First Certified Company*

When you've completed your People First Certification, every person you and your Purpose Partners encounter will notice the difference and appreciate the change in attitude, in service, and in professionalism. People will want to know your secret. Tell them the secret is putting People First! The BEST time to get People First Certified is NOW, BEFORE your competition does.



## White Paper

We Invite You to Join The Ranks of Our People First Certified Companies!



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