

# 25 TIPS ON... CREATING A PERFORMANCE CULTURE

## PUTTING ON A PERFORMANCE

- 1 Develop an organisational culture focused on delivering a winning performance. "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." – Peter Drucker
- 2 What show is your organisation putting on? Starbucks' Howard Schulz decided his show was called *A Third Place Between Work and Home*.
- 3 Decide where your 'theatre of action' is – the place where the performance meets its audience.
- 4 The people facing the audience are the most important; what happens on stage determines how our performance is judged.
- 5 Once we understand what show we're in and know where our theatre is, we can focus on delivering a winning performance.

## BUILDING ENSEMBLES

- 6 When people come together to perform, they are energised. A performance culture is an engaged culture.
- 7 When we put on a performance, we genuinely work together; we become an ensemble.
- 8 Ensemble players actively work to help the performance of fellow players – their brilliant performance helps you perform better.
- 9 The stagehands and the lighting crew are as engaged as the lead actors in delivering a great performance.
- 10 People performing together focus intently on each other so that they can react in the moment; teams that do this are highly functional.
- 11 Our role changes with context and time: sometimes we're the lead, sometimes we're the support; both are essential to the performance.

## CREATIVE REHEARSAL

- 12 Rehearsal is different from practice. Practice builds technique whereas ensemble rehearsal creates brilliant performances.
- 13 Full rehearsal needs the whole ensemble on the stage – the extras as well as the lead players.

- 14 Rehearsal involves trying out risky things, otherwise there's no point. Real innovation takes us out of our comfort zone.
- 15 Rehearsal means trying things out until we know if and how they work or not. New ideas must be welcomed and worked with. No idea should be 'blocked'.

## TECHNICAL VS. ARTISTIC

- 16 The success of the output (the performance) depends on the quality of the inputs. Measuring outputs can be misleading – focus on the inputs and get the technique right.
- 17 Great performances are built by getting many little things right. Small improvements build on each other until the whole performance is transformed.
- 18 All great performers are technically excellent. Outstanding performers add artistry to technique.

## LEADER AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

- 19 Good leaders are like theatre directors, they supply a direction and a framework but let the players develop their individual roles.
- 20 Great directors don't try to control everything, they create environments in which wonderful and surprising things can happen.
- 21 Ensembles don't have leaders in the traditional sense: leadership is shared and allowed
- 22 Successful teams function like jazz bands: new ideas are offered up and played with, and leadership is passed around.
- 23 In all true ensembles, individual brilliance is put at the service of the overall performance.

## PERFORMANCE THINKING

- 24 Think of your colleagues as an ensemble. Are you helping each other perform brilliantly to deliver the best overall performance?
- 25 Think of your organisation as a performance. Is everyone focussed on the theatre of action? Does the audience love the show? Are they coming back for more?



## PERFORM TO WIN

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