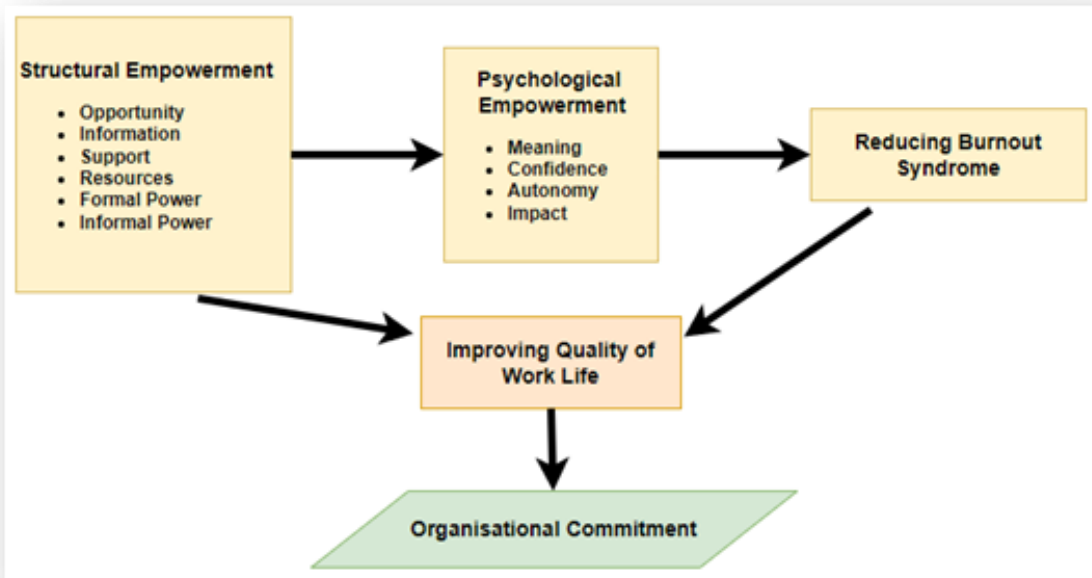


Strategy Execution



Strategy execution is one of the most overlooked components of any organisation. Studies show that only 8% of leaders can successfully implement strategy in an organisation. Therefore, the likelihood of achieving the strategic objectives and growth initiatives is severely hindered.

Apart from having an effective organisational strategy that ensures competitiveness in the market, each section/division/department within the organisation should have an individual strategy that aligns with the overall organisational strategy. Although some perceptions may view it as a waste of time, that couldn't be further from the truth.

Using an analogy of a road trip, let's say that the organisation is on one side of the country and needs to get to the other side. If the organisation develops an overarching strategy without clear goals for each area, you could end up with parts of the organisation all over the country on different roads, taking on other projects along the way; even if everyone makes it to the goal, they will not be there to help each other out along the way due to taking different paths and not creating an alignment.

Now, take that same example and implement strategy execution initiatives that give clear guidance for all the areas to follow one route and help each other along the way to arrive at the destination together, ready for the next destination, achieved by having clear, step-by-step directions (i.e. GPS guidance) that align with the overall goal. Additionally, cross-collaboration through the organisation is vital as it bolsters strategy execution capabilities.

Another perspective is that effective strategy is like a band. Each member needs to play their own instruments to the same song, in the same tune, and at the same speed to sound good; this is achieved by each band member creating an individual strategy to ensure they play their part effectively; business is no different.

Along with developing a strategy for each area, the crucial components that need attention to ensure effective strategy implementation include.

1. **Developing an achievable organisational strategy:** Often, strategy development focuses too much on the top-down and inside-out approaches. In contrast, insufficient attention to the outside-in and bottom-up perspectives leads to building a strategy that may look good on paper but is not achievable due to the strategy not aligning with the operations.
2. **Leadership:** Too often, we see technically proficient people promoted into leadership roles without the proper development and tools to be effectual leaders who can achieve organisational goals. It is vitally important for leaders to understand the importance of the business functions and their impacts if neglected, as well as the benefits when done correctly. Not everyone needs every skill; they only need an understanding of where to seek advice. Having the wrong leaders in roles will make the following two points mute. Hence, understanding the capability of leadership at all levels of the organisation is vital.
3. **People:** Having the right people in the organisation sets the tone of capabilities. It is not merely about having the right skill sets; technical skills are teachable commodities. However, employing people who are not the right fit for the organisation regarding values can be a cancer to your operations and, therefore, strategic goals. The saying that an empty house is better than having a lousy tenant applies to employees. The amount of time and focus taken away from leaders and other team members can impede output and team dynamics, which leads to the next point.
4. **Culture:** A very fragile component of an organisation, and one of the most powerful is the culture. Culture requires constant nurturing to ensure the embedment of resilience and change capability within the organisation. A poor culture generally stems from an organisation's lack of structural and psychological empowerment. The emphasis is that good organisational culture can propel an operation to achieve and drive strategic initiatives to new heights. A poor culture can significantly impede an organisation's ability to achieve strategic objectives and maintain market competitiveness.

The image outlines the importance of the elements discussed. In particular, having an achievable strategy, effective leadership and the right people create structural empowerment, whereas culture creates psychological empowerment. When these elements are effectively combined, it promotes increased organisational commitment and significantly increased capability to achieve strategic objectives.