

Axiom Consulting Partners Calls on Organization Design Pros to Lead “Shockproof” Efforts that Help Companies Survive Uncertainty

Seven key actions help companies align strategy, organization and talent to improve their performance.

Chicago, IL (PRWEB) November 07, 2011 -- Get the key elements of your company aligned in this uncertain economy or prepare to stumble, warned [Axiom Consulting Partners'](#) Juan Pablo González, speaking at the recent annual [Organization Development Network](#) Conference in Baltimore, MD. Citing recent examples such as Netflix, Crocs and the U.S. Postal Service, González said that the misalignment of a company's strategy, organization and talent inevitably would harm its performance.

González, co-author of [Shockproof: How to Hardwire Your Business for Lasting Success](#), opened his talk by sharing the genesis of his book. “In preparing to write Shockproof, my co-authors and I agreed that the leaders of consistently successful organizations make it a priority to focus on aligning business strategy, organization and talent to improve execution. We tested this idea by interviewing a group of more than 50 executives from leading organizations around the world.

“What we learned was revealing – and encouraging,” he added. “We discovered that the notion of aligning strategy, organization and talent was not only practical, it was already being practiced.”

Throughout his remarks, González cited companies that had benefited from applying shockproof practices. For example, a leading wireless communications company thrived in a highly competitive environment because their focus in seven areas. Those actions include:

- Identifying the highest priority business drivers. “Everyone, from senior management to back office support, is clear on what's most important to customers and the company's performance,” said González. “This wireless carrier took the time to have each functional leader help diagram a ‘value tree’ that detailed the factors affecting sustainable profitable growth. Once everyone agreed that service reliability was the highest priority, settling on

the right growth initiatives was relatively easy.”

- Determining the areas and functions that most influence the company’s ability to execute its strategy. “Knowing where to invest within an organization is critical,” he added. “Asking questions like ‘what factors most influence our ability to satisfy and retain customers?’ can lead management to place sure bets in the areas that can create the greatest value.”
- Establishing clear lines of accountability for results. “Unproductive turf battles occur when there’s uncertainty about who is responsible for executing strategy,” González said. “If the roles and accountabilities necessary to get work done aren’t clearly defined, important deliverables will invariably fall through the cracks.”
- Ensuring key performance measures are known to all. “What gets measured gets done,” González said. “If a company is measuring operational effectiveness or customer satisfaction, for example, it is not enough to use those metrics to decide if a functional manager has earned a bonus. Those measures should be held high, so everyone can reach for them.”
- Communicating how individual performance influences company performance. “When people know how the work they are performing is connected to the business strategy they are inherently motivated to perform at a high level,” he explained. “It’s up to management to help employees connect the dots so they see how they and their teams are contributing to the bottom line.”
- Determining the competencies critical to delivering against those drivers. “You might think that knowing which skills to hire and retain would be obvious, but managers often end up in headcount battles that have more to do with consolidating power than executing strategy,” González said. “Since service reliability was critical to the wireless carrier’s strategy, there was never any argument about building the required capabilities.”

González concluded, “While the leaders we interviewed did not refer to this approach as ‘shockproofing’ their stories made it clear that many organizations were already putting these principles into action and benefiting from their application, even during the depths of the recession.”

About Axiom Consulting Partners
Axiom Consulting Partners is a management consulting firm that helps clients achieve sustainable, profitable

growth by working with leaders to align business strategy, organization and talent to improve execution. Taking a practical, fact-based approach to analyzing and solving complex business issues, Axiom focuses on removing the disconnects that commonly exist between the boardroom, middle management and front line employees, resulting in dramatic improvements in financial performance. Axiom's partners have an average of 20 years experience across a variety of industries and have served clients in North America, Europe and Asia.

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