



A CASE STUDY -

BOBOTECH CORPORATION INCORPORATED.

A DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT "FAIRYTALE?"

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BOBOTECH International employs a multitude.

It is a true meritocracy; its employees go the extra mile every time, and suppliers are falling over themselves to work with it.

The general public the world over loves its products, its services and its presentation.

Business was not always this good...



Once upon a time It Was Really Really Bad !!

Previously Bobotech's internal politics "stank," individual employees operated an everyone for themselves infighting type mentality, as each manager did more and more to draw power to their own particular centre at the expense of the common good, as each manager tried to enhance and guarantee their personal future prospects.

As a group, its management did everything in their power to prevent the recruitment and promotion to positions of responsibility,

people who they perceived looked any different to them, with new blood and ideas that would challenge and revolutionise their own tired approaches.

Things seemed to have always been that way.

The overwhelming majority of its workforce cared little about its fortunes as long as they got paid at the end of the month.

They kept their ideas and opinions about business to themselves.

Management gimmicks yielded minimal gains, went in and out of fashion and sometimes did a lot of structural and systemic damage making matters worse for Bobotech.

The management mindset ensured that its marketing / distribution systems confined it to reaching only a fraction of the markets available to it.

Being historically geared to a "traditional" mono-cultural audience, Its communications were narrowly targeted, its product and services were ill configured in terms of design and relevance when compared to the diverse audiences available.

BOBOTECH'S communications were laughable, sometimes making particular groups angry, sad and at worst indifferent and excluded.

Suppliers were chosen by the organisation based on their ability to help them maintain the status quo particularly if they looked just like they do and or could be employed to pander to established prejudices.

Its publics only bought from it because they had nowhere else convenient to go and longed for some imagination from somebody so they could shift brands.

Bobotech's board remained largely unconscious of the above conditions being supported by personnel keen to keep their jobs and not willing to rock any boats with any "radical" ideas they may have had related to its misfortunes.

Bobotech's view of itself and of the people who worked for it and bought from it became increasingly skewed day by day, month by month, year by year.

New competition with fresh approaches eroded its market share day by day.

As time went by and the world changed it took the same old tired steps to maintain growth...

Which however continued to decline across all fronts and nose-dived across many.

Bobotech 's management far from admitting their shortcomings laid the "blame" on;

Those "Unstable international markets..."

Those "Fluctuating exchange rates..."

While of course failing to recognise and tap into the mass of the iceberg that existed beneath the surface of its narrow minded mono cultural approach, particularly relevant in its three largest markets.

Awake management and staff abandoned the "sinking ship" as fast as they could, taking any valuable skills and abilities and personnel elsewhere.

Bobotech Corporation Incorporated had trouble.

It needed to identify some home truths.

It needed to make effective changes.

It needed to develop a competitive edge.

Bobotech decided to take the "Bull by the Horns" and retake the Initiative...

It contacted "A very special" consulting Group.

Its board had become aware of the group's unique approach to the management of the diverse workgroups and diverse markets, they had by then lost faith in the fashionable theorising on the part of people who had no relevant experiences as a member of any under-represented group to draw on and who never produced any useful, practical long-term solutions to Bobotech's difficulties.

Consulting organisations that seemed to only say what they thought Bobotech wanted to hear... particularly bored them.

Together Bobotech Corporation Incorporated and The "Special Consulting" Group over time examined the organisation across a broad range of issues.

Employee, supplier, product & service design, communications, customers and a host of others.

Bobotech learned some revealing, often painful, useful and exciting truths;

Its institutional structures, systems and professional practices were not as efficient as they could be in terms of maximising on the morale, skills and abilities of its workforce...

The ability of individual managers to hold the organisation and its employees, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders hostage to their personal subjectivity had to be transformed into structures and systems that enforced decision making and professional practices based on the use of "objective criteria."

Its available publics in particular had moved on socio-politically and were more inclined to think for themselves, they no longer slavishly did as they were told without asking questions based on their own aspirations and value systems, comparing them to what was being offered by whom.

Furthermore they were more inclined to buy from organisations that looked like they do and who spoke to them addressing their own various aspirations and values.

It learned that it could only match the aspirations of its various available publics if its personnel in positions of responsibility truly understood those aspirations.

It realised that only personnel in positions of responsibility drawn from the various groups it wanted to reach "Could" understand and appeal to those particular publics because they lived and breathed those same aspirations and values themselves.

Bobotech committed itself to some revolutionary "long-term" strategic plans and having done so it reviewed its "short-term" tactics...

In the long-term it wanted to successfully appeal to the hearts and minds of all the different groups it was possible for its communication efforts to reach.

It was cold-blooded in its pragmatism and had no compunctions about being seen to be so.

One look at its organisational/management pyramid would reveal to all its true intentions.

A pyramid that reflected the audience it wanted to reach at all levels would give it the very spread of imagination, insight and talent needed to be able to successfully appeal to any particular audience.

The Very Special Consulting Group provided the expertise to analyse the working environment and to design structures and systems to enable the strategic planning to bear fruit via modified professional practice.

For example Bobotech had a major problem with structural racism, its systems unwittingly enabled and in some cases actually compelled its managers to apply their own personal prejudices about people they perceived as different to themselves, to the organisation's recruitment, appraisal, design and communications processes via the application of subjective criteria viz...

What schools did members of particular groups go to?

Who did they know socially?

What type of sports they did?

What organisations had they worked for?

What part of town did they live in?

What type of music did they like?

What were their personal politics?

Where did they shop?

Where did they take their vacations?

What did others think of them as people?

What socio economic groups did they belong to?

What beliefs were true of their religions?

What racial group did they belong to?

What bla, bla? etc etc etc etc, adnausium.

All valid questions of course???

The answers though and consequent actions based upon them, tended to reveal more about the perceptions of the managers, than the truth about the people they were concerned with.

The use of market research organisations, Advertising, Design and Employment Agencies for example, more often than not compounded Bobotech's problems, because those organisations suffered from the very same infections Bobotech did.

So they tended to ask the wrong questions in the wrong way to the wrong people with the wrong interpretations.

Generating the "wrong" actions with the "wrong" results...

Nothing changed...

Some trap !!



Fast forward... Then It Became Really Really Good !!

The development of systems and working practices by The special consulting Group, based on the use of objective criteria, had the effect of eliminating the application of subjective perceptions and resultant subjective criteria to the decision making processes associated with any given corporate project thereafter.

The results for Bobotech were spectacular in the long-term and precipitated highly visible shifts in attitudes the very same day it told its workforce what it intended to pursue.

Almost immediately the endemic insecurity among the remaining employees lifted as people had guarantees that their jobs and future prospects for promotion depended on merit alone, their rights could no longer be abused without transparency...

Morale skyrocketed.

Potential employees from across all underrepresented groups and job-grades overtime heard about the way Bobotech Corporation Incorporated treated its workforce and perceived it as the type of organisation they would like to work for.

The revitalised workgroups crackled with fresh ideas, insights and methodologies, they lovingly applied them to the many different projects Bobotech undertook.

At dinner parties, in the press, formally and informally among themselves and with non-Bobotechers they spoke well of the organisation.

Suppliers and potential suppliers gained new confidence in their approaches to working with Bobotech, they were no longer afraid to voice new material, product and service design concepts that were a little off

the beaten track, they no longer simply offered Bobotech only what they think reinforced its particular prejudices.

On the stock markets Bobotech 's share price rocketed and achieved new stable highs as investors saw new opportunities...under-represented groups among its shareholders increased their representation and bought even more shares.

The various lethargic markets across the globe increasingly identified with Bobotech as they saw their own kind reflected among its people in positions of responsibility, across all job grades.

They fell in love with Bobotech as they saw it modify the quality of its corporate messages, its tone and style of presentation, the design and relevance of its products and services, its address to their aspirations and values.

People from radically different backgrounds and persuasions felt that Bobotech knew them and that it was their friend.

As they went about their buying, consumers consciously and unconsciously compared Bobotech with its competitors...And found their approaches to be increasingly tiresome and unattractive.

Bobotech had over time reset the pace and started a whole new game...

Others would be obliged to follow its lead, which contributed to the wider social good.

Price for price and weight for weight people bought from Bobotech every time.

Bobotech had won their hearts...And minds.

Bobotech 's turnover, profits and philanthropic contributions grew beyond analyst wildest projections.

Employees, Suppliers, consumers and other stakeholders wanted to give back to Bobotech what Bobotech gave to them...

An Equal Opportunity !!



We now come *Back To Reality !!*

We all know that fairy tales are often metaphors for real life situations; they have indeed inspired many of our life choices if we are honest.

It would be naive to oversimplify the range of forces acting upon any organisation's fortunes. Keeping an open mind though and thinking for a minute, one can conceive of the extraordinary benefits to an organisation when decision-making is systematically based on solid objective criteria.

The point is that the opportunity to review the decision making processes, the structures and systems through which we all work, must be healthy for the continued growth and development of any organisation, regardless of whether it has or doesn't have difficulties with race, gender or other diversity related issues.

The competitive edge comes from a fresh approach to the way we configure our organisation to present information to our publics, the way we understand and process incoming information from them and the way we develop and enable our employees to move forward appropriate to the needs of a 21st century environment.

Start with one structure, one system, and one aspect of professional practice and see what you think...

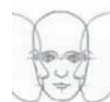
Subjectivity- The Mother and Father of Discriminatory Practice.

That which is "Objective" is **MEASURE-ABLE**, is **JUSTIFY-ABLE**.

-THE END ??-

The character elements of this document bear no resemblance or similarities to any person living or dead, corporate or natural.

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admin@campbellconsent.com