

HOW STRONG PERFORMANCE CAN MASK ISSUES IN THE FUTURE

BY BILL HOGG

In my experience as a [leadership consultant](#), I have had the privilege to work with a wide variety of organizations of all sizes and from different industries. However, one thing I have observed that has gotten many organizations in trouble and has caused issues within the leadership ranks is relaxing too quickly when things are going well. Even though strong performance is a positive thing, it does not mean that performance will remain this way into the future.

The truth is strong performance can actually mask issues if you are not careful, which can come back and bite you in the future. This is why leaders need to stay sharp and keep their foot on the gas to ensure that today's good performance leads to tomorrow's [exceptional performance](#).

Good Performance does not always Equate to Good Business Practices

Having a great product or service does not always mean that your business has effective business practices in place. When you rely too heavily on positive performance as a measure of success, without having the proper structure in place, you could be setting your organization up for failure down the road.

What happens when performance slumps and the competitive edge of a new or unique product is lost? Million dollar companies have been built on a great concept but run aground because they lacked the best practices to support strong business operations and sustain growth and development over time.

Good performance can hide sustainability issues and leaders need to ensure that proper protocols and business practices are in place. This means having the foresight to see the need for new and improved processes and getting to the root of potential issues. It is vital that leaders identify potential issues today before they hamper company performance in the future.

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Warning Signs that Indicate Issues could be Developing

There are many warning signs to indicate that a dip in corporate performance could be on the way, and it doesn't just have to do with sales. Here are some of the telltale signs that suggest issues may be present:

- **Lower employee engagement:** Disengaged employees can lead to a variety of internal issues, each of which can negatively impact performance going forward.
- **People leaving:** An increase in people leaving could signify that there are issues with organizational culture that need to be addressed.
- **Reduction in performance:** If your teams are consistently missing targets, it could be a sign that internal protocols need to be revised or revamped. Adding training and coaching may also be required.

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- **A rise in customer service complaints:** An increase in complaints could mean there is a disconnect between your customers expectations and the customer experience being created. There may be a need for customer service training and a review of the customer experience map – check out [Customer Service That Rocks](#) for some tips.

Leaders need to have a plan for each of these issues before they arise. The quicker these issues are identified and addressed, the less impact they will have on future performance.

Don't be Lulled into Complacency

Relying on current sales and performance can mask potential issues that put your organization's future in jeopardy. A proactive approach is a must. Don't wait for an issue to develop before you take action. Address potential issues now, before they become real issues in the future. This will help your organization sustain strong performance for the long term.

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Bill is the "just do it" guy who has walked in your shoes. Senior leaders at organizations like Anheuser-Busch InBev, The Bay, Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, Pita Pit, RBH, State Farm Insurance, Toronto International Film Festival and ServiceOntario hire Bill to navigate change and influence and inspire higher performing teams that deliver exceptional customer service, higher productivity and improve profits.

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