Management Insight

Professional Blind Spots and Stress Assessment

Most organizations have developed a functional blindness to their own defects. They are not suffering because they cannot solve their problems, but because they cannot see them. **This Survey is the first step in your Discovery Process to identify areas of potential stress and organizational improvement.**

BLIND SPOT #1: Not being in recruiting mode. The best companies are always on the lookout for the best people. Give yourself a score of 1 if you are only in recruiting mode when there is a need or a staffing emergency; a score of 10 if you are always in recruiting mode; or another score if you are somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #2: Not establishing a process for hiring. Following a "gut feeling" is not a process! You need a clear, quantifiable hiring process, and everyone involved in hiring needs to follow it. Give yourself a score of 1 if you have no documented hiring process; a score of 10 if you have a detailed written hiring process that everyone with hiring authority in your organization follows; or another score if you are somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #3: Not tying corporate goals to personal goals. This needs to happen at the individual employee level, which means managers must gain a deep understanding of the personal aspirations of those who report to them. Give yourself a score of 1 if you have never had a discussion with employees about their most important personal goals and aspirations; a score of 10 if you have had this discussion with everyone who reports to you and connected those personal aspirations to specific workplace behavioral goals; or another score if you are somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #4: Not creating and sustaining a culture of accountability. Creating a culture of accountability from the top down requires, among other things, that leaders show vulnerability. The leader's personal example is the biggest determinant of success in this area. Give yourself a score of 1 if you have never acknowledged a personal skill gap or oversight to a subordinate; a score of 10 if you regularly establish specific accountabilities to subordinates and connect or apologize authentically whenever there is a breakdown that prevents you from fulfilling that accountability; or another score if you are somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #5: Creating learned helplessness. Leaders, and everyone else, can often fall prey to dysfunctional communication patterns that undermine a sense of personal responsibility. Give yourself a score of 1 if you often find yourself taking on tasks because no one else is capable or you don't "think" anyone else is capable, of "doing it right" or doing it on time; a score of 10 if that seldom or never occurs and you spend 90% of your time working on the business, rather than in it; or another score if you are somewhere in the middle.

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BLIND SPOT #6: Not having a common organizational language and approach. Sometimes people and teams work at cross purposes, without a common process or a common vocabulary. If you asked all your team members to document the most important processes they follow, would the answers everyone gave for a given process match up? Give yourself a score of 1 if you think the answer is "definitely not"; a score of 10 if you know for certain the answer is "Yes"; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #7: Not capturing best practices. Document what your top performers do best and if these best practices are built into the onboarding and performance review processes. Give yourself a score of 1 if you have never done this; a score of 10 if you do it consistently; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #8: Not creating a consistent onboarding experience. At some companies, new employees are left to figure nearly everything out on their own, and leaders make excuses for that decision — like telling themselves that they operate in a "self-starter" culture, or that they only hire seasoned veterans. Give yourself a score of 1 if you have no formal onboarding process for new hires; a score of 10 if you have such a process, apply it to all new hires, and use it to ensure that new employees know exactly how and when to be up-to-speed on each and every aspect of the new job; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #9: Not knowing how to coach. Contrary to popular belief, coaching is not "telling them what to do." It is supporting employees in a one-on-one open, and safe setting and asking them the questions that enable them to take responsibility for their own personal and professional development. Coaching is both an art and a science. Give yourself a score of 1 if this definition of coaching is new to you or does not reflect what your managers are currently doing; a score of 10 if effective, regularly scheduled coaching sessions are an integral part of your employee development program; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #10: Not training the management team. Most managers do not receive basic management training or reinforcement. Give yourself a score of 1 if there has never been any formal management training and reinforcement program at your organization; a score of 10 if every person with management or leadership responsibility (including yourself) receives ongoing training and reinforcement; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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BLIND SPOT #11: Not focusing on lead generation. This is the lifeblood of your business. Give yourself a score of 1 if there are constant business development problems that express themselves in bad projections or missed revenue quotas; a score of 10 if such crises seldom (or never) occur and you have consistent business development processes in place; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #12: No methodologies and systems. When everything is improvised, inconsistency carries the day, and less than predicable events – like key people leaving or getting sick for an extended period – lead to major, immediate problems. Give yourself a score of 1 if your business would be in instant crisis if its top three people were, without warning, incapacitated for a week; a score of 10 if such an event would have little or no immediate effect on the smooth functioning of your organization; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #13: Not planning for organizational change initiatives effectively. How did you last prepare the team (or any portion of it) for major changes that would affect them — such as a change in compensation, a change in benefits, structure or a change in the way your company does business? Give yourself a score of 1 if you simply announced your decision and thanked everyone in advance for their cooperation; a score of 10 if you talked to user groups before finalizing the change, planned and managed the change initiative using multiple communication channels, and set up a reinforcement plan that involved key internal allies and stakeholders; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLIND SPOT #14: Not sharing the vision with those tasked to implement it. Only people who share and are aligned with the leader's vision and the company's purpose can evangelize legitimately on its behalf. This vision must be constantly reinforced over time. Give yourself a score of 1 if you have not formulated a personal vision for yourself and a complementary mission for your organization; a score of 10 if you communicate that vision easily, regularly, and with passion to other members of the team; or another score if your organization is somewhere in the middle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Survey Scoring

PERSONAL SCORE	LIKELY RESULT
LESS THAN 39 POINTS	Unsustainably high and dangerous personal stress levels
40-89 POINTS	Significant personal stress levels; reduced quality of life.
90–129 POINTS	Moderate personal stress levels; adequate quality of life, but room for improvement.
130-140 POINTS	Low, consistently manageable personal stress levels; high quality of life.

Discovery

Often business leaders are so focused on the here-and-now that they don't see problems that inhibit the organization's growth—and their own well-being. The Blind Spots Survey you just completed is designed to help you uncover your personal blind spots, areas of potential stress and organizational improvement. Now that you have completed it, identify in the spaces below the three blind spots where you have the most room, or need, for improvement:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Call Management Insight for guidance in any of these areas!