



5th Annual Combined TEC / Key / Partner
& TEC Associate Meeting
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“Execution Is What Counts”

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Execution:

getting plans and ideas successfully implemented

a critically important management issue



Execution Is What Counts !!

It's all very well for top executives to dream, envision, plan and set goals. But what's the use if they can't shepherd their vision into reality. Even in the best-run companies, it is too easy to feel that the work is done when the Big Idea is hatched.

1990 Globe & Mail



Execution Is What Counts !!

Current marketing research shows that 85 percent of new product failures occur as a result of poor execution of marketing plans — not because the new product or services are of low quality.

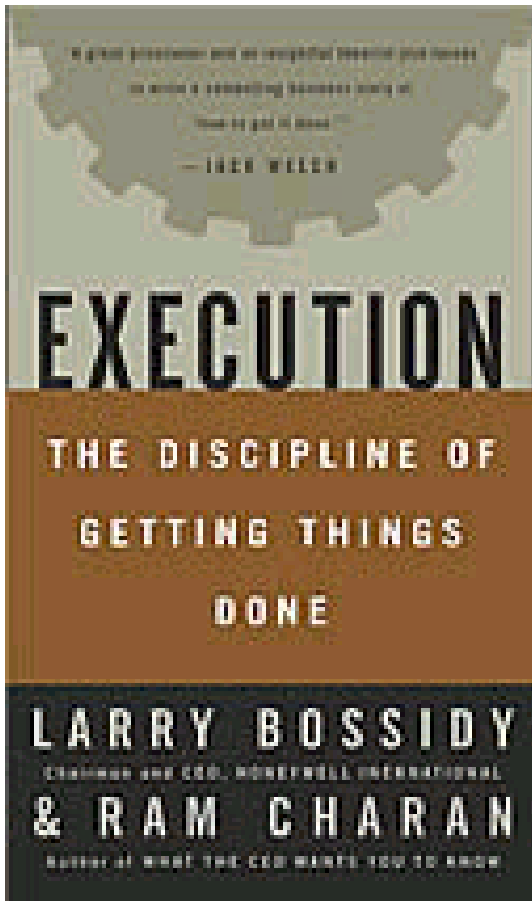
1990 Globe & Mail

The greatest idea, vision, plan or strategy in the world is only that until it gets implemented. Thus, the vision and its implementation are inextricably intertwined.

The one who leads can't avoid the responsibility of getting things done. In fact, the leader who can't manage his or her troops so that vision gets translated into reality isn't a leader at all.

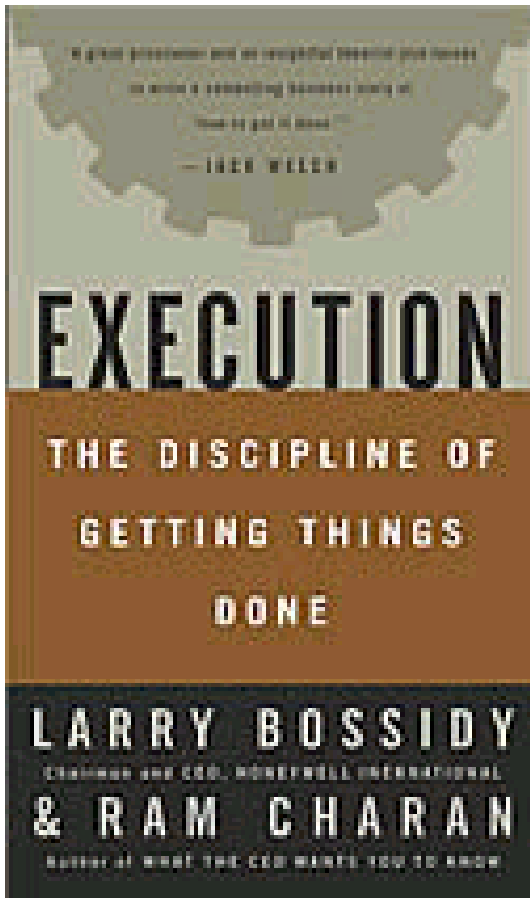
1990 Globe & Mail

Execution Is What Counts !!



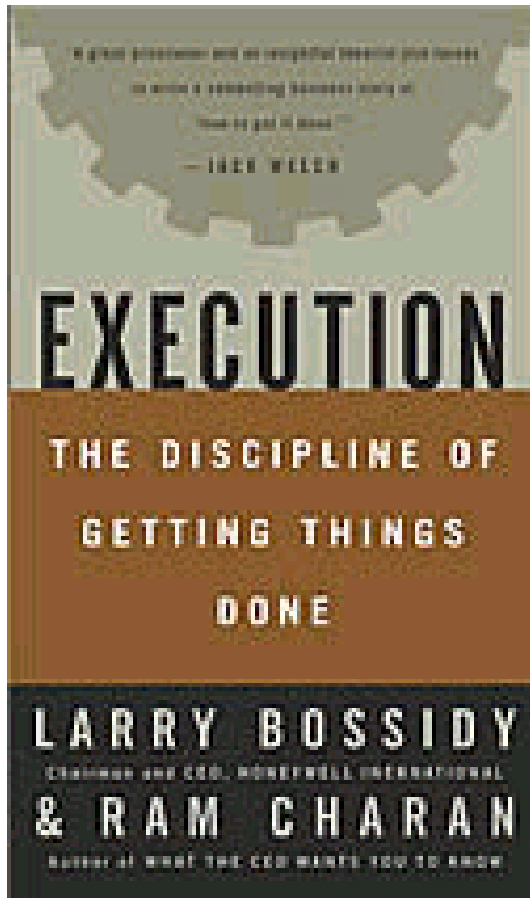
People think of execution as the tactical side of business, something leaders delegate while they focus on the “bigger” issues. This idea is completely wrong. Execution is not just tactics -- it is a discipline and a system. It has to be built into a company's strategy, its goals and its culture. And the leader of the organization must be deeply engaged in it. He cannot delegate its substance.

Execution Is What Counts !!



Most often today the difference between a company and its competitor is the ability to execute. Execution is the greatest unaddressed issue in the business world today. Its absence is *the* single biggest obstacle to success and the cause of most of the disappointments that are mistakenly attributed to other causes.

Execution Is What Counts !!



Many business leaders spend vast amounts of time learning and promulgating the latest management techniques. But their failure to understand and practice execution negates the value of almost all they learn and preach. Such leaders are building houses without foundations.

2002

Obvious !!??

Management = Goal Accomplishment
(EXECUTION)

(Harold Geneen, 1985)

Why did organizational leadership get diverted from a focus on execution?

One Cause:

Misrepresentation of effective organizational leadership;

-- what a CEO is and what a CEO needs to do.



Execution Is What Counts !!

1960's and 70's: Management vs Administration

Useless Definitional Debate

1980's and 90's: Management vs Leadership

Another Useless Definitional Debate**

Another Useless Definitional Debate**

- **** Despite solid, contradictory evidence showing leadership and management were intertwined
- **** Explosive growth of management publications and media interest in management
- **** Marketing and media became an influential determinant of management ideas and theories

Execution Is What Counts !!

micro-manage,

management control

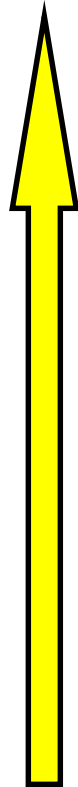
Results:

Separation promoted between:

- ◆ leadership & management
- ◆ idea/vision & implementation

Growth of a training and consulting industry to support these ideas.

Became fashionable to venerate leadership and to denigrate management.



Consequences:

. . . the theoretical split between leadership and management that is promoted by so many recent management books only makes the situation worse because it allows the person at the top to feel justified in avoiding the job of managing.

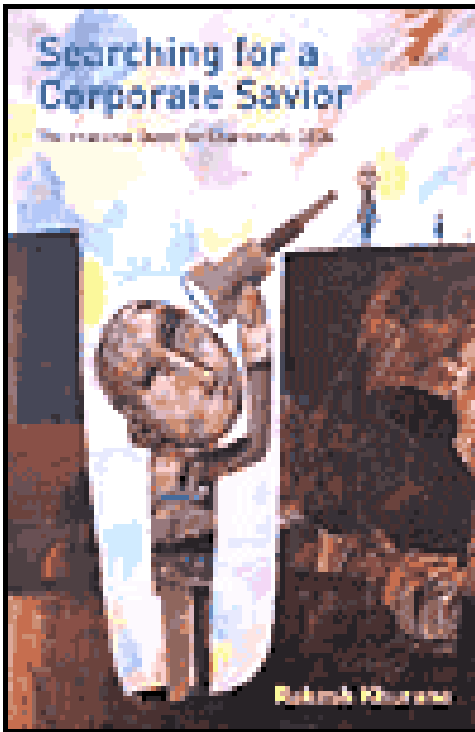
Consequences:



Searching for a Corporate Savior:
The Irrational Quest for
Charismatic CEOs

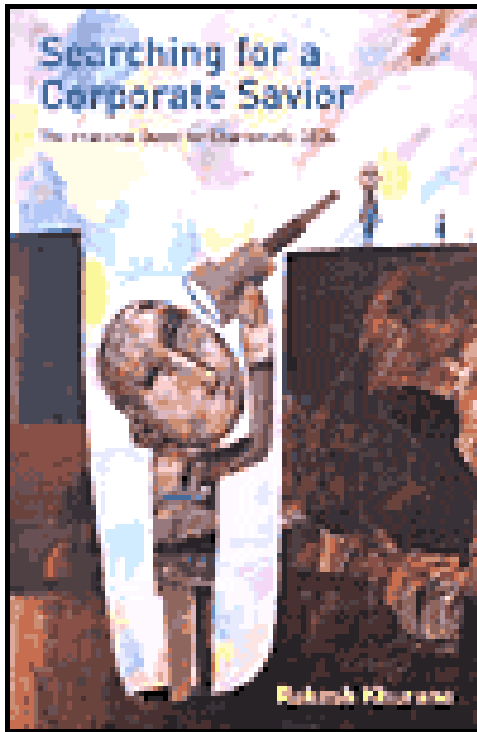
charismatic leadership; a barrier
to successful execution.

Consequences:



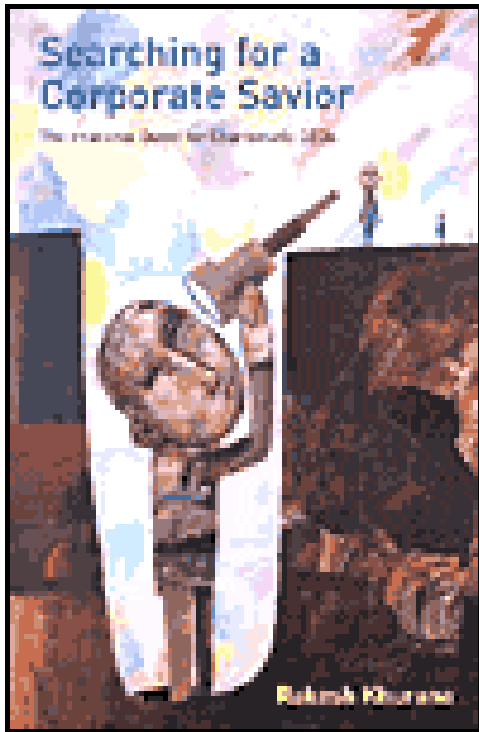
- ◆ abandon selection criteria re competencies and experience
- ◆ restrict candidate pool
- ◆ charisma = reputation & success of company
- ◆ motivation to win analyst and media approval

Consequences:



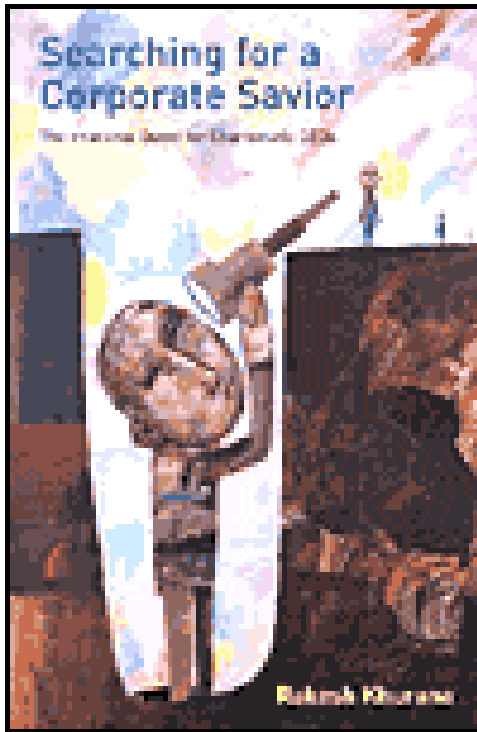
- ◆ charismatic authority discourages criticism.
- ◆ visionary leaders generally do not respond well to questions or complaints about the measures they have taken.
- ◆ the charismatic leader (not able to hear critical, questioning voices) has no way of knowing whether he or she is being effective.

Consequences:



- ◆ charismatic authority has always been alluring for the simple reason that it avoids accountability and responsibility for outcomes.
- ◆ “leadership” regressed to a personality trait

Consequences:



- ◆ charismatic leaders an expensive disaster and a barrier to execution

“Corporate boards, in their pursuit of charismatic CEOs have transferred literally billions of dollars from organizations and shareholders to the personal control of CEOs and ex-CEOs, too often with little, nothing, or even less than nothing to show in return.

I believe that in the not-too-distant future, we will look back and marvel at the colossal folly of this chapter in American business history.”



Execution Is What Counts !!

My experience over the past 2 years:

Studied, analyzed and/or conducted management audits for:

- ◆ 12 manufacturing plants
- ◆ 2 national retail organizations
- ◆ 2 major educational institutions
- ◆ 1 major software developer
- ◆ 1 large medical clinic
- ◆ 1 small accounting firm

in total, over 5,000 employees

My experience over the past 2 years:

Almost all executives and senior managers share similar **frustrations** (to differing degrees) regarding **execution**.

- ◆ Senior management frustrations with insufficient direction
- ◆ Executive frustration with lack of follow-through
- ◆ Inability to translate plans and ideas into specific action
- ◆ Feelings of helplessness to impact the behavior of employees



Execution Is What Counts !!

My experience over the past 2 years:

Almost all executives and senior managers share similar **frustrations** (to differing degrees) regarding **execution**.

See questions in Questionnaire Handout.

Some of my employees are not responding to direction. I've asked for things to change but they don't seem to happen.

Execution Is What Counts !!

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Almost all executives and senior managers share similar **frustrations** (to differing degrees) regarding **execution**.

See questions in Questionnaire Handout.

It's like pulling teeth to get some employees to go in the direction I want.

Execution Is What Counts !!

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Almost all executives and senior managers share similar **frustrations** (to differing degrees) regarding **execution**.

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I'm always having to follow-up or run after my people to get them to do their jobs correctly.

Execution Is What Counts !!

My experience over the past 2 years:

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I've been trying to implement new things, but they never take hold. New initiatives quickly fade away. I'm frustrated.

Execution Is What Counts !!

My experience over the past 2 years:

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I seem to be solving the same problems over and over again, and not making the best use of my time.

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The business' structure is changing and our new roles are unclear.

Execution Is What Counts !!

My experience over the past 2 years:

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See questions in Questionnaire Handout.

The staff aren't pulling together as a team. There's a lack of cooperation and everyone's going his or her own way.

Execution Is What Counts !!

My experience over the past 2 years:

Almost all executives and senior managers share similar **frustrations** (to differing degrees) regarding **execution**.

See questions in Questionnaire Handout.

We have an opportunity to grow and progress, but I feel we're coming apart at the seams.

Execution Is What Counts !!

My experience over the past 2 years:

Almost all executives and senior managers share similar **frustrations** (to differing degrees) regarding **execution**.

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We're doing well but I'm overworked, running around in circles, and there's not much "sense of urgency" with the staff. >

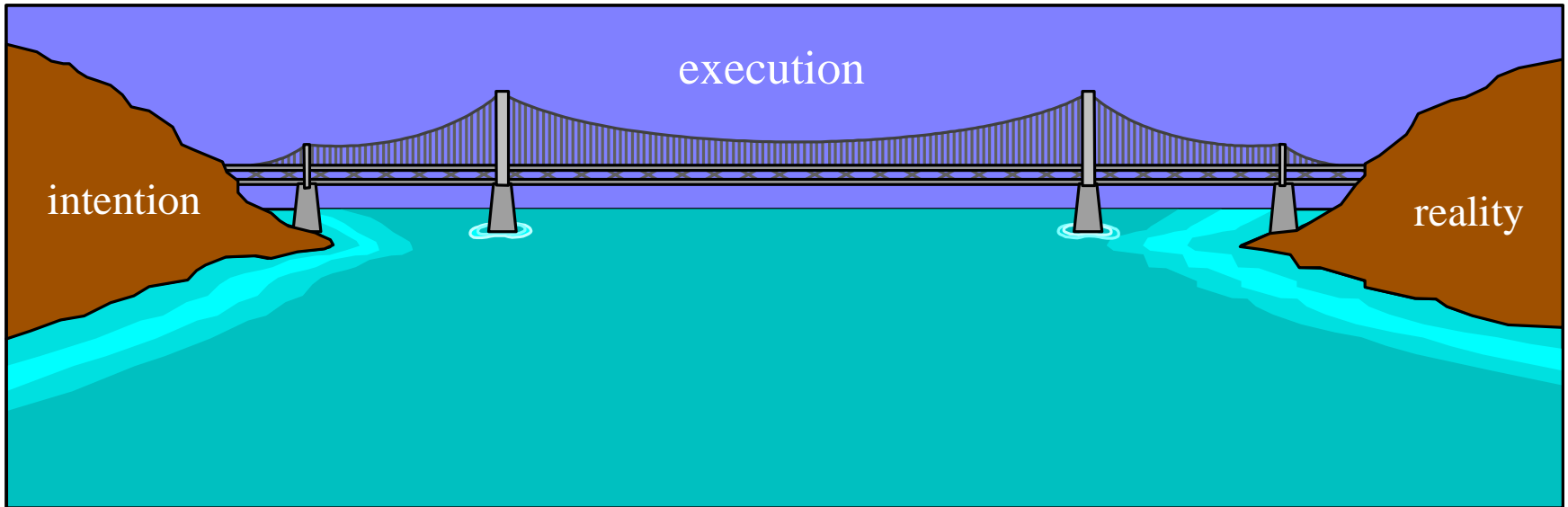


Execution Is What Counts !!

Examples of How to Improve Execution:

Simple to organization-wide

Examples of Solutions:



Examples of How to Improve Execution:

- ◆ documented action plans
- ◆ follow-up meetings
- ◆ manage the senior managers
- ◆ systematic tool for translating direction into activity and accountability

Examples of How to Improve Execution:

The solution lies in building effective practices and procedures for executive management into an organization's operations and, ultimately into its culture so that its leaders can use the strength of the organization rather than just their own personality to make things happen. (G&M 1990)

Execution is not just tactics -- it is a discipline and a system. It has to be built into a company's strategy, its goals and its culture. And the leader of the organization must be deeply engaged in it. He cannot delegate its substance. (Execution, 2002)

Conclusion:

[1] Effective organizational leadership requires the fundamentals of management -- skills and willingness to give clear, unambiguous direction, to hold others accountable and to ensure follow through.

Conclusion:

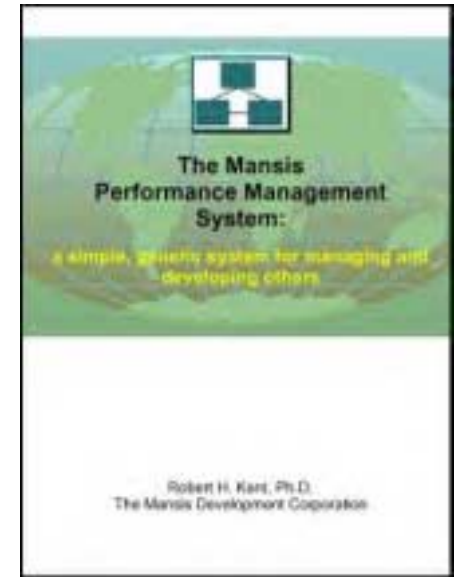
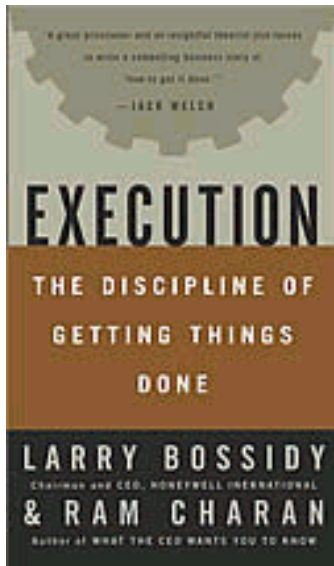
[2] For organizational leadership, some charisma is necessary but not sufficient -- it can be developed and managed.

Conclusion:

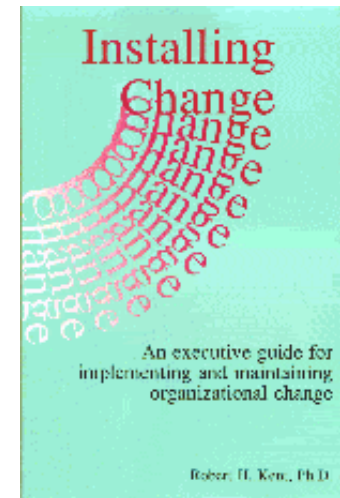
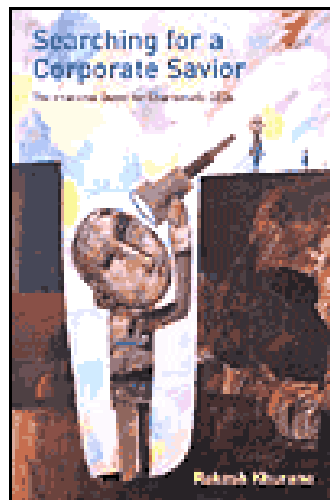
[3] To improve your organization's long term viability, make the processes for organizational leadership and management (execution) part of the operating structure of your business -- systematize the processes and make them a tangible corporate asset.

i.e. the capacity to execute should be a characteristic of the organization, and not a skill possessed by specific individuals !!

Execution Is What Counts !!



See references to these 4 publications in the handout papers.





Execution Is What Counts !!

Thank You

See: <http://www.mansis.com>

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