3 E’s of Effective Innovation Leadership

by Amber Lyons

Legacy companies like Apple, Xerox and IBM have transformed their organizations over the past 30 years to stay competitive in an ever-evolving market. This kind of transformational change is not easy for any organization, small or large. In fact, 70% of all change efforts fail. So what can you do to improve your odds of success? One of the most critical factors for transforming innovation results is bold executive leadership encompassing three key leadership pillars essential for any change effort.

3 E’s of Effective Innovation Leadership

1. **Envision**: All change efforts begin with a vision. As an innovation executive, it is your job to create the vision of where the company is going. This vision must articulate the compelling need for change and the innovation results required to be successful. It must communicated clearly and broadly to the organization in a way that aligns innovation strategy to current business imperatives. The vision should be based on internal and external assessments as well as cultural intuition. It should then be developed into a plan with clear, mutual goals including measurement systems to monitor progress and course correct along the journey.

2. **Energize**: Once leadership has defined and communicated the vision of where the company needs to go, the next important task is to motivate people across the organization to fully and willingly commit to it. Your people must understand the benefit of the desired change or the consequences that may occur if the organization remains as-is. To energize the organization, select the right leaders with the influence and respect to drive behavioral change and impact results. Gaining organization-wide buy-in is essential to any organizational change effort.

3. **Enable**: The final pillar is perhaps the most critical. Leadership can set a vision and select the right influential leaders to drive change, but nothing happens without adequate means. Provide your people with the resources, funding and support to successfully execute on the vision and drive results. This requires active involvement in the transformation process and continual guidance for your people. Leaders can do this by assigning very specific tasks and roles to employees with the right skills and following up with expectations in the form of results.

Transformational change efforts are not easy, but with bold leadership, companies are one step closer to successfully implementing their vision and driving bottom-line results from innovation.

In Their Words

Kalypsonians Mike Friedman, Helayne Angelus and Paul Beck discuss their experiences with the three E’s.

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