

THE COMPELLING JOURNEY™

A PLAYBOOK™ FOR SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE GROWTH

- ▲ **Stuff Always Happens... eventually**
- ▲ **What must the organization rely on to maintain momentum in spite of disruption**
- ▲ **What are the values and beliefs that will sustain the organization in times of crisis**



*"If matters go badly now,
they will not always do so."*

- Horace

"It's always something."

- Gilda Radner

Facing the Unexpected

The team had been through a lot. It had been a tough two years. Lots of turnover, customers leaving, vendors leaving them in the lurch. **The Board had begun to question leadership's strategies and the investors were becoming restless.**

The new CEO decided that the leadership team needed a new approach. They buttoned themselves up for a couple of days and took a hard look at their situation. **Following The Compelling Journey™, they were able to look at the situation clearly without clouding it with day-to-day drama.** They analyzed their operation, knew the strengths that they could build on, identified their personal and organizational barriers. They were able to identify who they could rely upon as emerging leaders. Because they had clearly defined their Call to Action, establishing the strategic pillars followed in due course. They took care to identify success and how to reward it effectively. And they fully believed in their Compelling Story.



The senior team did a good job of sharing the plan they had developed with everyone in the enterprise. Slowly, the changes began to take. **Sales began to tick upward, fulfillment improved, and everyone began to believe in the program. Morale started to shift. The energy in the office was clearly on the rise.**

The Vice President of Sales received a call from one of the company's major customers. They had decided on a new process that effectively cut the sales order in half. A quick analysis by the finance people suggested that this new development would cut off the company's profit projections and that they would have to consider layoffs and other cost-cutting measures to survive.

Carl Von Clausewitz once famously said, "Every plan is a good one - until the first shot is fired." The same is true in business. Events have a way of disrupting planning and require an organization and its leaders to be nimble and adjust. **The question becomes: what can the enterprise rely on to ensure that the members stay focused on the Call to Action and not permit themselves to be derailed by the unexpected?**

Another way of approaching this issue is: **When did Noah build the Ark? Before the rain.**

Leadership must expect that there will be disruption and plan for managing through it. **After completing the Compelling Story, the next step is to anticipate adverse consequences.** What within the organization's values and expectations will the leadership team draw upon to help keep everyone functioning well in spite of a challenge that may weigh heavily upon all?

The company that had faced the loss of business from the major customer used their resiliency to examine their situation. They relied upon their core values and their strengths to find a solution. **The situation clarified their need to diversify their operation, taking on several new customers and balancing their sales portfolio.** They learned that they could not be beholden to one or two key customers ever again.

The shift in sales approach had an unintended side-effect. Since the sales mix changed, it caused the leadership to view the relationship with that initial customer differently. **It created a more equal relationship in which the company believed it could negotiate for better terms than they might previously have sought in their more "dependent" relationship.**

Adding this last critical component to the planning phase, the Compelling Journey is almost complete. There is only one item left to consider: **Community and Long-Term Impacts of fulfilling the Call to Action which we will cover next.** Once completed, we help leaders move into the next phase of reinventing the organization.