

The Talent Advantage: How to Bust Silos to Accelerate Results

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Adapted from the book: The Talent Advantage by Dr. Alan Weiss and Dr. Nancy MacKay, published by Wiley.

Silos are costly barriers that exist between business functions, causing people to work against one another. Creating a sense of urgency for people to work together and applying effective strategies to bust silos is necessary to attract, retain and develop top talent.

Here are 15 strategies to bust silos to accelerate business results:

1. Build trust, candour and transparency between your board and management team to minimize “horizontal silos”. It starts at the top.
2. Use a team approach to succession planning and talent reviews. Avoid a silo approach to career planning.
3. Get feedback from peers and direct reports for performance reviews.
4. Focus on and share accountability plans tied to strategic outcomes and interdependencies.
5. Don't be the referee. Get the evidence. Encourage straight talk.
6. Build confidence in leaders. Catch people doing things right five times a day.
7. During team meetings, invite people to step into your shoes and out of their silos.
8. Lead an annual “number 1 priority” executive team project at all times.
9. Ensure that cross-functional project teams understand the role of the project manager.
10. Foster deep social bonds to minimize ego-talk and unhealthy conflict.
11. Clarify who the decision makers are. Clarify and honour reporting relationships.
12. Give people an opportunity to “be in charge” when you are away.
13. Give people an opportunity to learn all business functions.
14. Give people an opportunity to run cross-functional meetings.
15. Dial-up team-based rewards, recognition, and compensation.

