Four Disciplines of Execution Summary and User Guide

Discipline #1: Focus on the Wildly Important Goals (WIG)

WIG: A WIG is an acronym for a "Wildly Important Goal". A goal so important that not achieving it makes other achievements inconsequential.

> Ask yourself: If every other area of our operation / my performance remained the same what is the one area where change could have the greatest impact?

The WIG can come from within the whirlwind (i.e. fixing or improving something) or it can be something new outside the whirlwind. The organization will set a WIG (example: increase Cub Scout membership from 8,355 to 8,750 by year end) and then teams within the organization will have WIG's that support the overall WIG (increase number of schools having boy talks from 210 to 250 by year end).

WIG Rules

No team should set / focus on more than 2 WIG's at the same time

The battles you choose must win the war (organizational WIG)

- DON'T ASK: What are all the things I must do to win this war?
- DO ASK: What are the fewest battles necessary to win this war?

Sr. Level leaders can veto but not dictate what the sub WIG's

- WATCH OUT! The level of engagement in creating the WIG will equals the level of commitment to achieving it.

All WIG's must be in the form of X to Y by when.

Steps to creating the WIG:

Brainstorm: Engage the team in brainstorming a list of possible WIG's.

Engagement equals commitment.
- o Ask, "Which area of our team's performance would we want to improve most, assuming everything else holds, to affect the overall WIG?" Where are the levers?
- o What are the team's greatest strengths?
- o What areas are performing poorly in which their improvement would be impactful?

Rank: Rank ideas by impact to company WIG
- o Ideas must impact company WIG not just improve the team's performance.

Acid test the top ideas:
- o Is the WIG aligned to overall WIG?
- o Is it measurable? If you're not keeping score you're just practicing.
- o Who owns the results? The team must own 80% and not be dependent on another team for more than 20% of the results

Identify who owns the WIG, the leader or the team?
- o Watch out! Avoid the trap of the WIG depending too much on just the leader. The team will lose interest.

Define the WIG

1. Must begin with a verb. Increase, improve, contact, etc.
2. Define lag measures in terms of X to Y by when
3. Keep it simple
4. Focus on what, not how
5. Make sure it is achievable

Watch Out for these 2 Focus Traps:

1. Say no to good ideas. There will always be more good ideas than the capacity to execute.
2. Don't try to make everything in the whirlwind a WIG. Look for high impact / leverage points.

Make sure you got it right:

- o Have you gathered rich input both top down and bottom up?
- o Will the team WIG have a clear predictable impact on the overall WIG or strategy?
- o Is the team WIG the most impactful thing the team can do to drive achievement of the overall WIG?
- o Does the team clearly have the power to achieve the WIG without heavy dependence on other teams?
- o Does the WIG require the focus of the entire team, not just of the leader or a subgroup?
- o Can the WIG be simplified any further? Does it start with a simple verb and end with a clear lag measure? *Example: Increase average daily lead count from 20 to 40 leads by end of September.*

Discipline # 2: Act on lead measures

Great teams invest their best efforts in those few activities that have the most impact on the WIG's. These are called the lead measures. Achieving your WIG is like trying to move a giant rock, it is not a question of effort. Effort isn't enough. Lead measures act like a lever making it possible to move that rock. Ultimately the lead measures that your team chooses is their strategic bet (that will move the WIG.)

o   Lead Measure: The measure of an action planned and taken as a means to achieving a WIG

Deliverable: When you have successfully finished this step you will have a team WIG & lag measure.

o   Must be predictive of achieving the WIG
o   Must be influenceable by the tea
o   They can be counterintuitive. Most leaders are used to looking at lag measures
o   They can be hard to keep track of.
o   They can look simple with a precise focus on a single behavior.

Two types of lead measures.

1.   Small outcomes focus the team on weekly or daily results but give members of the team latitude to choose their own method.
2.   Leveraged behaviors focus on specific behaviors from the team member.

Steps to creating the lead measures:

Consider the possibilities
o   Stay focused on ideas that will drive the WIG

Rank by impact
o   Key here is to narrow the focus to a few lead measures. Too many lead measures and you dissipate the pressure. A lever must move a lot to move the rock.

Acid test the top ideas
o   Is it predictive? Does it move the lag measure?
o   Is it influenceable? 80% or more control.
o   Is it an ongoing process or a once and done?
o   Is it a leader's game or a team game? Lead measures connect the team to the WIG but only if it's the team's game to play.
o   Is it worth measuring? Remember getting this data may not be easy. Is the outcome worth the effort?

Define the lead measures
o   Are you tracking team or individual performance? This choice will affect how you keep score. Tracking individual results creates the greatest accountability however it's the hardest game to win because it demands the same level of performance from everyone. Alternatively, tracking team results allows for difference in individual performance while still enabling the team to achieve the outcome
o   Are we tracking lead measures daily or weekly?
o   Define both qualitative (how well) and quantitative standards (how often)

Did you get it right?

- o Have you gathered rich input on the lead measures from the team and others?
- o Are the lead measures predictive- that is, the most impactful things the team can do to drive the team WIG
- o Are the lead measures influenceable- that is, does the team clearly have the power to move the lead measure?
- o Are the lead measures truly measurable? Can you track performance from day one?
- o Are the lead measures worth pursuing? Or, will the data cost more to gather than its worth? Any unintended consequences?
- o Does each lead measure start with a simple verb?
- o Is every measure quantified-including quality measures?

Discipline #3 is the discipline of engagement.

Even though you have defined a clear and effective game in disciplines 1 and 2, the team won't play at their best unless they are emotionally engaged and that happens when they can tell if they are winning or losing.

3 Principles– Keep a Compelling Scoreboard

1. People play differently when they're keeping score. If you're not keeping score you're just practicing.
2. A coach's scorecard is not a player's scorecard. A coach's scorecard is complex. A player's scorecard is simple. Think of a basketball game. The coach is keeping track of all sorts of data on things like field goal %, steals, blocks, 3 pointers, etc., etc. The player's scoreboard is simple. It shows a handful of measures that indicate to the players at a glance if they are winning or losing the game.
3. The purpose of the scorecard is to motivate the players to win. Watch Out! The more the team is involved in designing the scoreboard, the more likely it will instill their ownership.

Steps to creating a compelling scoreboard

Choose a theme
- o Trend lines are the most useful for displaying lag measures. They can quickly communicate from x to y by when.
- o Speedometer is useful for measuring times such as process times, time to market, etc.
- o Bar chart is useful for comparing the performance of teams or groups within teams.
- o Andon chart consists of colored signals or lights that show a process is on track (green) in danger of going off track (yellow) or off track (red). Useful for showing the status of lead measures.

- Personalize. Let the team members personalize the scoreboard. Such as add a team name, photographs of team members, cartoons or other items that represent the team. Remember that engagement drives results.

Design the scoreboard
- Is it simple? Does it show where you're at compared to where you should be and over what time?
- Can the team see it easily?
- Does it contain both lead and lag measures.
- Can you tell at a glance if we're winning? 5 second rule – can you tell in 5 seconds or less if you're winning or losing? If not, it's too complicated.

Build the scoreboard
- Signs, poster board, whiteboard, chalkboard, etc.

Keep it updated
- Who is responsible for the scoreboard?
- When it will be posted?
- How often it will be updated?

Did you get it right?
- Has the team been closely involved in creating the scoreboard?
- Does the scoreboard track the team WIG, lag measures, and lead measures?
- Is there a full explanation of the WIG and measures along with the graphs?
- Does every graph display both actual results and the target results (Where are we now? Where should we be?)
- Can we tell at a glance on every measure if we're winning or losing?
- Is the scoreboard posted in a highly visible location where the team can see it easily and often?
- Is the scoreboard easy to update?
- Is the scoreboard personalized -a unique expression of the team?

Deliverable: A scoreboard that keeps the team engaged.

Discipline #4. Create a Cadence of Accountability

This is the discipline of accountability. Even though you've designed a game that's clear and effective, without consistent accountability the team will never give their best efforts to the game. This is done with WIG sessions. A WIG Session has a singular purpose: To refocus the team on the WIG despite the daily whirlwind. It takes place regularly, at least weekly and sometimes more often.

It has a fixed agenda as follows:

WIG Session Agenda

Review. Leader to review the scoreboard.

- o   Learn from successes and failures.

Report. Each team member to report on last week's commitments.
- o   State the commitment
- o   State its outcome

Plan: Clear the path by removing obstacles and make new commitments that will raise the lead measures to the required level of performance the coming week. Leaders should guide the team in making commitments that have the highest impact using the following guidelines.

One or two high impact commitments at most.

- o   Specific. Exactly what will you do and what is the outcome?
- o   Should start with "I". It's a personal commitment.
- o   Timely. Must be able to be competed in the coming day / week.
- o   Must be directed at moving the lead measures on the scoreboard.

Watch Out! Common pitfalls

- o   Competing whirlwind responsibilities. Don't let the whirlwind in the WIG Session.
- o   Ask how will completing this affect the scoreboard? Stick to specific outcomes.
- o   Repeating same commitment more than two weeks
- o   Accepting unfulfilled commitments

Keys to successful WIG Sessions

- o   Keep schedule. Same day and time every day / week.
- o   Keep sessions brief. 20-30 Min
- o   Set the standard as the leader. Report on your own commitments.
- o   Post the scoreboard
- o   Celebrate success of kept commitments
- o   Share what's working and what's not.
- o   Refuse to let the whirlwind enter. Limit the discussion to commitments that move forward the scoreboard. Avoid small talk.
- o   Clear the path for one another. Remove obstacles
- o   Execute in spite of the whirlwind. Hold team members unconditionally accountable. If a commit is missed one week/day it must be accounted for the following.
- o   Keep an eye out for future leaders in the WIG Session

Deliverable: Regular, frequent WIG sessions that moves the lead measures.