

from
Gloom
to
Sunshine

A case study on Performance Turnaround

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CHAPTER ONE

On the Blink

“Change your thoughts and you change your world.”
– Norman Vincent Peale

It's a hot and humid Friday in Dar es Salaam. The consultant listens intently to the man sitting across from him in a well-furnished – if a little worn – office in a glistening high rise.

Through his office window, he can see the clear blue waters of the Indian Ocean – ferries shuttling passengers and cargo across to the South Coast; and vast ships docking at the harbour.

A gorgeous view. Peaceful even. But not for this business owner. The cool breeze blowing in from the ocean does little to calm the man on the other side of the table.

The client leans in, furrowed brow glistening in the morning sun. He is in no laughing mood. The brief is brutal. His company is starting to fail.

At any moment, something could snap, triggering an avalanche that might herald doom for the business. Things are, as they say, thick.



Finger pointing had replaced Teamwork.

His sales team is done. They have almost given up. Employees show up at the office when they feel like it. Clients are frustrated by the unreliable service.

Everyone – from accounting to production; driver to messenger – has tried to do sales in an attempt to salvage the situation, but nothing seems to work.

All attempts to rally up the troops have failed. Workers have not been paid in two months. They blame the managers, the managers think the workers are NOT doing enough.

" Watch your thoughts, they become words. Watch your words, they become actions "

R.W Emerson

The consultant has seen a lot of difficult situations. He has known many distressed businesses; has dealt with bickering teams; is used to organizational dysfunctions.

But this particular situation has taken a toll. It has been a tough week – even for someone like him, in the business of rescuing distressed companies and helping clients resolve complex issues.

He can't wait for the week to end. At least then, he can take a break from the finger pointing, the blame games, and all the worrying and fretting.



The consultant wakes up with a start. Noise. So much noise. He's a little groggy. Tries to recall where he is. Hotel room. Dar es salaam. Saturday. What time is it?

The noise. Vuvuzelas, horns, whistles! The air is thick with anticipation. More hooting. Oh, the noise. He can hear movement outside his window. Peeks through the curtain.

A mass of people marches below on the street, right past him. Then he remembers. Derby! Wasn't there some kind of grudge match today?

Dar es Salaam city is now all red, yellow and green. Simba versus Yanga. That's what is happening. The two biggest football clubs in Tanzania are going head to head today. It's the city's oldest rivalry.

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CHAPTER TWO

Let there be light



Fans have turned out in their largest numbers ever. They're loud. Raucous. Bragging. Everyone wants to prove their team is the best. Passions are raw. Its electric. Hypnotic.

It's a torturous countdown to what promises to be a clash like no other. Forget the English Premier League. Forget UEFA. This is for bragging rights. Dar is expectant. Everyone is waiting.

Then – a breakthrough.

The consultant jumps back from the window, frantically scrambling for his trusty laptop.

An idea!

The scene below just showed him the way.

....now he is sure of what the client needs.

First though, he must write all this down, for there's a lot of work to do.

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CHAPTER THREE

Step by step



The consultant swings into action. Within one month, the client's sales team was re-born anew. Folks were showing up bright and early, ready to work.

All employees are now happy. They have – once again – fallen in love with their jobs. It is all high-fives and big, brotherly smiles.

Customers are impressed. Weekly sales targets are often exceeded. Cash flow is stable. No one is complaining anymore. Month-end victory parties are commonplace.

Everyone is making plans; talking about the future! Cars, houses, vacations! They are all going places.

How did they turn things around?

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CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis & Planning



“In God we trust, all others must bring data”

..W.E Deming

A review of past performance revealed that the company was in a rapidly growing industry, with tremendous growth potential. It should have been thriving – not stagnating or declining.

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CHAPTER FIVE

**How does good
look like**



“Begin with the end in mind”

The change process began with figuring out annual targets for the company and for each employee. Expectations were clearly spelt out and shared across the business.

Support systems were put in place to ensure everyone worked towards a common goal. Workers became responsible for - and accountable to – one another.

Each knew precisely the goal they were working to achieve. They understood what it would look like when they achieved their goals, and also what to do every day to get there.

They knew their lives would ultimately change in incredible ways. Their jobs became meaningful.

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CHAPTER SIX

All systems Go



The stage was set. The vision was clear. Everything ran as it should.

Morning check-ins were quick, weekly refills prompt, and the team moved forward in unison, crushing every target and setting new performance records every month.

The organisation rolled on like a well-oiled machine, never missing a beat.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

The Final Tally



....Done!

When the dust finally settled, the business was thriving. Cash flow was perfect, targets were being exceeded. Eighteen months of sales had already been achieved by the sixth month.

Of all the surprises, one defied every management textbook logic. The expenses stayed within the same level, even as the sales soared.

The company was on a roll. Managers received daily hugs from their employees – the very same individuals who had blamed them when circumstances were dire.



It's a New Day

Achievement awards were dished out during the victory parties. Folks looked out for each other. Everybody wanted to see their colleagues excel. The future had never looked so bright.

Sales commission agents – who rarely showed up at the office – were now some of the first people in. Attendance in morning meetings jumped 100%!

Today, if you walk in 5 minutes before a meeting, you would not get a seat. The place is always packed to the rafters. Excited, expectant faces, showing up each day.



....think about it....



**This can happen to
your organization
too....**

Now

.... *ready*

.... *willing*

.... *able*

...to work with you through your toughest problems, and implement superior systems to help your workers achieve outstanding results.

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**To GET A
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OF
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