

96 questions we all need answers for to thrive on the challenges of change

by Ian Berry



For me the top two challenges facing business leaders today, and for the foreseeable future, are:

- 1) change leadership (and, often, letting go of performance management)
- 2) thriving on the challenges of change

Below are the questions I seek answers to when I conduct a remarkability review for organisations. I list the questions here under the 19 headings of what I see as the critical for success areas of modern business. For convenience they are listed in alphabetical order.

I trust your positive, productive, yet doable answers to these questions will help you to see the myriad of options available to you to thrive on the challenges of change. More, I trust you will take massive action as a result of answering these questions. **If I can be of assistance please contact me on +61 418 807 898.**

1. Board conformance and performance

- *Does each board member have a genuine commitment to your organisation and business best practice in general?
- *Does each board member have real and relevant skills?
- *Can each board member provide appropriate strategic leadership in compliance, governance or conformance to laws and principles, as well as achieving high performance in a conformance environment?
- *Are board meetings effective and efficient and focused on strategy and execution?
- *Does the board chairperson inspire and influence the CEO/MD well?

2. Change leadership

- *Are leaders and managers being the change required as Gandhi suggested we must be?
- *Are people told about change or is there such an openness that a shared view is reached?
- *Are there accepted ways of managing the systems and processes to do with change?
- *Is there a team of change agents or champions in addition to senior leaders in your organisation who are role models and the go to people?
- *Is change being undertaken in alignment with your organisations' purpose?



3. Communication, message management, and presentation skills

- *Are leaders and managers highly skilled communicators? i.e. they listen well, accept feedforward and feedback, provide feedforward and feedback in ways that are uplifting for others, mean what they say and say what they mean?
- *Is there a social media policy followed that means the great technology is used yet the unnecessary use and abuse of it is limited?
- *Do leaders have well developed presentation skills meaning messages are delivered in inspiring and engaging ways?
- *Is there consistency of message across all media?
- *How well is wisdom shared and stored for posterity?

4. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) or corporate responsibility (CR)

- *Does your organisation have a cause beyond profit that is a key aspect of recruiting, engaging, and retaining the best people?
- *Does your organisation report social and environmental results as well as economic ones?
- *Is there an ethics policy that is being followed?
- *Is there an executive who has CSR/CR as a key responsibility?
- *Is your organisation actively involved with NGO's and/or local community groups?



5. Creativity and innovation

- *Is there a process for turning information into insight into inspiration into ideas?
- *What happens to ideas raised or presented to leaders?
- *When ideas are successfully implemented (innovation) how are instigators and implementers recognised?
- *Is creativity encouraged and taught?
- *Is fun integral to work?

6. Customized leadership development

- *Is leadership development off the shelf or specifically designed and implemented to precisely match the needs, expectations, desires, and development needs of participants?
- *Are courses and seminars etc., leaders attend in alignment with strategy and execution?
- *Is there a clearly defined purpose for leadership development?
- *Is succession planning a key component of leadership development?
- *Is there teaching methodology variety so that all learning styles are catered for?

7. Decision making

- *Is there a process followed when making major decisions?
- *Is the process transparent?
- *How well are major decisions communicated to stakeholders?
- *How much is decision making enabled at the front line?
- *Does problem solving mean returning to the status quo or innovation?

8. Dispute/conflict resolution

- *Are there any unresolved disputes or conflicts?
- *What is policy, procedure, and practice for resolving disputes and conflicts?
- *Are independent experts used where appropriate?
- *Is there a complaints log and what happens after complaints are made?
- *What is the attitude of leaders to people who make mistakes?



9. Empowerment culture

- *Are employees genuinely empowered to fulfill their roles?
- *Is their role clarity for each role?
- *Are people shown appreciation when they do well?
- *How are people held to account when performance standards aren't met?
- *Have employees contributed to policy, procedure and practice development?

10. High performance teams

- *Do all teams have shared purpose and agreement about goals and the strategies to achieve them?
- *Is there genuine valuing of difference?
- *Do people understand the work preferences of their teammates?
- *Is there agreement about performance standards?
- *Are there rewards for team performance?

11. Learning and development and training

- *Do people know the differences between learning and training?
- *Is learning and development and training integral to personal and business growth strategies?
- *Are human resource professionals respected and their skills utilised properly?
- *Is there appropriate use of external experts?
- *Does every employee have a learning and development plan that helps them identify and deploy their unique gifts?

12. Memorable service

- *Is consistent above average service the norm or the exception?
- *Has an audit of service and loyalty been conducted in the past 12 months?
- *Does the company know customer engagement percentages and is increasing them part of strategy?
- *Is there empowerment at all key transaction and interactions points with customers?
- *Are customers seen as always right or always first?

13. Performance Leadership

- *Has % of employees fully engaged in their work and not, been assessed/measured in the past 12 months?
- *Do employees know their unique gifts and does culture enable enhancement?
- *Is formal feedback exchange about performance happening at least every 90 days?
- *Is formal feedback exchange about performance a celebration as well as an upgrade of plans for the future?
- *What is the degree of congruence about goals and the strategies and tactics to achieve them, and is there harmony between personal and business goals?

Is below a picture of your business? If so you need to upgrade your change leadership quickly! The best organisations have at least 51% of employees fully engaged in their work.

11% of employees
employees
fully engaged
in their work

76% of employees
open to persuasion
through increased
emotional commitment

13% of
actively disengaged
from their work



Source: Corporate Leadership Council 2004 Survey of 59 organisations and 50000 employees

Note: All kinds of surveys by a myriad of organisations since 2004 show little change in the levels of employee engagement! Please see sparkenation 44 in my Changing What's Normal book for current data. You can buy my book [here](#) or get it for free [here](#).

14. Performance leadership success indicators

- *Does every leader and manager have a employee bank?
- *How is employee turnover measured and is it less than 10%?
- *What is the status of knowledge/wisdom retention system?
- *Are exits interviews held and learning applied?
- *Is talent identification and nurturing captured in role descriptions?

15. Relationship marketing and selling

- *Is your organisation outcomes or process focused?
- *Is your organisation clear on its market/s and its message/s to these?
- *Is the message/s being delivered well to the market/s?
- *What % of business is generated via referrals?
- *Are sales having to be closed or are people genuinely buying?

16. Risk management/scenario planning

- *Are the risks, perceived and real, to your organisation well documented?
- *Are there scenario plans in place and ready to be executed?
- *Is there a safety, welfare, and wellness policy in place that is understood and adhered to?
- *How much is risk management taken into account in strategic thinking?
- *Is each employee aware of the risks and rewards of their performance?

17. Self leadership and management

- *Are leaders devoted to their own development?
- *Is self leadership and management seen as a precursor to leading and managing for others?
- *Do people try to manage time or do they invest wisely in the time available?
- *Is personal development seen as just as important as business development?
- *What is the life/work/play harmony ratios of leaders?

18. Strategy and execution

- *Is strategy key reference points for making decisions about future direction or is it hidden somewhere in large volumes of paper?
- *Is strategy written on a page for your organisation, each division, each team?
- *How well is strategy cascaded down to individuals?
- *Does every employee know and own their piece of the execution map?
- *Is strategy in alignment with the value that stakeholders demand, desire, and feel they deserve?

19. Value delivery structure and delivering value to all stakeholders that they demand, desire, and feel they deserve

- *Has the structure been developed without people in mind?
- *Is the structure all about value delivery roles?
- *Are people matched to roles?
- *Are roles properly clarified and documented?
- *Has the value that stakeholders demand, desire, and feel they deserve been validated in the past 12 months?

No one can be an expert in all of these 19 critical for success areas of modern business. I am an expert in some of these areas and I am fortunate to know, like, and most importantly trust, many people who have expertise in the same areas as myself and others who have expertise in areas that I don't.

Please contact me today on +61 418 807 898 to be linked up with the expert/s who can partner you as you take your business to the next level and thrive on the challenges of change.

Be the change you want to see in your business and in your world.

Ian

[All change is personal first, relationships second, and organisational change a distant third.](#)