



SPECIALIST MANAGEMENT & SALES TRAINING FOR THE OFFICE PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

P1TD

P1 TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT LTD

Member of the P1 Group

SFM² – Formula For Performance Success

Let's get one thing straight. There is no magic pixie dust that will help you improve performance in your business. There is no magic formula! There are many ways, processes, programs you can use that *may* deliver success/improvements. But not ONE. If, like me, you read so-called 'skills development' books you will soon realise that the best ones are those which you can relate to personally. And there are hundreds!

Hang on though. We ARE performance specialists. And this article is all about a formula for performance success isn't it? Well, yes it is BUT I am not naïve enough to think that we have THE answer but read on ... you may find that this one works for *you!*

Ok, at P1 we specialise in performance management. It's what we do. As independent advisors we are able to work with our clients **free** of any of the usual distractions surrounding that business – the politics, the history of interpersonal relationships, the reasons things '**have to be that way**'. We don't have that baggage. We don't have any obligation other than to focus on the performance management of your business. So what do we do? How do we work if all we have to do is focus on performance?

We of course like to think we can help as we are, after all, specialists in performance management – it says so on our business cards! I'm confident we can work with you and anybody in your business and help you/them to perform better. If we didn't know how we would not have a business. We can teach you lots of new things, new tricks, techniques. We can show you gadgets and programs. In fact we can throw any number of things at you that you would find, potentially, useful. But we can't do that in an unstructured way. We can't just pitch up at a clients and hope for the best. We also can't assume that we can apply the same solutions and give the same advice to every client. Every client we work with is NOT the same as the next with different people, skill sets, issues, opportunities, you name it – EVERY client is different no matter how similar they look from the outside. But we also HAVE to have an approach that, once we are no longer there, the client and their people can work with just as effectively without us being around. We have to do it in a way that makes you and your people realize permanent benefits not temporary ones.

How do we do that then? How do we manage so many varying situations from SME businesses to large corporate clients? How do we ensure what we teach not only stays but is also understood by many different levels within a business? Well, we use a common structure. And we make it simple. And I'll tell you how ... we have a formula!

I'll be honest with you; It will come as no surprise that we don't always get as much time with our clients' people as we would really like – 'time' itself and of course 'cost' the two biggest hurdles we face. We have to find a way that makes our solutions as effective as quickly as possible AND easy to maintain in our absence. We HAVE to find a way of delivering our initiatives and skills development in a way that is simple, memorable and is, of course, effective. This is how SFM² was born. We call SFM² 'the formula for performance success'. We created SFM² after many years of personally managing people, teams, businesses and indeed ourselves in demanding performance-reliant environments. We revisited every area of success and failure to see whether we could find any 'common' ingredients for success. We realised, surprisingly, that, when pure LUCK was removed, there were always four key elements in place when we, as individuals and business leaders, enjoyed sustained performance success. The SFM² formula is actually a play on the acronym SFMM. SFMM stands for Structure, Focus, Motivation and Management – the four key ingredients for performance success.

SFMM Explained

Performance management processes are multi-dimensional. It is a sometimes confusing array of situations that have to be dealt with. Write a list of all the things that effect performance and you will have a long list! But IF you take this list and categorise them you will find they fit into one of the four categories of SFMM.

Ok, let's start at the top. Think of your business today in the following way:

Structure – the physical aspects of your business, your people, your customer base, your facilities, your teams, functions

Focus – the objectives and goals of your business

Motivation – the motivational 'why' sitting behind the goals and objectives of your business

Management – the processes and procedures, systems and communication disciplines

Now ask yourself the following questions:

Cont..



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- Is the STRUCTURE of my business able to support the delivery of my objectives and goals?
- Are the goals and objectives (FOCUS) clearly understood and communicated throughout my business? Are my goals a reflection of my structure or is my structure a reflection of my goals? What should it be?
- What are my MOTIVATIONS behind these goals? Do I really know what I'm doing this for? What's in it for me? Why are people motivated to deliver these goals? Do they truly know why they are doing/being asked to do what's being asked of them? What's in it for THEM?
- Are my MANAGEMENT processes able to deliver on my goals? Does the way we manage our business today suit our STRUCTURE or does our structure determine the way we manage the business?

There's a good chance that you will find what we call 'mis-alignment'. You will probably find that you answer 'no' to one if not all of these. A simple scoring mechanism we use is to score each question above between 1 and 10; 1 being 'definitely not' and 10 being 'definitely yes'. If you score less than 6 you have some issues to address.

If you are unsure as to any of the above then that place is a great place to start. When we work with our clients using SFMM we look at achieving ALIGNMENT first. Alignment is when we can say all four areas are clear and interconnected / dependant on one another THROUGHOUT the business. Once you start the process by looking at just these four components you will be amazed at where it leads you. It forces you into areas of your business that you need to address to help achieve alignment. Try it!

First Step

Like any new process it's sometimes hard to know where to start. With SFMM it doesn't matter. Start with Focus if you prefer. You can start where you like with SFMM because the fact is if you do not have ALIGNMENT then **something** has to change! For example, IF your structure does not support/reflect the goals and objectives of your business then your structure has to change doesn't it? IF your structure CANNOT change then the FOCUS (goals and objectives) has to change. Likewise, management and motivation – they all go hand in hand.

Again, taking a holistic view of your business ask yourself just these four questions:

- What's GOOD/RIGHT about it?
- What's NOT GOOD?
- What NEEDS to happen?
- What would I LIKE to happen?

It's very easy to look at your business and see the negatives. Practically every SFMM workshop we run find the negatives are much more readily accessible than the positives. We have to remember though there will be many, many things RIGHT about your business that may be compromised if you focus just on fixing the WRONGS. Again that's where the alignment mindset comes in handy.

Using SFMM

The SFMM process can be used at every level – company, department, function, team, individual. For example at individual level, how does that sales person structure their day? Workload? Client interaction? Do they spend more time with people they 'like' rather than those who deliver the greatest return? Do they allow enough time for pro-activity? Don't though just think of SFMM as an 'executive' process. It can be applied to all sorts of situations. For example think about, say, your next management meeting or account review:

Structure – how long is the meeting? Who's doing what? What's the agenda?

Focus – what do I/we want to get from this meeting most of all? Is there anything else I could get from this meeting whilst we are all together if I get time? Does the agenda allow me to achieve this?

Motivation – why? What's in it for me? What's in it for them?

Management - who do I need there? Is the room the right size? Location? What reports? Data? Statistics? Communication? Facilities? Environment? Mood?

SFMM will allow you a simple framework when things are either (a) not working as they should (b) could be better than they are.

We can of course work with you on any area performance management for your business or even you personally. The SFMM process is now multi-faceted with various workshops and templates to suit. You might find though that whoever you use that it all revolves around this simple process of managing the four key elements of performance management – Structure, Focus, Motivation and Management.

And THAT may work for you!



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