Art Koch's Profit Chain® Series

My Business Got COVID

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I'm not telling you that any of our team members or I got COVID. My argument here is that the business got COVID.

More and more, I'm discussing the current situation with my client's leadership and witnessing the long-term effects of having their team members working remotely.

Before the pandemic, businesses were functioning relatively well. They had

daily visual management meetings where opportunities received rapid responses from highly engaged associates, and issues could be swiftly escalated when necessary.

During the last few weeks, I re-engaged with a past client. Speaking with three of their leadership team members, they voiced the same concerns and comments as my other clients, that COVID remote work is negatively impacting their productivity and teamwork.

When I sat through Team and Zoom meetings with my other clients, the parallels to my re-engaged client's experiences were striking:

1. Individuals often losing internet connection
2. Loss of focus due to many distractions from pets, children, spouses, and parents
3. Little to no use of cameras, resulting in a loss of community
4. Meeting fatigue. Too many back-to-back meetings
5. Loss of visual KPI structure.

Because associates are remote, they are not talking with one another during coffee breaks, lunches, or trips to the restroom. Additionally, most businesses lose their visual daily management processes by holding remote meetings. With the diminished capacity to keep operations in check using visible KPIs, organizations are jumping from one firefight to the next. These businesses are feeling the negative impact of losing standard business processes and communication.

Here are a five simple solutions that address these challenges:

1. Insist that team members turn on their cameras during meetings. This simple solution will increase the sense of community and communication between colleagues. Just seeing your co-workers and making eye contact with them will increase the focus on the subject at hand and pay significant dividends.
2. Have all leaders start each day with a standing 15-minute meeting. Discuss successes from yesterday, what must be done for today and tomorrow to be successful, and review critical KPIs.
3. During the first 5 minutes of all meetings, allow time for associates to socialize.
4. Create break-out rooms for associates from similar teams to take their breaks and lunches together.
5. Create community break-out rooms for cross-functional teams to collaborate.

I'm confident that a more stable work environment can be established once these solutions are instituted. Demonstrating this level of responsiveness to the associates' challenges will create a sense of hope and optimism that leaders are connected to their issues and are working toward solutions that benefit the entire organization.

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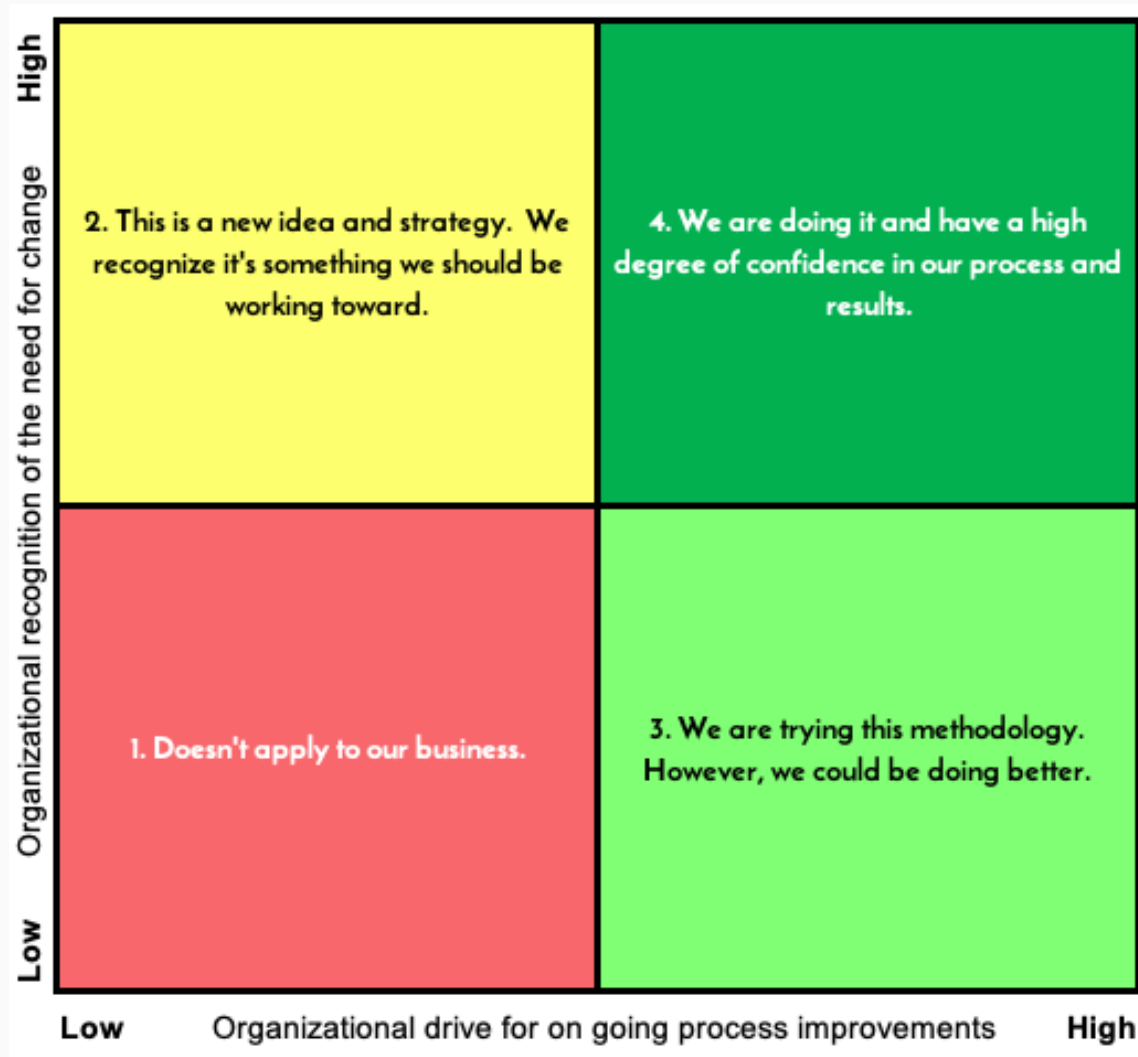**Create dramatic improvements to inventory velocity, customer service, and corporate**

profits.

If you have any questions or concerns about your operations and supply chain business strategy, please contact me by **e-mail** or at +1 (336) 260-9441.

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<u>Self-Ranking - Pick one of the four questions below and then fill in your comments in the space provided.</u>

1. Don't think this applies to your business or enterprise? (Write three to four reasons why it might not.)
2. This is a new idea and strategy; it's something we need to work toward. (Brainstorm the first steps.)
3. We can do better, modify our strategy, and now we are moving in the right direction. (What are the next steps to ensure success?)
4. Our team gets the necessary time to keep their minds fresh, and we have plans to live our dreams. (Comment on how you're ready.)

- _____ .
- _____ .
- _____ .
- _____ .

A 2x2 matrix chart. Y-axis: "Organizational recognition of the need for change" (Low to High). X-axis: "Organizational drive for on going process improvements" (Low to High).

2. This is a new idea and strategy. We recognize it's something we should be working toward.

4. We are doing it and have a high degree of confidence in our process and results.

1. Doesn't apply to our business.

3. We are trying this methodology. However, we could be doing better.

Don't be afraid to call with any questions or comments.

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Inventory Is Evil!™

in·ven·to·ry / ˈin-vən-ˌtȯr-ē / noun
Inventory is the term for the goods available for sale and raw materials used to produce goods available for sale.

in·ven·to·ry is evil! / ˈin-vən-ˌtȯr-ē is ˈē-vəl / phrase
"Left unchecked inventory has many negative unintended consequences to profitability. It hides problems; **therefore, it delays fixing problems!"**

Transforming Problem Chains into Profit Chains™

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Thanks in advance for your time and for being a loyal client. Looking forward to helping you and your team again soon.

Carpe diem,

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