BACKPACKING SECTION (BPX)
Fast Track Guidelines

How to Get More Done with a Volunteer Committee

Background

"Fast Track Guidelines" describes a strategy to achieve the BPX Committee's Objective #1 for FY2020: "To accomplish all Operating Objectives by the end of the fiscal year."

BPX is a startup. Startups are founded in pursuit of a vision that requires significant cultural change. Cultural change and rapid growth require strong leadership, a clear vision, a dedicated team, and a plan.

The Problem

Three issues threaten to dilute the vision, inhibit change and retard growth.

1. Committees are infamous for slow, deliberative processes. Careful deliberation is appropriate when underlying goals include stability and continuity. But BPX must act more decisively than can be achieved with traditional committee processes.

2. Group decisions tend to revert to the cultural mean. A vision seeks change in the status quo. The "mean" in our case is traditional CMC Culture, which has in past decades been insular by resisting change. There are benefits to traditional CMC culture, but that's another paper.

3. A functional structure is more efficient than alternatives when an organization has limited human resources. But the downside is that departmental goals may take priority over organizational goals, thereby diluting the vision.

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A Solution

Larger organizations resolve these issues by separating governance from operations. But BPX governance and operations are vested in a single body. Five steps may help identify, separate and control competing agendas:

1. <u>Separation of Responsibilities</u>. **Each BPX committee member wears two hats. One as a member of the governance committee, the other as a member of the operating committee. Governance and operations are often in conflict. The Chair, as head of both governance and operations, and in consultation with The Founders, is responsible to resolve such conflicts.**

2. <u>Three Overlapping Circles of Communication</u>. **Traditional committees tend to share all info with all committee members before everyone votes on nearly every issue. To preserve time, energy and momentum, BPX committee members work together in three overlapping circles of communications—founders, governance and operations. Each circle is headed by the Committee Chair.**

    a. <u>The Founders' Oversight Role</u>. **The primary role of BPX's three Founders is to provide oversight and direction to the committee. The Founders might be thought of as an enhanced executive committee.**

    b. <u>The Committee's Strategic Roles</u>. **The strategic roles of the Committee include: (a) identifying operating objectives that advance strategic goals, (b) approving annual operating plans and budgets, and (c) electing committee members.**

    c. <u>The Committee's Operating Roles</u>. **The operating roles of the Committee include developing and implementing strategies, plans and programs to achieve operating objectives. The Committee is divided into functional teams, each comprised of a coordinator, a co-coordinator and a Founder.**

3. <u>Email Coordination</u> **will be used to deliberate and resolve operational matters.**

    a. **Functional coordinators are expected to collaborate with a Founder and a co-coordinator, who provides a sounding board for ideas, facilitates emergency succession, and provides a backup source for work-in-progress.**

    b. **Functional Coordinators are not expected to coordinate operational decisions outside the functional team, other than with the Communications-Promotions team, who is typically involved in most tasks.**

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4.   <u>Committee meetings</u>. The purposes of monthly committee meetings include team building; keeping all members informed on the big picture, including the status and progress of all committee functions; and to deliberate and vote on strategic matters.

5.   <u>Documentation and Transparency</u>. Key BPX policies and procedures will be posted on the CMC/BPX web page, including minutes of monthly meetings with an attached list of significant electronic communications. The purpose of this policy is to preserve a history of issues, conclusions and actions, with as much openness and transparency as possible.

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