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Focus

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Post Mortems

Evaluating results is fundamental to good management. Paradoxically, while most managers would agree with this assertion, many fail to rigorously study outcomes for guidance on how to improve. The most appropriate method for evaluating results depends on the application. Consider the following:

- A yearly business plan
- A project for a customer
- An internal project
- A sales campaign

Reviewing a year's results compared to a plan should involve more than "what happened" issues. Insight into reasons, internal and external, improves probabilities for building on strengths and correcting weaknesses.

Project post mortems (I also like the military's term After Action Reviews) should be a part of managing most businesses. Using the "after action" concept also allows a broader application to cover activities beyond a discrete project. For example, an accounting firm might review performance during tax season. Companies who routinely work on projects (like architects, engineers, and contractors) should focus on illustrative successes and failures in a group setting.

In all cases, the main objective is to confront the facts as they are, no matter how brutal or unpleasant. The key is to ascertain the "why" factors. Although simple to say, recognition of the main underlying reasons can be quite difficult.

Tom Wagner

We help clarify options so our clients
identify the Right Questions
and solve the Right Problems.

Call us at 800 422-1374 to learn more.

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