



**AN HONEST
LOOK INTO
YOUR
ORGANIZATION**

DO YOU EVER WONDER WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON INSIDE YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Aligning an organization's capabilities to changes in the business environment and market conditions is a cornerstone of business success. The success of this alignment hinges upon an honest, clear assessment of the internal state of the organization. However, in our experience, the pacing and detail of these assessments are often not properly calibrated. Things are either studied for too long, often by outside parties and at a high cost, or not considered enough and the organization moves to strategy and execution too quickly. We have worked with leaders who say that "you only get a successful strategy when you have successfully defined the problem."

A key Brimstone belief is that the best answers to your organization's problems will often be found by your best people, and not by outsiders. While there is clearly a place for external experts, too often meaningful work that could build the organization's fabric, build leadership capacity, drive real results and - perhaps most importantly - build ownership and accountability in your people, is contracted out of the organization. Just as we believe that developing top leadership is a Senior Executive's job, we believe that honesty assessing and responding to the "realities" getting in the way of organizational success is a priority for leaders.

Brimstone offers two options for getting an honest look into your organization. Our Insight Squad process involves an internal team of trusted advisors, chartered by a Senior Executive, who evaluate selected organizational realities and make recommendations for addressing those realities. Brimstone manages this process, working closely with the chartering leader and the internal team, to ensure the outcomes are practical and relevant, and that the team feels ownership for the results.

The Goals of an Assessing Your Organization

- To understand the current state of an organization's—Strategy, Customers, Competitors, Products, Critical Issues, Key Processes, People, and Culture
- To identify areas of agreement and disconnects among the organization's senior leaders
- To share observations and recommendations with the Senior Team
- To develop a organization specific approaches to better alignment and resolution of issues facing the business.

The second option, Brimstone's Organizational Diagnosis process, involves our own, highly experienced, consultants conduct the assessment and provide recommendations. Since it is often hard to step outside of a system you and your people know, the objective assessment of a trusted third-party can sometimes provide valuable insight.

HOW THE INSIGHT SQUAD WORKS

The Insight Squad process can be completed in 30-45 days:

1. A "Chartering Executive" meets with key leaders, introduces the idea and the business case for doing it, gets agreement, asks for nominees and settles on team members – typically 6-8.
2. Team members are invited to a launch workshop. The Senior Leader charts the team, being very explicit about what they are being asked to do -- "I want to know, I want to hear it, you are working directly for me, and I have your back". The team does an initial diagnosis based on their own knowledge and experience, determines the questions they will ask interviewees, and determines the people they will interview.
3. Over the next 20-30 days, interviews are conducted.
4. When interviews are completed the team meets for another day to share data, develop themes, and begin to form recommendations for action.
5. The team reports-out to the chartering executive and others during an in-person meeting. The team typically has 30-60 minutes to present and an hour of dialogue with the leaders. The assessment team then leaves – their work completed – and the executives meet for 2 hours to discuss implications and next steps.

Brimstone designs and guides the process, coaches the executives, leads workshops and conducts some part of the assessment so as to have context and a "control sample" from which to help assess other data.

HOW THE ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGNOSIS PROCESS WORKS

This option involves our own consultants interviewing the leader's or leadership team's direct reports about what's going on in the organization. Using a consistent protocol, the

interviews explore the client's business from strategy and process to interpersonal. Beyond surfacing the challenges and opportunities for the organization, the interviews evaluate the alignment of the senior team. The process provides an opportunity for senior leadership to hear the honest, unfiltered perspectives of others in the organization – which is often a “wake-up call.”

After conducting the diagnostic interviews, Brimstone prepares observations and recommendations for the senior leader or leadership team. After discussing the results, both Brimstone and the leader(s) have the opportunity to reflect on the particular challenges facing the organization, discuss their implications, and explore possible approaches to resolving issues.

THE OUTCOMES FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

- 1.** An honest assessment of potential issues facing the organization.
- 2.** A clear set of recommendations for executives to consider.
- 3.** An “awakened” organization – between the key people who were interviewed and the audience that hears the report-out, there is a clear sense of “something is happening” on the one hand, and “we have to do something” on the other.
- 4.** With the Insight Squad, a highly motivated, empowered, and enthusiastic assessment team – typically this group feels extremely proud of the role they have played and been asked to play. They have had access to the senior levels of the organization and have had a crash course in “speaking truth to power”. When chosen well this team rises to this occasion with responsibility and enthusiasm. We recommend that the executive re-engage with this team over the coming months, leveraging their ownership and enthusiasm to help drive results and communicate in the organization.

SAMPLE SUMMARY OUTPUT

Senior Leader Effectiveness			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Senior Team has become more collaborative since CEO joined + Progress has been made with barriers between some silos starting to come down + Growth strategy towards 1,200 Stores clearly known and understood by the organization 			
Business Processes/ Operating Mechanisms	Organizational Structure	Rewards	People Management/ Talent Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Opening new stores + Bringing newness to guests + Rallying around opportunities + IT support of business departments + Town Hall meetings a good venue for communications + intranet for communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Organizational structure generally makes sense + Limited layers help streamline + Supply chain has improved + IT PMO is a strength 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Generally positive Pay & Benefits for Manager level & above + HQ peer-level recognition + Generally positive view of field team's monthly rewards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Tools and LMS Training + Development programs/assignments for the field; i.e. Gold Program, Area Manager Role, Leadership training + Development tools and focus in place in certain departments; IT, Gold Program, Specific Regions
Culture			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Fast-paced, results-oriented + Collective desire to succeed, both individually and at the company level + Do a lot with a little ("we're nimble"); good work ethic + Strong support of new values 			

DELIVERING RESULTS, DEVELOPING LEADERS, ALIGNING ORGANIZATIONS

Brimstone is a management consulting firm that empowers our global clients to achieve breakthrough financial performance by driving large-scale organizational transformation. Our Insight Squad and Organization Diagnosis processes help pinpoint the challenges facing the business, identify areas where the senior team lacks alignment, and results in an action plan for addressing issues. These processes allow Brimstone to collaborate with executives to design an engagement that meets the specific needs and challenges of their organization.



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