

CASE STUDY



A Phoenix Rises

The information systems department of this logistics company had become a black hole – requests went in, and nothing came out. Leaders came and went, but nothing changed. When we explored this situation, we found that a key source of difficulty was the lack of respect shown for the department’s boundaries by the rest of the company.

For example, the CEO had the frequent habit of phoning software engineers with instructions to drop any work in progress and start on an urgent enhancement – even if this contradicted yesterday’s instructions. Without demonstrated executive commitment to priorities, department staff found it impossible to focus and difficult to succeed. And their discouragement neutralized their innate motivation to raise their level of performance and professionalism.

Our first order of business was to take the outrageous step of obtaining agreement by senior executives on rules for engaging with the department. A formal channel was established for requesting, prioritizing, and obtaining status of work, and back-channel interference with priorities was expressly forbidden. With this relief accomplished, we then introduced the practice of team empowerment to the department, and turned them loose on the task of self-improvement. Within six months, they implemented totally new processes that insured accountability for both short-term emergencies and long-term strategy.

Client Benefits

- Transformed bottleneck information systems department into responsive and prolific powerhouse
- Introduced full process and status visibility for systems service requests
- Laid collaborative foundation for strategic technology supported business changes in the future

Cultivating Creativity, LLC uses the techniques of creative leadership to help companies increase their increase their ability to perform and adapt. We consult with executives and entrepreneurs, blending strategy, collaboration, and creativity to restructure project portfolios, improve team and leader performance, articulate vision and values, and resolve interpersonal conflicts. We focus on effectiveness and adaptability by stimulating innovative thinking and removing systemic obstacles to innovative practice. Our success is based on an approach that integrates forty years’ experience in project management, conflict resolution, product development, and the performing arts.