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What Do We Want to Create Together?

There is no more profound question than this one, and none more difficult to answer in any meaningful way. It is the question on which real accountability hinges.

The Practice

Simply ask the question, “What do we want to create together?” This task should be done in small groups that are mixed by level and function. You can focus the question on whatever the goal of the meeting is—could be a vision, could be a strategy for changing the measurement system, could be how to communicate with the rest of the organization. Whatever the specific focus, the discussion now is about a joint future.

Collect the answers in the larger group. Let the groups share their ideas. Post them on the wall. Look together at what they have come up with. Discuss common themes. This is the starting point for a co-created future.

A Tip

Sometimes it is hard for people to find the right words to say what is in their minds. Urge them to use language that is theirs alone. If they have heard a phrase before, they cannot use it. If they continue to have trouble finding the words, have each small team create a mural on a piece of flip-chart paper, using images, colors, anything but words. The images are always compelling and if posted on the wall bring some life into the room. If you have a long roll of paper, all the teams can create their mural on the same piece of paper. It takes them all one step closer to the idea of creating something together.