



Management Services

Management Solutions
performance + results

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Management Consultants to the Precast Industry

RESULTS IMPROVEMENT BULLETIN

PRECAST BUSINESS RESULTS IMPROVEMENT BULLETIN

Precast Business Results Improvement Bulletins are published by MJS Management Services. Additional bulletins that summarize current management challenges and solutions for the precast industry can be found at www.mjsmanagement.net.

MJS Management Services is a consulting firm that works exclusively with clients in the precast industry to improve business performance and results. For assistance with this or other management challenges please call 206-388-5209 or contact us by email. Visit our web site for a full description of the services we provide.

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ORGANIZATION CHALLENGE – BUILDING MANAGEMENT TEAM STRENGTH AND SUCCESSION

Many precasters are challenged with building strong management teams for today and finding, developing and retaining strong managers and leaders for tomorrow. The strength of your team will dictate your success. A common reason why companies fail to meet their objectives and compete successfully is a lack of the human capability needed to thrive in today's ever more demanding world.

Some questions to consider:

- Is your management team strong enough to achieve your company objectives?
- Have you created a definition of “management team strength” and developed an action plan to achieve this?
- Do you have the strength and resources to win against your competitors?
- Does your management team contain the leadership to develop and implement innovative, winning long-term strategies?
- Do you have less seasoned employees and managers in the organization with the potential to fill senior positions? Are programs in place to retain and develop these high potential employees?



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MJS Management Services can help to assess and strengthen your management team and to create development programs for high potential employees.

Assessing and building management team strength

A common description of a precast management team is:

- Strong operational skills and experience
- Many years of experience in the industry
- Good hands-on managers
- Often a number of managers have a technical background.

This combination is successful in precast because of the:

- High attention to detail and risk awareness needed to handle projects
- Customers and other stakeholders (general contractors, owners representatives, designers) have similar characteristics.

However, to ensure success in the future and to develop strategies to transform and improve your business a broad set of skills are required. Some examples include the ability to:

- Create a vision for the future and move the business to that target
- Develop and implement innovative, successful strategies that beat the competition
- Transform the business
- Introduce advanced methods and processes
- Take risks
- Focus on results and achievements and less on process and technical issues
- Create a sense of urgency
- Engage the organization
- Communicate clearly.

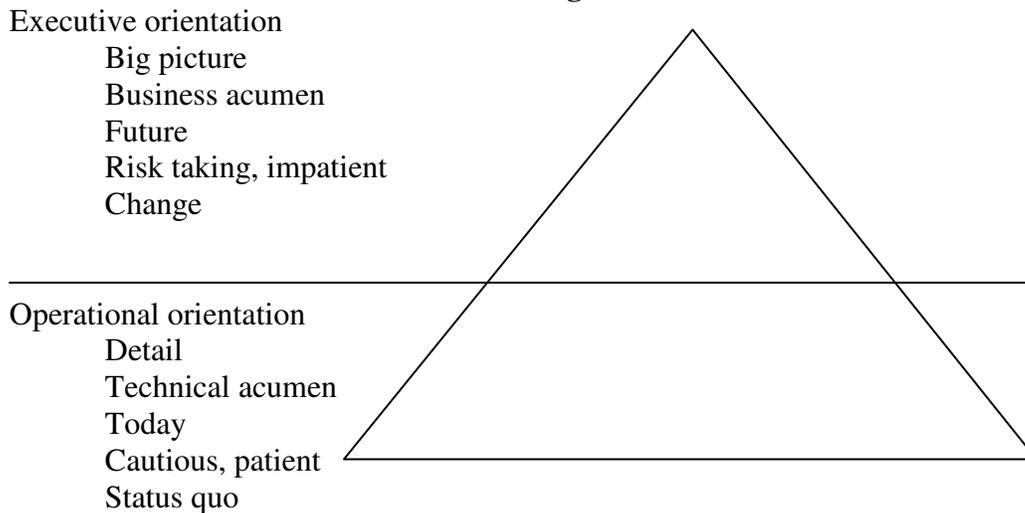


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Management Team Profile



Balance is the key

Most precast management teams have a predominance of strength at operations but some are weaker at strategic management. Symptoms of this can be:

- difficulty in defining improved ways to run the business
- slow to change and transform the business, falling behind the competition
- lack of innovation
- a tendency to propose solutions that have a technical or process orientation rather than a business and results focus.

The technical orientation of the precast industry creates a challenge in developing employees with senior management potential. Employees that bring a strategic approach can struggle with early-career staff and junior management roles and may need support to successfully complete projects work. For example, individuals with executive potential tend to work with less detail. In project situations this tendency can result in an important item being overlooked. If this tendency is recognized in advance appropriate support mechanisms can be put in place.



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Some solutions:

- Assess the skill sets of your current management team and note areas of strength or weakness
- Develop internal candidates with senior management oriented skill sets and attributes
- Hire new talent, consider candidates from outside the precast industry who may be able to bring fresh perspectives
- Use a consultant to inject new ideas and assist with transformation. Your management team can learn from the experience and then operate the business in more of a steady state mode once a major transformation exercise is complete.
- Recognize the balance needed for success. Strategic oriented managers can help operational oriented managers with innovation, business orientation and urgency. Operational oriented managers can help strategic type managers to follow-up to make sure important details haven't been overlooked.

Useful tools are available to help management teams assess and understand their current inventory of skills and attributes. These tools provide a baseline to help define personnel development programs, to select managers for promotion and to evaluate external candidates. Further, these assessment tools can provide the management team with a better understanding of their own styles and natural preferences – therefore enhancing communication and providing opportunities to better support each other.