

# Results Oriented Execution

by: Eduardo M. Arroyo



# Results Oriented Execution

A guide by Eduardo M. Arroyo

## Introduction

If there is a single term that could universally describe what every leader needs in order to be successful is RESULTS: consistent, repeatable, desirable, favorable and sustainable results.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines results as: *The consequence of a particular action, operation, or course; an outcome.* Webster defines it as: *Beneficial or discernible effect; to come about as an effect or consequence.*

Both agree that before a given result is obtained (a beneficial or desired effect, consequence or outcome) a cause or a series of ACTIONS must precede it.

Certainly some results do happen by a series of chance actions, but as a professional can you rely just on chance? Certainly not! You need concerted actions.

In practice we have found that a series of GENERIC and CONTROLABLE, PLANNED activities can maximize the probability of EXECUTING the ACTIONS that are theoretically necessary for obtaining the desired results. Leaders that consistently execute a series of particular actions, frequently accomplish their desired results. And when they do not, they usually can pinpoint why they did not happen for correction and further learning.

To maximize the possibility of consistent and somewhat controllable results and continued learning and development you need a theory and a methodology. The two burning questions are:

1. What actions do you prescribe as required for the results to happen?
  - a. This is your Hypothesis. *What you want to do.*
  - b. Your hypothesis is a logical statement that utilizes available expertise to predict a cause and effect relationship.
    - i. *Example of a simple hypothesis: If I train my employees in customer service (cause) the quality of my service will improve (effect).*
  - c. Your prescribed actions (your work plan, project steps, or the tactics needed to execute a strategy...) reflect the “cause” side of your hypothesis.
    - i. *In our example the prescribed actions will reflect how to execute a training plan for employees on customer service.*
  - d. The effect side will be your desired results (objectives).
    - i. *In our example the desired results are improved customer service.*

2. How can I get those prescribed actions to happen?
  - a. This is your leadership methodology. The *how* you will get it done.
  - b. Your leadership methodology is one that maximizes the possibility of making the required prescribed actions a reality.
  - c. The methodology is a series of GENERIC, PLANNED and CONTROLABLE activities that can maximize the probability of EXECUTING the ACTIONS that are necessary for obtaining the DESIRED RESULTS.

Getting results then is composed of two unique but interdependent activities.

1. Establishing the initial hypothesis for obtaining the desired results.
2. Executing a sound leadership methodology.

It is important to notice early that the initial hypothesis is frequently modified or changed as a result of increased knowledge or new data acquired during the process of executing the leadership methodology. There is nothing wrong with that.

Getting results requires completing a leadership methodology consisting of several stages. This methodology we will call RESULTS ORIENTED EXECUTION or ROE for short. The stages of ROE are:

1. Concept - what we want and how we will get it.
2. Decision – we want to do it.
3. Capability – we can do it.
4. Actions – we do it
5. Results – we get it.

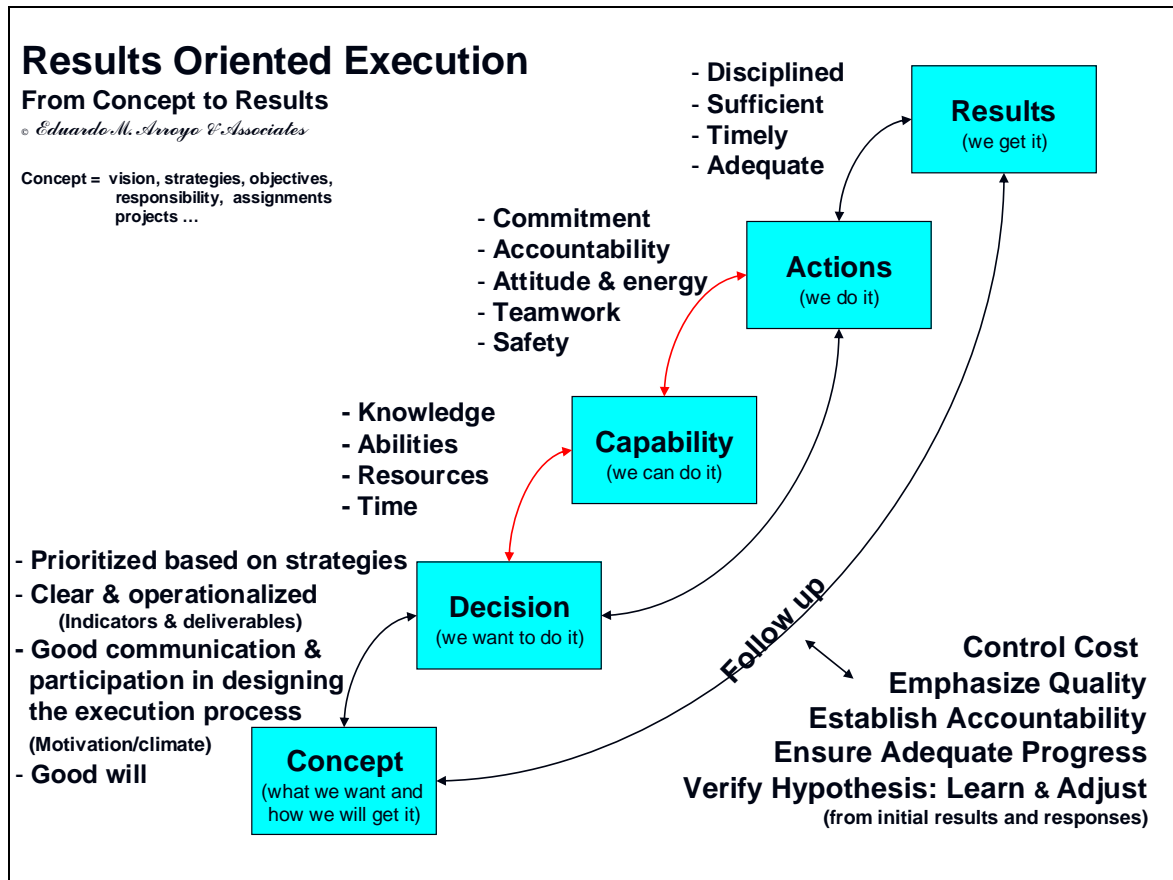
These stages are not necessarily linear; some of them can be progressing at the same time. Sometimes you can get results by barely touching on some of these stages. Sometimes you think you are getting there but somehow something is missing and you have to go back to a previous stage. Sometimes you never get there and you don't know why. As a general rule the more complex and involved the desired results are the more thorough and detailed you must be in the completion of each stage.

In the rest of this guide, we will show you:

1. The main activities required before you “complete” each stage.
  - a. Ideas on how to go about completing those activities. and/or
  - b. A checklist of questions so you understand where you are in terms of readiness for transitioning for the next stage.
2. A diagnostic tool, to give an initial troubleshooting guide when things are not going well.

This by no means pretends to be a very thorough 400 page discussion. The majority of you would not have read this far if it was. Our objective is to provide a strong, effective and essential guide of getting results. As you master this methodology, you will work on your own to farther sophisticate your approach.

Here is the leadership methodology we will follow for the execution:



We will proceed to expand on the 5+1 stages (+1 is the follow up process). In theory, the transition from each phase to the other is not complete unless we completely address what we will call TRANSITION ELEMENTS

## Stage 1: Concept – what we want and how we will get it

The concept is the initial notion of the results you want to obtain. It could be in the form of a vision, strategies, objectives, responsibility, assignment, project or a series of other terms that can represent an outcome or result.

### TRANSITION ELEMENTS (TE) for Stage 1

#### TE 1.a Prioritized based on strategies.

Since resources are limited, the amount of targeted results should certainly be prioritized so the organization can manage the scope without losing perspective of what is relevant. We want to get the most short and long term benefit for a given effort.

Some criteria for prioritizing based on strategies are:

1. Vision and mission relevant – strategic.
2. Congruence with major strategic objectives.
3. Differentiation potential – competitiveness
4. Product and Service Quality
5. Cost Related
6. Volume/throughput
7. Compliance
8. Others

When in doubt, the rule is “too few are better than too many.”

Keeping with the service quality example, let us suppose that our Vision is to become the best Insurance Company in the world. The stated result “improved customer service” is found to be the number one strategic objective, and thus becomes the concept we want to turn into results. You might argue that the desired results are more profits and you are right, but for the sake of simplicity we will leave the effort of converting service quality into profits for a future book.

Following the rule “too few are better than too many”, we decide to put all our efforts in the coming year only on this desired results. Our concept will then be “improve our service quality”.

The manager thinks that service quality is mainly an issue of training, so the initial hypothesis is: *If I train my employees in customer service (cause) the quality of my service will improve (effect).*

#### Key TE 1.a questions:

- ⇒ Is the selected set of desired results strategically relevant?
- ⇒ Are those results worth investing our limited resources?
- ⇒ Are we dealing with too many things at the same time or are we running the risk of having our organization lose the perspective of things?

## TE 1.b Clear and Operationalized (indicators and/or deliverables)

From now this TE onward we will start changing our focus (and vocabulary) from concept to specific results. This TE just starts doing that. The hurdle is ensuring everyone is clear on what success should look like if we get the results we want. We want to have:

1. An explanation of what is the concept. (Clear)
  - a. *Improved customer service means that the experience of dealing with us at all stages of the relationship, sales, account maintenance, and insurance claims is one judged as fair, professional, and cordially respectful.*
    - i. *Fair implies that all relevant details of the policy are spelled out and explained BEFORE the sale is closed and that it is followed exactly as established when a claim arises. If any scenario that occurs cannot be clearly decided by the established criteria, we will err in favor of the customer.*
    - ii. *Professional implies that we will follow our CODE OF ETHICS in every transaction and interaction we perform. That we will perform all services in the established time and we will make sure that the customer understand what those times are and why. And that we formally track all promises (entering them as tasks in OUTLOOK) to ensure they are delivered on or before promised.*
    - iii. *Cordially respectful means that we treat every customer as if he was our president's mother, making sure we stay away from anything that the customer might interpret disrespectful (completely avoiding the subjects of politics, religion, race, sex, health, age and morals) and using the words please and thank you whenever appropriate; but at the same time making him know and feel that we will take good care of them.*
2. Objective indicators and or clear deliverables so everyone understands if we are getting results. Everyone must be able to independently answer the question "Did we accomplish the desired results?" with the same answer – i.e. That everyone answers yes or no with ZERO DISCREPANCIES. (Operationalized)
  - a. Indicators: Mathematical formulas whose result measures the execution level of a specific process or parameter.
    - i. *Number of sustainable (those that prove to be a violation of the above description of FAIR, PROFESSIONAL, and CORDIALLY RESPECTFUL service) complaints per thousand of interactions reduced by at least 30% as measured through our formal customer feedback process and sustained for a minimum of four consecutive months. (these are follow up calls performed monthly by an independent group with a scientifically prepared protocol to a random sample of customers).*
    - ii. *Percentage of customers promised executed on time as measured by OUTLOOK and validated by our formal customer feedback process (check and balance).*

- iii. *Number of complaints received monthly per thousands of interactions as measured by our customer feedback cards process reduced by at least 40%. sustained for a minimum of four consecutive months (a sophisticated in line feedback system that is accessible to customers and to all employees, no matter their function or level, and validated by the independent survey).*
- b. Deliverables – Tangible products that can be described in such a fashion as to be able to precisely state if they have been completed or not. Could be attached not only to the concepts but to the required actions prescribed to accomplish the desired results.
  - i. *Initially there is no specific deliverable determined. If eventually the actions focus on service quality training, deliverables could include training design coverage, training design execution, pre and post training testing, formal certification of trainees and others.*

**Key TE 1.b questions:**

- ⇒ Is the desired result clear?
- ⇒ Is the desired result operationalized?
- ⇒ Based on the clarity level, will everyone in your organization be able to unmistakably know if the results are actually accomplished, if ever?

**TE 1.c Good communication & participation in designing the execution process (Motivation/climate).**

This transition element is critical to ensure that the right motivation and climate is developed in order to phase the rigors of executing the action plan.

**Key TE 1.c questions:**

- ⇒ Has everyone in the organization heard a formal presentation directly from a high level executive, presenting and explaining all the aspects of the desired results? (Explanation, operationalization, how will we know if we succeed, and what our initial hypothesis is?)
- ⇒ Has directly and indirectly affected employees given the opportunity to ask questions about the initial presentation?
- ⇒ Has a substantial group of employee directly and indirectly participated in living dialogues and discussions for validating, expanding and/or reformulating the initial hypothesis?
- ⇒ Has data, sound verifiable experience and published theory been the basis for making decisions on the evolution of the initial hypothesis?
- ⇒ Does the initial hypothesis evolved in a matter that most affected employees believe it will accomplish the desired results?

- ⇒ Has the evolved hypothesis been shared back with all employees?
- ⇒ Has a substantial group of employee directly and indirectly participated in the design of a prescribed action plan that if followed will most likely bring the desired results?
- ⇒ Do all the employees directly and indirectly affected know and understand what the prescribed action plan that will be followed is? (preferably presented by a team of employee leaders that participated in creating it)
- ⇒ Is the prescribed action plan now profound and thorough enough so that the possibility of success is maximized?
- ⇒ Is the prescribed action plan now reasonably detailed, with: major activities defined, established start and end dates, defined responsible person, budget and other available resources?
- ⇒ Do most people now, starting with you, feel that they will most likely accomplish the desired results if everything is executed as planned?

## **TE 1.d GOODWILL**

### **Key TE 1.d questions:**

- ⇒ Do employees believe that the top organizational leaders are working for the benefit of everyone in the organization? (as opposed to his own personal glory)
- ⇒ Were the opportunities to participate during TE 1.c real?
- ⇒ Has the credit for the initial ideas and plans been unselfishly given to the people that had the opportunity to participate?
- ⇒ Were the people that participated in developing the evolved hypothesis and in creating and presenting the prescribed action plan not only the bosses' friends but all of those that wanted to?
- ⇒ Has employee safety been considered as a critical portion of the prescribed action plans?



## **Stage 2: DECISION – we want to do it.**

At this point, if you have honestly and solidly answered yes to the transition questions in Stage 1: Concept, people should be very clear on what is wanted, why will it be good to get it, and what needs to be done to accomplish it. They should start feeling quite good about what is going on, enthusiastic and feeling that the plan is theirs.

Most people will actually want to do it by now, but not too many of them could publicly swear that we will do it. In this stage more work needs to be done to solidify the “we know what we want and how we will get it” and the “we want to do it” while working on ensuring that we “can do it”.

### **TRANSITION ELEMENTS (TE) For STAGE 2**

Specific individuals have already been given the responsibility of one or several of the major activities of the prescribed action plan. At this stage they will further analyze (ideally with other participants that will be assigned for those major activities) EACH and every one of their major activities based on the following transition elements.

#### **TE 2.a Knowledge**

##### **Key TE 2.a questions:**

- ⇒ Have we taken the major activities of the prescribed plan and broken them into more specific actions, including required start and end dates for each of them?
- ⇒ Have we identified all the information, understanding, or expertise required to successfully complete the specific actions of the prescribed plan? (you must be highly certain about this, if necessary inquire for outside help to increase your certainty level)

#### **TE 2.b Abilities**

##### **Key TE 2.b questions:**

- ⇒ Have we identified all the physical and mental, natural or acquired, skills or talents required for successfully completing the specific actions of the prescribed plan? (you must be highly certain about this, if necessary inquire for outside help to increase your certainty level)

## **TE 2.c Resources**

### **Key TE 2.c questions:**

- ⇒ Have we identified the resources available during the required time frame (in house or outside) that has the required knowledge or abilities necessary to successfully completing the specific actions of the prescribed plan?

## **TE 2.d Time**

### **Key TE 2.d questions:**

- ⇒ Have we calculated the required time needed by type of resource for successfully completing the specific actions of the prescribed plan within the required time frame?
- ⇒ Will the resources identified in TE 2.c have the required time available within the time frames and within the budget specified by the plan? (You must run different, real and creative iterations of TE 2.a, 2.b, 2.c, and 2.d until answering yes, or before going to negotiate either different time frames or budgets to the appropriate level. This is a real show stopper until you solve it.)
- ⇒ Affected people are aware of the results of all these analysis and the decisions that are been taken because of them?

## Stage 3: Capability – we can do it

At this point, if you have honestly and solidly answered yes to the transition elements questions in **Stage 2: Decision**, people should be very convinced that they **want to do it** (Stage 2). They should start feeling quite good about all the benefits that should result if the prescribed action plan is executed.

Most people will actually believe **we can do it** (Stage 3). by now, but not too many of them could publicly swear that **we will do it** (Stage 4). By now we have a better understanding of the complexities of the task since we have analyzed the activities thoroughly. The work ahead might now seem intimidating to some people, although the previous analysis makes us understand it a lot better. In this stage more work needs to be done to solidify the “**we want to do it**” and the “**we can do it**” while working on ensuring that “**we do it**”.

### TRANSITION ELEMENTS (TE) for Stage 3

#### TE 3.a Commitment

This transition element is usually the result of executing the previous stages fully. If it is not here, you must go back and review again the answers to the questions on all previous TE's. Specifically review all areas dealing with communication (dialogue) and real (as opposed to cosmetic, for appearances only) participation, including the use of suggestions that could have affected the hypothesis or the prescribed action plan but were ignored.

##### Key TE 3.a questions:

- ⇒ You can frequently hear statements from people at all levels and at formal and informal forums stating or showing that they are intellectually or emotionally bound to the prescribed action plan?
- ⇒ Can you see related activities already started (before their planned start dates) and people enthusiastically talking about them?
- ⇒ Are you as a leader taking complete personal responsibility for getting the desired results?

#### TE 3.b Accountability\*

At the end of the day, executing the prescribed action plan is not a voluntary activity. We have given plenty of opportunities for understanding and participation, and at this point we are certain that execution must happen for the benefit of the organization. It is part of the job, and failing to comply with it will derive some type of consequence (either a coaching, education or relocation process when the non complying person is acting in good faith, to suspensions and firing if the person is not complying with the agreed activities necessary for him to improve compliance). If we let non compliance happen, we are failing at our own job.

**Key TE 3.b questions:**

- ⇒ Who is responsible for doing what and for when is clear and in writing?
- ⇒ Responsible people had a chance to dialogue and sincerely negotiate those responsibilities?
- ⇒ The process for handling non compliance, including possible consequences, is clear and in writing?
- ⇒ People are clear on the process for non compliance, including its consequences, and the majority of them believe it is a fair process?
- ⇒ This process is not set up only for executing this prescribed action plan, but is in place for all other routines and special responsibilities as formally delegated?
- ⇒ Non compliance coaching, if necessary, should be starting to happen by now?
- ⇒ Individual and team progress review sessions are already scheduled and all people are aware of them?

**\*We offer a formal training session specifically dealing with this critical and too often mismanaged process of accountability.**

**TE 3.c Attitude and energy**

By now people know this is very serious business. Specially if the formal accountability process was not previously prevalent and it was created or renovated at the same time the prescribed action plan was created. All comments included in TE 1.a apply here, with the addition of ensuring we have created a very fair accountability process, and most people believe so.

**Key TE 3.c questions:**

- ⇒ You can often hear statements around meetings and hallways declaring that we will succeed at executing the action plan?
- ⇒ The energy level feels high?
- ⇒ Sincere optimism is felt all over?
- ⇒ People are working hard and having fun?

**TE 3.d Teamwork****Key TE 3.d questions:**

- ⇒ A shared purpose is present?
- ⇒ Are “team playing rules” formally present, clear and in writing? (this could be either or at both organizational and team level)
- ⇒ Activities that require synchronized events are flowing easily?
- ⇒ You can often see people helping others in responsibilities that are not directly theirs?
- ⇒ People are freely and respectfully sharing what they feel directly and only with the affected parties?
- ⇒ “Love is in the air”?

### **TE 3.e Safety**

We are not talking about job security here. At this point it should be clear that job security is maximized when we together plan strategic initiatives that improves our competitiveness and that we are all individually and as a team accountable for making them, as well as our daily prescribed work routine responsibilities, a reality. That is the only formula for job security.

There is not a worse feeling at work than when someone gets seriously injured or dies. At that point nothing you can do can reverse the events. We must ensure that safety is seriously has been seriously considered BEFORE (probably as part of the prescribed action plan as noted in TE 1.d GOODWILL). People should not, and will not progress, if safety is lacking.

#### **Key TE 3.e questions:**

- ⇒ No one is been asked to perform an activity were ALL safety precautions, preparedness and trainings have been, or will previously be, thoroughly addressed?
- ⇒ We all believe that we will be at least as safe when executing the prescribed action plan, if not more, than in our already safe environment enjoyed while executing our daily routines?

## Stage 4: Actions - we do it

Sure we have performed many plan related activities up to now. But we are now in the middle of it. Things are happening, things are changing, and some seem they are not. Some early victories energize the process; some early failures might momentarily disappoint us. Usually there is no turning back by now.

At this point, if you have honestly and solidly answered yes to the transition elements questions in **Stage 3: Capability**, people should be very convinced that they **can do it** (Stage 3). They should start feeling quite good about executing the action plan.

Most people will actually believe **we will do it** (Stage 4) by now, but not too many of them could publicly swear that **we will get it** (Stage 5). By now we have a better understanding of our capabilities for doing the task, but that there is a lot of activities to be completed. In this stage more work needs to be done to solidify the “**we want to do it**,” the “**we can do it**” and the “**we will do it**” while working on ensuring that “**we get it**”.

### TRANSITION ELEMENTS (TE) for Stage 4

#### TE 4.a Disciplined

Items answered with a no require dialogue and assertive action from the leader.

##### Key TE 4.a questions:

- ⇒ People are complying with the established working rules?
- ⇒ Execution of prescribed activities is focused, systemic, ordered and controlled?
- ⇒ Activities are been performed according to plan?
- ⇒ Execution of the prescribed plan is not having an adverse effect on routine day to day activities?

#### TE 4.b Sufficient

##### Key TE 4.b questions:

- ⇒ Amendments are been done to the prescribed action plan if necessary to harvest or exceed the desired results?
- ⇒ It seems that the prescribed action plan, as amended and if followed completely, will at least get us the desired results?

## **TE 4.c Timely**

### **Key TE 4.c questions:**

- ⇒ Things are happening when needed, and if not the prescribed action plan has been amended, in order to ensure that you will get the desired results for when it was planned?
- ⇒ Availability of resources are been reviewed frequently to ensure activities will keep been completed as scheduled?

## **TE 4.d Adequate**

### **Key TE 4.d questions:**

In our initial service quality hypothesis we stated that *If I train my employees in customer service (cause) the quality of my service will improve (effect)*.

Most likely this hypothesis would have been expanded during STAGE 2, where when given an opportunity, people would have said “*we also need to fix this or that back office process, since no matter what we do it will hinder the service quality.*” A similar situation could happen at this stage, where we find out that something could be missing or wrong with our initial hypothesis. What we do in that possible situation and how we react and handle it will affect this and many future opportunities. Please give it a serious treatment in the event it happens.

- ⇒ Are you starting to get some initial results as per your hypothesis?
- ⇒ Does it seem that your hypothesis is working?
- ⇒ If you have found some gaps or areas of opportunities in your hypothesis, has it been improved or expanded?
- ⇒ If your hypothesis was improved or expanded through new discoveries, prescribed action plans (including related analysis like knowledge, skills, resources...) are been improved based on those findings?
- ⇒ If for some reason you believe your hypothesis is not true, have shared the findings with all the organizations, made a significant learning experience out of it, and started creating a new hypothesis and prescribed action plan with increased energy and commitment?

## Stage 5: Results - we get it

One of the best feelings in life is accomplishing what you set up to do. Getting to this stage is what it is all about. It could even represent survival to the organization and a better future for all. Celebrate, recognize everyone involved, give credit, give thanks, but ensure that things are securely in place so that the obtained results can be sustained and becomes the new standard. The standard we now have to beat.

### Key TE 5 questions:

- ⇒ We are celebrating complete success (partial results can also be celebrated as such) as established at Stage 1: Concept?
- ⇒ We are giving plenty of differentiated credit and recognition to everyone?
- ⇒ We all feel we made it?
- ⇒ New results have become the expected standard for execution?
- ⇒ We have conducted an execution “post mortem” to formally learn from the process and make it better the next time?
- ⇒ A considerable amount of people participated and learned from the “post mortem”?
- ⇒ Lessons learned have formally been captured and shared in order to use them on the next opportunity?
- ⇒ Everyone believes it was all worth it?
- ⇒ We, after a very short rest, are all ready to tackle the next set of desired results?

We have used the words “everyone” and “all” liberally. We understand that not always “everyone” and “all” feel the same level of success and accomplishment, or really helped during the process. But make your best attempt to include all, and to understand why the difference for those who do not feel success.

Also ensure to differentiate in terms of thanking those that apparently just went for the ride, and significantly appreciate the effort of those who really sacrificed. In any event, do not let a few people get in the way of the joint feeling of success.



## **For ALL STAGES: A Formal Execution “FOLLOW UP” Process**

Your prescribed action plan seems to be superb, transitions appear to be progressing as planned... but perfect plans and superb methodologies do fail. How can you maximize the possibility of your success? Easy, by establishing, scheduling and performing a formal execution follow up process. These should occur at least every 6 to 8 weeks.

During the follow up process you will cover at least the following “Follow Up Elements” (FUE). Many of these you have seen as one time “Key TE questions,” but you need to ensure they stay in place throughout. Some of the FUE’s will have more relevance during the prescribed plan execution process, but you should at least keep them in mind at all stages.

### **FUE 1: Verify Hypothesis, Learn & Adjust (from initial results and responses)**

- ⇒ Are you starting to get some initial results as per your hypothesis?
- ⇒ Are affected sectors (customers, competition, employees, shareholders, government, community, special interests groups, etc., as applicable) responding as planned in your hypothesis?
- ⇒ Does it seem that your hypothesis is working?
- ⇒ If you have found some gaps or areas of opportunities in your hypothesis, has it been improved or expanded?
- ⇒ If your hypothesis was improved or expanded through new discoveries, prescribed action plans (including related analysis like knowledge, skills, resources...) are been improved based on those findings?
- ⇒ If for some reason you believe your hypothesis is not true, have shared the findings with all the organizations, made a significant learning experience out of it, and started creating a new hypothesis and prescribed action plan with increased energy and commitment?

### **FUE 2: Ensure Adequate Progress**

- ⇒ Are you reviewing actual VS planned completion?
  - Look at actual VS planned completed since your last formal follow up session.
  - Establish rescheduled dates for incompletes, but do not loose the initial due date off your sight, since that is where you will judge your total plan execution against.
  - Review the items that are due between now and the next formal follow up session and test for probability of on time completion. Put contingency plans in place to support or adapt to projected future completions’ noncompliance.

- ⇒ Execution of the prescribed plan is not having an adverse effect on routine day to day activities?
- ⇒ Do all employees receive regular communications regarding progress?
- ⇒ Do people continue to have plenty of opportunities to really participate providing ideas for improving the execution of the plan?
- ⇒ Are we giving enough recognition and credit to the people that are executing the plan?
- ⇒ Are we celebrating progress?
- ⇒ Are we having fun?

### **FUE 3: Establish Accountability**

- ⇒ Individual progress review sessions are also scheduled and all people are aware of them?
  - All individual expectations have been dialogued; they are clear and in writing?
  - Non compliance coaching, if necessary, is formally executed?
  - Intrinsic rewards (recognition, appreciation, development opportunities...) are timely and plenty when regular compliance makes them appropriate?
  - Consequences for inaction on agreements are known and happen promptly?
  - Are you as a leader taking complete personal responsibility and accountability for progress?

### **FUE 4: Emphasize Quality**

- ⇒ We are not cutting corners in terms of required activities in order to comply with scheduled dates?
- ⇒ Are we adding activities to the plan, as deemed necessary in order to improve the quality of the process and of the outcomes?
- ⇒ Performance indicators (quantitative and qualitative) are formally gathered and monitored?
  - They are utilized as a basis for taking action?

### **FUE 5: Control Cost**

- ⇒ Are we tracking expenses VS budget in an agile and rapidly visible manner?
- ⇒ Do we have to throw money in order to solve our problems such as late completions or inadequate initial planning?
  - Is this affecting our budgets?
  - Is this affecting our expected benefits
  - Are we doing anything significant to correct the situation?

## Results Oriented Execution: Follow Up Troubleshooting Guide

During the formal execution follow up sessions, or your management by walking around experiences, you might hear about or perceive one or more symptoms that could affect obtaining the desired results. In the case that more than one of these symptoms occurs; start working with the symptom that appears first (top down) in this list before moving to the next one. Some of these perceived symptoms could be:

**Indifference:** people lack enthusiasm or interest, there is no emotional attachment.

**Troubleshooting:** Look for answers in TE 1.a, 1.b, 1.c and 1.d first.

**Insecurity:** people are anxious, uncertain and lack self confidence.

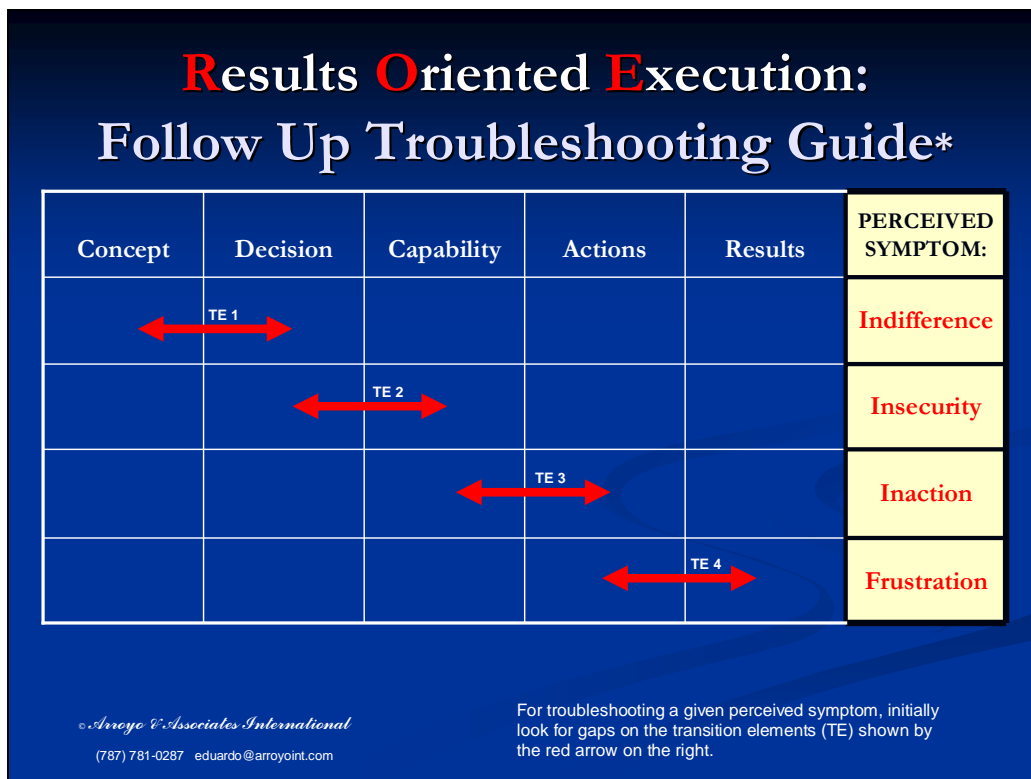
**Troubleshooting:** Look for answers in TE 2.a, 2.b, 2.c and 2.d first.

**Inaction:** No or very little movement, change or progress occurs.

**Troubleshooting:** Look for answers in TE 3.a, 3.b, 3.c, 3.d and 3.e first. Also ensure you are tending FUE 1, FUE 2, FUE 3, FUE 4 and FUE 5.

**Frustration:** an intense condition of dissatisfaction arising from unfulfilled needs that accompanies an incident of being disappointed in attaining goals.

**Troubleshooting:** Look for answers in TE 4.a, 4.b, 4.c and 4.d first. Also ensure you are tending FUE 1, FUE 2, FUE 3, FUE 4 and FUE 5.



## Closing remarks

Every single element in this methodology is quite simple by itself. Mastery comes from been able to consistently perform all the essential elements under all circumstances. Very few people reach mastery, but for you it is now in your hands. We certainly trust that if you review, utilize and expand on this methodology, you will get better results. Your career and your life will change for the better.

You will come up with additional transition element questions on your own. Please share them with me, together with your comments, experiences and success stories, through e-mail at Eduardo@e-arroyo.com where after serious analysis, we might post them at a public site and even include them in this guide's next revisions (of course with proper credit to you).

We feel very grateful for your attention, and we appreciate all our clients and teachers for giving us the opportunity of learning and sharing.

A special credit is given to my longtime Senior Associate and admired friend Edgar Quiñones for his hands on experimentation in hundreds of extremely successful, passionate and masterfully executed applications where these concepts were additionally validated. After reviewing this document he made an extremely valuable comment I will like to use for closing: ***"I believe that you should reinforce again at the end, the importance of recognition and of giving credit to the people that are the protagonists of the execution..."*** Here it is, Edgar... I believe the readers better do so, from the bottom of their hearts.

Revised

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# Results Oriented Execution – Master Checklist

To accompany “Results Oriented Execution” A guide by Eduardo M. Arroyo

This master checklist is to be used only IN CONJUNCTION with “Results Oriented Execution” A guide by Eduardo M. Arroyo, available free at [www.arroyoint.com](http://www.arroyoint.com).

## Stage 1: Concept – what we want and how we will get it

### TE 1.a Prioritized based on strategies.

- ⇒ Is the selected set of desired results strategically relevant?
- ⇒ Are those results worth investing our limited resources?
- ⇒ Are we dealing with too many things at the same time or are we running the risk of having our organization lose the perspective of things?

### TE 1.b Clear and Operationalized (indicators and/or deliverables)

- ⇒ Is the desired result clear?
- ⇒ Is the desired result operationalized?
- ⇒ Based on the clarity level, will everyone in your organization be able to unmistakably know if the results are actually accomplished, if ever?

### TE 1.c Good communication & participation in designing the execution process (Motivation/climate).

- ⇒ Has everyone in the organization heard a formal presentation directly from a high level executive, presenting and explaining all the aspects of the desired results? (Explanation, operationalization, how will we know if we succeed, and what our initial hypothesis is?)
- ⇒ Has directly and indirectly affected employees given the opportunity to ask questions about the initial presentation?
- ⇒ Has a substantial group of employee directly and indirectly participated in living dialogues and discussions for validating, expanding and/or reformulating the initial hypothesis?
- ⇒ Has data, sound verifiable experience and published theory been the basis for making decisions on the evolution of the initial hypothesis?
- ⇒ Does the initial hypothesis evolved in a matter that most affected employees believe it will accomplish the desired results?
- ⇒ Has the evolved hypothesis been shared back with all employees?
- ⇒ Has a substantial group of employee directly and indirectly participated in the design of a prescribed action plan that if followed will most likely bring the desired results?
- ⇒ Do all the employees directly and indirectly affected know and understand what the prescribed action plan that will be followed is? (preferably presented by a team of employee leaders that participated in creating it)

- ⇒ Is the prescribed action plan now profound and thorough enough so that the possibility of success is maximized?
- ⇒ Is the prescribed action plan now reasonably detailed, with: major activities defined, established start and end dates, defined responsible person, budget and other available resources?
- ⇒ Do most people now, starting with you, feel that they will most likely accomplish the desired results if everything is executed as planned?

#### **TE 1.d GOODWILL**

- ⇒ Do employees believe that the top organizational leaders are working for the benefit of everyone in the organization? (as opposed to his own personal glory)
- ⇒ Were the opportunities to participate during TE 1.c real?
- ⇒ Has the credit for the initial ideas and plans been unselfishly given to the people that had the opportunity to participate?
- ⇒ Were the people that participated in developing the evolved hypothesis and in creating and presenting the prescribed action plan not only the bosses' friends but all of those that wanted to?
- ⇒ Has employee safety been considered as a critical portion of the prescribed action plans?

#### **Notes for STAGE 1:**

## **Stage 2: DECISION – we want to do it.**

### **TE 2.a Knowledge**

- ⇒ Have we taken the major activities of the prescribed plan and broken them into more specific actions, including required start and end dates for each of them?
- ⇒ Have we identified all the information, understanding, or expertise required to successfully complete the specific actions of the prescribed plan? (you must be highly certain about this, if necessary inquire for outside help to increase your certainty level)

### **TE 2.b Abilities**

- ⇒ Have we identified all the physical and mental, natural or acquired, skills or talents required for successfully completing the specific actions of the prescribed plan? (you must be highly certain about this, if necessary inquire for outside help to increase your certainty level)

### **TE 2.c Resources**

- ⇒ Have we identified the resources available during the required time frame (in house or outside) that has the required knowledge or abilities necessary to successfully completing the specific actions of the prescribed plan?

### **TE 2.d Time**

- ⇒ Have we calculated the required time needed by type of resource for successfully completing the specific actions of the prescribed plan within the required time frame?
- ⇒ Will the resources identified in TE 2.c have the required time available within the time frames and within the budget specified by the plan? (You must run different, real and creative iterations of TE 2.a, 2.b, 2.c, and 2.d until answering yes, or before going to negotiate either different time frames or budgets to the appropriate level. This is a real show stopper until you solve it.)
- ⇒ Affected people are aware of the results of all these analysis and the decisions that are been taken because of them?

### **Notes for STAGE 2:**

## **Stage 3: Capability – we can do it**

### **TE 3.a Commitment**

- ⇒ You can frequently hear statements from people at all levels and at formal and informal forums stating or showing that they are intellectually or emotionally bound to the prescribed action plan?
- ⇒ Can you see related activities already started (before their planned start dates) and people enthusiastically talking about them?
- ⇒ Are you as a leader taking complete personal responsibility for getting the desired results?

### **TE 3.b Accountability\***

- ⇒ Who is responsible for doing what and for when is clear and in writing?
- ⇒ Responsible people had a chance to dialogue and sincerely negotiate those responsibilities?
- ⇒ The process for handling non compliance, including possible consequences, is clear and in writing?
- ⇒ People are clear on the process for non compliance, including its consequences, and the majority of them believe it is a fair process?
- ⇒ This process is not set up only for executing this prescribed action plan, but is in place for all other routines and special responsibilities as formally delegated?
- ⇒ Non compliance coaching, if necessary, should be starting to happen by now?
- ⇒ Individual and team progress review sessions are already scheduled and all people are aware of them?

**\*We offer a formal training session specifically dealing with this critical and too often mismanaged process of accountability.**

### **TE 3.c Attitude and energy**

- ⇒ You can often hear statements around meetings and hallways declaring that we will succeed at executing the action plan?
- ⇒ The energy level feels high?
- ⇒ Sincere optimism is felt all over?
- ⇒ People are working hard and having fun?

### **TE 3.d Teamwork**

- ⇒ A shared purpose is present?
- ⇒ Are “team playing rules” formally present, clear and in writing? (this could be either or at both organizational and team level)
- ⇒ Activities that require synchronized events are flowing easily?
- ⇒ You can often see people helping others in responsibilities that are not directly theirs?
- ⇒ People are freely and respectfully sharing what they feel directly and only with the affected parties?
- ⇒ “Love is in the air”?



### **TE 3.e Safety**

- ⇒ No one is been asked to perform an activity were ALL safety precautions, preparedness and trainings have been, or will previously be, thoroughly addressed?
- ⇒ We all believe that we will be at least as safe when executing the prescribed action plan, if not more, than in our already safe environment enjoyed while executing our daily routines?

### **Notes for STAGE 3:**

## **Stage 4: Actions - we do it**

### **TE 4.a Disciplined**

- ⇒ People are complying with the established working rules?
- ⇒ Execution of prescribed activities is focused, systemic, ordered and controlled?
- ⇒ Activities are been performed according to plan?
- ⇒ Execution of the prescribed plan is not having an adverse effect on routine day to day activities?

### **TE 4.b Sufficient**

- ⇒ Amendments are been done to the prescribed action plan if necessary to harvest or exceed the desired results?
- ⇒ It seems that the prescribed action plan, as amended and if followed completely, will at least get us the desired results?

### **TE 4.c Timely**

- ⇒ Things are happening when needed, and if not the prescribed action plan has been amended, in order to ensure that you will get the desired results for when it was planned?
- ⇒ Availability of resources are been reviewed frequently to ensure activities will keep been completed as scheduled?

### **TE 4.d Adequate**

- ⇒ Are you starting to get some initial results as per your hypothesis?
- ⇒ Does it seem that your hypothesis is working?
- ⇒ If you have found some gaps or areas of opportunities in your hypothesis, has it been improved or expanded?
- ⇒ If your hypothesis was improved or expanded through new discoveries, prescribed action plans (including related analysis like knowledge, skills, resources...) are been improved based on those findings?
- ⇒ If for some reason you believe your hypothesis is not true, have shared the findings with all the organizations, made a significant learning experience out of it, and started creating a new hypothesis and prescribed action plan with increased energy and commitment?

## **Notes for STAGE 4:**

## **Stage 5: Results - we get it**

- ⇒ We are celebrating complete success (partial results can also be celebrated as such) as established at Stage 1: Concept?
- ⇒ We are giving plenty of differentiated credit and recognition to everyone?
- ⇒ We all feel we made it?
- ⇒ New results have become the expected standard for execution?
- ⇒ We have conducted an execution “post mortem” to formally learn from the process and make it better the next time?
- ⇒ A considerable amount of people participated and learned from the “post mortem”?
- ⇒ Lessons learned have formally been captured and shared in order to use them on the next opportunity?
- ⇒ Everyone believes it was all worth it?
- ⇒ We, after a very short rest, are all ready to tackle the next set of desired results?

### **Notes for STAGE 5:**

## **For ALL-STAGES: A Formal Execution “FOLLOW UP” Process**

### **FUE 1: Verify Hypothesis, Learn & Adjust (from initial results and responses)**

- ⇒ Are you starting to get some initial results as per your hypothesis?
- ⇒ Are affected sectors (customers, competition, employees, shareholders, government, community, special interests groups, etc., as applicable) responding as planned in your hypothesis?
- ⇒ Does it seem that your hypothesis is working?
- ⇒ If you have found some gaps or areas of opportunities in your hypothesis, has it been improved or expanded?
- ⇒ If your hypothesis was improved or expanded through new discoveries, prescribed action plans (including related analysis like knowledge, skills, resources...) are been improved based on those findings?
- ⇒ If for some reason you believe your hypothesis is not true, have shared the findings with all the organizations, made a significant learning experience out of it, and started creating a new hypothesis and prescribed action plan with increased energy and commitment?

### **FUE 2: Ensure Adequate Progress**

- ⇒ Are you reviewing actual VS planned completion?
  - Look at actual VS planned completed since your last formal follow up session.
  - Establish rescheduled dates for incompletes, but do not loose the initial due date off your sight, since that is where you will judge your total plan execution against.
  - Review the items that are due between now and the next formal follow up session and test for probability of on time completion. Put contingency plans in place to support or adapt to projected future completions' noncompliance.
- ⇒ Execution of the prescribed plan is not having an adverse effect on routine day to day activities?
- ⇒ Do all employees receive regular communications regarding progress?
- ⇒ Do people continue to have plenty of opportunities to really participate providing ideas for improving the execution of the plan?
- ⇒ Are we giving enough recognition and credit to the people that are executing the plan?
- ⇒ Are we celebrating progress?
- ⇒ Are we having fun?

### **FUE 3: Establish Accountability**

- ⇒ Individual progress review sessions are also scheduled and all people are aware of them?
  - All individual expectations have been dialogued; they are clear and in writing?
  - Non compliance coaching, if necessary, is formally executed?
  - Intrinsic rewards (recognition, appreciation, development opportunities...) are timely and plenty when regular compliance makes them appropriate?
  - Consequences for inaction on agreements are known and happen promptly?
  - Are you as a leader taking complete personal responsibility and accountability for progress?

### **FUE 4: Emphasize Quality**

- ⇒ We are not cutting corners in terms of required activities in order to comply with scheduled dates?
- ⇒ Are we adding activities to the plan, as deemed necessary in order to improve the quality of the process and of the outcomes?
- ⇒ Performance indicators (quantitative and qualitative) are formally gathered and monitored?
  - They are utilized as a basis for taking action?

### **FUE 5: Control Cost**

- ⇒ Are we tracking expenses VS budget in an agile and rapidly visible manner?
- ⇒ Do we have to throw money in order to solve our problems such as late completions or inadequate initial planning?
  - Is this affecting our budgets?
  - Is this affecting our expected benefits
  - Are we doing anything significant to correct the situation?

### **Notes for FOLLOW UP PROCESS:**

Revised September 2010

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