



The Deadly Disease of Conformity – How to Explore Outside the Box

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What is in it for me?



How to manage your possibilities and expand your influence in the workplace



**The mere act of listening to
wise statements from others
does little for anyone**

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Exploring the conformity box



In order to think out side the box you must understand the box



If you understand the box can you define all the lines of the box and their locations





★ The human urge to conform to what is perceived as established cultural practice is a protective device of sorts. Conforming to a norm can protect against change which might be less advantageous to the group or in some cases the individual who introduced it



Conformity norms



- ★ **This is just the way things are done around here**
- ★ **When we join a new group we become converts**
- ★ **When we are forced to conform, defined as compliance**
- ★ **What is most normal however is we fear embarrassment, discomfort, sense of inferiority, desire to be liked called defensive conformity**



Pressures to conform



- ★ **The difficulty or ambiguity of the task**
- ★ **The perceived competence of the group**
- ★ **The perceived status of the group**
- ★ **Group cohesiveness**
- ★ **Group composition**
- ★ **Group size**
- ★ **Group unanimity**





What are some existing conformity examples



★ **Work hours arrive/leave**

★ **Clothes**

★ **Lunches**

★ **Parties**

★ **Perks**

★ **Politics**

★ **Status symbols**





Self Survey on conformity

Describe conformity issues in your organization

Which ones are most detrimental to allowing you and the organization to attain maximum potential gains

Prioritize the top five in order





Risk and certainty



The trouble is if you do not risk anything you risk even more. You risk the uniqueness of you



In any organization it is amazing how many cares and concerns disappear when you decide not to be Just as part of something but a “someone” who brings hope, energy and vision to those around him/her



★ In some cases individuals who are acting outside the established norms and are so outrageous in their thoughts and proposal they are deemed as someone who represents the “disenchanted fringe” and their issues are viewed as absurdity without purpose



Maslow said it best to describe what we need



- ★ **Autonomy and independence**
- ★ **The strong desire to not be enculturated without value**
- ★ **Democratic values**
- ★ **Accepting of themselves and others**
- ★ **Spontaneity over contrived or false actions**
- ★ **The ability to appreciate that which others take for granted**
- ★ **Simplicity over pretense and artificiality**
- ★ **Creativity that allows them to see beyond the mundane**



Conformity strength or weakness



- **A leaders perspective.**

★ **By John Duddy**



Reporting Status

- ★ **Do you just take flow downs or do you decide what adds value to you?**
- ★ **How do you decide this?**
- ★ **What “metrics” and actions truly make a difference in your organization?**
- ★ **How often do you report status?**
 - **What do you report?**
 - **How often do you report it?**
 - **Do you understand why you report it?**





What we do – flow downs

★ **Manage the flow downs**

- **Which truly make a difference?**
- **How do they add to the success of the overall system?**
- **What 5 things can you do at your level that will make a difference this year?**
 - **What about your team?**
- **Start, stop continue**
 - **Name some things I ought to start doing, stop doing and continue doing**
 - **Name some things as a leadership team**
 - **Have your leadership teams give feedback to others on your leadership team**
 - **Give feedback, make this a living activity that gets tracked and accomplished!!!**





What we do – flow ups

- ★ **Don't manage the flow ups!!!**
- ★ **It's ok if my team has an issue that I cannot solve and they decided to surface it to the boss**
- ★ **EGO – check it at the front door**
- ★ **Try to understand what their issue is**
- ★ **Try to help from my knothole**
- ★ **Encourage it**





Teaming

- ★ **What drives you to compete with your teammates versus “team” with your teammates?**
 - **Salary planning**
 - **Team rewards**
 - **Recognition**
 - **Individual**
 - **Team**
 - **Decision making**
 - **In front of the boss**
 - **Not in front of the boss**
 - **Risk taking**
 - **What happens when it doesn’t pan out?**
 - **What happens when it does?**





Get out of your box

- **Get out of your office/cube and go find out throughout the organization!**
 - **Go find people and ask them!**
 - **You'll end up with actions from them**
 - **Write them down**
 - **Go work them**
 - **Tell your people what you are doing and if you cannot help them, at least give them feedback**
- **If you are the star, then you are one**
 - **If your people are the stars, then you are many**





**“Only those who will risk going too far
can possibly find out how far one can
go”**

T. S. Eliot