

DTD Episode 41 Show Notes

Defeat *YOUR* Drama:

I've Recommended Better Processes but Leaders Won't Implement Them

Jen from Fort Worth, TX

If you'd like me to share customized strategies for your drama situation go to my website <http://podcast.defeatthedrama.com/defeat-your-drama/>. You can type or record your message. Use your real name or an alias for anonymity. Note that recorded or written messages may be used on the podcast.

Jen from Fort Worth, TX:

I work in purchasing and previously worked in Customer Service where we made enhancements that saved time and money. In my transition, it was very clear we had broken systems and areas where we are very inefficient. I have submitted process improvement recommendations several times but they go through an approval process where I am not part of that discussion. (Leadership team) It takes some money to fix the issues. Our leadership team worried about hard cost savings but not savings where it's difficult to justify/capture. But at the same time, they are having everyone manually handle tactical issues and being inefficient. Help :)

Jen, so sorry to hear about your struggles. Let's get you some customized solutions. I am an efficiency junky so I understand your desire to improve your work processes and systems!

As always, In the Defeat Your Drama segments, I will provide solutions based on the information provided. I will obviously not have full details so will provide customized strategies based on what you share. Always consider your own specific circumstances before taking any action. These are suggestions not guarantees.

#1 Generate Some Creative Calculations

It sounds like your company is very interested in attaching dollars and cents to their decisions. There are times when, as you say, it is more difficult to capture the true savings. You'll still want to make a business case for improving the processes so think creatively about other calculations you can generate that would illustrate the need for improved efficiency. For instance, you mention all of the manual tasks. How about calculating the money they are spending on the additional time required for these manual tasks? Use an average wage and multiply by the additional minutes or hours per person per day. If they just look at salaries as fixed costs per day they may miss this. There isn't actually a cost savings it's just a way of thinking about how they are spending their compensation dollars. Are ineffective processes the best use of those dollars? As an example, I often have clients calculate the cost of ineffective meetings. Tallying time spent for the wages in the room generates some eye opening results! This concept is the same. Not a cost savings just better utilization of dollars spent.

What else could be done with the captured time? Perhaps there are some revenue generating activities that have been put on hold because there is a lack of time. Multiply the revenue that could be generated by focusing those compensation expenditures on those activities instead.

You get the picture. Just think outside the box and find alternate ways to calculate costs and lost revenues to make the expenditure on new systems more enticing.

#2 Emphasize Your Unique Perspective

It sounds like the fact that you have worked in both customer service and purchasing has helped you have a unique perspective on the flow of work inside the organization. You are perhaps able to identify additional opportunities for improvement.

You don't say how you are sharing your ideas now. You need a strong advocate. Is there someone on the leadership team you could speak with individually to explain your unique perspective? Share with them that you would like to utilize this perspective to benefit the organization as a whole. Give he or she a couple of examples you've identified.

Perhaps between your unique perspective and your creative calculations they would allow you to make a presentation to the leadership team yourself. You could then answer questions and connect with them around the topic. The focus would be on your enthusiasm and desire to improve efficiency and profits.

#3 Focus on What's in Your Control

When faced with a frustration I always have clients figure out what is in their control and what isn't. Find creative ways to solve the problems from a direction that's in your control. Let go of the rest. So, you will try these techniques for being heard. You will create a business case for the improvements. You will see if you are able to present your ideas yourself. If that doesn't work is there anything else in your control? At a minimum, you control your reaction to the ineffective processes and manual tasks. Being frustrated by them doesn't help the situation it just zaps your energy. So, you can be frustrated or accept what is true about the tasks you must do. Either way they are there for the time being.

If you stopped focusing on the inefficiency would you be able to find more satisfaction at work? The goal is to make what is currently frustrating you as palatable as possible. If they

won't change the processes you have to live with them or move on. For your own sanity, avoid the feeling of frustration that arises from something you cannot change.