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Description:

Work Outs are cross functional, cross level, town hall meetings of forty to two hundred employees led by teams of internal and external consultants designed to drive out problems in organizational functioning and design and implement solutions.

Uses:

A work out will allow workers and managers to identify bottlenecks in production or implementation of product design in a safe environment, which can lead to changes in the structure of the organization.

Materials:

Flipcharts to record issues and ideas for solutions.

Instructions:

Choose a problem that inhibits productivity. Select a cross-functional, inter-departmental and cross-level group of employees. Generate recommendations and ideas from the work teams to improve the process or eliminate unnecessary work. Ask for volunteer “champions” who will see the process of change through if it is accepted by management. Meet with management and ask for an immediate response to proposed changes. Conduct a follow up meeting to evaluate changes.

Tips:

Look for both rattlers and pythons. Rattlers are problems that make a lot of noise but are easily fixed. Pythons are problems that make little noise but can choke the life out of any organization. Pythons are much harder to spot and fix.

References:

Large Group Interventions Barbara Benedict Bunker and Bile T. Alban Josey Bass 1997