



# INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

at MSI

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Our **Four Dimensional (4D) approach** to institutional strengthening helps organizations achieve their goals and supports change across four dimensions: individual, team, organization, and environment using innovative, participatory methods and tools.



## STEP 1



### Confirm Vision and Performance Goals

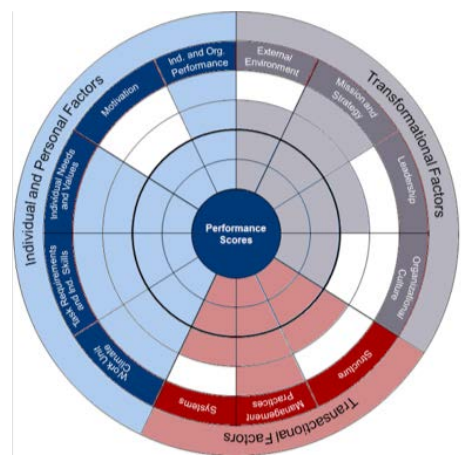
Bring clarity to organizations that do not yet have clear goals and frame coming changes in terms of performance improvement. During this step we also try to help the organization and its people reconnect to the organization's core purpose, such as improving the health of citizens, ensuring every person competes on an even field for open positions, or inspiring children to love learning. By reconnecting people with purpose, staff can connect again, or for the first time, in seeing how their efforts within a context of greater meaning. This creates an openness for reflection and imagination that business as usual does not offer.

## STEP 2



### Identify Assets, Needs, and Incentives

Employ facilitated sessions with organizational leaders, polling and focus group work with stakeholders and customers and web-based staff polling to identify the organization's assets, needs, and incentives for change. This step brings fresh energy to organizations that may not have considered the achievements they already have made and resources already at their disposal that can be employed to achieve their goals. Staff polling results are displayed in the wheel graphic on the right based upon the Burke-Litwin model of organizational change and performance. Using this model, the levers of change are apparent and organizational scores are easily understood by all staff.



## STEP 3



### Design Performance Improvement Solutions

Involve the organization determining which issues are most pressing (capitalizing on a strength, addressing a need, mobilizing a resource, etc.) and how the change will be addressed. Facilitators/external experts ask thoughtful questions that guide the organization as it considers its way forward while remaining observant that way forward needs to arise from within the organization. 4D uses strategic communication internally and externally to build momentum for change, excitement among staff, and support among stakeholders and the public.

## STEP 4



### Implement Solutions

A variety of flexible approaches depending upon what is needed. For addressing the individual dimension, we may use coaching and leadership development in addition to training. For the team dimension, we engage in team building and interpersonal and leadership skills assessments to maximize team effectiveness. In addition, we work with teams on decision making processes in order to improve communication and effectiveness. For organization level assistance, we provide change management, business process reengineering, organizational restructuring, and career path development. During implementation, we facilitate a process of iterative adaption whereby the organization goes through cycles of engaging in targeted performance improvement and learning which ones work best. Regular check points ensure the organization learns, adapts, and identifies opportunities to scale up promising practices. Last, we work with leaders to coach them to lead and manage change. When the environment hinders performance, we use communications campaigns to build demand for measurable, sustainable change. We work with existing structures and systems such as career/competency models, reporting processes, curricula, performance appraisal,



## STEP 5



### Sustain Performance

Further embed the change to a performance improvement-oriented culture. Our evidence-based methods and tools build on what the organization already tracks to ensure the organization measures and monitors the right things for long-term organizational achievement while building an openness and appetite for learning. This achievable because the organization learns by doing, is responsible for its own success, and efforts are supported at multiple levels (individual, team, organization, and environment) simultaneously.



# Why Organizations Choose MSI

*While the tools we use are important, the difference we make is not in what we do, but in how we do it.*

**1** We balance performance (results) and process, so our facilitators keep leadership focused on the end goals while helping them engage with individuals, teams, the organization, and key players in the environment in order to achieve and maintain performance gains.

**2** We recognize that if people need to behave differently, the drivers and incentives for change need to be evident to everyone who is being asked to behave differently.

**3** We recognize that learning is essential for sustained performance improvement and we recognize that there are frequent opportunities for it. We model reflective practice and ask questions that open people to reflection.

*In keeping with the latest research on organizational development, our approach is...*

**Asset-based** | While we recognize all organizations have shortcomings, research shows that a focus on gaps and deficits undermines confidence and performance. We look across the 4Ds to understand what is working, where strengths lie, where there are relationships, competencies, skills, attitudes, physical resources, and other assets that can leveraged to improve performance in the long term.

**Iterative** | As per the current research, we wed the need for flexibility with action research and organizational learning, creating openings for fast failure and authentic reflection on what works. We can afford to do this with organizations because those cycles of figuring out what's working are fast. This makes the cost of "failure" low enough to arouse curiosity about what we think may work and what we learn really does work.