



FranklinCovey

New FranklinCovey Focus Solution Helps Employees Focus and Execute on Highest Priorities

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SALT LAKE CITY, Mar 13, 2003 (BUSINESS WIRE) --

FranklinCovey Survey Reports Less Than Half of U.S. Worker Time is Spent Working on Their Organization's Most Important Goals

FranklinCovey (NYSE:FC), a global leader in effectiveness training, productivity tools, and assessment services for organizations and individuals, today announced its new Focus Solution -- a set of assessment, learning, and application tools to help get everyone in an organization, from top to bottom, voluntarily and passionately focused on their organization's highest priorities.

The FranklinCovey Focus Solution includes the xQ(TM) Survey; xQ Debrief; FOCUS: Achieving Your Highest Priorities Workshop; Aligning Goals for Results Work Sessions; and the FranklinCovey Planning System(TM).

FranklinCovey, which has surveyed more than 2.5 million people over the last 14 years about productivity and effectiveness issues, also released today the results of its latest xQ Survey of U.S. workers. FranklinCovey commissioned Harris Interactive(R) to field the xQ Survey to poll 11,045 adult U.S. workers. The survey results confirm that most organizations suffer from major "execution gaps" which undermine the achievement of their highest priorities. These gaps include the following:

1. Workers don't know their organization's highest priorities. Only 44% of U.S. workers surveyed said they clearly understand their organization's most important goals.
2. Workers don't translate their organization's highest priorities into action. Only 19% of U.S. workers have clearly defined work goals, and only 9% believe that their work has a strong link to their organization's top priorities.
3. Workers don't embrace their organization's highest priorities. Only 19% feel a strong level of commitment to their organization's top priorities.
4. Workers don't stay on track with their organization's highest priorities. They report spending only 49% of their time on activities they believe are directly linked to their organization's key priorities. U.S. workers spend 32% of their time on other activities that demand their immediate attention, but have little relevance to their organization's most important goals. And 19% of their time is spent on petty politics and bureaucracy. Only 12% report their individual performance is reviewed monthly with their manager.
5. Workers don't collaborate well on their organization's highest priorities. Just 31% feel they can express themselves honestly and candidly at work and only 34% say they work together in a "win-win" atmosphere.

Overall, U.S. workers gave their organizations a score of 51 out of 100 for their collective lack of focus and execution on truly important goals.

"U.S. workers are basically giving their organizations a failing grade on focus and execution," said Bill Bennett, president of the FranklinCovey Organizational Solutions Business Unit. "There is a great opportunity for organizations to increase their productivity by closing the gap between their key objectives and daily execution."

The FranklinCovey Focus Solution

The FranklinCovey Focus Solution emphasizes both individual effectiveness and alignment of organizational goals throughout an organization.

Individual Effectiveness -- The effectiveness of individuals in achieving their highest priorities at work and in their personal lives is greatly enhanced by FranklinCovey's offerings, including:

FOCUS: Achieving Your Highest Priorities Workshop

A key element of the FranklinCovey Focus Solution is the Focus workshop. FranklinCovey has a legacy of helping individuals to become more effective. The one-day Focus course teaches productivity skills integrated with a proven, powerful planning system to help employees clarify, focus on, and execute their highest priorities -- personally and professionally.

The xQ Survey of U.S. workers reports serious problems with regard to individual employee productivity:

-- Only 32% report their individual work goals are translated into daily tasks and/or performance standards. -- Just 37% say their goals are tied to a deadline. -- Just 30% say they take time to plan their work schedule every day. -- Only 52% say they are satisfied with the results of their work at the end of most weeks.

The Focus workshop has been designed to build upon the proven FranklinCovey productivity principles with effective solutions to current knowledge worker productivity issues. Participants will:

-- Learn to consistently manage their activities and time so that the "wildly important" doesn't fall victim to the "merely urgent." -- Become more committed and purposeful as they feel more engaged in work that meets the core objectives of the organization. -- Learn to utilize technology to help them manage the onslaught of information they receive daily.

Workshop participants complete the pre- and post-Focus Assessment, which has been created to infuse a greater understanding of the course content

and to measure productivity improvement. Participants also discover how to apply a goal-setting process that gets results, help them stay focused every day with a reliable planning system, gain control of the competing demands on their time, and reduce stress by recognizing and eliminating low-priority activities and distractions.

Other Focus workshop modules include integrating and using productivity tools such as the paper-based Franklin Planner(TM), a PDA with FranklinCovey Planning Software, FranklinCovey TabletPlanner(TM) for Tablet PC(R), and FranklinCovey PlanPlus(TM) for Microsoft(R) Outlook(R).

FranklinCovey Planning System

Workers are inundated every day with large amounts of information from multiple sources. Everything from e-mail, voice mail, group scheduling software, memos, notes, and more make it virtually impossible to keep track of it all without having the information in one integrated, mobile, and customized system.

The FranklinCovey Planning System helps employees apply the productivity principles of the FranklinCovey Focus Solution to their daily work. Specifically, the Focus and Aligning Goals for Results workshop and work sessions teach participants how to stay on track with their priorities with a planning and tracking system, which is:

Integrated -- applicable on multiple platforms and tools (paper, PC, handheld, phone, etc.) all working together.

Mobile -- a carry-around tool, which keeps information for use any place, at any time.

Customized -- a system built around an individual's personal and work life with the tools that work best for them.

The tools provide specific implementation methods around core FranklinCovey planning concepts taught in the FranklinCovey workshops, such as weekly planning and daily task management, accomplishing personal and professional goals, and establishing and applying a mission statement. Each FranklinCovey software product features exclusive FranklinCovey planning applications including, the Prioritized Daily Task List(TM), Daily Notes, Appointment Schedule, Weekly Planning and Compass(R), and Master Task List(TM).

The FranklinCovey Planning System is available for use on each of these powerful productivity tools -- the paper-based Franklin Planner, FranklinCovey PlanPlus for Microsoft Outlook, FranklinCovey TabletPlanner for Tablet PC, FranklinCovey Planning Software, and Pocket PC(R) or Palm(TM) handheld organizers.

Organizational Alignment -- Effectively assessing how sharply employees focus and execute on their organization's key objectives, and then inspiring and engaging them to achieve those critical goals together, is vital to the success of every organization. These important business practices can be achieved through the following assessment and learning tools of the FranklinCovey Focus Solution:

xQ Survey and xQ Debrief

Administered through a Web-based system, the xQ (Execution Quotient(TM)) Survey is FranklinCovey's new assessment and management tool that gathers -- from an employee and workgroup perspective -- how well organizational goals are understood and carried out. The assessment asks employees for details to uncover underlying focus and teamwork barriers or issues. The Execution Quotient, measures the extent to which people throughout an organization focus and execute on mission-critical objectives.

The xQ Debrief is a review session that shows executives, at any level in an organization, the areas of concern within particular divisions or departments. Leaders can see specific actions needed and the steps to improve focus and execution at any organizational level.

The xQ Survey and xQ Debrief can be administered regularly to determine whether or not an organization's execution capability is improving over time.

Aligning Goals for Results Work Sessions

An August 2002 McKinsey Quarterly report says that many CEOs wrongly assume that others throughout their organization share their understanding of the most important goals. For example, in one major utility company, the five top executives were asked to list the company's highest priorities. This group listed 27 different priorities, and only two of those appeared on more than one list.

The Aligning Goals for Results Work Sessions help managers lead and focus their teams on their organization's few dominant or "wildly important" goals by translating them into meaningful, measurable, weekly and daily goals cascading from the top of an organization to each individual employee.

According to the xQ Survey, the activities of U.S. workers are generally not aligned with the goals of their organizations and workgroups. Workers report the following deficits:

-- Only 39% of workers feel that their organization's mission is translated into a few goals that are most important to their success. -- Just 27% said their organization's most important goals are translated to the goals of their workgroup. -- Only 25% report their workgroup goals are translated into their individual work goals. -- Just 30% of workers plan with their workgroup how to support each other in agreed-upon goals and tasks.

Managers and their team members who experience the Aligning Goals for Results Work Sessions will learn to:

-- Separate two or three "wildly important" goals from the dozens of "merely important" tasks assigned to workers everyday, and help their teams focus on achieving those goals with excellence. -- Build relevant, compelling, and credible measures that connect to key organizational objectives. -- Engage their team through individual commitments to tackle meaningful challenges. -- Inspire and coach others to execute and achieve results by working together. -- Help individuals take ownership of their own performance and results.

Today's tough, slow-growing economy is making U.S. workers busier than ever, as they try to do their own job, plus those of one or two gone-but-not-replaced colleagues. Trying to do more with less has resulted in a loss of focus, support and recognition. In fact, 43% of U.S. workers report feeling totally "maxed out," and unable to get to all of their priorities. Two out of three workers feel a lot of pressure to produce more with less.

"The greatest gap in organizations today lies between the determination of a few high priorities and following through on the details of those priorities

with discipline and passion," said Dr. Stephen R. Covey, vice chairman of FranklinCovey and author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. "In today's competitive, global marketplace, organizations that do not focus and execute on their highest priorities will not excel."

Covey gives the following advice to improve the focus and execution of organizations and individuals on key business priorities:

1. Clarify the top goals of the organization. There is no more important activity than for leaders to establish clear, key goals and then communicate those goals to all levels of their organization. The reality is, most leaders have not clearly defined their top goals, have too many, have not prioritized them, and think they have effectively communicated their goals when the front-line workers are clearly not aligned with them.
2. Translate top organizational goals into action. For organizations to be successful, workers at all levels of the organization must clearly see how their work aligns with the top goals of the organization.

Great strategies that don't include detailed tasks for the front-line workers are doomed to fail. As Peter Drucker said, "All good strategy eventually degenerates into work."

3. Ensure buy-in and commitment to the top goals. Involving people in the formulation of the goals not only creates better goals, but also creates buy-in and commitment. Having people's backs and hands in their work is fine, but having their hearts and minds passionately involved is where the real leverage lies.
4. Follow-through with discipline. It's shocking how much time workers spend on things that are unimportant, unnecessary, but are superficially important and urgent -- needless interruptions dealing with the minor issues of other people, reports no one reads, unscheduled and unproductive meetings, or low-priority e-mail and voicemail messages. Every day people should think through their priorities, determine where they can make their greatest contribution, build a plan around their priorities and unique contributions, and then have the discipline to stick with their plan. The simple acts of individual workers and workgroup planning and coordination on a weekly and daily basis could solve many complex organizational problems.
5. Encourage workers to execute on top priorities together. Workers today spend far too much time in unproductive activities, such as infighting, politicking, and covering up. All of this is done because there is a lack of trust. Nothing works as fast as the speed of trust. When workers are committed to a common cause, they feel like they can contribute and trust the basic character and competence of one another. Then, true synergy takes place, leading to extraordinary results.

The recent FranklinCovey xQ Survey of U.S. workers reinforces the need for a comprehensive solution to help organizations address the challenges they and their workers are facing today. By applying the principles of the FranklinCovey Focus Solution, organizations will help their employees streamline their workload, increase their individual and workgroup's productivity, and ultimately increase their organization's effectiveness in meeting its mission-critical objectives.

"A key to raising productivity is to get workers focused and executing on those goals that are most significant to the success of an entire organization," said Bennett. "An organization cannot expect an acceptable return on its investment in human capital if those on the top, middle, and front lines are not planning and prioritizing their individual and workgroup's goals according to the key objectives of their organization."

To review the complete report of the FranklinCovey xQ survey, visit www.franklincovey.com/about/press/2003/xq_report.pdf. For more information about the xQ Survey, FranklinCovey Focus Solution, and to register for a FranklinCovey workshop, visit www.franklincovey.com/forbusiness/solutions or call 800/868-1776.

Additional Key Findings of the xQ Survey

Survey questions were presented to participants in a multiple response format.

Organizational Goals Lack Clarity -- 52% of U.S. workers say their organizations have decided what their most important goals are. -- 43% said their organization has clearly communicated its most important goals. -- 49% said they clearly understand what they are to do to help their organization achieve them. -- 40% report their organization's goals are emphasized on a regular basis. -- 43% of U.S. workers feel their personal work goals are specific and clear. -- 33% feel people get recognized and rewarded for doing things that support their organization's goals. Lack of Commitment and Discipline to Key Goals -- 40% of employees feel their companies set goals that give measurable economic payback. -- 34% say their organization sets goals that will delight their customers if they achieve them. -- 35% feel their organization sets goals that are really achievable. -- 23% say their organization consistently achieves its most important goals. -- 28% say they decide with their manager what they need to do to achieve important goals. -- 13% say they are extremely satisfied with the results of their work at the end of most weeks. Involve, Recognize, and Reward Employees

When asked what actions organizations could take that would have the largest impact on increasing their employees' focus on the most important goals, U.S. workers responded with the following:

-- 40% say to involve employees in deciding what needs to be done. -- 39% say recognize and reward achievement of organizational goals. -- 33% want organizations to provide frequent feedback on how employees are doing in terms of meeting organizational goals. -- 31% say train employees on how to execute organizational goals. -- 29% want the alignment of systems and processes to support the goals of the organization. -- 29% say to hold people accountable. Poor Accountability, Few Clear Consequences -- 52% say they are held accountable for reaching their commitments on time. -- 46% hold each other accountable for doing what they commit to do. -- 36% say they are held accountable for staying on budget. -- 22% report clear consequences and/or rewards are applied to employees. -- 40% say those goals are tied to specific measurable results. More Talent, Little Support -- 46% report that they have more creativity, resourcefulness, intelligence, and talent than their job requires or allows. -- 35% say their organization is empowering them to meet its most important goals. -- 31% feel they are provided with sufficient direction and feedback to meet their organization's most important goals. Significant Distractions

The most significant distractions the average U.S. worker deals with that prevent them from completing their most important work tasks are:

-- Other people's urgencies and emergencies -- Interruptions -- Shifting priorities -- Workplace tensions -- political, social, or otherwise -- Trying to meet the conflicting expectations of influential people Significant Barriers

Just 19% of U.S. workers say their organization helps them meet its most important goals by removing barriers. The most significant barriers U.S. workers face in completing their most important work tasks are:

-- Bureaucratic processes -- (e.g., needless approvals, lack of access to key people, unnecessary time-consuming procedures, outdated rules, etc.) --
Surprise projects -- Lack of resources -- Micromanagement -- Unproductive meetings -- Broken systems -- Uncertainty about what to do Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States between September 26 and October 17, 2002, among a nationwide cross section of 11,045 adults (18+), employed full time in 10 functional areas across 11 major industries. Figures for employment, industry, gender, education, income, race/ethnicity, and region were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. "Propensity score" weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

In theory, with a probability sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of +/-1 percentage point of what they would be if the entire adult population had been polled with complete accuracy. This online survey is not a probability sample.

About FranklinCovey

FranklinCovey is a global leader in effectiveness training, productivity tools, and assessment services for organizations and individuals. FranklinCovey helps companies succeed by unleashing the power of their workforce to focus and execute on top business priorities. Clients include 90 percent of the Fortune 100, more than 75 percent of the Fortune 500, thousands of small and mid-sized businesses, as well as numerous government entities and educational institutions. Organizations and individuals access FranklinCovey products and services through corporate training, licensed client facilitators, one-on-one coaching, public workshops, catalogs, over 180 retail stores, and www.franklincovey.com. More than 2,500 FranklinCovey associates provide professional services and products in 39 offices and in 95 countries.

To review the complete report of the FranklinCovey xQ Survey, visit www.franklincovey.com/about/press/2003/xq_report.pdf.

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