**We Take ownership**

Interview question: Tell me about a change that you championed that led to a significant win for the business/organization. How did you communicate the change and inspire others to achieve it? What obstacles did you encounter? what were the main outcomes?

Certainly! Here's an example of a change I championed that led to a significant win for the business/organization, along with the communication, inspiration, obstacles, and outcomes:

In my previous role as a senior manager, I championed a change initiative that involved transitioning our manual paper-based processes to a digital workflow system. This change aimed to streamline operations, improve efficiency, and enhance collaboration across departments. Here's how I approached it:

1. Communication: To communicate the change, I developed a comprehensive communication plan. I held town hall meetings, departmental presentations, and one-on-one discussions to clearly articulate the reasons for the change, its benefits, and the expected outcomes. I emphasized how the digital workflow system would simplify tasks, reduce errors, and free up time for more strategic work.

2. Inspiring Others: To inspire others to embrace the change, I emphasized the positive impact it would have on their daily work lives and professional growth. I highlighted success stories from other organizations that had already implemented similar systems and showcased the benefits they experienced. I also encouraged open dialogue and actively listened to concerns, addressing them with empathy and transparency.

3. Obstacles: One of the main obstacles encountered was resistance to change from some team members who were comfortable with the existing paper-based processes. To overcome this, I organized training sessions to familiarize employees with the new system, addressing any fears or uncertainties they had. Additionally, I designated change champions within each department to serve as advocates and provide ongoing support.

4. Main Outcomes: The implementation of the digital workflow system yielded several significant outcomes for the business/organization. Firstly, it led to a substantial reduction in processing time, enabling faster turnaround and increased productivity. Secondly, it improved data accuracy and integrity, reducing errors and enhancing overall quality. Additionally, it fostered better collaboration and communication among departments, as information became easily accessible and transparent.

Furthermore, the change initiative resulted in cost savings by eliminating the need for excessive printing, storage, and physical document handling. It also positioned the organization as forward-thinking and technologically advanced, enhancing its reputation in the industry.

Overall, by effectively communicating the change, inspiring others through a compelling vision, addressing obstacles, and focusing on the positive outcomes, we successfully championed the transition to a digital workflow system. The significant wins for the business/organization included improved efficiency, enhanced collaboration, cost savings, and a strengthened competitive position.

Interview question: Provide an example of a time when you demonstrated courage in proposing an idea or expressing your views on a difficult decision. why did it take courage? what feedback/reactions did you receive? How do you encourage a safe environment for others to share their views?

Certainly! Here's an example of a time when I demonstrated courage in proposing an idea and expressed my views on a difficult decision, along with the reasons for the required courage, the feedback/reactions received, and how I encourage a safe environment for others to share their views:

In a previous role, our team was faced with a challenging decision regarding a major product launch. The prevailing approach was to rush the launch without conducting thorough market research and testing. However, I believed it was crucial to invest more time and resources in market analysis to ensure a successful and well-informed launch. It took courage to propose this alternative approach because it went against the prevailing opinion and required challenging the status quo.

1. Courage: The proposal took courage because it involved questioning the established norms and challenging the urgency and pressure to meet deadlines. It required presenting an alternative viewpoint that might be met with resistance or skepticism. Expressing my views meant taking a risk, as it could have potentially strained relationships or undermined my credibility.

2. Feedback/Reactions: When I expressed my views, I received a mix of reactions. Some team members were receptive to the idea and appreciated the need for a more comprehensive approach. They recognized the potential risks of rushing the launch without proper market validation. However, there were also individuals who resisted the idea, primarily due to concerns about delays and additional costs.

Despite the initial skepticism, I was able to gather support by presenting a well-reasoned argument supported by data and examples from similar industry cases. I actively listened to feedback and addressed concerns, providing reassurance that the proposed approach would mitigate risks and improve the overall outcome.

3. Encouraging a Safe Environment: To create a safe environment for others to share their views, I believe in fostering a culture of psychological safety. I actively encourage open and honest communication, where individuals feel empowered to express their opinions without fear of judgment or reprisal. Some key practices I follow include:

- Actively listening: I ensure that I attentively listen to others, valuing their perspectives and creating space for them to share their ideas without interruption.

- Celebrating diversity of thought: I emphasize the importance of diverse perspectives, acknowledging that innovation and effective decision-making are enhanced by considering various viewpoints.

- Providing constructive feedback: I give constructive feedback that focuses on ideas and solutions rather than personal attacks. This fosters an environment where individuals feel comfortable challenging ideas and proposing alternatives.

- Leading by example: I share my own thoughts and experiences openly, including instances where I've had to challenge the status quo or propose alternative solutions. This helps normalize the behavior and encourages others to do the same.

By promoting psychological safety and modeling open communication, I strive to create an environment where team members feel safe to express their views, challenge assumptions, and contribute their unique perspectives to decision-making processes. This ultimately leads to better outcomes and a more engaged and innovative team.

Interview question: Describe a time when your team or department fell short of meeting an important objective or goal. What was the situation? What feedback did you share with those leading the initiative? What learning experiences were gained from the outcome?

Certainly! Here's an example of a time when my team fell short of meeting an important objective or goal, along with the situation, feedback provided to the leaders, and the learning experiences gained from the outcome:

In a previous role, our team was tasked with launching a new product within a specific timeframe. Despite meticulous planning and diligent efforts, we encountered unexpected technical challenges during the development phase that resulted in a significant delay in the product launch. This situation was disappointing as we fell short of meeting the important objective of launching the product on time.

1. Situation: The technical challenges we encountered were unforeseen, and despite the team's best efforts, they posed significant obstacles to the timely completion of the project. It became evident that the initial project plan did not account for all possible contingencies, and there was a gap in risk assessment and mitigation strategies.

2. Feedback to the leaders: In this situation, it was important to provide constructive feedback to the leaders who were overseeing the initiative. I shared an honest assessment of the challenges we faced, outlining the specific technical issues and their impact on the project timeline. I also highlighted the areas where the initial plan and risk mitigation strategies fell short and suggested improvements for future projects.

3. Learning experiences: The outcome of falling short of the objective provided valuable learning experiences for the team and the organization. Some key takeaways included:

- Enhanced risk assessment: We realized the importance of conducting a thorough risk assessment at the outset of a project and continuously revisiting and updating it as new information becomes available. This helps identify potential challenges and develop proactive strategies to mitigate them.

- Agile and adaptive approach: We learned the importance of adopting an agile mindset and being flexible in our project execution. By embracing an iterative approach, we could have identified and addressed the technical challenges earlier, minimizing the impact on the overall timeline.

- Clear communication and expectations: We recognized the need for effective communication and setting realistic expectations with stakeholders. Transparently communicating the challenges we were facing and the revised timeline would have helped manage expectations and maintain trust.

- Continuous improvement: The experience served as a catalyst for process improvement. We implemented a post-mortem analysis to evaluate what went wrong, identify areas for improvement, and develop action plans to prevent similar challenges in the future. This included updating project management methodologies, enhancing risk assessment frameworks, and fostering a culture of open communication and learning.

Overall, the situation of falling short of an important objective provided valuable feedback to the leaders and valuable learning experiences for the team. It highlighted the need for continuous improvement, effective risk assessment, adaptability, and clear communication. These experiences served as a foundation for growth and enabled us to develop more robust strategies and processes for future projects.

Interview question: Provide an example of a time when you prioritized enterprise-wise goals and initiatives over your individual or functional agenda/goals. What was the situation? How did you communicate priorities and the rationale to your leaders?

Certainly! Here's an example of a time when I prioritized enterprise-wide goals and initiatives over individual or functional agenda/goals, along with the situation, how I communicated priorities, and the rationale to my leaders:

In a previous role, our organization was undergoing a strategic transformation aimed at improving operational efficiency and customer experience. As the leader of a functional department, I recognized the need to align our efforts with the broader enterprise goals, even if it meant adjusting our individual agenda and goals.

1. Situation: Our functional department was primarily focused on optimizing internal processes to enhance productivity and reduce costs. However, during the strategic transformation, it became apparent that our processes needed to be realigned to better serve the evolving needs of customers and support the overall organizational objectives.

2. Communicating priorities and rationale: To communicate the shift in priorities to my leaders, I initiated a series of discussions and meetings. I highlighted the importance of aligning our department's goals with the enterprise-wide initiatives and explained the rationale behind it. I emphasized how our collaboration and contribution to the broader goals would not only benefit the organization as a whole but also positively impact our functional outcomes in the long run.

I provided specific examples of how the realignment of our processes would lead to improved customer satisfaction, increased operational efficiency, and ultimately contribute to the success of the strategic transformation. I encouraged open dialogue and sought input from my leaders to ensure their understanding and buy-in.

3. Actions taken: To prioritize enterprise-wide goals, we undertook the following actions:

- Reevaluated our departmental objectives: We reviewed our existing goals and initiatives to identify areas that needed adjustment or realignment to align with the enterprise-wide objectives. This included revisiting our performance metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure they were in line with the overall goals.

- Fostered cross-functional collaboration: We actively sought opportunities for collaboration with other departments to identify synergies and jointly work towards the enterprise-wide goals. This involved establishing regular communication channels, sharing best practices, and encouraging knowledge sharing across teams.

- Adjusted resource allocation: We reallocated resources within our department to support the enterprise-wide initiatives. This meant prioritizing projects and tasks that directly contributed to the strategic objectives, even if it required shifting resources from other less critical areas.

By effectively communicating the rationale behind the prioritization of enterprise-wide goals and aligning our efforts accordingly, we were able to gain support from my leaders. They recognized the importance of taking a broader view and understood the potential long-term benefits for our department and the organization as a whole.

Prioritizing enterprise-wide goals over individual or functional agenda not only demonstrated a commitment to the overall success of the organization but also fostered a collaborative culture and helped drive the strategic transformation forward. It enabled us to contribute to the organization's growth and achieve collective success.

Interview question: What have you done to inspire innovative and bold thinking within your organization? Give me an example of a time when you sponsored a new idea which did not ultimately work out. What happened as a result?

Certainly! Here's an example of what I have done to inspire innovative and bold thinking within my organization, along with an example of sponsoring a new idea that didn't work out and the subsequent outcome:

1. Inspiring innovative and bold thinking: To inspire innovative and bold thinking within my organization, I have implemented several strategies:

- Creating a culture of experimentation: I encourage my team members to take calculated risks and experiment with new ideas. I emphasize that failures are learning opportunities and that bold ideas are welcomed and encouraged.

- Providing resources and support: I ensure that my team has access to the necessary resources, such as time, budget, and tools, to explore and implement new ideas. I actively support their endeavors by removing barriers and providing guidance when needed.

- Promoting cross-functional collaboration: I foster an environment that encourages collaboration across teams and departments. By bringing diverse perspectives together, we can generate more innovative ideas and create a culture of shared learning.

- Recognizing and celebrating innovation: I actively acknowledge and celebrate innovative ideas and successes within the organization. This recognition helps to reinforce the importance of innovative thinking and encourages others to come forward with their ideas.

2. Sponsoring a new idea that didn't work out: In one instance, a team member proposed an idea for a new product feature that seemed promising based on initial analysis. The team put significant effort into developing and testing the feature, but unfortunately, it didn't achieve the desired outcomes.

As a result, we conducted a thorough post-mortem analysis to understand what went wrong and learn from the experience. We examined the data, sought feedback from users, and assessed the market dynamics. The analysis revealed that the feature didn't address a critical pain point for our target audience and that our assumptions about user preferences were not entirely accurate.

Although the outcome was disappointing, I ensured that we approached the situation with a growth mindset. We extracted valuable insights from the failed initiative, including a deeper understanding of our customers' needs and preferences. This knowledge guided us in refining our future product development strategies and focusing on areas where we could provide the most value to our customers.

Furthermore, I emphasized the importance of learning from failures and encouraged the team not to be discouraged. We discussed the lessons learned openly, highlighting the specific areas for improvement and sharing the insights gained with the wider organization. By doing so, we fostered a culture of continuous learning and innovation, where failure was viewed as an opportunity for growth.

Overall, sponsoring a new idea that didn't work out provided a valuable learning experience for the team and the organization. It reinforced the importance of rigorous analysis, market validation, and customer-centricity in decision-making processes. It also highlighted the need for resilience and perseverance in the face of setbacks, and ultimately contributed to a more refined and informed approach to innovation within the organization.