

# Corporate Blind Spot

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Recently I was offered a position with a large Saudi corporation. They were doing an upper level shake up, a revamping of the entire corporate HR department. The sales and profits had been climbing year on year, but there were problems in employee retention and training. They were making money and expanding rapidly, but there were many problems inside the company.

I sat with the new corporate HR director for hours discussing the problems the company had been facing. The parent company owns 8 other companies and they all follow the lead of the parent company. All had the same problems.

He told me that each company had an HR director who was European or American and the head of training was European or American. After telling me this, he wanted me to explain why none of them were able to see the problems? He could not understand how you could have high caliber management, yet lack results.

I told him it was a leadership problem. You can have all the right policies and procedures, but if the leadership is not good, everything will suffer. You can have the best minds in the world, but if there is no true leadership, little will be accomplished.

The new HR director asked me how I would fix the problems in the training departments. He noted that I am a leadership specialist, but he wanted to know how I would ascertain the main problems, how long it would take and what policies I would change.

I laid out a plan to evaluate the current programs within 6 months and I told him from there we would have to see how long it would take to fix the problems. I told him depending on how extensive the problems, the solutions could take months or years to implement.

I then continued with the need for leadership training at all levels, but he was not that interested in that aspect of the program. I attempted to show him that leadership was the root cause of the company's current dilemma. Had there been good leadership, you would not be facing these problems now.

The owners, three brothers, had started from scratch and built an empire, but then handed over control to corporate heads. When they were in direct control, the problems did not exist. They lead the company, they had a vision for the company, they inspired loyalty; they were the leaders.

Now, the company is in the hands of corporate 'chiefs' and there have been problems ever since. Yes, the company makes money, lots of money and that is the blind spot of 87% of the corporations today. They make money and every year the profits increase masking the internal problems; lack of true leadership.

This new HR director wants to bring in the finest brains to solve the problems. He has grand ideas. He worked in the US for years and knows HR forwards and backwards, but he does not see the need for true leadership. He thinks that hiring the finest brains will solve the problems.

In truth, it will be a fix, but a temporary fix. In time everything will drift back to its present state. The owners will see the problems again and once more fire all the top management and bring in fresh blood. Hopefully, they will hire in leadership experts and develop a company of true leaders, all focused on the same vision for the company.

Examine your company. Do you have true leadership? Are you committed to developing true leadership? Or are you happy as long as the money keeps coming in?

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