

INTRODUCTION

Smart management

Management is a form of technology, and technology is constantly changing. Viewed this way, none of us should resist changes in the way organisations, people, and resources are managed. There is no single way to manage your organisation, except to the extent that you find the smartest technology to facilitate your overall desired result.

Management theories, organisational structures, and corporate models are designed as tools to enhance the experience of real people in actual workplaces. Well-documented and credible examples include traditional hierarchical models, flat organisations, de-centralised structures, inverted pyramids, hypertext organisations, matrix management, and virtual workplaces.

These business concepts and management approaches should be viewed as enablers rather than outcomes in themselves. They should change and adapt to the needs they are designed to serve. They are not best kept static, in case they grow irrelevant to the evolving world around them and the people who work within them.

Traditional, top-down, linear management structures are fast becoming old technology. While some still prefer to use the iPhone 3 and drive a 1977 canary-yellow, two-door Toyota Corolla fuelled by leaded petrol, both are near obsolete.

So it is true for the restrictive hierarchical organisational models. They are slow. They lack connectivity. They pollute the environment. If there was ever a time for them, that time has passed. We know too much about how people want to work in this generation to not upgrade our management technology and enable them to achieve more.

Our organisation, the Back In Motion Health Group, downloaded its new workplace operating system after our old management technology failed us. Software patches and periodic bug fixes weren't enough anymore. A cultural virus had corrupted our code and we were experiencing glitches in everyday processes.

We needed a whole new platform, rather than just a temporary reboot. Our fix relied on hardware and software changes.

The result was worth the effort.

Custom build

In keeping with the technology metaphor, a custom made, bespoke application typically serves you better than whatever you can find on the shelf. In our modern world, we can buy, sort, and compile componentry with relative ease to build the right technology to specifications that match our needs.

The same is true with your organisational model.

While I share the specifics of our ONEteam™ technology in this book, I am not an expert in organisational design. My intention is to promote multiple possibilities that may exist for you to innovate your own workplace model.

We do not consider ONEteam™ to be the right approach for everyone, as much as we believe it is right for us. You too must find what is right for your workplace.

The best hope in finding the right solution for you is to posture yourself as a learner. This is what we did. And the learning curve is still steep, even as I publish this book.

In observing the development of microprocessors for personal computing, Gordon Moore (co-founder of Intel) predicted that the technology would advance twice as fast and cost half the price with each iteration. The number of transistors per square inch on integrated circuit boards doubled every year since their invention until only recently.

In a similar way, organisational management needs to evolve quickly and become more accessible to keep pace with the changing socio-cultural landscape. With millennials becoming the more dominant generational influence in the future workplace, they will expect change.

But who is innovating the management process in the same way Silicon Valley revolutionised computing?

We are. And *you* could.

Our journey in building the next-generation management technology for our organisation will hopefully give you valuable insights for your own discovery.

Experiences inform principles

As you make your way through this book, please note the important distinction between *our story* and the *Transferable Principles* that our organisation uses.

I have learned so much in my career from hearing the experiences of others and studying their example. For this reason, I will be very transparent about specific things we did well, and those awkward moments I wished had been someone else's story. Our anecdotes and examples will demonstrate how we have applied workplace principles both successfully and unsuccessfully.

Do not interpret these personal experiences necessarily as empirical recommendations. We share them for your benefit, but not always for your repeating. Learn what you can from our experiences and apply with caution.

Transferable Principles are different. At the end of each chapter I highlight the truisms of organisational leadership – the Transferable Principles – that should not be violated (I have also summarised them in a list at the end of the book). They are like the basic command prompts and lines of software code that every application relies on to succeed. The principles can, and should, be applied in unique and creative ways to incite your own leadership revolution.

In short: learn from our mixed experiences, but follow the principles.

Leadership vs management

The distinction between genuine leadership and learned management can seem blurred and confused when considering historical and contemporary literature. In some cases, it is simply semantics; while at other times, the terms should not be used interchangeably as they mean something quite different.

While it's beyond the scope of this book to deal with all of the nuances of effective leadership, and how it differs from management, the discovery and implementation of ONEteam™ within the Back In Motion Health Group has certainly been characterised by that of *over-leading* and *under-managing*.

The Transferable Principles outlined in the pages that follow speak intentionally to developing personal leadership attributes within colleagues who together make up an organisation, rather than just relying on management structure or protocols to achieve the desired result. Consistent, values-driven leadership, operating within a supportive workplace model, will stimulate individuals and the organisation to flourish. One without the other will result in compromise.

On this basis, please don't be preoccupied with distinguishing the virtues of leadership over the role of management in the early stages of the book. Our story will unpack how I differentiate between the two; and while we believe leadership should always precede management, the two are interdependent and therefore mutually inclusive in achieving overall success.

DIY management

We don't believe ONEteam™ is a finished product. It's not 'set-and-forget'. Our workplace is a living ecosystem that continues to adjust over time as we learn more about how our team works best. It must evolve.

This is both good news and bad news.

The upside for you is that if you don't like one or more attributes of the model we have created, you can consider modifying them to better suit your purposes. You can create your own variation on the theme. Call it 'DIY management'. Find your own expression and courageously experiment. We do.

The downside is that most people are looking for an over-simplified recipe to 'plug-and-play'. We don't offer you a five-step plan to re-invigorate your workplace, or a cute acronym that guarantees a high-performing and self-managed team. From the moment this book reaches publication, it's almost a certainty that we will have leveraged one of the Transferable Principles into a new expression, and pivoted on some dimension of our model.

It's inevitable. As we practise what we have built, we learn. As we learn, we innovate. With innovation, ONEteam™ progressively looks different.

Please remember that while we constantly review our management *technology*, the *Transferable Principles* don't change.

Read with a pen

As we begin our journey together, consider embracing the discipline of *active* reading.

Avoid passively absorbing content. Interact with us. Read with a pen in your hand. Highlight key concepts. Jot down the insights you gain about your own situation. If you think it, *ink it*. If you like it, *write it*.

It's better to rely on a blunt pencil than a sharp mind to remember what matters. Make a list of the actions to follow through. Identify questions you want to ask me or a colleague who is reading the book with you. Challenge the things you disagree with.

Given that it's reported that most people only recall 10% to 12% of what they read, it's a good idea to do something with what you learn. Applying the reading will make all the difference. Build your own library with real experiences.

Remember, a book never changed anything. It's what people *do* with what they read that makes a difference.

Best done in pairs

Find at least one other person to read this book with. Seek out a colleague, supervisor, or employer. Suggest it to an industry peer, or even a business coach or consultant. Engage a mentor. Maybe just invite your best friend.

Put a copy of the book in their hand today and invite them on the journey. I promise that you will get so much more from the experience if you have someone else to bounce the ideas off.

Be warned: some concepts will be confronting, while others will excite you. And you won't agree with everything.

The timeliness of this book is going to be different for each reader. In exploring the Transferable Principles, be careful not to get stuck climbing one tree (let alone falling out of it) and missing the forest.

Minds are like parachutes

Over the years I have encountered an enormous amount of curiosity for ONEteam™, from consultants, potential employees, and suppliers, to competitors, industry peak bodies, and peer CEOs. Their curiosity piques most often when they observe our organisational chart, participate in an internal meeting, hear how we introduce a colleague, or seek clarity regarding who they need to pitch to.

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It doesn't take long before they realise something is different about us... *very* different.

Sometimes they ask perplexed questions. Normally their facial expressions say enough.

We have learned that what we do is not always intuitive or simple to explain. For this reason, I have included a glossary of terms unique to ONEteam™ at the back of this book. It may be helpful to refer to it along the way as you encounter new descriptions.

Some find our leadership model refreshing, and those that don't are at least intrigued. While few people reject the sentiments as being outright unworkable, many are sceptical that ONEteam™ could exist in their workplace.

We have found it works for us.

Minds are like parachutes: they work best when open. As I share our story, please open yourself to some new possibilities. Make this your story too, and write to tell me what happens next.



1. IDENTITY

Cluedo

It was Colonel Mustard with the candlestick in the library! After numerous interrogations and some nail-biting discoveries, it's a relief to finally declare whodunnit.

We all liked playing the popular murder-mystery board game, Cluedo. It usually demanded time and patience, though, to confirm the right identity of the killer. In my childhood experience, it took approximately 90 minutes on the lounge room floor most weekends.

In the workplace, it typically takes much, *much* longer to confirm the right identity of your organisation.

The corporate world is littered with altruistic vision statements. We marvel at gold-embossed motherhood statements hanging in boardrooms. We pick up full-colour, good quality brochures stacked in reception lounges depicting rich organisational stories. Brand consultants invoice tens of thousands of dollars to help directors and senior management teams discover themselves. Advertisers flaunt succinct taglines full of client-friendly buzz words.

But despite all this, there are familiar, haunting questions that linger. Long after organisational missions have been launched and innovative product campaigns have finished, we ask ourselves questions like:

Who are we really? What do we value that others don't?

What are we called to do? What is our best contribution?

Where can we make the greatest impact?

What is it that only we can do? How are we unique?

These most basic questions help to define our true identity. But, they are deceptively difficult to answer.

One attribute that can never be cloned in an organisation is *inner belief*.

Who you are, and what you value, is crucial. Organisations can copy brand promises, use the same colour palette in their logo design, stir similar emotional responses through aspirational marketing images, and produce a product that looks and behaves the same. But organisations can't fake the DNA within. The values that hang on the walls in the corridors so often aren't lived in the hearts of the workers.

Where the outward may look similar, the complexity and sincerity of the inner world is inherently different in every organisation. We must each deeply understand our own identity. If we cannot do this in a profound and authentic way, then nobody is able to do it for us. For someone to offer any suggestion or alternative would be to project their identity on us. This limits our own personal discovery.

While not immediately apparent to all, every workplace develops an identity. One they choose with intent. Or the one they ended up with by default. No workplace is void of identity. It just may be poorly defined, well hidden, or possibly counter-intuitive. But it's there.

For those who are unsure what their organisational identity is, it's time for a fresh game of Cluedo. It's a matter of discovering what is important to you and why. Define your company's purpose. Articulate a succinct and compelling vision. Agree on definable values to chart your future course.

None of this is a light undertaking. It's a process of trial and error. Don't subdue your curiosity. It's worth the pursuit. You can't afford *not* to do it.

Don the sleuth's hat. Drape the cape. Light up your pipe. It's time to begin the investigation.

Identity crisis

Without clear and articulate corporate identity, teams tend to thrash around in waves of indecision. They stumble through strategic objectives like a sleepwalker in the dark. The culture within the workplace becomes obscure and vanilla.

People who lack clarity, soon after lack motivation. When goals and targets are vague, workers resort to structure, process, and bureaucracy as a form of substitute mission. People do things because they are told to... not because they inherently know why it is important. The *means* is elevated above the *end*.

High performing individuals start to grow weary. Efforts are made in vain. Team meetings become ineffectual. Soon enough, the organisation is without form and void of purpose. Nobody knows why they are there and to what greater good they are supposed to contribute.

While operating under the illusion of progress, the organisation very quickly becomes directionless. Without clear conviction of self-identity, everything stops. At least, eventually. In the interim, teams go around in circles *ad nauseum*. This is the end-stage of organisational identity crisis!

It's no way for any organisation to be. At least, not *our* organisation.

Identity in motion

At the time of writing, our organisation has approximately 25 national staff, 70 practice directors, and more than 500 clinical and support staff. We operate physiotherapy practices across more than 100

locations in Australia and New Zealand. We are the largest, and still fastest growing, allied health franchise in the Oceanic region.

Together, we make up the Back In Motion Health Group. Our identity is distinct from all others in our sector. Without this distinctiveness, we would not have flourished.

Of course, it wasn't always the case. Over 15 years our organisation has matured in its self-discovery of who we are and why that's important to the world around us.

It's been a journey. Some would say, a gruelling adventure. Naturally, there have been some triumphant highs and some gutting lows. There has also been confusion and surprise as we oscillated between the two. Every experience has added something to the soul of the organisation we have created. Life has shaped us in the same way the ocean carves its wave-print into the cliff walls that enclose it.

But the journey has not been against our will. We have gone with it. At all times, we sought to preserve and promote our DNA, even when tested under fire.

Intuitively, organisational identity reflects the people within it. It's the individuals who come together and form a collective conscience that imprint on the workplace its culture and *modus operandi* – for good and for bad, intentionally or otherwise. The organisation becomes an interactive installation of those who lead and contribute to it.

In hindsight, I can trace some of the earliest roots of the Back In Motion identity to definable moments during my youth.

Inspirational cartoon

I can remember as a ten-year-old boy eagerly anticipating Saturday mornings.

On the grounds of a carefully pre-negotiated arrangement with Mum and Dad, I would get up early on the weekends and make myself two pieces of vegemite or peanut butter toast. With breakfast in hand, I would then watch the morning cartoons... all by myself.

With the lounge room door closed so as not to disturb my sleeping parents, Channel 9 became my supervising guardian. Slouched in an ugly-brown vinyl beanbag, I became lost in an endless stream of *Road Runner*, *Donald Duck* and *Masters of the Universe*.

By 9am the rest of the family would start surfacing for the day. At this point there was normally sufficient evidence that I had enjoyed a wonderful time, namely a ring of toast crumbs circling the beanbag, and my grin from ear to ear.

There is no way I could know the significance these morning routines would have on my impressionable and formative identity, let alone that of the organisation I would come to lead.

During the early 1980s, as the cartoon re-runs went to advertisement breaks, I can recall seeing appeals for world aid to prevent malnourished children dying in Ethiopia. My field of view went from the crazy antics of an animated mouse setting traps for his nemesis cat, to looking at the stark images of impoverished children about my age. My television set was taken up with images of swollen and distended bellies, lifeless and withdrawn faces, fragile limbs, distressed breathing and collapsed figures.

The children looked unhuman. Many were unable to stand or even hold their heads up to the camera. The adverts captured their plight for the world's attention.

I had no real context for where Africa was. For all I knew, these children were just down the road and around the corner. Maybe they were close, but out of sight.

My little mind flooded with questions.

Why hadn't anyone told me that some people don't have enough to eat?

Who was helping them? Where were their parents?

Why didn't the doctor give them some medicine and make them better?

None of what I saw made any sense to me. It wasn't fair. People needed to do something. With a naive childish response, I decided to help. I distinctly remember sitting upright, staring at the television, and volunteering to support the cause.

It was a profound moment.

I committed my life to helping the children who were dying. It seemed a natural thing to do. In a very unsophisticated and incomplete way, I made a pledge to God. I would invest my life into the stories of others who were less fortunate than me.

It was a deeply personal decision. I didn't tell anyone. I made a promise in secret which took deep root in my heart. And then, Mickey Mouse stole my attention again. Each Saturday morning, during the innocence of my cartoon routine, I found myself recommitting to the cause.

Medical missions

Time passed. I grew and found my rhythm within school. It was not long before I calculated that the best way I could make good on my boyish calling was to become a medical missionary. If I worked hard and was accepted into university, then my practical skills and medical knowledge could be of great service to undeveloped communities around the world.

My heart was set. The mission was firm. Clear identity fuelled my personal motivation and purpose.

Anyone who asked me the cliché question of career aspiration got the same answer. I became known for it among friends, family, and school teachers. I chose my subject electives, worked tirelessly for high grades, and set my leisure-time priorities on anything that would improve my chances of joining the health profession. Whether I was to become a doctor, physiotherapist, or nurse wasn't clear. I was just determined to secure a role *anywhere* in healthcare to work among those who could least afford it.

Eventually, I graduated with honours as a physiotherapist. And I married an intensive-care nurse who, unsurprisingly, shared the same convictions. We were compelled to make a difference in the world together. We had more than enough to share with those in need, it was just a question of how.

We started as volunteers, leading medical teams to Cambodia and India. They were only short-term placements, but each trip contributed to our long-term objectives. We were on our way.

Unhealthy care

During this time, I also completed graduate roles within major public hospitals and worked as an associate in a couple of private practices. These experiences were influential in what came next.

I observed healthcare being delivered in a very reactive, problem-orientated way. There were few long-lasting, solutions-based, holistic interventions. Mainstream medical practitioners were acting more like break-fix technicians, rather than proactive strategists. The profession seemed to be just waiting for people to injure themselves, develop a disease, or experience pain, before offering any help.

This approach violated my intuition. Furthermore, it was contrary to the research literature I was consuming. The world's best practice was informed by weighty evidence. It advocated engaging people in optimal healthy lifestyle choices early, not just offering remedial services *post hoc*.

In short, I became very disillusioned and frustrated, very quickly.

Healthcare was sick. Physiotherapy needed some rehabilitation of its own. The medical professions needed to improve if we were to promote healthy living for our physical best. At least, it was clear *I* must improve.

Convergence

Within the space of a few short but tormented years, my two life aspirations found a common pathway. My pledge to serve those in greatest need, combined with my passion to deliver a proactive model of healthcare, soon gave birth to the Back In Motion Health Group.

These two heartfelt sentiments framed our earliest organisational identity. They seeded our DNA. And even though, at business conception, my wife and I were only a team of two working out of a makeshift consultation room from the garage of our first and unrenovated home, our organisational trajectory was set.

We launched an innovative philosophy of physiotherapy care that redefined health. Our promise was to tailor integrative strategies for those in pain, to help them not only recover from their episode of injury, but more importantly, build a sustainable, optimal lifestyle.

And the profits of our practice were to be given to the poor.

It was a simple idea. But sometimes it's the simple things that work best!

Like-minded people soon joined the cause. Clients were attracted to something different. Staff opted in to the great adventure. Banks took a risk on us. Medical referrals started to flow. New premises were sought. I read a lot of books, asked a lot of questions, and did a lot of navel gazing.

Despite our inexperience in business, health outcomes improved. Results were sustainable. Loyal clients influenced their friends and family. So, the inevitable happened... we grew. In fact, we exploded!

It took a little money and lot of sweat. We stayed focused on our two primary drivers:

1. Empower clients in optimal lifelong health; so that we can
2. Invest into the lives of the poor and needy.

They were exhausting days and sleepless nights. But I had a glimpse of the future. As our momentum built and our results steadied, my heart was quick to dream.

What impact could we have if we achieved a network of 100 practices built on this ethos?

What if every location was led by a values-driven team and aligned to this same core identity?

We would change lives. Probably, whole communities. In time, with persistence and strategy, we might even impact a city, or even the nation.

I buried these thoughts deep in my heart, out of sight, alongside earlier ideas that had been formed many years before during a Saturday morning of cartoons. They remained there unshared for some time to come.

And with that, I turned my attention to the immediate challenges. I had to give thought to organisational design and business models to accommodate our expanding single practice.

MPV₁SV₂

Corporate giants will tell you that *size* is the enemy of *vision*. That is, the bigger you get, the harder it is to maintain congruency. Direction becomes distracted; alignment, almost impossible. Vision leaks and mission drifts. Small organisations are easy to manage. Big ones become unruly, geographically distributed, and less homogenous. So we found out.

We bounced from a single location to six practices relatively quickly. A few years on, and a small cluster of 14 locations existed. In a short time, our organisational identity started to show the early signs of strain and fatigue. Growth brought more people in more places. With volume came diversity.

The heart sentiments that framed my original purpose were not easily translatable to everyone. Some got it, some didn't! It was like the game of broken telephone. To rely on others to convey my passion and values, risked a dangerous dilution effect.

I reacted by writing procedures, policies, and formal documentation. Our organisational structure became increasingly more rigid and defined. Our business was coming of age. It was like entering corporate adolescence. Hormones flowed. Acne appeared. Our voice shook as it deepened. But this was all part of growing up as a business.

In time, we made more deliberate efforts to articulate formal identity statements. With careful wordsmithing and lots of consultation, we captured the essence of our organisational identity in the somewhat awkward acronym MPV_1SV_2 .

MPV_1SV_2 : Mission, Purpose, Vision, Strategy, Values.

We operationally defined each of these identity attributes in a very personal and specific way for the Back In Motion Health Group. We kept them clear, simple and memorable so they could transfer easily to others. The words took on such significance that they became magnets that drew people together. They galvanised our efforts and minimised our distractions.

Collectively, these **identity statements** became our guiding north star:

- ▶ **Our mission** (what we do) is to empower clients in optimal lifelong health.
- ▶ **Our purpose** (why we exist) is to be significant to those in need.
- ▶ **Our vision** (where we see ourselves in the future) is to be the most loved and trusted provider of allied health services.
- ▶ **Our strategy** (how we will achieve our mission) is to provide effective leadership and comprehensive support to become the clinical provider, workplace, and business model of choice.

- **Our values** (the beliefs we are committed to) are excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and significance.

We achieved a certain clarity. The hymn books were passed down the aisles so we could all sing from the same page. We started to enjoy alignment again.

Empowering clients in optimal lifelong health and being significant to those in need remained central to our ideology and governed commercial strategy.

We had refreshed who we were and what we cared about. And because of this, growth rolled on.

Self-appointed long service leave

Success often breeds success. But success can just as easily beget failure.

When healthy organisations grow, they require more management, investment, and attention. Back In Motion grew on average between 15% and 40% year-on-year for over a decade. It wasn't long before it was regarded as not only one of the best physiotherapy providers in Australia, but also the largest.

Leading the group became a demanding role.

I was professionally trained as a physiotherapist, not a business graduate. At times, the rigours of managing the business were overwhelming. In founding the group, it was necessary to have performed every role, in every capacity, at some stage. I treated the clients, I mentored staff, I balanced the accounts, I met referrers, and built relationships with local community services. And then after morning tea, I would turn my attention to everything else...

Now I had hundreds of franchisees and staff over more than 40 practice locations, and I was tired. In healthcare, the quality of interpersonal relationships, client service, and clinical results must be of the highest standard. If I wasn't careful, cracks were about to show. It was obvious that I needed help.

I was advised to build a national management team around me. We incorporated marketing, finance, information technology, business systems, human resources, and clinical support. After reading all the books and attending the seminars on popular management culture, I adopted the typical top-down organisational chart to keep everyone in order. It was a traditional linear hierarchy. It was not creative or innovative, just a corporate beige.

Approximately 25 people were stratified into differentiated layers of executives, senior management, and support staff. As CEO, I learned to leverage my time and energy very well through these lines of reporting and organisational responsibility. It allowed me to be in more places at once and hold people accountable for their agreed performance objectives.

While it was a bland organisational model purchased off the shelf, it worked. Our identity did not seem to suffer any compromise. The structure facilitated sizable additional growth.

So, after 10 years, and with things now in order, I agreed to take a long overdue holiday – three months' self-appointed long service leave! Paulina and I travelled throughout South America with three kids under eight years of age. So, it really was just leave, not rest!

7/50/100

Somewhere between the golden sands of Copacabana and the jaw-dropping summits of Machu Picchu, my mind started reflecting. I searched those deep recesses of my heart where the seeds of my personal identity had first taken root. They were still there – nurtured... maturing... but not yet fully developed.

I was taken back to the images I saw as a young boy. Human suffering caused by extreme poverty. I blended with these memories my new graduate aspirations. I wanted to innovate a proactive healthcare model that empowered clients in optimal holistic health.

It was clear to me these ideals still mattered. And I had made inroads with both. Doors were ajar. I just needed to press up against them with more intent.

Back In Motion had kick-started a physiotherapy revolution in Australia. We redefined the contribution our profession was making in the local community. We had launched an innovative philosophy of clinical practice called Results4Life®. We had already delivered millions of health services to grateful clients. We were optimising people's everyday performance and empowering them in healthy living. More Australians were performing at their physical best because of us.

We had also launched the SOS Health Foundation. It is a public benevolent institution focused on improving the health of disadvantaged people living in Australia and neighbouring regions. We were flying health professionals into some of the neediest communities on a pro bono basis, alleviating devastation brought about by poverty and focusing on both the urban poor and remote indigenous homelands.

We were progressively achieving our mission; admittedly, with only little steps. But our identity was still clear. And it seemed our organisational model was working.

But then I challenged myself to think again.

I find I can be more objective when I step outside of my business. Changing your geography can radically change your perspective. While overseas and distant from the daily grind, I risked an old thought for a second time:

What impact could Back In Motion have in the world around us if we established a footprint of 100 practices?

I ruminated on the cute acronym 7/50/100.

This numeric code represented 100 flagship practices, generating \$50 million in services, located across 7 states and territories of Australia. It sounded like a commercial target. But it was less about

brand recognition, economies of scale, or personal financial gain. Achieving this goal would facilitate human good. And a lot of it!

The business could become the economic engine to achieve our calling in the world. We could reach more people in need. We could offer our signature healthcare model with less barriers. A strong platform of national scale would afford us greater influence to reach out to those who could least afford it.

I wondered, if we achieved 7/50/100:

How many more people could we help?

Could we manage the growth without compromising quality?

What systems and processes would need to be fortified and innovated?

Could we sustain it?

It was big thinking. It would be a doubling of our group in a third of the time.

It dawned on me that we had some limiting factors. Our organisational structure was not fit for purpose. Furthermore, our people were unprepared, and our work habits were incompatible. In short, we were not ready to realise our full potential.

Structure and identity

I was about to learn the hard way that organisational structure must reflect and serve organisational identity.

Ponder this irony. Most organisations have unique identities (albeit in some cases, undeveloped or poorly articulated), but most organisations operate almost identical workplace structures.

This shouldn't compute. Structure imposes itself on every workplace activity: strategic planning, tactical decision making, team meetings, approval processes, and disciplinary policies. Even client service culture is influenced by organisational structure.

If we get *structure* wrong, we risk threatening *who* the organisation is trying to become.

For every unique identity, one must have a unique workplace structure. We should pursue a model of behaviour and workflow that helps us become more of who we really are. Or at least, who we want to become.

This challenges us to embrace the unconventional. Innovative workplaces should adapt their structure to give oxygen to untapped potential – create something new, commission an organisational model that is a press-fit, purpose-designed. Owners, managers, workers, clients, and suppliers will all benefit.

At Back In Motion, we had an opportunity to change – even to be different! Besides, who doesn't prefer the genuine article over a cheap imitation? Our identity was reset around the intention of 7/50/100.

So, it made sense. We were compelled to create a different workplace model to achieve this – something entirely new!

Transferable Principles

- 1 A clear *identity* will fuel personal *motivation* and *purpose*.
- 2 Your identity must be *clear*, *memorable*, and *transferable* to those around you.
- 3 Beware of *vision leaks* and *mission drift*. Organisational *size* becomes the enemy of collective *direction* and *alignment*.
- 4 A change in *circumstances* often gives you a change in *perspective*.
- 5 Organisational *structure* must reflect and serve organisational *identity*.