Name your Silo

After reading this, introduce yourself to a person seated next to you. Tell this person why you are here and name one silo you have encountered.
Welcome!

Objectives

• Discuss the nature of silos – what they are and how they work
• Share some time tested strategies to mitigate the impact of silos
THE NATURE OF SILOS
What Kinds of Silos are There?

• Write down one silo name on a sticky note
• Call the silo name out and put it in the center of the table
• 60 second time limit
Types of Silos

- Knowledge
- Specialization
- Geography
- Education
- Authority
- Language/Culture
Organizational silos are some of the most pernicious dysfunctions you can find within companies today.
The invisible barriers that separate work teams, departments and divisions, causing people who are supposed to be on the same team to work against one another.

- Silos, Politics, and Turf Wars
A silo is an organizational unit that is in a core position in the business, reliably adding measurable value, and offers essential services that satisfy demand from more than one mission critical process.

- blog: www.ribbonfarm.com
Perspectives

- Tom Perry
- Patrick Lencioni
- Venkat Rao
ROBBERS CAVE
STATE PARK
The Setup

• Twenty four 12 year old boys
• Robbers cave campground
• Oklahoma…
3 Phase Approach

1. Create Silos
2. Create Conflict/Tension
3. Resolve the conflict
Phase I – Create the Silos

Hypothesis

1. Hierarchies will form
2. Your place in the hierarchy affects assessment of performance
3. Members of groups will adopt norms of the group even in the face of conflicting evidence.
The Evolution of the Eagles & Rattlers

- Separate camps
- Hierarchies
- Flags
- Tattoos
Phase II – Create Conflict/Tension

Hypothesis
1. Competition will increase team solidarity
2. Relationships between groups impact relationships within groups
3. Low status members of group are more likely to act out violently
Competition between the Eagles and Rattlers

1. Tug of War
2. Tent Pitching Contest
3. Baseball Games
4. Football Games
5. Campsite Inspections
Outcomes

• Fist fights
• Name calling
• Avoidance
Phase III – Resolve the conflict

Hypothesis

1. Contact will not decrease tension
2. Groups will cooperate when there are superordinate goals that are not achievable by one team
3. There is a cumulative effect of pursuing superordinate goals
Strategies

- Common Enemy
- Disintegrate & focus on Individuals
- Use “Leadership”
- Common Superordinate Goals
- Contact as Equals
Examples of Superordinate goals

• Drinking water Problem
• Securing a Movie
• Camp out at Cedar Lake
  – Truck Break Down
  – Meal Prep
  – Tent Pitching
What are Some Superordinate Goals In Your Organization?

- Working in groups of 3
- Identify 3 superordinate goals w/in your organization (one per Post-it)
Biases

• Us vs. Them – David Barreby
The Nature of Silos

• Examples
• Perspectives
• The Robbers Cave Experiment
• Biases
STRATEGIES
See the Whole

• Get the big picture
• Use tools like value stream mapping to help make the business value stream visible
• Identify possible superordinate goals
Understand The Silos

- Understand their challenges, needs, and fears
Eliminate The Fear

• Make it safe to work together
Use the ambassador pattern

• Live, breathe and eat in their world
• Use cross training to your advantage
Acknowledge their Presence

• Be careful to invite them to the table and acknowledge what they bring
Manage through Executives

• Create alignment at the top first
• Define the superordinate goals
Play!

• Um...you know...play?!?
Attend, Befriend, Defend

• Make friends!
Re-Organize

• Can the groups be reorganized toward product responsibilities?
Use Crisis as an Opportunity to Redefine the Conversation

• Highlight the success/failure in overcoming/succumbing the crisis
• Start the conversation about how to make things better
Summary

- See the whole
- Understand the silos
- Eliminate the fear
- Use the ambassador pattern
- Acknowledge their presence
- Manage through executives
- Play!
- Attend, Befriend, Defend
- Re-Organize
- Use Crisis
What Are Your Silo Busting Strategies?

Work with 3 other people and come up with a strategy for addressing the following situation:

- Product development has recently undergone a transition to Agile methods. The Operations group however, is uncomfortable with many facets of agile development and has rejected its adopting Agile in favor of keeping the established SDLC. Development teams have successfully switched to more rapid Agile delivery cycles of weeks rather than months. This has resulted in tension between Product Development and Operations when it comes time to release the code to production.

- Tensions between the two groups have risen to such high levels that there have been shouting matches between mid-level managers and morale across the board has been adversely affected.

- Operations has recently decreed that releases, previously done on a daily basis, will now only be permitted twice a month. This has raised the tension levels between the two groups to an all time high.
SILO BUSTING TIPS AND TRICKS
Use food

• Appeal to their stomachs!
Get an Introduction

• Don’t barge in
Script Your Encounters

- Preparation works
Use the Power of the Water Cooler

• Seek connections
• Use networking to your advantage
Read “How to Win Friends and Influence People”

• Dale Carnegie was on to something
Go Bust Some Silos!
References

• The Robbers Cave Experiment, Muzaffer Sherif, et. Al.
• Silos, Politics, and Turf Wars, Patrick Lencioni
• Bust the Silos, Hunter Hastings
• Us and Them, David Berreby
• How to Win Friend and Influence People, Dale Carnegie
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