

EXERCISE 10

FUTURE DIALOGUE - DESIRED AND PROBABLE

During periods of change it is very important that we allow ourselves time to talk about our individual ideas for the future. Not only for the simple reason of having a common vision statement on paper, but also for the sake of sharing and discussing our views of the future. This is how we create an arena for our employees to align their own present pictures with the future desired state through dialogue. In this process we can start to see "what's in it for me" and if and how our personal visions fit into the vision of the change.

Purpose and objective

- Through dialogue understand how my colleagues and I view the future.
- At the end of the exercise we have shared, compared and defined what is probable and what is not, as well as what we feel is desired and what is not desired.

Steps to take

1. Introduce the purpose and objective of this exercise.
2. Explain how important it is for us all to have the chance to express and discuss our individual views of the future.
3. Divide your team into groups of 4-6 people. Aim for a good mix in the group.
4. Hand out the instruction page "Our images of the future". Ask everyone to read through the instructions and whether they have any questions or concerns before we start.
5. Follow the instructions.
6. Conclude the session with a short reflection on what they feel and think about your exercise.

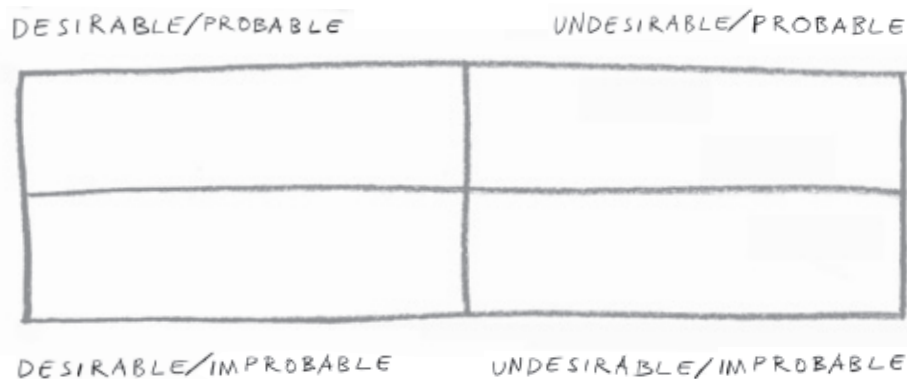
Time needed

You will need 3-4 hours, including the introduction, exercise and reflection.

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OUR IMAGES OF THE FUTURE

1. Write down five statements about the development of the organisation over a period of approximately five years. These statements will form part of your image of the future. They can contain both positive and negative images of people, technology, the economy, developments within society, trends in research or development at the company. The statements can be a declaration of what you want to happen or what you believe or hope will happen over the next five years. Use the needs of the people and the organisation as a starting point. The statements can also reflect fears and threats that you believe will materialise. Write down each statement on a small, separate piece of paper.
2. When you assemble for group work, place all the statements in a pile on the table and mix them up. One piece of paper should then be drawn from the pile, read aloud and discussed.
3. Each statement should be discussed and tested in depth using the dimensions given below. The first dimension to discuss is whether the statement is DESIRABLE or UNDESIRABLE. Try to agree on this in the discussion. You should then try to establish a position regarding whether you believe that the statement is PROBABLE or IMPROBABLE. Even here you should try to reach some form of consensus.
4. As a result of the discussion and an examination of the statement it should be possible to place the statement on a table, the corners of which are marked as follows:
5. When all the statements/pieces of paper have been discussed and placed, examine the implica-



tions of these future images for operational development and the work within the organisation. Which issues should be made a priority?

6. What are the implications for your role and/or for your leadership?
7. What do you consider to be the most important issues for the company's management team to prioritise in the future?