

A Goal Without a Plan is Just a Wish

Brian: [00:00:00] Welcome to the One Advantage Podcast, exploring the intersections of pure power, culture, and agility. Your hosts, Mike Richardson, Jason Richmond, and Leo Bottary co-founders of the One Advantage Community and Practice and Advantage Peer Groups. For more information, please visit us at the IdealOutcomesInc.com.

Mike: Hey everybody. Welcome back to another episode of the One Advantage podcast. I can't believe this guys, I think this must be three in a row where we've had a full house. I, the stars are lining up. It's a thing of beauty. I'm here with Jason Richmond, Leo Bottary, and of course myself, Mike Richardson. We have a good one today, guys.

A goal without a plan it is just a wish. Boy. Oh boy. Oh boy. We will get to that momentarily. But first, as always, let's find out where everybody's been and perhaps where they're going next. And it's always a surprise feast to hear [00:01:00] that from Leo. So we'll start with Leo. Where have you been? Where you going next?

Leo?

Leo: Last week was fun. On Sunday night I had a very had this unique opportunity to speak on the rooftop of Petco Park.

Mike: I saw that. I saw that in LinkedIn. It was awesome,

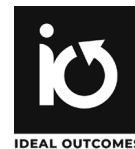
Leo: Yeah, 300 people CEO roundtables and the subject in many respects was about culture and about how the fact that it's not just about wins and losses and these kinds of things as we're experiencing in the NCAA tournament, but it's about creating organizations that have winning cultures and then the following morning I was on a six 30 flight to Chicago and did my 350th Vista group meeting presentation.

Mike: Oh boy.

Leo: And then back home. And now I'm back home for a little bit now.

Mike: Nice.

Leo: So I'm excited about that.



Mike: 350 groups of CEOs all over the country, and to some degree, the world, everybody now.

Leo: Yep.

Mike: Chomping on the concept of pure innovation. Leo is spreading the good word all over the place. What about yourself, Jason? Where you been? Where you going next?

Jason: Mike, as you said, the three of us have been on the podcast now for three weeks in a row, and I think this is [00:02:00] the first time in a long time. We've all three been in Southern California at the same time.

Mike: Oh,

Jason: Yeah. I've been in Orange County all week this week.

Working with clients, working with customers. Spent a lot of time this week. Working with leadership groups around culture planning culture evolution. Those, those important topics and actually spent all day on Wednesday just going through, the importance of planning, planning your culture, and tracking it and measuring it.

So yeah, it's very timely today.

Mike: Awesome. Great stuff. Hopefully you're staying warm. It's chilly down here in Southern California. If not snowy and rainy. It's unbelievable. I haven't been anywhere last week, but next week I'm going to Austin. To do a deep dive immersion experience of a peer forum event.

And then I go to Boston from there. But between now and then, everybody, tomorrow I officiate a wedding on the water's edge down in San Diego. I am I am an efficient of [00:03:00] weddings ordained on the internet, as it were. And so I'm doing one of those tomorrow, so that's gonna be a blast, but enough of that nonsense.

Let's get down to the real deal. Because Jason was just about to take us there. Get ready Jason to tell us more. A goal without a plan is just a wish. Everybody, if you don't consciously plan your company culture, you will have a company culture, but it may not be the one you want. Yeah. We've got a strategic please plan.



You strategically plan all other aspects of your business. Hey, here's a novel idea. How about strategically planning your culture as much as you do everything else, cuz it's probably even more important that you do to get that a cut, that culture of accountability that you want. Not least of all, with the peer power that you want and the culture of agility that you want, such that when any sort of situational circumstances arise in your future, you can navigate them with ease and continue thriving.

Jason, when you think about. Planning culture, where does your [00:04:00] head start to go? How do you start to think about that? On behalf of our listeners here,

Jason: Mike, a lot of times I'll start with organizations with an analogy and I and I like to pick on the sales groups, right? And we've all been in companies and we've all been engaged with, sales groups and how many times.

have you been in sales meetings and you're talking about salespeople's pipelines and their forecast and that type of stuff, but yet there's no account strategy or any meet. Behind this monster number out there, right? And I've for years and years working with sales groups, I always challenge them.

Is that a pipeline or a pipe dream?

Mike: Oh, . I,

Jason: So I use that analogy because I've, over the years, I bet you any of us in our. Probably work with sales organizations and working with pipe dreams more than we do pipelines. And I relate that to

culture strategy.

Mike: I like that. Yeah.

Jason: I relate it to culture strategy because is it is [00:05:00] it really a culture strategy or a culture dream?

I, is it just words coming outta your mouth or just vision or what you'd like it to be With no meat behind it. So it's, when I talk, when I look at it as, a goal without a plan is just a wish. It exactly is. It relates to sales, it relates to operations, it relates to business strategy.

There's gotta be meat behind that pipe

dream, if you will.

Mike: Yeah, I really like that. I'm gonna, I'm going, I'm gonna use that in future pipeline or pipe dream. Yep. Is it a culture dream or is it a other, a, is there a pipeline of culture? Plans and initiatives and strategies and actions and and things that you're putting in motion to really live into the dream that you have for your culture.

What would you weigh in with Leo? How do you begin to think about, how do you put a plan together for culture?

Leo: When Jason talked about sales team, I always think of a sales team as this, the big oxymoron, right? , just because they do the same thing doesn't make 'em a. So when you think about, so what's the culture [00:06:00] of that team?

So you can have goals, you can have all this other stuff, but the reality is how you go about doing what you do, how you create a culture of abundance versus scarcity. How do you create a culture where instead of having people fight for their slice of the pie, they actually work to make the pie bigger?

And I think this is where culture feeds into this clarity about goals, it, clarity about our purpose and about our wine and what this is all about. And to the extent that you can get alignment around that and that people are playing for one another, and this is where the pure piece of this comes in.

Yeah. To me that's essential and it all works together. The, this whole concept that we have about the one advantage, right? You look at. Power of peers in our companies. You look at the importance and value of culture. You look at the need today to be agile and to be adaptive.

All of these things work together.

Mike: Yeah. And I was it's very well said. And I was on a call this morning actually with a potential new client very big business, hundreds of millions of dollars all over the place. And they were saying that one of their core values, they [00:07:00] have, I think six in total, one of their core values is flexibility.

But when you read the fine print of what they mean by flexibility, they actually mean agility and all that comes. and they were really talking about exactly that, Leo, that it's like we, we have to figure out how are we going to raise our game around all of that. It can't be wishful thinking.

We need to have a plan, which is obviously why they're talking to me about how we gonna take our agility, our culture, our peer power to a whole other level. To remain compose, confident, courageous that we are future-proofed their business they were saying is doing great. Really great and they worry that it could easily start to not do that.

Great. It could easily start to fade. Yeah. And we cannot just leave this Jason, can we cannot just leave this to wishful thinking or thinking that we can default into the future with what we've got [00:08:00] now. Then, it's just not gonna be enough in the future, is it? We're gonna have to have a plan to raise our game with our culture to yet another level.

What do you say, Jason?

Jason: No, I agree. I was just in a conversation earlier this week about this, where's it start? Where's this culture planning start? And I'm adamant about this. I am a big believer that it starts with alignment with the executive teams. , right? That C-suite from the.

They have to be a part of this process in defining what that desired culture is going to be and, communicating that and demonstrate, buy-in and importance into any type of culture initiative. The hard work, the lifting in my world really happens at that middle level manage.

But without that executive level sponsor

Mike: Yeah.

Jason: And support and alignment your plan is doomed to fail.

Mike: Yep. Yep. Yeah, cuz it's it's too hard, everybody, it's that's why it remains as wishful thinking. It's an uphill battle to to take your culture from where it is to where you want to be.

And without [00:09:00] that, the air cover that you need from the C-suite, if not c e o. Sponsorship. It's just not gonna happen. It's, you're just gonna be busy fools and it's just gonna, it's just gonna crash and burn. What would you say, Leo?

Leo: I think one of the big things that ails us in this regard is our unbelievable laser focus on results and not what it takes to achieve those results.

Jason: Yeah.

Leo: What's really required? Everything from the plan to the culture to all of it. I was speaking to a group in Reno the other day. I was making this point and I said, look, if we were all sitting around a card table and you've got a big pile of chips and you want that pile of chips to grow, and you're just watching the chips and not paying attention to your cards, you're in a lot of trouble.

Yeah. You're going nowhere in that situation you're gonna lose. There's just no question about it. But how? Are we so buried in our Excel spreadsheets that we're not paying attention to the, to, to, and having the attention to detail about the things that really matter about making all of these results [00:10:00] possible.

And, so I, I think this is where this combination of strategy and culture and doing and , become so essential.

Mike: Yeah. I'm doing a, I'm doing a keynote in about a month that I think the two of you know about it. And I'm gonna, I'm gonna major around the concept of the One Advantage, a peer powered culture of agility.

But Jason and Leo know that I've become very passionate recently about this concept of collective intelligence. So I'm I'm inserting those words into the one advantage concept being, a collectively intelligent, peer powered culture of agility. Because I think what you're saying, Leo, is If we're not careful, we are being collectively unintelligent.

To put it mildly, we are so focused on the chips and not the cards. That is just downright stupid. And if we're not careful in businesses, we are. When somebody, really shines a light on it, you, it's not hard to demonstrate. Did you realize how you're being collectively dumb?

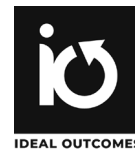
Leo: Yeah. And feel free to [00:11:00] use that, Mike. .

Mike: Oh, I've already put it down, man. It's mine, man. .

That's right. All good.

Go ahead. Jason, what do you think? We're,

Jason: you guys are exactly right and what we're talking about is, you know what I think some of the listeners might appreciate is where do they start.



right? It's all good to talk about what, what makes up a culture strategy. And I always start with defining what it's supposed to be. You gotta have a, organizations go out and build leadership competencies, right? They put definitions behind them. They identify behaviors behind those the expectations, the vision, the mission, all this stuff is part of the strategic plan.

All this stuff is very well thought out, but yet in my experience, More often than not, I find that there's a misalignment in the definition of culture or what, how we define, and I always start there. Yes. Part of the plan is metrics. Part of the plan is operational execution. Part of the [00:12:00] plan is, our processes and change our tolerance is the risk, right?

All those things are part of the culture strategy or culture plan, but it's really gotta start. , that defining of what you really wanted to be. I get questions all the time. What should my culture be? I can't answer that question. Great. That can answer that question for you.

Mike: Yeah. Can work

Jason: with you to help come up with what that culture should be for your company.

Mike: Yeah. And I heard a nice answer actually today to that when I was talking to that potential client that I'm talking to and who shall remain nameless, but they were telling me that they started business in 1972. Yep. As a family business. And they've, they've it's now, and then I think they did their last sort of core values exercise in, in 2015, I think it was, as part of their determination to fully professionalized the business.

And they've probably 10 Xed the business, of course, over that time. And they were telling me that what they [00:13:00] did is they looked back from 2015 to 1970. and they tr tried to crystallize and deduce what were the core values and the associated behaviors that have allowed us to be successful and grow.

And grow. Yeah. Because with some slight modification that, that is probably the long thread into the future as well in terms of, sustaining our longevity. And they said it took them about nine months to do it. But they gradually went through that process. They worked, it worked it, and they came up with something that really seemed to compute and add up and have meat to it that the whole organization could buy into.



So I'm, I'm optimistic at, to work with them and help them, open yet the, yet another chapter of that evolution. That, that sounds like a good process they went through. Jason, what do you think? Oh,

Jason: Yeah. I think it's a great process and, part of any planning or strategy is spending a little bit of time looking at the past.

Yeah. But you gotta visualize in the future. I [00:14:00] was with a customer this week, guys, and they have set up coming out of Covid the lessons, they've learned what they've done. They've spent enough time reflecting on all that. They have now got a group of people in the organization that their sole responsibility is really keeping their.

eye in the future and trying to identify potential disruptions Yeah, exactly. That are gonna impact their culture or the way they work or the way they operate. And they're putting a lot more focus on getting in front of and anticipating disruptions and getting out of this massive reaction. Yeah. Several of us fell into, once Covid hit.

Yeah. They don't, they learn from that. So now they're putting so much effort in their cultural work and trying to anticipate what that next disruption is in being pre-prepared

for that.

Mike: Yeah, exactly. Leo, what's what's coming up for you when you continue to think about all of this and how do you plan forwards for a culture?

Leo: I was just wanted the remark first on how impressed [00:15:00] I am with that company that you just talked about who was willing to do the hard work over that period of time that most people are not willing to do. Yeah. This is not a lot different from people who, approach the SATs.

Everyone loves to do the math problem, right? Nobody wants to do the reading comprehension problem. No one wants to actually go through and read this lengthy thing I know to figure it out. Because it's not easy, it's

Mike: plus they don't always clear. Yeah. Plus they think why would I bother now?

Chat GT's gonna take care of that in the future. Yeah.

Leo: Or it's a waste of time or whatever. And Yeah. You know what's interesting is if they're not practiced at doing that JP chat gpt, it's not gonna help. Exactly. won't even know how to ask it the right question.

But yeah, so I, I thought that was just really impressive. We don't do that work. We don't understand how powerful, unnecessary it is. We think we don't have time for it. We, all this other stuff, and yet it's so essential that we tap into. , those very important things that serve as the engine that drives our organization.

Mike: Yeah. I like the way I like the way that, that this episode was teed [00:16:00] up with the paragraph, we invest so much work in everything else that we do in our business where we try, we know we need to be more strategic and we've got, granular. Detailed in depth spreadsheets and or, design documents, whatever it is.

And you, I think you gave us a great analogy Jason, that, and oftentimes of course we do that for the leadership development model part of our business, we've got, we've got a dozen pages that define leadership and all of its attributes and all of the behaviors and all of that. We've got all that stuff, a dozen pages.

And yet when we turn to. The design and definition and development of our culture. We're lucky often in many businesses, everybody, if there's one page that has been printed out, poster size and stuck on the wall and there's nothing behind it, if we're not careful, Jason, why don't you keep

keep,

Jason: I often find, yeah, we often find going in that.

When we go into the culture strategy, culture planning and again I don't really the word strategy or planning. I [00:17:00] prefer the word doing. Culture doing.

Mike: Yeah.

Jason: But when we, a lot of times we'll start this process. And we'll spend the first, the front end of this just on mindset because executives and individuals will come into this culture doing with the mindset of their single discipline and what's important to them.

In order to really start a, a culture strategy, you have to open yourself up to realize the entire enterprise, not just your discipline. If you go into that, what's important to me in my discipline or my business silo.

Mike: Yeah.

Jason: You're never gonna be aligned. So we spend uptime upfront time just on mindset of this.

Mike: Yeah.

Jason: And looking holistically from the entire organization, which does encompass your customers. Yeah. Your customer experience, employee experience, and everything else. So there's just some mental, there's some mental work that needs to go into this.

Mike: Yeah, somebody like that. Go ahead. J Leo.

Go ahead.

Leo: Just, this is why everything you just said is why there's more culture [00:18:00] daunting than there is culture doing.

Jason: Yeah.

Leo: basically, when you get right down to it,

Mike: don't do this and don't do that, , it's just too hard. It's just too hard. So

they don't Yeah. Yeah. It makes your head hurt everybody.

You, you're staring down this blank piece of paper or the one piece of paper you've got, and you think how on earth do I double click on this and bring more. bring more definition, granularity, behavioral, definitions to it. I love what you just said Jason, about, being more holistic.

And one of my favorite concepts to use, it's a little tricky to use, is the word holonic. Everybody with an H, everybody holonic. That's why I don't use it very much, holonic And holonic means it's very close to the word holistic. What it means is, holonic means simultaneously seeing the part in the hole, which is it

comes very readily to us, seeing where my part fits in the hole and simultaneously seeing the hole in the part.

In a holo, in a holographic kind of way. And I think for me, that's where the, that's [00:19:00] where the ultimate alignment comes from. When you have a head of a particular function or department or division or territory or line of business or business unit. And they're simultaneously seeing their part in the whole right, of the bigger corporation, but also seeing the whole in their part, that's where true cultural alignment starts to, to show up. What would you add in the mix of all of that, Jason?

Jason: I agree a hundred percent. And the other gap we see. It's a struggle sometimes from the leadership standpoint to tap in unseen or hidden assets that are just sitting there bubbling amongst their workforce that we're not tapping into from culture, influence, and culture involvement.

It's really, I relate this to, hall of Fame coaches in, in, in any sport, right? You look at the, in my opinion, the best coaches that ever coached the. Have won championships and championships, sometimes not with, most often not with the best individual [00:20:00] talent.

Mike: That's right.

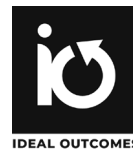
That's right.

Jason: They get the most, they get the most out of the talent they have. They raise the bar on people's performance by tapping into hidden assets of them people instead of just letting natural skill and ability and talent lead the way.

Mike: In fact, Leo, you sent an article around the other day, didn't you, Leo, that spoke directly to that?

I forget what the title of it was, but it when I read the article, it got down to a discussion of collective intelligence and it really made the point that, and it and it came, there was that line in the movie, the Miracle wasn't there. About the USA winning the ice hockey, whatever it was, the Olympics or whatever it was, where the coach.

was asked, why aren't you picking the best players? And the coach said something like, I'm not looking for the best players. I'm looking for the best team, or whatever it was. Yeah. Sometimes if you have too much. If you have



too much talent, too many talented individuals on a team act, actually the team performance goes down, not up.

Yeah. Leo, would you weigh in on that?

Leo: Yeah. That was a thing that [00:21:00] was put forth in, in Harvard Business Review and yeah. Yeah it definitely can happen and they talk about how it doesn't have to, but more often than not,

it will.

Will for sure.

Mike: Yeah. Yeah. And so I think you were speaking Jason to, how do you raise the game of the team you've got?

And really that's the definition of collective intelligence is how individuals can actually play at a level above their individual strengths, of course. So that you get a net ad, not a net subtraction correct. Away from that process.

Jason: And it. It takes a little bit of effort on to identify and uncover those

Mike: Yeah.

Jason: Those hidden talents. But it's effort worth taking.

Mike: Yeah. So I think, go ahead Leo.

Leo: Only that and this goes back to what we've talked about before and that when you look at those great teams, they don't regard winning the championship as their goal. They regard getting better every day as their goal.

And they're focused on what it takes to make championships possible. They look at championships or even just putting themselves in a position to compete at that level as their [00:22:00] reward for the work that they do.

Jason: Yeah,

Leo: that it's really all about how do we maximize our potential as a, as individuals and as a team.

To work together. And if we focus on that and we have the kind of attention to detail and commitment to one another to make that happen again, we put ourselves in a position to play at a high level. And this is in business

as well as in sports.

Mike: Yeah. And back to your analogy earlier, therefore everybody, if I focus on the cards, not the chips will take care of themselves.

And no matter what cards I'm. If I've got a good team ethic and a good culture and good definition, I can still win. Even if I got dealt some, some weaker cards, I can still win or still do better every day and end up

Leo: Sure.

Mike: End up winning.

Yeah, exactly.

Leo: We don't

win every day.

Mike: No, exactly.

Leo: And we don't win every single day.

Mike: So Jason, I think really what we're really saying here are we not with culture, is there is a huge opportunity to be a lot more intentional, everybody about culture and core values and how do you get from where you are to where you want to be with a [00:23:00] plan that you execute on just like you would if you were building a new factory.

If you decided. Look, we're gonna build a new car manufacturing plant in wherever, right? There would be so much definition and detail and planning you would have to bring to that to get into business with that. It's of the same here, isn't it, Jason? We've got to it's one of the least tangible things in business, but we've got to take the same kind of approach to it.

Jason: Yeah. Yeah. We do just like any successful business, their business plan's not done on a bar napkin. Your culture plan can't be done on a bar napkin



either. Yeah. Yeah. There, there's gotta be strategy behind it, and there's gotta be purpose behind it, and there's gotta be measurement behind it. But it is as important as

that business plan

Mike: and never forget everybody.

There's a reason why we call this podcast The One Advantage. What we're trying to convey to you is that there is only one advantage that sustains your future. Not just surviving, but thriving that can futureproof you in your [00:24:00] business, in your career, in your leadership journey.

And it is culture powered by peers for agility. The one advantage, a peer powered culture of agility, the emphasis on the word culture. There really isn't anything else. That has any degree of permanence these days. Everything else can be disrupted bigger, faster, sooner than your worst nightmare. The only thing that will be left standing that can differentiate you and your future is your peer powered culture.

Underline the word culture of agility. Jason final thoughts that you wanna leave our listeners with?

Jason: If you really want a high performing culture, you gotta go. You gotta go from, Culture dreaming to culture planning, and.

Mike: Nice from Pipe Dream to pipeline, everybody. I'm never gonna forget that one.

That is perfect. Leo what final thoughts would you like to leave our listeners on this one?

Leo: Just by the time

we record next time the ncaa championships will be [00:25:00] over and I'm gonna predict university of Connecticut meant to win the whole thing in the men's side,

Mike: And we've got that, we got that on tape, everybody.

Leo: That's right.



Mike: And for those that have any interest at all. Yes. England beat Italy yesterday in the Euro qualifiers soccer. And so that was a good match. There we have it, everybody. Another episode of The One Advantage in. In recorded and going out live pretty soon.

A goal without a plan is just a wish, and there is probably nothing more than your culture, your core values, the definition and detail that you bring to that, the plan that you bring to that to which that that. Phrase applies. A goal without a plan is just a wish. Don't let your culture just be wishful thinking.

Don't let it be a culture dream. Make it culture doing. Have a culture plan. Thanks for being here, everybody at the One Advantage Podcast. We will see you next time.

Brian: Thanks for listening to the One Advantage Podcast. If you liked this episode, please [00:26:00] consider helping us by reading us wherever you listen, spreading the word, having us as a guest on your podcast or webinar, and mentioning us in social media.

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