BARRIERS TO EXCELLENCE

There are countless barriers to success. While many quality firms have found a way to overcome most of them, we have found that the following eight barriers have some degree of negative impact on even the most successful firms. To what extent does each barrier impact your firm?

Accomplishing Goals. Few firms have a process in place to accomplish the goals they set. As a result, most firms have a poor track record in accomplishing their goals. It is virtually impossible to create a high achievement culture in any organization without a solid track record of accomplishing goals.

"Chance for Success" Approach. Most endeavors (new projects, assignments, tasks) are approached with an attitude that provides a "chance for success." While our intent is to have success in a given endeavor, our overall effort invested does little to ensure success will be the end result. There is a big difference between a "chance for success" approach and a "leave nothing to chance" approach.

Lack of Commitment. It is far easier to generate support for an endeavor within a firm than it is to gain commitment. There is a huge difference between commitment and support. The problem within many firms is that leaders feel they have commitment from stakeholders when, in fact, they may only have support. Commitment means doing everything possible to bring about success in a certain area or endeavor.

Lack of Accountability. Most firms lack a strong measure of accountability. Goals are set and assignments are made without a system of accountability in place. In looking at world-class organizations, one of the key things that stands out is that employees want to be held accountable. The highest form of accountability is self-accountability.

Procrastination. It is entirely possible for leaders to go weeks, months and even years wanting to work on their firm - to make needed changes and course corrections - only to continue to believe that the right time to do so is tomorrow.

Lack of Effort. The “effort gap” is the difference between the maximum amount of effort an employee can bring to his position and the actual effort he is currently putting forth. Since by meeting the minimum requirement the employee has already done what is necessary to avoid penalty, the remaining effort—the difference between the minimum and the employee’s very best effort—is truly discretionary.
Lack of Vision. Most firms lack a clear, compelling vision that motivates all employees to give their maximum effort. Although many firms have a mission statement, this represents only a small part of a vision statement. A key part of a vision statement is the firm’s courageous goal and a descriptive future of what things will be like for all concerned when the firm reaches that goal.

Lack of Concentration. On average, employees are interrupted every 10 minutes during our workday. Whether it's the phone ringing, email messages chiming their way in, or someone at their door, interruptions happen far too frequent. These interruptions hinder our ability to do our best work and become a barrier to achieving excellence in the things we do.

The key to your success lies in your ability to overcome these barriers. Upstream Academy’s services have been carefully designed to help you do just that.