

Grid[®] Success Stories

Dairyworld Foods

From the time you enter David Coe's office, you are struck by the ease with which the President and CEO of Dairyworld Foods discusses the essentials of teamwork and the commitment Dairyworld has made to both continuous learning and employee satisfaction.

His ease is due to the fact that David Coe's first exposure to Grid Principles occurred in the late 60s while with the large, multinational Warner Lambert.

Fifteen years later, the company had made a huge commitment to a quality process. However, the results were mixed, and future plans needed good results.

"It just wasn't clicking," comments Coe. "We were missing some essential glue which was basically teamwork."

The Corporate VP of Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness started talking about Management Grid which he had taken while with another company. As soon as he said it, Coe knew he had put his finger on it. "It really was the missing ingredient."

Why Grid?

"Many people come into management with no management training, often from a technical background or discipline. They think being a manager (in the absence of anything else) is like being a sergeant in an army," observes Coe. "I don't think I was any different. But I was definitely looking to learn, and learn the right way."

"Grid just seemed so incredibly effective. And the more I tried it, the more effective it was because I had real buy-in. And in the end, the decision was better because I had inputs from everyone else."

But it wasn't always clear sailing. "I had a couple of hard knocks which signalled that just for me to be a participative manager by myself was not adequate," confides Coe.

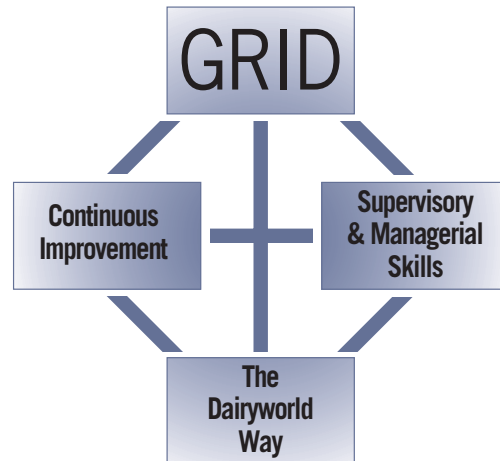
"People had to understand the process and they had to understand that they didn't have the luxury anymore of waiting for orders and following them through without having to take responsibility or without having to be accountable.

"With this participation side comes the whole accountability side. You can't get one without the other.

"It really wasn't until we introduced Grid at Dairyworld that we got the teamwork to take off because then people understood what was expected of them."

Today, at Dairyworld Foods

Over 3,000 employees work in a culture where participation and communication are valued, encouraged, and recognized.



"Take any pillar away and the structure would fail. It just wouldn't work without Grid. Grid is how we work together," Coe emphasized.

Even after four years of Grid and having their four cornerstone model in place for the organization and the Grid component well established, Dairyworld still didn't rest on its laurels.

Intercompany Grid

An innovative management team took the "leap of faith" to apply the 9,9 principles of Grid to interrelationships with a customer (The Overwaitea Food Group) and a supplier (Tetra Pak).

"We call taking Grid this next step, Grid 3. It was the highest risk part of Grid that we have ever taken."

Idea #1: *Apply Grid to create new possibilities with customers and suppliers.*

The risk is lowered by only attempting this with companies who have participated in Grid. "I wouldn't even

think of doing it unless the customer was into Grid themselves because I just don't think it would work. You need that common language, but even more, it [Grid] almost puts a value system in it," expands Coe.

Idea #2: *Communicate your core values and expectations.*

"One of the values, for example, is critique. If (both organizations) are use to critique, and used to the way it is given, and the way it should be taken, then you can be pretty sure when the two organizations work together that if critique is given, it will be taken okay."

Idea #3: *Extend the opportunity for giving critique to other stakeholders.*

"So far, so good"

"I feel that we are really breaking some ground. Roadblocks are, in many cases, not real," comments Coe. "They are emotional or imaginary or all kinds of different things. It [intercompany Grid] lets you get right at the heart of the matter."

Results

At the core of Grid is the goals of maximizing effectiveness. Dairyworld Foods provides a leading edge model for this process. Beyond their own organization, they have created efficiencies in the supply chain with a retailer and applied innovative, new technology with a supplier.

Part of the Structure

All this is possible due to the effort which Dairyworld has made to change its corporate culture by design.

"They have taken Grid and incorporated it right into the keel of the organization," states Bruce Carlson, President and CEO of Grid International. "One of the reasons for their strategic success during such a phase of change and growth...has been the strength of that keel. They have developed an effective organization which can hold up through chaotic times and catch the wind when it favours their destination."

Their Vision 2000, Mission Statement, and seven core expectations and values all reflect Grid values and are each examples of Dairyworld's philosophy to always communicate expectations fully.

Dairyworld Foods' executive team retreats quarterly for strategic and tactical planning meeting which David Coe states, "Couldn't run effectively without operating in true Grid style."

Conclude with Critique

Evidence of the effective use of critique is that three month "report cards" are filed next to photos of paint ball and contact sport croquet! And yes, they critique their meeting when it's wrapped up!

The ultimate example of the use of critique was the finale to the last Dairyworld Foods AGM when all of the dairy producer/owners were given form for critiquing the meeting. "Now we know what we can do next year to make the meeting better," concluded David Coe.

As their examples show, from farm gate to our plate, Dairyworld Foods incorporates Grid to effectively get the job done.