Examples of Communication Technology: Diving into a Bottom-Up Approach in the Enterprise

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It seems like this is how it's always been done: A leader in the organization has an idea, such as generating a new application, and he may have examples of the communication technology he wants to implement. The idea is disseminated throughout the organization all the way to the development team that will drive it to fruition.

Bottom-up management is an effective, innovative way to develop new examples of communication technology.

No one has really questioned this traditional management approach until more recently with the emerging "bottom-up" approach. In the bottom-up model, it's the developers, not the executives, who are increasingly bringing forward ideas that drive organizational solutions and growth.

For example, say a staff developer approaches his director or VP about an idea to increase app usage. Instead of using traditional marketing, he proposes to implement a social invites tool to send SMS invitations with links to the app store. He read an article about it and has been playing around with it in the lab.

Instead of squashing the idea, leadership listens and supports it going forward. It works, downloads increase, and in-app purchases go up, all because the developer had a good idea and was supported. Why did it work? The developer is closer to the technology and the
customer. While the executives are adept at running the business, they may not always be the best sources for innovation strategy or technology-specific solutions.

Examples of Communication Technology: A Few Surprising Benefits

The first question organizations may ask is why they should adopt this method when the top-down approach has worked for decades. The fact is, the top-down approach isn't always the best in all situations, and some businesses have used it simply because it's been a traditional practice, not because it makes the most sense.

Some of the benefits are obvious, such as increased employee engagement and job satisfaction. Everyone wants to be heard and have the power to make things happen, and most workers are more productive when they're pursuing something they're passionate about. What's more motivating than making your own idea come to life?

Do you need examples of communication technology or another problem solved? Give bottom-up management a try.

Many enterprises also find that developer-initiated solutions work better. They often cost less money, and can be easier to maintain. The reason is that developers understand how the technology works and have an ideal view to make technology-based recommendations. While executives expertly manage goals, strategies and expectations, they may not have the hands-on experience and technology knowledge to sort through the details. And at this stage of the problem, it's the details that matter.

It's easy to see how the bottom-up approach benefits developers, but what about the decision-makers at the top of the organization? While it might seem that leadership would ultimately prefer a top-down approach, the bottom-up approach can be very appealing. This approach gives them the freedom to focus on what they do best: managing the bigger picture. Decision-makers can provide the strategies and let those with the most knowledge about the programs find the solutions. Leaders often don't belabor the details — they're more focused on results. And by taking an agnostic mindset, management gives developers freedom to find the solution. It's an expectation of delivery, not an edict on how to get there.

Making Bottom-Up Management Work

Change can be hard, and bottom-up management is no different. One of the biggest challenges is empowering developers while decision-makers also ensure the desired business outcomes. The decision-maker has to clearly state the overall goal, then give employees the freedom to explore different options.

For example, say an executive decrees the company needs to improve customer satisfaction. However, instead of mandating new processes or specific technology, the decision-maker asks employees to brainstorm implementations. The executive gives no specific direction on how to get there, just describes the desired overall result.

He may initially worry that by simply opening the floor, there is a possibility developers won't step up. But to keep this from happening, he initiates a process for formally brainstorming ideas and taking them up the chain, from goals to deadlines.
After hearing the edict to improve customer service ratings, an entry-level developer begins working on a solution. She has experience working with an application with a real-time sentiment feature that gave her insight into caller sentiments and emotions. This enabled the business to make better decisions, provide better support, and see better outcomes.

She researches the tool, does some test use cases, and brings the results to her manager. When her plan is reviewed and approved, she drafts a plan for rollout. While her technical skills and experience were the reason for the solution, she also learned valuable project management skills she can use as she moves up the ladder.

As you can see, bottom-up management can be a great solution if you have communication technology problems in your organization you need solved. Set up a challenge in your office to see what your developers can come up with. Once you've tried the bottom-up approach, you'll likely enjoy the freedom it gives you as a decision-maker to use your strengths. It's liberating, smart, and makes good business sense.

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