

# Session five

**The new competitive advantage; the ability  
to execute**

**The Silent killers of strategy implementation and the  
Seven deadly sins of strategy implementation**

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# An overview

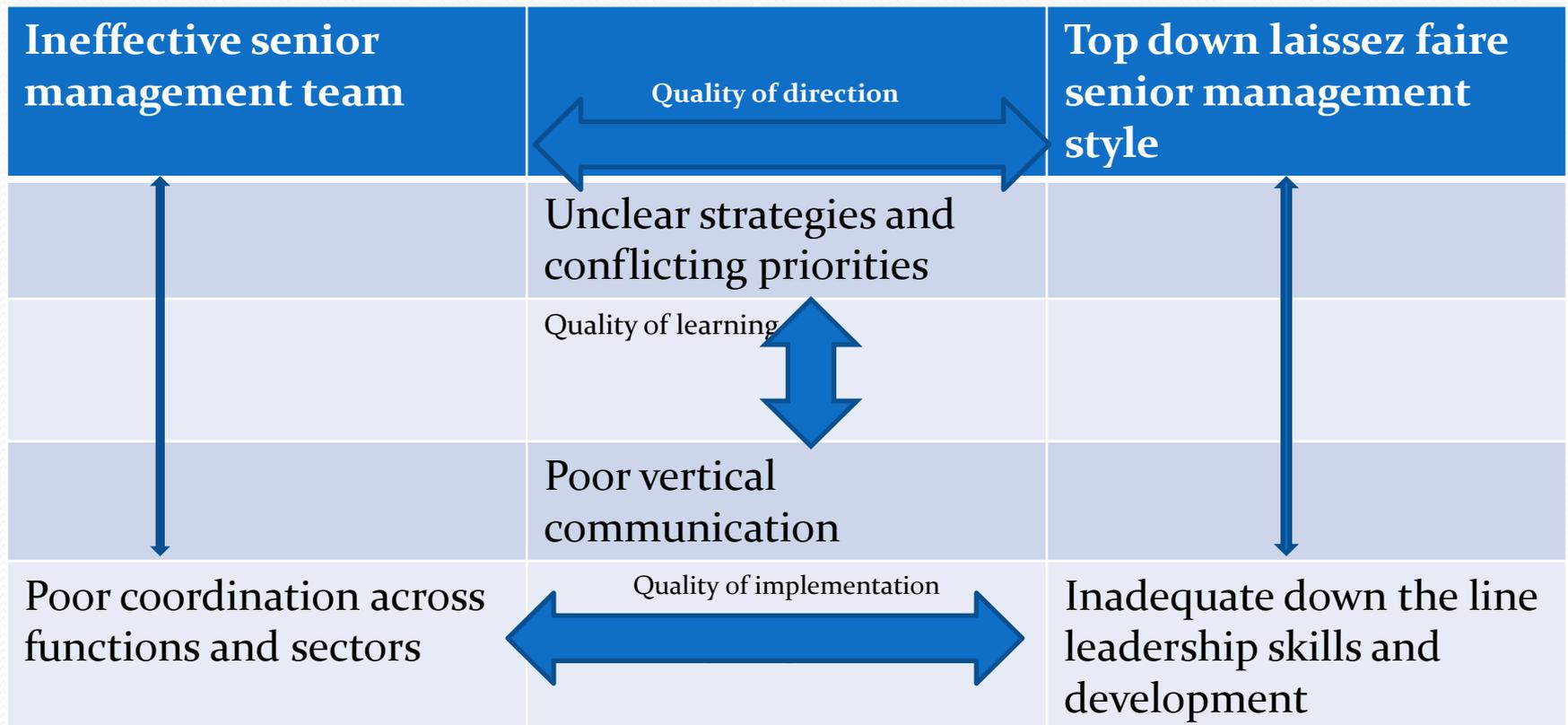
Six silent killers of strategy implementation exist in most organisations(countries) but too many officials avoid confronting them. Leaders(both public and private)need to face these killers if their countries are to learn and succeed.

*Professor Michael Beer, Harvard Business School.*

# The six silent killers of strategy implementation

1. Ineffective senior management team
2. Unclear strategies and conflicting priorities
3. Top down or laissez faire senior management style
4. Poor coordination across functions and sectors
5. Poor vertical communication
6. Inadequate down the line leadership skills and development

# How the six silent killers interrelate



# Quality of direction

An ineffective top team, top down management and laissez faire senior management are all related.

- Seniors by passing those below them to get information and give orders to those at lower levels.
- This leads to an ineffective leadership team and undermines the teams potential by avoiding discussions that could cause conflicts.
- No one can be held accountable because there is no coordinated decision making

# Quality of learning

- Blocked vertical communication adversely affects the ability to implement and refine strategy
- Strategy documents go into a lot of technical detail on trends without providing a coherent story showing why the outside world demands new ways of working
- Lack of strategic consensus and clarity undermines effective upward communication

# Quality of implementation

- The three silent killers associated with senior management make it very difficult to develop the required coordination at lower levels or to develop the required down the line leadership capabilities.
- Managers from different functions and sectors cannot be expected to collaborate when their leaders are pushing them in competing directions

# The seven deadly sins of strategy implementation

The Sin	The cause	The solution
1.The strategy is not worth implementing	Deficient analysis,creative insight,ambition or practicality or limited stakeholder involvement	PSDS developed by some of the best brains in the country in a very consultative manner
2.People not clear how strategy will be implemented	Little implementation planning	Launch will be followed by an Action implementation plan workshop for all implementing agencies
3.Stakeholders do not understand the strategy	Senior management in government and in private sector do not communicate the strategy to those working for them	The Action plan implementation strategy will include a communications plan which sets out who needs to be told about the strategy
4.Individual responsibilities not clear	Ambiguous allocation of tasks without accountability	Action implementation plan will provide clear and specific responsibilities for making the strategy work

The sin	The cause	The solution
5.Senior management steps out of the picture once implementation begins	If staff feel that senior management are not fully committed to the strategy, their own commitment and enthusiasm will wane	Senior management must remain engaged from development to implementation, they must continue to sell the strategy both within and outside their own organisation
6.Brick walls are not recognised	Failure to recognise that things will not always work to plan	When setbacks to strategy implementation are encountered, people should be encouraged to develop creative and innovative solutions to address them
7.Forgetting to “mind the shop”	Strategy implementation becomes the consuming concern for senior management at the expense of the day job	The recognition that the day job is equally important. Strategy implementation should become an integral part of the days job.



Thank you for your attention