

HAS YOUR BUSINESS GOT FIGHTING SPIRIT?

Will it survive in the face of adversity?

Recent qualitative research carried out for the Royal Navy has revealed some invaluable findings that are **essential** for business if they wish to survive and succeed in the face of adversity. **As business faces an increasingly challenging economic climate they cannot afford to ignore the lessons learnt.**

- Fighting Spirit is about the ability to cope with and survive adversity, be that recession, a loss of top talent, a take-over, a natural disaster or other adverse scenarios.
- It is about having the determination and perseverance to win and succeed, along with the moral courage and ability to take decisive actions.
- The research highlighted what is needed to inculcate a sense of fighting spirit, the competencies required to generate effective Fighting Spirit and how to sustain it.

Why is this relevant to business?

All businesses will face difficult times, and those that survive and overcome these adverse scenarios and go on to grow and increase profit margins need to have a “Fighting Spirit”.

As the UK faces an economic downturn it will be the fittest who survive, knowing how to inculcate and generate an effective Fighting Spirit will help your business achieve this.

Adversity could be in the form of an economic downturn/recession; or a natural disaster (e.g. flooding); or the loss of top talent; or a takeover; or being faced with an enormous change/transformation programme; or any other challenging/difficult/adverse scenario.

What is the evidence for this approach?

The findings from recent qualitative research with the Royal Navy have provided the data and evidence to underpin this approach. Whilst this may appear to be core business for the Armed Services, the findings are directly relevant to the business environment. Therefore, this is not based on an individual’s view or assumptions, but actual research.

What is Fighting Spirit?

Fighting Spirit is having the competencies, qualities and culture to face and effectively deal with adversity. It is about having the determination and perseverance to survive, succeed, win and grow; and having the moral courage to take decisive action.

“Fighting Spirit is the source of moral courage, perseverance and decisive action in the face of adversity.”

How do you inculcate a sense of Fighting Spirit?

Fighting Spirit stems from your company ethos and culture, i.e. your “employer brand”. Having a meaningful employer brand, culture and set of values which all employees “sign-up” too, and live by are key.

What are the competencies required to survive?

The two critical competencies for generating an effective Fighting Spirit are Leadership and Team Cohesion.

Leadership: Leaders must be able to generate confidence, commitment and capability. Knowing their people, individual and team strengths and weaknesses is essential. The leader must set a clear mission and tasks, ensuring people know what is being asked of them, and valuing individual contributions. People will be prepared to go that “extra mile” if they are valued. They must not be afraid to re-visit failure, and must celebrate success.

Developing leadership is therefore a critical success factor.

Team Cohesion: This is not just about working together as a team, but needs to be focussed on building a cohesive team, who are all pulling in the same direction, have the same values and believe in what they are doing. This is generally inspired through leadership. Team Cohesion is also dependent on having a sense of belonging and an identity; this is linked and intertwined with ethos and culture. Therefore, employer branding is pivotal. Like the leader, the team must know one another; know each others strengths and weaknesses. This will be assisted if they have worked together through “tough” tasks/times and have shared experiences.

It takes time to generate a cohesive team, and it can not be achieved in isolation of the leader. Instilling and investing in the leadership qualities outlined above are the starting point.

How do you sustain Fighting Spirit?

Fighting Spirit cannot be generated and then ignored, it must be sustained. The organisational culture (employer brand) is central to sustaining Fighting Spirit. However, in terms of keeping employees motivated and focussed, the maintenance of morale is critical.





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