

## We know why some divisions of your company are soaring and others can't get off the ground. Do you?

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It's a common event: Quarterly results are released showing several business units performing well, some may even be exceeding expectations. Too often, however, one division is struggling. What you'll never hear management say is, "we don't really know why." But it's true; they may not know. (Psst, We just might.)

Over 38% of companies included on the 2020 Fortune 500® list—those companies with the highest revenue for the year—actually reported a decline in revenue versus the prior year. In some cases, entire industries have been negatively impacted by the global Covid 19 pandemic

(we see you, restaurants, travel, and transportation), while others are tracking a global multi-year decline, such as magazine and newspaper publishing, department stores, and even gasoline marketers.

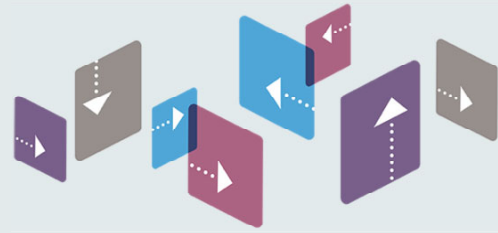
Study that same 2020 Fortune 500® list carefully, however, and you will spot some companies reporting declining performance in otherwise healthy, growing industries. A closer look at some of the annual reports notes that one company experienced a massive vendor challenge, while another details a catastrophic—but hopefully one-time—manufacturing problem. Yet another blames a tricky reconfiguration of an operational process because of Covid-related changes to their business model. And for a year riddled with pandemic impacts, surely supply chain issues were often the culprit.

But is that really what's going on? Well, mostly, yes.

But sometimes...no.

*“Companies are having to make radical and utterly essential changes to their 2021-and-beyond plans, and they’re having to do it with insufficient information. Essentially, they’re winging it. But they don’t have to; there are insightful ways to obtain objective data on all these issues. Quickly, actionably, and affordably.”*

Undoubtedly, 2020 was one of the most unsettling years in business for countries around the globe. 2021 Will see many of the same negative



### **In 2021, do you have a solid grasp on how your leadership and employees...**

- Understand their role in a dramatically changed business environment?
- View your company's strengths?
- Recognize how your company's priorities may have changed?
- Understand what unspoken traits your company needs, values, or ignores?
- Believe your company is equipped for required innovation?
- Have—or haven't—bought into the new ways of operating and the goals they've been assigned for 2021?
- Assess the abilities of your company's leaders to navigate the changes ahead?
- Feel they are being managed?
- See how well top leadership is aligned with each other in turbulent times?

impacts, and likely more we haven't fully grasped yet.

Whenever this much change slams any company, or an entire industry, future planning takes on an entirely different process. Where decisions were once guided by past performance metrics,

strategy execution plans, iterative improvements, engineering and technology upgrades, and other trending data, in a global pandemic all bets are off. These days, most companies must now assess the impacts of remote working, and many industries have to overhaul long-established staffing models and invent entirely different approaches to both internal communication and external customer contact.

During times of such intense change, employees working in different departments, divisions, or business units may evolve very differently, in part because their daily realities are that diverse. For instance, employees in Accounting may simply be working from home but tackling the same projects they did pre-Covid 19, while those working in ramped up fulfillment centers may clock in to their shift at an exploding-at-the-seams facility, and experience all-time high stress levels. Advancement opportunities also look very different when your department has to double in staff almost overnight. Work relationships shift, leaders may be less visible, and carefully developed plans may be scrapped and new directions developed with little advance notice.

The changes many companies are making to stay relevant and profitable in these new times impact the work experience of employees far beyond their daily tasks. Knowing how to solicit the inputs of thousands of employees is an important first step to completing a successful pivot. Finding ways to solicit this wide sphere of information—quickly, affordably, and actionably—then understanding how to use it to fine tune change management plans, is the next step.

If your company is having to make significant changes in 2021, you don't have to do so blindly. Our clients are taking steps now to ensure their companies continue to move higher on those lists that matter to them, their employees, and their shareholders. Go on, *lead*. ■



**Want to know more?**

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