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Team 1: Tackling Challenges by Building Consensus

Patrick Nwachokor

Houston Port Authority

Success Story	Developed a business planning process that maximized revenues by: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. changing the mix of cargo activities2. supplying shipping lines with data about shippers' current and future needs
Obstacles	Trying to understand the operational perspective. Getting buy in from internal and external stakeholders
Skills Needed	Data analysis Strategy Development Consensus Building
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Steel volumes climbed following the first year of the process.•Planning process continues to be used and adjusted to increase revenue and to account for changing market trends.

Mike Wilson

Port of Freeport

Success Story	The port authority started a new branding and marketing based on brutal self awareness of its strengths and weaknesses and planning
Obstacles	Building consensus. Motivating people who were content for Freeport to be a sleepy little South Texas port.
Skills Needed	Marketing & Strategy Planning Consensus Building
Result	With an investment of \$400,000 of marketing funds annually, went from 2% of potential customers recognizing the value proposition of the port authority to 63% in four years.

Chris Bonura

Port of New Orleans

Success Story	The Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans developed a successful strategy to prevent the 200 million gallons of oil spilled by BP in the Gulf from negatively impacting its business.
Obstacles	Shipping and cruise lines would often prefer to avoid the risk of delays or fines by skipping port calls that are affected by disasters.
Skills Needed	Communications Strategy Planning Consensus Building
Result	By giving decision makers regular updates about the trajectory of the oil plume and the process for cleaning hulls if needed, there were no cancellations of cargo or cruise ship calls.

David Koch

Oregon Int'l Port of Coos Bay

Success Story	Developed a plan of action to address the closure of a short line railroad and put it under the direction of the port authority.
Obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Funding.•Convincing everybody in the shipping community and key local, state and federal stakeholders to accept a new way of doing business.•Determining the right course, when there was a limited opportunity to act.
Skills Needed	Strategic Management Consensus building Leadership
Result	\$16.5 million to purchase rail line. Management structure in place. Unsafe tunnels have been addressed. \$25 million in additional funding available to improve the rail infrastructure.

Recurring Themes/ Lessons Learned

- Engage stakeholders early and share the credit for success with them.
- Make your business decisions based on facts.
- Track your business on a regular basis and develop a clear vision for the future.
- Learn how to identify tipping points, and motivate people to react to them decisively.
- When you are faced with a challenge, meet it head on.

Closing Thought

“It comes down to a simple choice ...
get busy living or get busy dying.”

Andy Dufresne

Shawshank Redemption