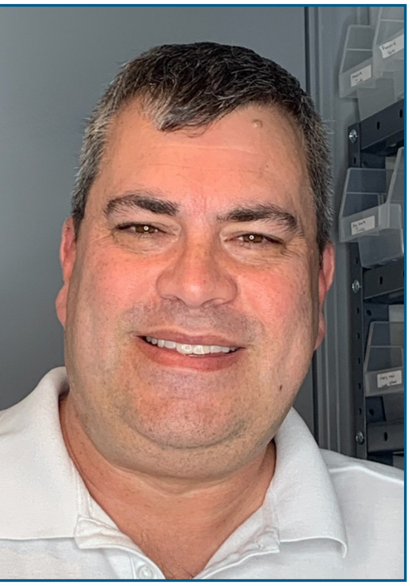
You Should Be Asking What You Left on the Table!



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Michael Heisman earned a BBA from Georgia Southern University in Marketing/Logistics and an MSc in Science-Supply Chain from Cranfield University (England). After gaining operational and management experience in 3PLs, trucking, fleets, brokerage, warehousing, engineering/optimization, and air transport, Heisman started Tansect as a consulting and solutions firm specializing in supply chain, supply chain technology, analytics, and continuous improvement.

You can't assume medium and large companies have "best practices" because they are large, and they must have grown to that size because they are efficient and make great decisions.

In my experience, it is quite the opposite, and I am often amazed how inefficient medium to larger companies are...and how much they "leave on the table." In fact, many of them are structured in such a way they cannot implement best practices without third-party assistance...if at all.

As an entrepreneur I can attest smaller companies are efficient because it's required for them to survive, as they do not have the resources of larger organizations. Likewise, larger operations are often formed through acquisition where they currently operate as silos, or they were never properly assimilated.

They also tend to give local P&Ls autonomy—creating scenarios where one location is head and shoulders above others in the company even though they perform the same function in the same industry with the same access to resources and often with the same leadership.

If the organization meets its goals, or performs better than the previous year, its MISSION ACCOMPLISHED and time to focus on the upcoming quarter, year, etc. It's only during downturns that emphasis on analytics, processes, best practices, and a thorough look in the mirror occur. Unfortunately, we've found it is during the good times these companies often miss the greatest opportunities.

Q So, what's missing?

A Analytics, humility, and an unbiased facilitator.

Almost everyone has data, but very few have good information to make decisions. This is where analytics becomes important.

Most of our customers are profitable organizations, but as a facilitator we demonstrate there are opportunities for them to increase their revenues, reduce their costs, and improve their company.

We also show them paths to recognize these opportunities as we strive to familiarize ourselves with their operation(s). It is not always an easy conversation to have, and we can come across as confrontational or unpleasant. If a customer isn't ready to look at their operations, the consulting gig may be a short one, but to be effective we are both unbiased and direct.

Q What can any employee or organization do now?

A Learn data! I don't mean learn how to read reports, but learn database infrastructure, learn how your data is collected and stored, and learn what is available. In today's environment there are free BI tools that are designed to be user friendly, can connect directly to SQL databases, and can easily create real-time dashboards. The keepers of the data, and those that know how to turn it into information (whether internal or an external resource like Tansect), are valuable competitive advantages to any corporate puzzle. Coding is the next best thing, but you don't have to be an IT professional to do analytics effectively.

Second, find ways to communicate and share/train across the barriers. Your organization has best practices and I promise they are not all within your sphere of influence, and those that are within your sphere are probably not being shared.