

# Organizational Sustainability

Over the course of the past 12 months we have been involved in the development of an organizational analysis process for fraternal insurance organizations. This process has raised the question, 'what are the key elements in sustaining any organization?'

Through a series of discussions and deliberations with a number of organizational leaders, we have developed the following '7 Key Ingredients'. These are not in any specific hierarchy of importance, but are sequential and represent building cornerstones of sustainability.

## Sustainability Key Ingredients:

1. **A Market/Need & Value Proposition**
2. **Products &/or Services** that meet the market needs
3. **Human Talent** (starting with the Leadership)
4. **Continually Improving your Recipe for Success**
5. **Managing the Financials**
6. **Knowing & Expanding your Capabilities**
7. **A Winners Mindset** - Courage / Celebration of Successes / Humility / Continuous Improvement / Caring

## Brief Description for each Ingredient:

The first step of this process involves the completion of an internal due diligence evaluation. It establishes the important benchmarks relating to an enterprise evaluation standpoint. This process identifies the opportunities within your firm, the present or future challenges and provides solutions to address these areas.

On the following pages is an overview of the Life Insurance Enterprise Sustainability Pyramid and the key elements therein.

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## 1. A Market/Need & Value Proposition

It all starts with having a market for whatever your product or service is. No need, no reason for your organization. The second aspect is having a clear means of communicating or connecting the value you provide – ie your Value Proposition. This is more than just the words, as it includes the means of 'getting the word out' about what you have to offer.

## 2. Products &/or Services

There are a number of important elements within this ingredient. First, where your products or services are positioned in the marketplace – i.e. price point / value point / differentiation from your competition. Second, does the distribution of your products and services meet the desires, means or trends of your potential customers.

## 3. Human Talent (starting with the Leadership)

People are your greatest asset. This starts with having the leadership in place that has the abilities and skills to lead the organization forward. The leader sets the stage for the organization's culture and mindset, which is a separate ingredient in itself. Engaging and harnessing the talents of all the people within the organization are all part of this area.

## 4. Continually Improving your Recipe for Success

As described by Jim Collins in 'Good to Great', this ingredient is about making the critical automatic by developing processes and disciplines which enable the organization to consistently deliver on their unique value proposition. As with all recipes for success, the organization needs to continually improve upon these processes and disciplines.

## 5. Managing the Financials

The first aspect of managing your financials, is being able to differentiate between lead and lag indicators. In addition to this, understanding the financial performance (and capacity) for each product/service line is a critical element. Of course the management of expenses, debt and assets are all elements of this area.

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## 6. Knowing & Expanding your Capabilities

This element refers to the required core competencies that are necessary to succeed and create differentiation. Understanding and expanding upon these strengths represents the best platform for developing a growth strategy.

## 7. A Winner's Mindset

There are many aspects in developing a winner's mindset, beginning with consciously creating the desired culture; including taking the time to celebrate successes and instilling a deep concern for your clients/customers. In addition to this, is incorporating a courage component, that positions you to know when to say no, as well as acting on the necessary difficult decisions. Other winning mindsets include a focus on continuously learning and improving your operations and having the humility to know that there is a great deal you don't know.

### How FUSION Helps You

- Provides a platform for **thoroughly assessing the impact of environmental change** directly impacting your organization.
- **Creating a business model and pragmatic strategy, positioning you for sustainability in the future.**
- **Processes for 'putting strategy into action'** and gaining the desired organizational growth results.
- FUSION is about **'bringing your leadership team together'** and gaining the real value from **'fusing the collective intelligence' within your organization.**

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