One company, one team, one culture, aligned around the same vision, living by the same values, making decisions for the greater good, getting the best synergy and collaboration across all divisions, business units, product and customer segments. Does this describe your organization? Or does this describe a state of being that you would like for your organization but you continue to be frustrated that it falls short of this ideal?

Based on our work with CEOs globally around these issues, we know that most CEOs are seeking to overcome challenges in how people work together to improve bottom- and top-line performance. At a time when organizations have to perform at their best, they are often stuck at average, trying to manage through turbulent change, or create greater cohesiveness across a complex or matrixed structure, with a geographically dispersed workforce, complicated reporting relationships, a lack of overall company clarity and alignment, competition for resources, turf wars and often poor communication.

It is rare to find organizations with product and geographic diversification that is fully integrated, aligned and executing synergistically. Most companies operate somewhere in between. They have business units, product or customer segments as well as geographic units. Somehow, all these elements need to work together. How do you best utilize the functions or centers of excellence? How do you maximize shared services? How do you serve customers more seamlessly? How do you get everyone working towards a common vision, thinking for the greater good? Answering these questions can add billions of dollars of value to Fortune 500 companies and tens if not hundreds of millions to smaller ones.

The real solution is not just about changing the structure or changing the leadership team, but rather, refocusing the culture around a one-company approach. The lever to drive the change is the functioning of the senior team (the CEO and direct reports). A set of behaviors needs to be in place at this level. These are among the overriding cultural imperatives for success:

1. A commitment to the greater good versus a self-interest mindset.
2. An increased emphasis on open communication, trust, common language, flexibility and focus on breaking down silos between units, functions, departments and operating business units.
3. Developing a supportive team together-team apart culture among top leaders.

What are some benefits of creating a one-company culture?

- faster execution of strategies, better decision making
- increased business results
- better team dynamics; more aligned, collaborative and mutually supportive
- greater agility to move faster with change
- an enhanced total customer experience
- greater levels of accountability at all leadership and management levels
- stronger cross-organizational collaboration to create greater value across the enterprise

A recent example of the benefit of creating a one-company culture is our work with Iglo Group. CEO Martin Glenn led a hugely successful turnaround, reshaping Iglo into Europe’s largest frozen food business, 2.5 times the size of its nearest rival, with a strong track record of innovation and demonstrated ability of consolidating the frozen sector through the successful acquisition and integration of Findus Italy.

As part of the turnaround strategy, Glenn engaged Senn Delaney to help create a common ‘PACE’ culture, based on values of Performance, Aspiration, Energy and Collaboration, as a platform for results and top-line performance. He recently reflected on how the PACE culture has been a key tool to enable and accelerate its growth strategy: “2011 was our best year yet. We achieved our fifth consecutive year of core category sales and EBITDA growth and delivered on all of our financial targets. I am proud of the management team’s ability to integrate a large-scale business.”

Iglo capped 2012 by being honored as the Food Manufacturing Company of the Year by the Food Manufacturing Excellence Awards in recognition for its all around excellence, innovation and excellent business performance.