<div align="center">MEMORANDUM</div>

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Writing Sample
Policy & Organizational Analysis
Subject: Analysis of Research in Motion (RIM) leadership

Research in Motion's (RIM) challenges with organizational culture, leadership and accountability lead to an internal structure unable to compete with rising technology companies. Organizational tactics based on research can influence change and improve the company's internal culture and overall success.

Background

Starting from a contract with General Motors, Research in Motion (RIM) developed into one of the most successful, in demand tech companies. In 1998 RIM released the first handheld Blackberry, offering email access, two-way paging, and a QWERTY keyboard. By 2008, the company peaked and new pressure emerged to keep up with Apple's 2008 Iphone (Seitjs & Bigus, 2012). Unfortunately, the newfound pressure led to the development of RIM's toxic culture.

In 2011 the Boy Genius Report published several anonymous letters addressed to RIM's Co-CEOs. These letters were from current and former employees and challenged RIM's leadership over the Blackberry market. The anonymous letters complained of inattentive leaders, overworked but unproductive teams, and an organizational culture that stunted innovation (Seitjs & Bigus, 2012). These claims were quickly supported by other RIM employees who reached out to Boy Genius in solidarity.

Although RIM issued a public statement acknowledging challenges and promising better products, the company was unable to efficiently adapt. RIM's stock devalued by over fifty percent and the company lost its position as the dominant force in the cell phone industry (Seitjs & Bigus, 2012).

Problem

RIM's internal conflict over Blackberry and their ensuing public scandal, signals a weak system of accountability, management, and transparency. RIM's executives failed to address the concerns of their employees and the product suffered. Overall, management faced the challenge of altering organizational culture to promote stronger relationships, communication and performance.

RIM's leadership did not prioritize their employee's needs resulting in lack of loyalty to the company. The internal and external company conflicts presented by RIM management resulted in the publication of anonymous letters. The letters addressed problems that RIM's CEOs should address in order to continue running the company effectively. Problems include

demoting loyal employees, unclear direction between management levels and continuing to enforce fear within hierarchy.

As Hamm states, the central dilemma in an organization's development is the lack of organizational structure resulting in failure of the company (Hamm, 2006). In the RIM case, the difficult circumstances between executives, employees, and consumers displays Hamm's Argument. The personal and relationship development is an essential component to the advancement of a successful company.

Recommendations
Management & Organizational Culture:
An ineffective RIM management caused employees to hide at work and suppress their enthusiasm in order to avoid demotion. As a result, employee-management communication was often vague or nonexistent. The lack of communication eventually led to failed project launches and defective devices.

As Sutton suggests, a wise boss is willing to listen attentively and use project failures to teach his or her employees (Sutton, 2017). RIM management actively used fear to suppress communication between the hierarchy of the organization. As product launches began to fail, management blamed employees for their incompetence and failure to meet deadlines. Sutton would suggest that RIM management encourage open communication to prevent miscommunication and project failures. In addition, Sutton's approach would use the failures of the product launches as a teaching lesson for all levels of the organization (Sutton, 2017).

John Hamm addresses organizational structure and hierarchy as an aspect that leaders must manage. Hamm explicitly states that, "But when the corporate structure is changing, the org chart can truly become fearsome, particularly in companies where, because of the political culture, employees worry about the risk of their personal status" (Hamm, 2006). As previously discussed, RIM employees became fearful of speaking with management when the competition from Apple intensified. Management at RIM actively reinforced fear by regularly demoting loyal employees and blatantly ignoring team input. Hamm's approach would encourage RIM management to focus on the cohesive nature and culture of the organization and to prevent bureaucratic disagreements from affecting the employee-management relationship.

Leadership Dynamics:
RIM leadership enforces Blumenthal's idea that bad individuals can rise to the top (Blumenthal, 2016). These individuals possess negative characteristics such as infinite ambition, the lack of emotional intelligence, and an absence of conscience. Although many leaders possess these characteristics, they are able to achieve success. For example, if a leader with infinite ambition rises to the top, they can push their staff to work hard and be ambitious. However, leaders should counter with a high level of appreciation and respect for their employees by combining both ambition and respect to balance. Employees and management should reach a

mutual agreement about what is expected. As Sutton suggests, leadership expressing gratitude is appreciated and reinforces employees to do excellent work (Sutton, 2017).

At RIM, leadership was afraid to say no to new projects leaving employees overwhelmed. The fear of saying no compounded, resulting in incomplete or defective projects. If Sutton's rule, not treating others as if they are idiots, was applied to company culture, then ineffective projects could be eliminated (Sutton, 2017). It is vital to listen to employees with direct expertise to promote organizational success and therefore the effectiveness of leadership.

Institutional Accountability:

RIM often undermined accountability as senior executives refused to acknowledge failed marketing strategies and flawed designs, and did not delegate decision making to lower-level managers. Workplace operations were too autocratic and this culture exacerbated Blackberry's eventual fall in the cell phone industry. Had senior executives been more responsive to employees and more willing to admit their weaknesses, they could have created better products for their consumers (Hamm, 2006).

A key theme of the anonymous open letters was employee anger at RIM's "overdone," "poorly-planned," and "passive-aggressive" production process (Seitjs & Bigus, 2012). According to managers, the process of making a Blackberry was exceedingly slow and rarely incorporated user feedback. Instituting even small hardware alterations required a months-long approval process, and this lengthy time frame made phone innovation almost impossible. But even more cumbersome was collecting and incorporating consumer feedback. Phones were designed to fit corporate ideals instead of consumer tastes, and inevitable negative reviews were met with "a lengthy and involved process of finger pointing" (Seitjs & Bigus, 2012). Senior executives were more interested in casting blame than fixing Blackberry's and their indifference drove out a lot of needed talent.

Had executives given staffers greater autonomy in the production process, RIM might have turned the negative publicity around. Corporate leaders placed too much responsibility on their own shoulders. They saw themselves (not the front line employees most involved with production) as the best problem solvers. But if they had delegated decision making, problems could have been identified earlier and alterations to Blackberrys would have been enacted quicker (Hamm, 2006).

Conclusion

RIM has several internal problems with the organizational culture. Addressing the internal problems is necessary to improve organizational cohesion and the success of the company. If these internal problems can be addressed then RIMs success as a company overall can be improved. The tactics discussed briefly can help approach several problems that RIM faced. In addition, concern to other issues should be approached in a similar manner. Fixing internal culture problems can directly influence profits of RIM.

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