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Does Your Company Need a DOGE?

When Donald Trump enlisted Elon Musk to dissect the inner workings of the U.S. government, it raised eyebrows and sparked debate, and for good reason. Musk's role in the government cleanup effort speaks to something companies should be pondering, too. What if we could view inefficiency with the outsider's fresh eye, stripping away internal politics and spotting opportunity without putting our core teams in the crosshairs?



For many organisations, the real question isn't whether their teams are competent or committed, but whether they've become so entrenched that they can't see the wood for the trees. This is where an outsider, or what some might jokingly call a "DOGE" (Dispassionate Outsider Generating Efficiency), can work wonders.

The Value of Fresh Eyes

Let's get one thing straight—your team isn't necessarily the problem. In fact, your people are often your strongest asset. But when you're deep in the trenches of day-to-day operations, it's all too easy to miss what might be glaringly obvious to someone else. A fresh set of eyes, one that's uninvolved in internal politics and has no bias toward entrenched practices, can bring that clarity.

Imagine a seasoned navigator standing on the deck of your ship, unburdened by rank or office tradition, pointing out that the old, worn-out compass has been nudging you ever so slightly off course for years. An outsider can often reveal this kind of drift, precisely because they're not embedded in the culture or steeped in the history of "how we do things here."

The Musk Factor: Ruffling Feathers for the Right Reasons

Elon Musk's track record is based on seeing through what others miss or dismiss. It's his knack for identifying inefficiencies, cutting unnecessary bloat, and realigning resources that makes him such an interesting choice for this high-stakes role. Musk isn't there to keep the peace; he's there to question the systems that everyone else has learned to live with. And that's exactly what organisations, from large conglomerates to smaller, agile enterprises, sometimes need to survive and thrive.

It begs the question: Why don't we do the same in the UK? In British business culture, the idea of a "troubleshooter" often feels reserved for crisis moments. Yet, this proactive approach might be just what's needed to keep a company from heading into troubled waters in the first place.

Efficiency Without Losing Your Superheroes

There's an art to transforming an organisation without throwing its greatest strengths to the wind. We've seen too many businesses, in a bid to chase efficiency, lose their superpowers in the process. Replacing people with tech, or arbitrarily culling teams, can backfire spectacularly. The real trick is finding that balance where we clear the inefficiencies without compromising what makes your business tick.

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This is precisely where organisations like COGENT come in. We're not here to suggest an overhaul for the sake of it; we're here to understand what makes your business great and to enhance it. If there are weak links, hidden drains, or inefficiencies, we'll help you confront them. But we also understand that in today's world, "disruption" doesn't have to mean chaos. Rather, it's about refining, focusing, and elevating the skills and assets you already have.

Avoiding the Dodo Syndrome

In a time when "disruption" has become a buzzword, the sad truth is that many organisations cling to legacy systems and outdated processes, afraid to rock the boat. Internal teams may be talented, yes, but they can also be blinkered by routine, comfort, and office politics. Just as it took someone like Musk to call out inefficiencies in the U.S. government, sometimes a business needs that brave outsider to ask the uncomfortable questions.

But make no mistake—this isn't about a slash-and-burn approach to restructuring. COGENT's approach is about evolution, not extinction. We aren't advocating for the wholesale removal of existing teams, but rather helping companies distinguish between what needs to change and what must remain.

A Call to Action: Take a Step Back to Move Forward

The world isn't getting simpler. The market isn't getting easier. And as leaders, we're not being given more time to consider our options. The question, then, is whether your organisation is ready to see itself as it really is. Are you prepared to uncover where you might be stalling?

In Musk's government task, there's a lesson for all of us—sometimes it takes a disruptor to reveal the sacred cows we've left untouched. But disruption doesn't have to be destructive; it can be the starting point of a smarter, leaner, more resilient organisation. COGENT is here to help companies not only survive this shift but to thrive on the other side of it.

The choice is yours. Embrace the DOGE, or risk going the way of the dodo.



John McLaughlin, CEO COGENT Executive