Building an Effective Team

Thomas Farley, MPA, RLC

Copyright 2016 Employee and Family Resources.
Life Support. Work Success.
Objectives

- Explore the characteristics of effective teams
- Review the natural stages of team development
- Examine barriers to effective communication
- Learn communication skills and tools that can be applied to improve team relationships
What is an Effective Team?

Think of the Best Team Experience You’ve Had
What is an Effective Team?

What made it work well?
How did it feel?
How did members behave?
What is an Effective Team?

How did the team deal with conflict and problems?
Characteristics of Successful Teams

A Take Away Tool
Analysis of Team Effectiveness

1. Degree of Mutual Trust
High suspicion___________________________________________________High trust

2. Degree of Mutual Support
Every person for themselves_______________________Genuine concern for each other

3. Communications
Guarded, cautious____________________________________________Open, authentic

4. Team Objectives
Not understood by team_____________________________________Clearly understood
Team is negative
Toward objectives________________________________________________Team is committed

5. Handling Conflicts Within Team
We deny, avoid, suppress conflict___________________________________________We accept conflicts and work them through

6. Utilization of Member Resources
Our abilities, knowledge, and experience aren’t utilized_______________________________Our abilities, knowledge, and experience fully utilized

7. Control Methods
Control is imposed on us___________________________________We control ourselves

8. Organizational Environment
Restrictive; pressure to conform___________________________________________Free, supportive; respect for individual differences
Team Effectiveness

1. Degree of Mutual Trust

High Suspicion---------------------------------------------High Trust

2. Degree of Mutual support

Every person                                              Genuine concern
for themselves-----------------------------------------------for each other
Simon Sinek – Why Good Leaders Make You Feel Safe

If the link does not open, copy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImyZMtPVodo into your browser.
Team Effectiveness

3. Communications
Guarded, Cautious---------------------------------Open Authentic

4. Team Objectives
Not understood--------------------------------------Clearly Understood
Team Effectiveness

5. Conflict

We deny, avoid, suppress conflict and work them through

6. Utilization of Member Resources

Abilities, knowledge aren’t utilized

Abilities, knowledge are fully utilized
Team Effectiveness

7. Control Methods

Control is imposed on us-----------------We control ourselves

8. Organizational Environment

Restrictive; pressure Free supportive; respect to conform-----------------------------for individual differences
“Teams cannot be created, they must be built”

Vivette Payne
The Team-Building Workshop
Four Stages of Team Development

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing
Forming – It’s All Good!

- Formalities are preserved, members are treated as strangers
- Getting to know one another
- Members want to know the Why.. their purpose
- Members want to know roles (theirs & others)
- Management communicates expectations
- Members *need time* to become comfortable with one another
Forming – Characteristics

- Trying to define tasks
- BS...people trying to express who they are in “lofty” terms
- Discussion on what we as team members need to know
Storming – Tornado Warning!

- **Politeness** begins to wear off…(it hits the fan)
- Dissension occurs over basic mission and operating procedures
- **Control** can become a primary issue
- Disagreements may be obvious or subtle
- General disagreement over **what & how** to do a job
- Disagreement on general purpose of the team
Storming

- This is a natural part of the team development
- Good time to review ground rules, purpose, vision, mission
- Effective Communication - Needed
- Managing Conflict - Needed
Storming – Characteristics

- Members begin to show their true *style*
- Growing impatience will surface over perceived lack of progress
- Members will start to cross boundaries and irritate each other
- When members begin to *trust* one another enough to air differences… it signals readiness to work things out
Trust...

- The belief that team members can rely on each other…(got my back?)
- will live up to their commitments.
- Trust allows the team to:
  - Take risks
  - Try new ideas
  - Take greater initiative
  - Work together more effectively
Norming – Checking the GPS

- A team recognizes, accepts, values the differences
- Start to ask, **How are we going to accomplish the job?**
- Start to look at **How are we functioning?**
- Focus more time and energy on the purpose, task, vision, mission
Norming – Characteristics

- Ground rules & procedures taken seriously
- Team will want to spend time on decision making and doing the job
- Members become focused on specific jobs that need to be done.
Norming

- Conflicts are addressed and resolved
- Accomplishing tasks becomes more important
- Subgroups may be formed to move along faster (special teams)
Performing – Git-R-Done

- The Action Stage
- Highly effective
- Problem solving
- Reach solutions quickly
- Prevent issues from becoming problems
Performing – Characteristics

- Production
  - Tasks are accomplished
  - Team looks for more to do
- Team is pro-active
  - Don’t wait for direction on every item
- Demonstrate Loyalty to the Team
  - Respect individual dissension and disagreement
- Self Regulating
Recycle into Storming

- A new member joins the team
- New management
  - New organizational strategy
Bad days just happen…

When the “Wheels Come Off” –
Don’t let anything tear the TEAM apart!
Barriers to Team Communication

- Stress & Change
- Direct vs. Indirect
- Lack of Balanced Participation
- Different Styles, Personalities, Experiences
- Conflict Adverse
- Nobody’s Listening!
“Listen First to Understand, then to be understood”

Stephen Covey
Practicing Effective Team Communication

- Taking the time, easier to avoid
- One at a time, taking turns
- Slowing conversations down
- Focusing on accuracy, quality
- Practicing reflective Listening
- Being aware of personal baggage
- Taking time outs
Communication Guidelines

- Balance in participation
- Be concise
- Own and take responsibility for your feelings
- Speak for you (Use I statements)
- Avoid blaming and fault finding
- Ask clarifying questions
- Positive, constructive attitude
Summary: Building a team starts one person at a time

- Form, Storm, Norm, to Perform
- Time to Become a Team
- Building Trust
- Communicate Effectively
Additional Resources

- *When Teams Work Best*, by Frank M.J. LaFasto & Carl E. Larson
- *How to Lead Work Teams: Facilitation Skills*, by Fran Rees
- *Coaching and Mentoring for Dummies*, by Marty Brounstein
- *Team Troubleshooter*, by Robert W. Barner
- *The Team Building Tool Kit*, by Deborah Harrington-Mackin
- *Crucial Conversations*, by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler