

TEAM – DEFINITION

A group of people with different skills and different tasks, who work together on a common project, service, or goal, with a meshing of functions and mutual support.

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMS

1. The purpose, mission, or main objective is known and understood by all team members.
2. Communication in the team is open, direct and honest.
3. Sufficient leadership is available in the team.
4. There is regular review of how well the team is performing toward achieving its purpose.
5. There is an agreed organizational structure to the team.
6. Adequate resources are available to permit the team to perform its function, including skills, tools, facilities, and budgets.
7. Synergy exists, so the team performs in a way that is greater than the sum of its parts.

ON-THE-JOB ACTIONS OF SUCCESSFUL TEAMS (1)

1. Seeking opinions and input before finalizing decisions or plans.
2. Being available to help teammates.
3. Volunteering information to teammates who need it.
4. Providing contributions on time.
5. Acknowledging other team members contributions to those outside the team.
6. Being non-defensive and receptive to ideas, opinions, and needs of teammates.
7. Considering the impact of the team's plans on the rest of the organization (administration, accounting, etc.).
8. Not criticizing teammates when they are not present.
9. Coming to meetings prepared.
10. Expressing appreciation for helpful teamwork extended by another.

ON-THE-JOB ACTIONS OF SUCCESSFUL TEAMS (2)

11. Identifying and helping with loose ends, even in someone else's area of responsibility.

12. Keeping teammates advised of changes, developments and new information.

13. Being supportive of the team's objectives, once they are set.

14. Pitching in when the whole team needs help in meeting a deadline, even if it is outside of your area of responsibility.

15. Trusting the team to be able to develop consensus, even though it takes extra time.

WHY USE TEAMS

1. More knowledge and skill is brought to the problem.
2. Information flow is more effective.
3. More people are aware of the full breadth of the problem.
4. Meetings are more productive and goal-oriented.
5. Better decisions are made.
6. Team problems are identified sooner and more clearly.
7. Team members learn from each other.
8. The team becomes more cohesive and develops a stronger sense of belonging to the organization.
9. Overall morale improves.
10. More is accomplished than is possible by equivalent individual efforts.
11. Productivity and time savings are achieved by eliminating duplication of efforts.
12. Absenteeism and missed deadlines are reduced.
13. Team members understand organizational issues better.
14. Management work is shared.
15. Teams set and achieve tougher goals than individuals.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

1. Teams don't need leadership.
2. Teams must have a say in all decisions.
3. Some groups cannot be teams.
4. "Talking teamwork" will make it happen.
5. Managing teams is more difficult than traditional management.

TEAM DEVELOPMENT STAGES

1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing

FORMING

1. People are cautious, guarded, wondering.
2. Little visible disagreement.
3. Lack of identity.
4. Little investment in the group.
5. Watching to see what is expected of team members and what is acceptable from team members.

STORMING

1. Conflict occurs.
2. Work is in fits and starts and not very productive.
3. High level of frustration and/or confusion.
4. Pairing and cliques develop.
5. Beginning development of identity, purpose, and interest.
6. People take risks and get to know one another.

NORMING

1. Developing goals, roles, and relationships.
2. Learning to appreciate differences in people.
3. Conflict is about issues, not egos or people.
4. Communication is open and clear.
5. Sense of belonging develops.
6. Progress is beginning to be made.
7. Work becomes enjoyable.

PERFORMING

1. Team acts on common goals, with synergy, high morale, and high productivity.
2. Easy shifting of roles from one to another.
3. Differences are valued.
4. Team members look out for one another's interests.
5. Spontaneous, collaborative efforts.
6. Sharing of all relevant information.
7. Conflict is frequent, but leads to problem solving.

TEAM DEVELOPMENT TASKS

1. Define team purpose.
2. Review performance against purpose.
3. Define a team vision, a long term view of where the team wants to be in the foreseeable future.
4. Discuss the team's work norms and traditions.
5. Assess the current stage of team development and identify barriers to further development.
6. As a group, define the roles of team members.
7. Create team plans.
8. Evaluate performance to the plans.
9. Develop a process to obtain useful feedback from outside sources (customers, management, other groups).
10. Participate as a team in a team skill learning event.
11. Participate as a team in a challenging or enjoyable experience (cruise, bike trip, outdoor challenge, charitable fund raiser, etc.).

TEAM DEVELOPMENT DON'TS

1. Overtalk
2. Brag
3. Power plays
4. Use authoritarian communication
5. Public criticism
6. Preoccupied with the pyramid

TEAM DEVELOPMENT DO'S

1. Straight talk
2. Manage conflict
3. Honor commitments
4. Permeable work boundaries
5. Affirm and celebrate
6. Apply collective wisdom
7. Appreciate differences

TEAM MEETING GROUND RULES

1. Start on time.
2. Only one conversation at a time.
3. Listen for understanding.
4. Be open to new ideas.
5. Ask “Why?”
6. Don’t repeat points already made.
7. Everyone participates.
8. No rank.
9. Only process owners vote.
10. Have fun!!