

Thinking about teams

KINDS OF TEAMS

<p>COHESION measures how much members like belonging to the group and how well they get along with and cooperate with one another.</p>	HIGH	<p>A 'GANG'</p> <p>High cohesion Low goal integration</p>	<p>A HIGH POTENTIAL TEAM</p> <p>High cohesion High goal integration</p>
	LOW	<p>THE UNINVOLVED WORKFORCE</p> <p>Low cohesion Low goal integration</p>	<p>INDIVIDUAL PERFORMERS</p> <p>High goal integration Low cohesion</p>
		LOW	HIGH

GOAL INTEGRATION: Measure the degree to which members of the group accept and are committed to the goals of the larger organization.

Instructions

INDIVIDUAL TASK: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT TEAMS? IDENTIFY THREE SPECIFIC THINGS ABOUT TEAMS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT IN THIS WORKSHOP.

TEAM TASK: SHARE YOUR INDIVIDUAL LEARNING GOALS. SEE IF THE TEAM CAN REACH CONSENSUS ON THE THREE TOP PRIORITY TEAM LEARNING GOALS. RECORD THEM ON THE SHEETS PROVIDED.

LEVELS OF 'TEAMWORK' The word 'team' is used widely today to describe what's going on in organizations. Unfortunately, the same word is used to describe many different levels of team work. Use the list below to help you to find the level of teamwork that you are familiar with and also to identify where you might be heading.

LEVEL EIGHT: LEARNING TEAMS (in high tech workplaces)

We work in teams to try to assess what we have learned, to assimilate new learnings and to plan for new learning.

Usual Outcomes: Innovation, change, understanding and learning.

LEVEL SEVEN: SELF-MANAGING WORK TEAMS OR LEARNING TEAMS

We work in 'teams' without a formal leader. The team handles most management tasks.

Usual Outcomes: a sense of 'ownership' of the workplace.

LEVEL SIX: LIMITED SELF-DIRECTION

We work in designated 'teams' full time. While we still have a formal leader to coordinate with other units, we often resolve problems without the leader's input.

Usual Outcomes: A sense of team accountability for team results.

LEVEL FIVE: INTERGROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING

Our group meets with other groups to deal with issues that affect us.

Usual Outcomes: increased cooperation

LEVEL FOUR: REGULAR PROBLEM-SOLVING

Our group meets regularly with our formal leader to deal with work issues, otherwise we work independently.

Usual Outcomes: Commitment to group decisions.

LEVEL THREE: PROJECT TEAMS

Our formal leader assigns a specific, one-time issue to a selected group to study, recommend and sometimes resolve the issue.

Usual Outcomes: a special feeling of enthusiasm and commitment.

LEVEL TWO: DIALOGUE

Our formal leader gets input from us, then decides & informs us.

Usual Outcomes: understanding & acceptance.

LEVEL ONE: INFORMATION SHARING

Our formal leader decides, then informs us.

Usual Outcomes: awareness and compliance.

WHAT KIND OF TEAMWORK DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION NEED?

HIGH NEED FOR
COHESION

COHESION
How important is it
that workers get along
well with each other?
Do they depend on
each other to cooperate?
Or can they each do their
work independent
of the other?

<p>DANGER</p> <p>When do you need high cohesion with Low goal integration?</p>	<p>INVESTMENT IN TEAMWORK MAY BE WORTH IT</p> <p>High need for cohesion & A High need for goal integration</p>
<p>TEAMS REDUNDANT</p> <p>Low need for cohesion Low need for goal integration</p>	<p>INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR MODEL MAY BE BEST</p> <p>Low need for cohesion High need for goal integration</p>

LOW NEED FOR
COHESION

LOW NEED FOR
GOAL
INTEGRATION

HIGH NEED FOR
GOAL
INTEGRATION

GOAL INTEGRATION: How critical is it that workers buy into the goals of the organization? Can the organization succeed if workers simply do their jobs as they are told to do them?

Look at the grid above. What does your organization need from its workers?

Why?

TEAMWORK IS HARD WORK...

WORKING ON COHESION AMONG TEAM MEMBERS

Feelings among team members that they belong to a "team" generally increase with...

- frequency of team meetings or 'practices',
- experiences of success and celebrations,
- the establishment of effective ways and means for working together,
- the establishment of some useful 'groundrules' of behaviour,
- establishing a noticeable team identity such as a name, place, jacket, logo etc.
- provision of opportunities to talk about the team and how its doing,
- a shared record of the work produced by the team,
- someone who effectively facilitates team meetings,
- members who appreciate the different contributions of each member to team performance
- members who accept and value different personalities and the perspective they bring to the team

WORKING ON INTEGRATING TEAM MEMBER GOALS WITH TEAM AND ORGANIZATION GOALS

An important dimension of longer term team success is the degree to which members of the team can meet their individual goals as the team meets its goals. One way to work on this dimension is to ask individuals what they want to get out of belonging to the team, or what their work goals are. Some may want to acquire more skills, some want to work towards an inspiring overall vision, some may want to lead, others may just like the idea of being part of a team, others may want more material rewards and others may want the security and anonymity of being part of a group. What are the personal goals of the members of the team you belong to?

Another way to work on goal integration is to clarify the goals of the team and of the broader organization for each member of the team. If the team does not have a set of clear goals, an early task would be to set those goals at a team meeting. If the team does have goals but the team members aren't sure what they are, talk about them at the next team meeting. If the organization has a mission or vision statement with supporting goals, make sure each member of the team knows what they are and how his or her work impacts achievement.

For more advanced teams, participation in the development of a complete team-based strategic plan fully integrated into the organization's strategic plan is an important step. This process involves an honest assessment of the teams strengths and weaknesses; a look at external threats and opportunities; the establishment of a team purpose or mission statement and a longer term direction or vision; the identification of action priorities to move towards the vision and the development of a detailed action plan with steps, responsibilities schedules and budgets. The team then works on implementing the plan and adjusting it from time-to-time to account for the realities it encounters. Team meetings are focussed on assessing progress, identifying and celebrating successes and identifying and solving problems.

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