Creating teams that work

A POSITION PAPER ON TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

WHY EFFECTIVE TEAMS?

We all hope that our experiences with teams will be enriching and successful. In reality however, many of these groupings fall short of our expectations. What is baffling is this: Why the gap between aspiration and reality? In this position paper, we hope to shed some light on how to create more high-performing teams in the Public Service. If you are leading a team, part of a team, or facilitating team effectiveness, this paper is for you.

Teams are common building blocks in organisations, and will be increasingly important in the face of the Public Service's ever-changing and unpredictable environment. Leaders will find that they do not have all the right answers and need to tap on distributed knowledge across the Public Service. The term "joint solutioning" was coined in recognition of this need for agencies to integrate and coordinate in order to tackle cross-cutting issues. This would mean an increased need for teamwork within and across organisational boundaries.

While there are merits to teamwork, the actual experience may not be so favourable. Findings from the Public Service Employee Engagement Survey revealed that only 44% of respondents felt teamwork was encouraged in their organisation[1]. Participants of a Whole-of-Government collaboration study also revealed that if given a choice, they would rather not relive the experience of being in a cross-agency project[2]. The reasons included feeling that collaboration had compromised the mandates of their individual organisations. Others felt that the collaborative projects did not possess any real impact.

This is a pity because teams can potentially exceed the sum of each team member's individual best. However, when individuals are placed together, social dynamics and organisation support come into play, inevitably affecting the teams' performance[3].

If effective teamwork is so important, can anything be done to help them become better? The answer is, "yes". However, you must be prepared for the intentional and directed effort needed to build a team that has systematic, lasting results[4]. In this paper, we share some "whats" and "hows" of team effectiveness.

[1] Public Service Engagement Survey Norms 2012, Institute of Leadership & Organisation Development, Civil Service College.
[2] Neo, B.S. & Boh, W.F. (2010). WOG Collaboration Study: Findings and Recommendations. Information Management Research Centre.
[3] Kozlowski, S. & Ilgen, D. (2006). Enhancing the effectiveness of work groups and teams. Psychological Science Suppl. S, 77 – 124.
[4] Gordon, J. (2002). A perspective on team building. Journal of American Academy of Business, 22, 185-188.

TO TEAM OR NOT TO TEAM?

The first question we should ask is - do we really need a team? Whenever a task needs to be completed, a common response would be to form a team to work on it. Contrary to popular belief, not all situations/ tasks call for teamwork. As a guideline, teams should be formed only if a co-ordinated effort requiring different individual skills, like organising an event, is needed to achieve a desired outcome[5].

Additionally, not all tasks are best accomplished by a team. For example, tasks such as writing speeches or emails should be best left to individuals[6]. Such tasks involve organising and expressing thoughts and ideas, which may be diluted or compromised in a large group setting[7]. The adage, 'too many cooks spoil the broth', perfectly represents this point. Of course, some items would benefit from feedback from others, but after one or two people work on them. Think about the tasks in your work area – which ones are best accomplished by one or two people, and which are best accomplished by a team?

So what is a REAL team?

Team experts like Jon Katzenbach[8] and Richard Hackman have distinguished between groups and teams (see Annex, Table 1). Whenever a number of people come together for a purpose, you have a group. However, teams are a subset of groups, with a more specific set of criteria to be identified as a team. By understanding the differences between the two, it helps us determine the conditions and environment that help make the team or group effective.

Here are some suggestions on what makes a real team:

> Team members are committed to working interdependently toward a common goal[9].

> Teams have clear boundaries to distinguish between members and non-members[10].

> Teams have a low membership turnover rate, which gives members time and opportunity to learn how to work together well[11].

Some common types of teams exist within the Singapore Public Service:

1. Decision-making teams, for example, senior management teams, Public Service level committees and inter-agency project teams.

2. Coordinating teams, for example, event organising teams and crisis response teams.

3. Consultative teams, for example, advisory panels.

4. Learning teams, for example, communities of practice and learning cohorts.

[5] Ling, G. (2012). Why large teams write bad songs. Retrieved from http://www.challenge.gov.sg/2012/07/why-large-teams-write-bad-songs/.
[6] Shore, M. (2002). Personal communication.
[7] Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2001). When and how team leaders matter. Research in Organizational Behaviour, 26, 37-74.
[8] Katzenbach, J. R. & Smith, D. K. (1993). The discipline of teams. Harvard Business Review, 162 – 171.
[9] Wageman, R. (1999). The meaning of interdependence. In: M. E. Turner (Ed.), Groups atWork: Theory and Research (pp. 197–218). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
[10] Alderfer, C. P. (1980). Consulting to underbounded systems. In: C. P. Alderfer & C. L. Cooper (Eds), Advances in Experiential Social Processes (Vol. 2, pp. 267–295). New York: Wiley.
[11] Hackman, J. R. (2002). Leading teams: Setting the stage for great performances. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

What is a HIGH-PERFORMING team?

The next step after a real team is formed is to ensure it is on the road to performance. Most people think team performance is the successful accomplishment of work tasks. However, there is consensus (see Annex, Table 2) that a truly performing team achieves more than task completion and can be characterised by the following attributes[12]:

1   **Performance – The results meet or exceed stakeholder expectations.**
Its stakeholders are satisfied as the team's performance outputs meet or exceed the standards of quantity, quality and timeliness.
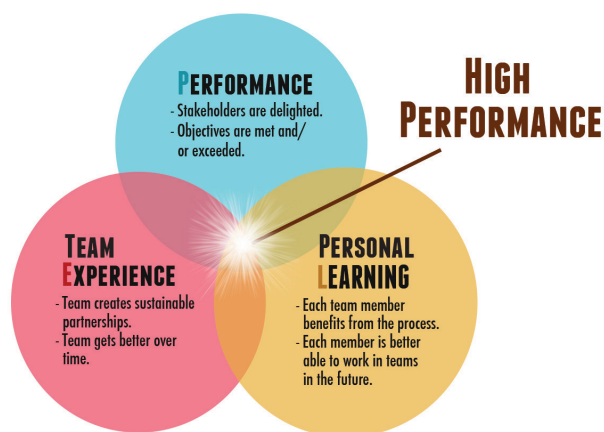
2   **Experience - The team's members are satisfied with being part of the team.**
The team gets better at working together over time and the members enjoy the experience of working together. One rule of thumb to help understand if there was a positive team experience is to ask members, "if given a choice, would you want to work in this team again?"

3   **Learning – Individuals learn new skills from working in the team.**
They are able to build skills and competencies from their participation in the team, and are more capable of working with others more effectively and interdependently in the future.

PERFORMANCE
- Stakeholders are delighted.
- Objectives are met and/or exceeded.

HIGH PERFORMANCE

TEAM EXPERIENCE
- Team creates sustainable partnerships.
- Team gets better over time.

PERSONAL LEARNING
- Each team member benefits from the process.
- Each member is better able to work in teams in the future.

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[12] Gallwey, W. (2001). The inner game of Work: Focus, learning, pleasure, and mobility in the workplace. Canada, Toronto: Random House Trade Paperbacks.

Do teams go through stages in their journey together?

A variety of theories have been created to explain changes that teams experience. Here we introduce two models of the team's journey, Bruce Tuckman's Stages of Small-group Development[13], as well as Patrick Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions of a Team[14].

These models help us better understand how to manage a team at different stages. Though they provide a rough map to a team's journey, it is important to note that team stages can be cyclical[15] or iterative. For example, some teams may need to go back to an earlier stage when a new team member joins, or when faced with new external challenges.

It is also useful to be aware that not all teams go through these stages of development in a sequential order. Some teams may skip stages, while some get stuck at a stage because they have not worked through their earlier more foundational issues[16]. However, the stages do inform us of overall patterns that groups tend to go through.

[13] Tuckman, Bruce W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. Psychological Bulletin 63, (6) 384- 399.
[14] Lencioni, P. M. (2002). The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, a Leadership Fable. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
[15] Marshak, B. (2009). Organisational change: Views from the edge. United States of America: The Lewin Centre.
[16] Wheelan, S. (2005). Group process: A developmental perspective. (2nd ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Tuckman's Stages of Small-Group Development

In 1965, social psychologist Bruce Tuckman created a model that explains the life cycle of groups. (Note: While this model targets groups, it can also be applied to teams.) He summarised this process as Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and later added a fifth stage, called Adjourning. Tuckman's model gained prominence because it responded both to the growing importance of groups in the work place, and to the lack of applicable research on groups[17]. The extra benefit of the Tuckman model is that the different steps in the process rhyme, making it easier for people to remember.

Stage 1: Forming

The forming stage is one where group members start to become oriented to the task and to one another. The group members begin by defining the task, and then deciding on necessary strategies to fulfil it.

Phase 2: Storming

The storming stage happens where members start to become aware of individual differences in thinking or working styles, which may result in friction. This could result from differences in perceived goals or each member's role clarity. It is important to note that the storming phase can be dealt with in either a healthy or unhealthy manner. Healthy conflict can be defined as open and respectful communication where members work to understand and resolve their differences. However, unhealthy conflict can cause people to quietly withdraw or become openly aggressive with the rest. Research has shown that not all groups necessarily go through team conflict[18]. Nonetheless, it is important that all teams work through their differences and build mutual understanding.

Stage 3: Norming

When groups progress beyond the storming stage, they move into the norming stage, where they begin to establish group norms and become cohesive. In this stage, there is an open exchange of ideas, opinions and feelings. Members understand how to interact and work better with each other. The team moves from tolerating differences to accepting differences.

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[17] Boneright, D. A. (2010). 40 years of storming: a historical review of Tuckman's model of small group development. Human Resource Development International, 13, 111-120.
[18] Tuckman, B. & Jensen, M. (1977). Stages of small-group development revisited. Group & Organisation Studies, 2(4), 419.

Tuckman's Stages of Small-Group Development

Stage 4: Performing

Following norming, groups can progress into the performing stage, where they mature. The group now knows how to operate at its optimum, enabling it to successfully focus on its task. Studies show that groups perform best during this stage, especially nearer the end of the project. However, not all groups get to this stage because they were not able to move past issues that surfaced during the previous stages. Also, some groups find themselves content to remain at the norming stage. As Jim Collins, the author of the book "Good to Great" says, "good is often the enemy of great".

Stage 5: Adjourning

Subsequently, the adjourning stage refers to the termination and separation of the group. This conclusion could lead to some recognition as well as reflection on the team's performance.

Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions

Another model that traces a team's journey is Patrick Lencioni's "Five Dysfunctions"[19]. Lencioni is a management consultant who based his work on his experience of working with teams. While his model lacks research validation, it is intuitive and easy to understand and reflects real life experiences of working in teams. Nonetheless, his model tends to slant toward team relationships and norms (trust, unfiltered debate, mutual accountability etc).

Here are Lencioni's five phases that teams journey through to achieve results:

Phase 1: Members trust each other

Trust occurs when team members are able to be vulnerable to one another, and are willing to admit their mistakes, acknowledge their weaknesses or ask for help. Without a certain comfort level among team members, a foundation of trust is impossible.

Phase 2: Engage in unfiltered debate around ideas

Trust builds the foundation for teams to engage in unfiltered, passionate debate about key issues, alleviating two problems. First, encouraging healthy conflict actually decreases the likelihood of destructive, back channel sniping. Second, it leads to optimal decision-making because the team benefits from the true ideas and perspectives of its members.

Phase 3: Commitment to decisions and plans of actions

Team members can truly commit to decisions because they are part of the decision making process (done through a healthy exchange of ideas). This often creates an environment of clarity and empowerment in an organisation.

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[19]   Lencioni, P. (2002). The five dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable. New York: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions

Phase 4: Hold one another accountable for delivering of those plans

When a team commits to a clear plan of action, peer-to-peer accountability can occur. An individual, for example, can privately point out to his or her teammate about their counter-productive actions and behaviours because the desired actions and behaviours were agreed upon in the first place.

Phase 5: Focus on achievement of collective results

When team members hold one another accountable, they increase the likelihood that collective team results will become more important than individual ego and recognition. When this occurs, performance improves and the team continues to thrive.

Focuses on achieving **Results**

Holds One Another **Accountable** to deliver

Takes decisions and plans actions with full **Commitment**

Engages one another in unfiltered **Conflicts** around ideas

Builds on the foundation of **Trust**

WHAT LAYS THE FOUNDATION FOR TEAM EFFECTIVENESS?

So far, we have articulated what team effectiveness looks like, as well as the developmental journey of teams. What are the conditions that underlie team effectiveness?

One of the keys to developing high performing teams is to remember that they do not simply happen. Building successful teams should be a collective act of commitment because they take much effort and time[20]. To attain high performance, we must be knowledgeable about the factors that influence team dynamics and effectiveness. While team leaders usually share greater responsibility for the team's effectiveness, every member should be contributing toward the development of the team. But what really enables team effectiveness? There are many models that help illustrate the key factors needed for team effectiveness. (See Annex, Table 3)

Here we highlight two models: The Hackman model as well as the GRPI model. We share the Hackman model due to its strong research-based support, and the GRPI model because it is widely-used and intuitive. Both models provide useful frames when diagnosing and intervening with teams.

Here are five conditions for team effectiveness according to Hackman[21]:

1 **Real Team:** Real teams (1) have clear boundaries; (2) are interdependent; and (3) have at least some stability of membership, which gives members time and opportunity to learn how to work together well.

2 **Compelling Direction:** The specification of the team's overall purposes is (1) challenging (which energises members), (2) clear (which orients them to their main purposes) and (3) consequential (which engages the full range of their talents).

3 **Enabling Structure:** Three structural features are key in fostering competent teamwork. (1) Task design. The team task should be a whole and meaningful piece of work. Team members should be able to have the autonomy to exercise judgment about work procedures. (2) Team composition. The team should be as small as possible, have members with ample task and interpersonal skills, and consist of a good mix of members. (3) Core norms of conduct. The team clearly and explicitly specifies member behaviours that are especially valued and those that are unacceptable.

4 **Supportive Organisation Context:** The structures and processes in an organisation are crucial to team effectiveness, specifically: (1) a reward system that provides positive consequences for excellent team performance. (2) an educational system that makes available technical assistance or training for any aspects of the work unfamiliar to team members. (3) an information system that provides the team with the necessary data and projections needed to carry out their work.

When the first four conditions are in place, it becomes useful to provide the fifth:

5 **Available, Expert Coaching:** The team has an expert that helps members to make good use of their collective resources in accomplishing the team's work.

FIVE CONDITIONS FOR TEAM EFFECTIVENESS MODEL
1. REAL TEAM   2. COMPELLING DIRECTION   3. ENABLING STRUCTURE
4. SUPPORTIVE ORGNISATION CONTEXT   5. AVAILABLE EXPERT COACHING

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[20] De Meuse, K. P. (n.d) Driving Team Effectiveness. Retrieved from http://www.lominger.com/pdf/teamswhitepaper080409.pdf.
[21] Hackman, J. Richard, Ruth Wageman, and Colin M. Fisher. 2009. Leading teams when the time is right: Finding the best moments to act. Organizational Dynamics 38(3): 192–203.

The GRPI model[22] was conceptualised by one of OD's founding fathers, Richard Beckhard[23]. It represents a useful frame to help us understand the basic conditions for team effectiveness.

Beckhard highlights four key conditions for team effectiveness:

1 **Goals:** A team with clear and compelling goals. (Is there goal clarity? How will we measure progress and performance? What outcomes would satisfy our stakeholders?)

2 **Roles:** A team with clarity of membership and roles. (Do we know who is part of the team, as well as their individual roles?)

3 **Processes:** A team with suitable norms/processes to do their work. (What are the processes/ systems for communication, decision making, and meetings?)

4 **Interactions:** A team that understands how to work together and maintains healthy interpersonal relationships. (What are our preferred working styles? How do we work together?)

The categories "Goals, Roles, Processes and Interactions" are intentionally ordered in a sequential fashion. When teams are not functioning effectively, most people assume that we should focus on building team relationships. Beckhard, however, argued that interpersonal relationships should be the last order of intervention. Instead, these problems could be due to more fundamental reasons such as lack of clarity for goals, roles or processes.
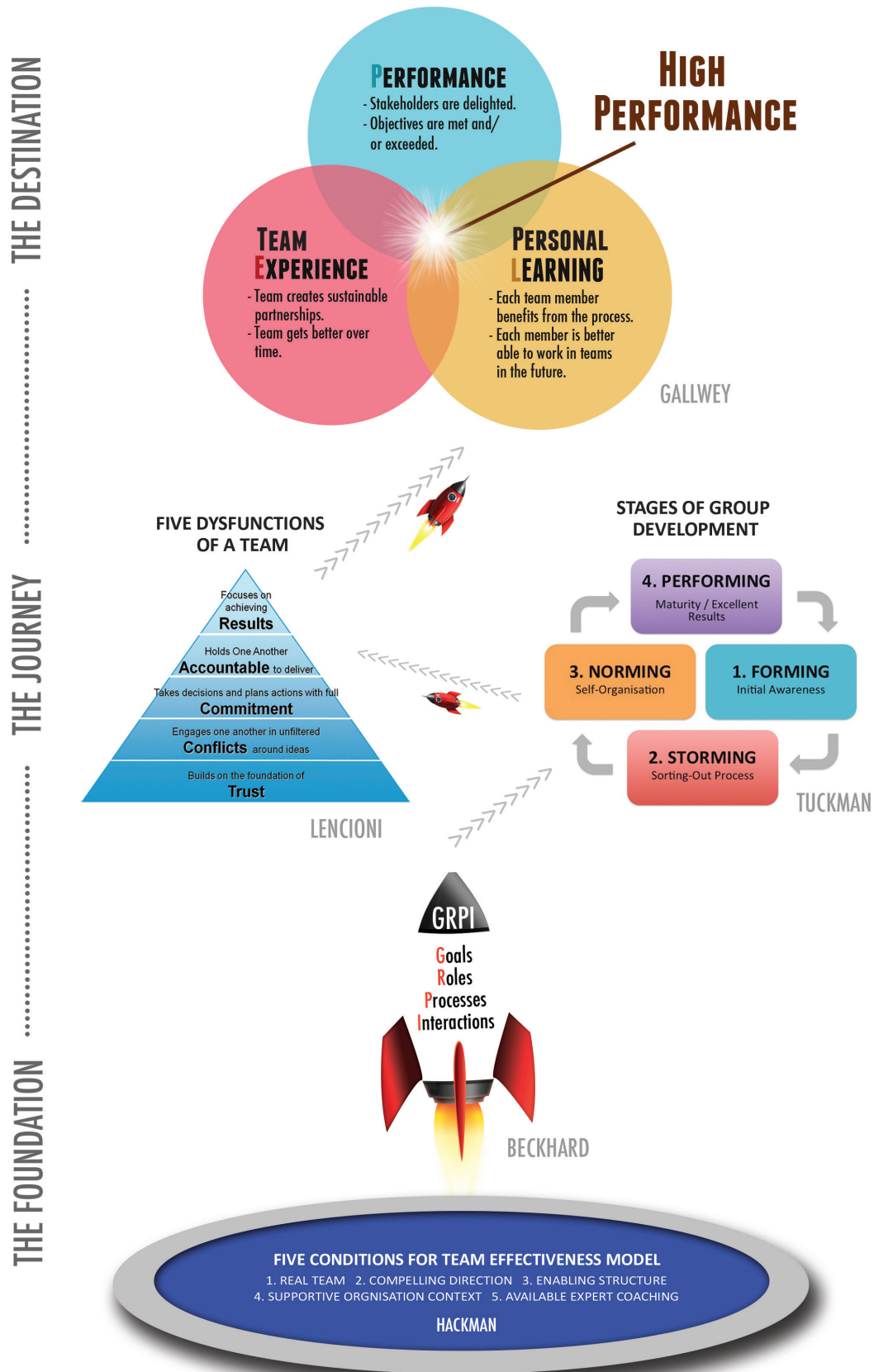

GRPI

Goals
Roles
Processes
Interactions

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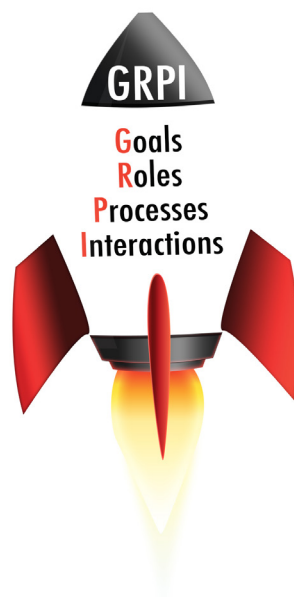
[22] Noolan, J. (n.d.) Diagnostic models: An introduction. Retrieved from http://www.donblake.com/module3/DiagnosticModels.pdf.
[23] Beckhard, R. (1972). Optimizing Team Building Efforts. Journal of Contemporary Business, 23-27.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:
CREATING EFFECTIVE TEAMS DIAGRAM

THE DESTINATION

PERFORMANCE
- Stakeholders are delighted.
- Objectives are met and/or exceeded.

HIGH PERFORMANCE

TEAM EXPERIENCE
- Team creates sustainable partnerships.
- Team gets better over time.

PERSONAL LEARNING
- Each team member benefits from the process.
- Each member is better able to work in teams in the future.

GALLWEY

THE JOURNEY

FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

Focuses on achieving **Results**

Holds One Another **Accountable** to deliver

Takes decisions and plans actions with full **Commitment**

Engages one another in unfiltered **Conflicts** around ideas

Builds on the foundation of **Trust**

LENCIONI

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

4. PERFORMING
Maturity / Excellent Results

3. NORMING
Self-Organisation

1. FORMING
Initial Awareness

2. STORMING
Sorting-Out Process

TUCKMAN

GRPI

Goals
Roles
Processes
Interactions

BECKHARD

THE FOUNDATION

FIVE CONDITIONS FOR TEAM EFFECTIVENESS MODEL
1. REAL TEAM   2. COMPELLING DIRECTION   3. ENABLING STRUCTURE
4. SUPPORTIVE ORGNISATION CONTEXT   5. AVAILABLE EXPERT COACHING

HACKMAN

HOW CAN WE ENHANCE TEAM EFFECTIVENESS?

HOW CAN WE ENHANCE TEAM EFFECTIVENESS?

In this segment, we share some practical tips on how team effectiveness can be enhanced. This is also where the team models that we have learnt come in useful as a reference point to frame our thinking about improving teams.

In the table below, we provide some tips to apply during the different stages of a team's life cycle.

	Key Questions	Project Team (i.e. short-term duration)	Work Team & Senior Management Team (i.e. long-term duration)
FORMING AND TRANSITION TO STORMING	• What is the team's purpose/goal? • Who is in the team? • Do we have clarity on the roles of each member? • Have we agreed on team norms of conduct?	• Scope the project: sponsors, champions, stakeholders, obstacles, etc. • Conduct team launch to clarify team purpose, role clarity and norms.	• Ensure mission, goals, and roles are clear. • Conduct team launch to clarify team purpose, role clarity and norms.
STORMING AND TRANSITION TO NORMING	• Have we been abiding with our agreed upon norms of conduct? • Do team members understand each other's working styles or preferences? • Do we have healthy ways of resolving conflict?	• Re-visit team launch and either reinforce or re-launch. • Celebrate healthy disagreements and enhance conflict skills. • Engage a coach or facilitator.	• Re-visit team launch and either reinforce or re-launch. • Conduct team assessment (i.e. team effectiveness, personality profiling). • Assess meeting dynamics and behavioural norms. • Engage a coach or facilitator. • Celebrate healthy disagreements and enhance conflict skills.
NORMING AND TRANSITION TO PERFORMING	• How can we facilitate open exchange of ideas and thoughts? • How can we support each other? • How can we perform even better?	• Assess PEL (Performance, Experience, and Learning) goals to see where there is leverage to move to performing.	• Create team goals, that can generate a shift towards high-performance. • Ensure structure and processes are in place that support sustained success. • Share leadership responsibilities, for things like chairing meetings and making consensus decisions. • Choose a high-leverage organisational goal that the entire team can participate in.

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[24] Hackman, J. R., & O'Connor, M. (2004). What makes for a great analytic team? Individual vs. team approaches to intelligence analysis. Washington, DC: Intelligence Science Board, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence.

[25] Hackman, J. Richard, Ruth Wageman, and Colin M. Fisher. (2009). Leading teams when the time is right: Finding the best moments to act. Organizational Dynamics 38(3): 192–203.

	Key Questions	Project Team (i.e. short-term duration)	Work Team & Senior Management Team (i.e. long-term duration)
PERFORMING	• How do we sustain and enhance our effectiveness?	• Sustain practices that have created high-performance.	• Explore what is the next opportunity for the team. • Expand teamwork to org-wide collaboration. • Re-examine what high-performance might look like for an entire range of stakeholders.
ADJOURNING	• How do we honour and learn from what we have done together? • What would transition look like for us?	• Celebrate achievements and consolidate lessons learned.	• Celebrate achievements and consolidate lessons learned.

1. LAUNCHING A TEAM

Much thought needs to be given to a team's formation. We need to ask the right questions at the start – Is the team a real team? Do we really have a right mix of member skills and abilities? Is there a clear purpose for the team? Does the team structure facilitate rather than impede collective work? Ensuring that some of these conditions are set in place can increase the chances of a team's success[24]. In fact, these factors should be re-considered even after the team has been formed for some time, if the initial purpose for forming the team was unclear, or there are certain dysfunctions in the team's design.

A team launch[25] is an intervention that can help to address some of these teething issues, with the purpose of getting a team off to a good start. It is a facilitated process that enables members to gain clarity and consensus on the team's goals, roles, norms and interpersonal styles.

How to do a team launch in four easy steps

1. **Purpose / Goals**: Get clear on the compelling purpose and goals of the project: for the stakeholders, the team, and the individuals.

2. **Roles**: Have each person share the skills and experiences they bring to the team, what they want to learn from the process, and then determine roles.

3. **Norms**: Now that the purpose and roles are clear, develop team norms to help achieve goals around communication, meetings, decision-making, etc.

4. **Interactions**: Talk with each other about working style preferences that would be helpful for each other to know.

2. DIAGNOSING A TEAM

When should teams be diagnosed? Team diagnosis can be used when there is an issue affecting the team, or simply to conduct a pulse-check to assess the team.

The first step to diagnosis is to understand the issue you want to address. The purpose of diagnosis is to help obtain a clear picture of this issue. There are various diagnostic tools that help us better understand these issues. In fact, the team models shared earlier also provide a useful diagnostic frame. Understanding where your team stands in its life cycle, (i.e. using "Form Storm Norm Perform" and "Five Dysfunctions") or whether it meets conditions for team effectiveness (i.e. "GRPI" or "Five Conditions for Team Effectiveness" models) can help shed light on the current state of the team. Choose an appropriate team diagnostic depending on the issue you want to find out.

The key to choosing a suitable diagnostic tool is to first understand what you want to better understand about the team and why. These tools use different methods, like observations, interviews or survey questionnaires, to facilitate diagnosis.

Appropriate interventions can only be designed when a proper diagnosis has been carried out. Findings from the diagnostic process then serve as a reference for the team to collectively make sense of the findings as well as decide on suitable action steps.

When is a team building session needed[26]?

Team building has earned a reputation as a common team intervention, although the term has come to mean many things to many people, from cooking together, climbing trees, sharing feedback, doing profiles, etc. There are mixed reviews about the effectiveness of such sessions. A common criticism is that after a team building exercise everyone goes back to what they were doing before – no real change is made. In fact, research has also shown little evidence that team bonding and team activity events have a positive impact on team performance[27]. Poor planning, inappropriate exercises, and unclear goals could all be reasons why team building initiatives fail.

In order for team building sessions to have more impact, they need to be approached more purposefully. What do members see as the challenges the team is facing, and what type of event do they think will help the team accelerate their development? So simply involving team members in the process can yield significant potential impact.

Team building should not be a cure-all solution for the problems a team faces. We need to identify whether the issue is faced by individuals or the entire team. Say, for example, that two members within a team do not get along. This issue is more appropriately addressed by having a private chat with the affected members rather than a facilitated session with the team. Involving the entire team may cause the intervention to backfire and weaken morale.

We must first understand what the team really needs, and if team building is the chosen intervention, to clarify the objectives that need to be achieved with the exercise. The design of the session should then align itself to achieving these objectives.

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[26] O'loughlin, D. & Chong, E. (2012). Outdoor adventure retreats – When do they really work? Retrieved from http://www.cscollege.gov.sg/Knowledge/Odyssey/Facilitating%20Team%20Effectiveness/Pages/Outdoor%20Adventure%20Retreats%2%2When%20do%20They%20Really%20Work.aspx.

[27] Katzenbach, R. & Smith, D. K. (1993). The wisdom of teams. United States: Mckinsey & Company.

3. MAINTAINING A TEAM

Most teams are not formed every other day; so much of the real work in facilitating team effectiveness really goes into maintaining the team. Introducing simple team processes can help to maintain and ensure the health of the team. Have you given thought to how you can improve the way your team works together on a day-to-day basis?

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Here are some suggestions:

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■ **Go arounds and check-ins.** A simple process such as inviting everyone to share their opinion gives people permission to speak up to share their views and thoughts. Conducting a "check-in" at the start of each meeting where each member is invited to share what they hope to achieve from the meeting also helps to set the stage for the meeting and ensures that expectations are clarified.

■ **Process consultation.** Assigning a process consultant to observe the team's meetings may shed light on further areas for improvement. The role of the process consultant is to heighten awareness of the relational patterns and systematic processes as people work together[28]. The process consultant may not provide solutions or be an expert in the content, but focuses on verbalising observations about the group's functioning.

What does a process consultant observe? The large frame is that of "task" and "maintenance" behaviours. Task behaviours are for the purpose of accomplishing the group task or goal, for instance, staying on time and following the agenda. On the other hand, maintenance behaviours focus on areas such as building the team's capacity to communicate, make effective decisions, exhibit leadership, and become high-performing.

Research from Marcial Losada and Emily Heaphy[29] has shown that high performance teams distinguish themselves in the following three dimensions – having a balance between inquiry and advocacy, significantly more positive than negative exchanges, as well as equal attention on being inwardly and outwardly focussed. These dimensions can also be observed and brought to the team's awareness as well.

28 Rainey, M. A. (2013). Understanding group dynamics and its role in the organisation. Retrieved from Civil Service College.
29 Losada, M. & Heaphy, E. (2004). The role of positivity and connectivity in the Performance of business teams. American Behavioral Scientist, 47(6), 740-765.
30 Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2005). A theory of team coaching. Academy of Management Review, 30, 269-287.
31 Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2005). A theory of team coaching. Academy of Management Review, 30, 269.
32 Hawkins, P. (2011). Leadership team coaching. Great Britain and United States: Kogan Page Limited.
33 Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2005). A theory of team coaching. Academy of Management Review, 30, 269-287.

◼ **Team coaching[30].** Hackman and Wageman propose that team coaching is "direct interaction with a team intended to help members make coordinated and task-appropriate use of their collective resources in accomplishing the team's work"[31]. This means that team coaching involves work with the entire team.

Team coaching has also been defined by Peter Hawkins as "enabling a team to function at more than the sum of its parts, by clarifying its mission and improving its external and internal relationships"[32]. This highlights the importance of ensuring that the team works on relationships it has with stakeholders instead of just focussing on how members work together.

The focus of the coaching can be motivational (addressing effort and building shared commitment to the group), consultative (addressing performance strategy) or educational (addressing knowledge and skill of team members)[33]. The team coaching could take place with the help of an external resource person, or the team leader or a member, as long as they possess competence in coaching and credibility with the team. The efficacy of the team coaching intervention also depends greatly on the appropriateness of its timing and the person doing the coaching. Also, the team needs to exhibit readiness for the coaching intervention being used.

◼ **Debrief meetings.** To support a team on the journey to high-performance, a few minutes can be spent at the end of each meeting talking about what went well and what can be improved in the meeting itself. As an alternative, the team can create a meeting assessment and complete it at the completion of each meeting. Either way, the team becomes more aware of its own dynamics and how it can become even more effective.
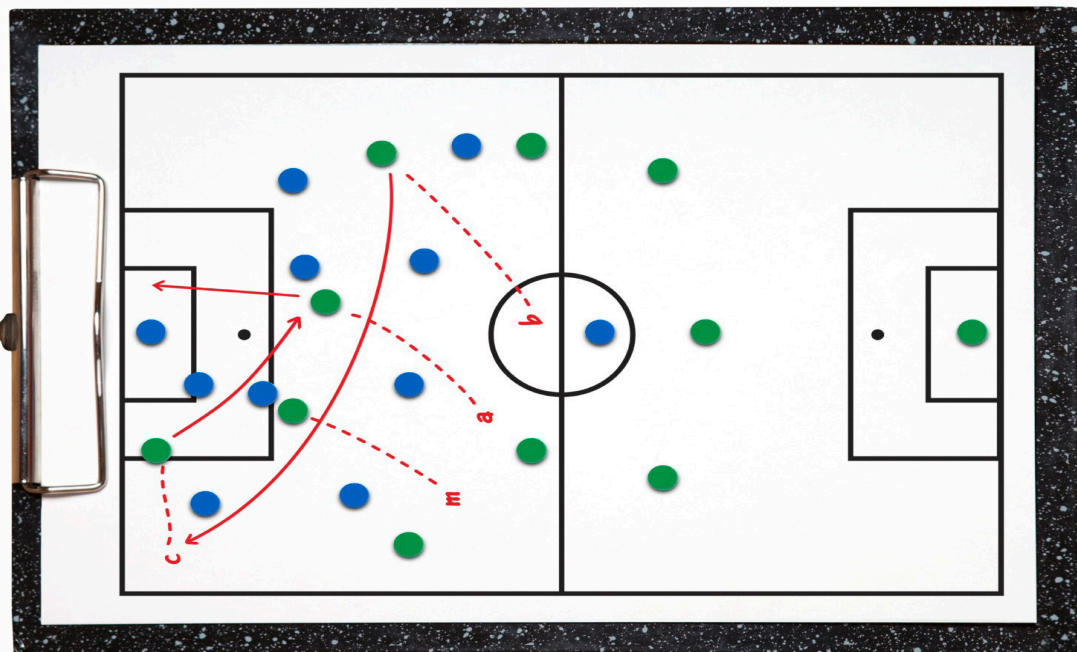
THE BIGGER PICTURE: BUILDING A CULTURE OF TEAMING[34]?

We have explored the practice of "teams" in this position paper, understanding what teams are, what high performing teams look like, the journey they undertake, as well as what makes them effective. The concept of teaming is a slightly different one. Rather than just focussing on teams as static groups of individuals, teaming is about inculcating the mindset and practices of teamwork across the organisation. It is about ensuring that the wider organisation culture provides a conducive environment for teamwork to thrive.

Coined by organisation learning expert Amy Edmondson, "teaming" is of growing importance in this environment of constant change and increasingly complexity. In such situations, knowledge resides in different parts of the system, and people need to convene together flexibly to work on tasks.

Teaming still relies on teamwork skills such as recognising and clarifying interdependence, establishing trust and figuring out how to coordinate. But unlike most work teams, there usually isn't enough time to build a foundation of familiarity through shared experiences of working together. This is why for teaming, individuals need to build capabilities to learn how to assemble and work together effectively.

In order to facilitate individual teaming behaviours, Edmondson suggests that organisations need to intentionally build cultures where people find it psychologically safe to team. In psychologically safe environments, people believe that if they make a mistake or ask for help, others will not penalise them. Leaders play crucial roles in promoting a psychologically safe organisation. Some ways they can do so are by being accessible and approachable, being willing to display infallibility, inviting participation, refraining from penalising failure, setting boundaries, and holding people accountable. The ability to learn from failure is also a key teaming skill. Failure detection, failure analysis, and purposeful experimentation are critical to learning from failures.

34 Edmondson, A. (2012). Teaming: How organisations learn, innovate and compete in the knowledge economy. John Wiley & Sons.

CONCLUSION

Teams. Love them or hate them, they will be always an integral part of organisations. The journey towards creating an effective team – or even being a part of one – is a very intentional one. Each step of the journey matters.

The next time you observe a team issue at work, stop. pause. listen. The problem may not be as superficial as it looks. Think about the different dynamics that usually accompanies each team stage. As you come to understand the factors influencing the team's performance, you will find yourself at a more advantageous solution in creating practical steps to improve its effectiveness.

ANNEX

Table 1: What makes a real team

Criteria	Katzenbach and Smith (2006)[35]	Wageman et. al. (2005)[36]	Lencioni (Leadership Teams) (2002)[37]
Team membership should be kept small	Yes		Yes
Clear boundaries to distinguish members from non-members		Yes	Yes
Moderate stability of membership		Yes	
Individual and mutual accountability/ Interdependence	Yes	Yes	Yes
Common team purpose and performance goals	Yes	Yes	Yes
Members have complementary skills	Yes		

Table 2: What is team effectiveness

Cohen, Ledford & Spreitzer (1996)[38]	Tannenbuam et al (1996)[39]	Wageman et. al. (2005)[40]	Gallwey (2001)[41]
High performance	Team performance in terms of outputs	Productive output meets or exceed standards	Performance - What are the tangible targets and outcomes we want?
	Teams ability to grow and regenerate itself	Social processes that maintain or enhance capability of members working together on team tasks	Learning - What are the learning, growth and development goals for team members?
Employee quality of work life		Group experience satisfies personal needs	Experience - How do we want our team members and our key stakeholders to feel?

ANNEX

Table 3: Models of team effectiveness

Model	Factors
Richard Beckhard's GRPI	Goals, Roles, Processes and Interpersonal Relationships
Peter Hawkin's Five Disciplines	Commissioning, Clarifying, Co-creating, Connecting, Core learning
Katzenbach and Smith's Team Basics	Common Commitment and Purpose, Performance Goals, Complementary Skills and Mutual Accountability
LaFasto and Larson's Five Dynamics of Teamwork and Collaboration	Team Member, Team Relationships, Team Problem Solving, Team Leadership and Organisation Environment
Kornferry's T7 model	Thrust, Trust, Talent, Teaming Skills and Task Skills, Team-leader Fit and Organisation Support
Hackman and Wageman's Conditions for Team Effectiveness	Real Team, Compelling Direction, Enabling Structure, Supportive Organisation Context, Team Coaching
Lencioni 's Five Dysfunctions of a Team	Absence of trust, Fear of Conflict, Lack of Commitment, Avoidance of Accountability, Inattention to Results
Linkage's Hi-Play Framework	Targets, Organisation, Competencies, Results, Operations, Rules
Hotspot's Teams in Context	Performance and Innovative Capability, Team complexity, Cooperative Mindset, Skilled at Working across Boundaries, Team Ignition, Support from Organisation

[35] Katzenbach, J. & Smith, D. (2006). The wisdom of teams: creating the high performance organisation (pp. 43-64). New York: Collins Business.
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[37] Lencioni, P. (2002). The five dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable. New York: Jossey-Bass.
[38] Cohen. S., Ledford. G., & Spreitzer. G. (1996). A predictive model of self-managing work team effectiveness. Human Relations, 49(5), 643-676.
[39] Tannenbaum, S. I., Salas, E., & Cannon-Bowers, J. A. (1996). Promoting team effectiveness. In M. A. West (Ed.), Handbook of Work Group Psychology (pp. 503-529). Chichester: John Wiley.
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[41] Gallwey, W. (2001). The inner game of work: Focus, learning, pleasure, and mobility in the workplace. Canada, Toronto: Random House Trade Paperbacks.