

PASCAS WORLDCARE



TEAMS: the WISDOM of and their OPERATION



“Peace And Spirit Creating Alternative Solutions”

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Pascas Foundation is a not for profit organisation

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COMMON SENSE FINDINGS

Teams cannot succeed without a shared purpose; yet more teams than not in most organisations remain unclear *as a team* about what they want to accomplish and why.

1. **A demanding performance challenge tends to create a team.** The hunger for performance is far more important to team success than team-building exercises, special incentives or team leaders with ideal profiles. In fact, teams often form around such challenges without any help or support from management. Conversely, potential teams without such challenges usually fail to become teams.
2. **The disciplined application of "team basics" is often over-looked.** Team basics include size, purpose, goals, skills, approach and accountability. Paying rigorous attention to these is what creates the conditions necessary for team performance. A deficiency in any of these basics will derail the team, yet most potential teams inadvertently ignore one or more of them.
3. **Team performance opportunities exist in all parts of the organisation.** Team basics apply to many different groups, including teams that recommend things (e.g. task forces), teams that make or do things (e.g. process teams, sales teams) and teams that run things (e.g. management teams at various levels). Each of these types of teams, of course, face unique challenges. But the commonalities are more important than the differences when striving for team performance. Unfortunately, most organisations recognise team opportunities in only one or two of these categories, leaving a lot of team performance potential untapped.
4. **Teams at the top are the most difficult.** The complexities of long-term challenges, heavy demands on executive time and ingrained individualism of senior people conspire against teams at the top. In addition, how executives are expected to act often conflicts with effective team performance. As a result, there are fewer teams at the top of large organisations and those that do exist tend to have fewer people. Importantly, however, this is caused by a number of misplaced assumptions about teams and behaviours at the top.
5. **Most organisations intrinsically prefer individual over group (team) accountability.** Job descriptions, compensation schemes, career paths and performance evaluations focus on individuals. Teams are often an afterthought in the "nice to have" category. Our culture emphasises individual accomplishments and makes us uncomfortable trusting our career aspirations to outcomes dependent on the performance of others. "If you want to get something done right, do it yourself" is a common belief. Even the thought of shifting emphasis from individual accountability to team accountability makes us uneasy.

Observations about teams can be extended to include:

1. **Companies with strong performance standards seem to spawn more "real teams" than companies that promote teams perse.** Teams do not become teams just because we call them teams or send them to team-building workshops. In fact, many frustrations with broad-gauged movements toward team-based organisations spring from just such imbalances. Real teams form best when management makes clear performance but loving demands.
2. **High-performance teams are extremely rare.** Despite the attention teams have been receiving, the true high-performance team – that is, one that outperforms all other like teams and outperforms expectations given its composition – is very rare. This is largely because a high degree of personal commitment to one another differentiates people on high-performance teams from people on other teams.

This kind of commitment cannot be managed, although it can be exploited and emulated to the great advantage of other teams and the broader organisation.

3. **Hierarchy and teams go together almost as well as teams and performance.** Teams integrate and enhance formal structures and processes. Pascas hierarchical structures are teams. Teams, in fact, are the best way to integrate across structural boundaries and to both design and energise core processes.

4. **Teams naturally integrate performance and learning.** We have yet to meet anyone who disagrees with the aspiration implied in the "learning organisation". Yet many people also express concerns over how to balance short-term performance emphasis with longer-term institution building. Teams do just that. By translating longer-term purposes into definable performance goals and then developing the skills needed to meet those goals, learning not only occurs in teams but endures.

5. **Teams are the primary unit of performance for increasing numbers of organisations.** Managers cannot master the opportunities and challenges now confronting them without emphasising teams far more than ever before. The performance challenges that face large companies in every industry – for example; individual personal growth, customer service, technological change, competitive threats and environmental constraints – demand the kind of responsiveness, speed, on-line customerisation and quality that is beyond the reach of individual performance. Teams can bridge this gap.

**Desire for God's Truth
Desire for God's Love
and be humble**

**humility is the
willingness to experience
one's own emotions.**



Feelings first

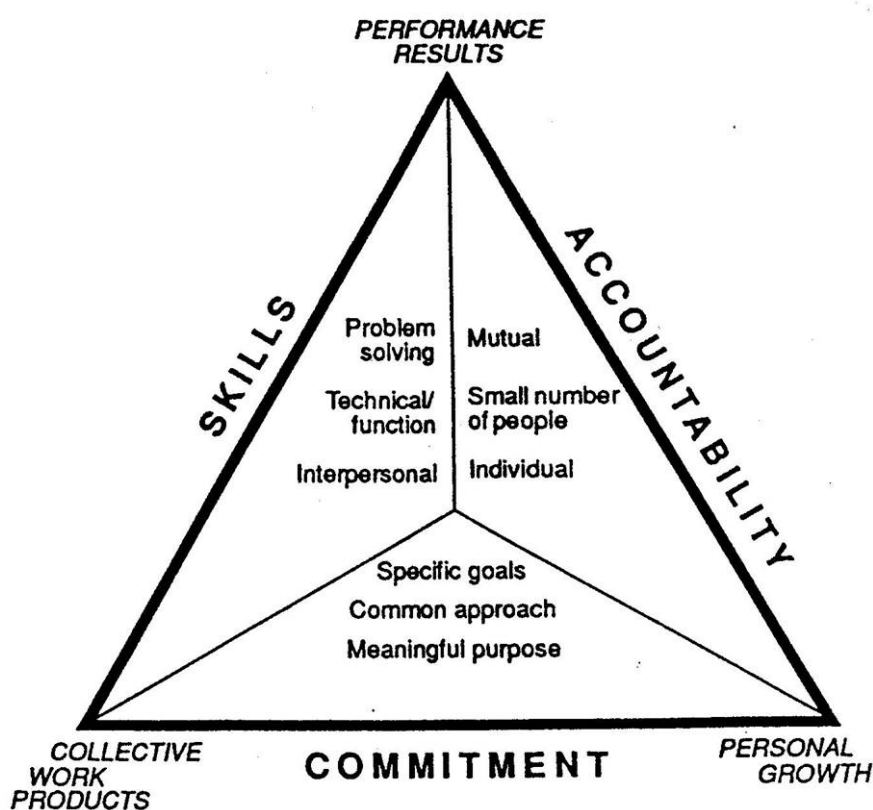
LIVE FEELINGS FIRST

TEAMS outperform individuals acting alone or in larger organisational groupings, especially when performance requires multiple skills, judgements and experiences. Most people recognise the capabilities of teams; most have the common sense to make teams work. Nevertheless, most people overlook team opportunities for themselves.

Confusion about what makes teams perform explains only part of this pattern of missed opportunity. More is explained by the natural resistance to moving beyond individual roles and accountability. We do not easily take responsibility for the performance of others, nor lightly let them assume responsibility for us. Overcoming such resistance requires the rigorous application of "team basics". By focusing on performance and team basics – as opposed to trying "to become a team" – most small groups can deliver the performance results that require and produce team behaviour.

The best way to understand teams is to look at teams themselves. Their own stories reveal their accomplishments, skills, emotions and commitment better than any abstract commentary or logical presentation. Real teams are deeply committed to their purpose, goals and approach. High-performance team members are also very committed to one another. Both understand that the wisdom of teams comes with a focus on collective work-products, personal growth and performance results. However, meaningful "team" is always a result of pursuing a demanding performance challenge.

FOCUSING ON TEAM BASICS



WHY TEAMS:

1. **Significant performance challenges energise teams regardless of where they are in an organisation.** No team arises without a performance challenge that is meaningful to those involved.

Performance is the crux of the matter for teams. Its importance applies to many different groupings, including teams who recommend things, teams who make or do things and teams who run or manage things. Any team – if it focuses on performance regardless of where it is in an organisation or what it does – will deliver results well beyond what individuals acting alone in non-team working situations could achieve.

2. **Organisational leaders can foster team performance best by building a strong performance ethic rather than by establishing a team-promoting environment alone.** Organisations, that reorganise their companies around self-managing teams, risk putting the number of officially designated teams as an objective ahead of performance. They sometimes loosely refer to their own small group at the top as a team when most people in the organisation recognise they are anything but a team.

Real teams are much more likely to flourish if leaders aim their sights on performance results that balance the needs of customers, team participants, and stakeholders. Clarity of purpose and goals have tremendous power in our ever more change-driven world. The opportunity to meet clearly stated customer and financial needs enriches jobs and leads to personal growth.

Most of us really do want to make a difference.

3. **Biases toward individualism exist but need not get in the way of team performance.** Even when teams are part of the picture, it is seldom at the expense of individual achievement.

Self-preservation and individual accountability, however, can work two ways. Left unattended, they can preclude or destroy potential teams. But recognised and addressed for what they are, especially if done with reference to how to meet a performance challenge, individual concerns and differences become a source of collective strength. Real teams always find ways for each individual to contribute and thereby gain distinction.

4. **Discipline – both within the team and across the organisation – creates the conditions for team performance.** Any group seeking team performance for itself, like any leader seeking to build strong performance standards across his organisation, must focus sharply on performance. For organisational leaders, this entails making clear and consistent demands that reflect the needs of customers, stakeholders, and team members and then holding themselves and the organisation relentlessly accountable.

Groups become teams through *disciplined action*. They *shape* a common purpose, *agree* on performance goals, *define* a common working approach, *develop* high levels of complementary skills and *hold* themselves mutually accountable for results. And they never stop doing any of these things.

The Need for Teams:

In any situation requiring the real-time combination of multiple skills, experience and judgements, a team inevitably gets better results than a collection of individuals operating within confined job roles and responsibilities. Teams are more flexible than larger organisational groupings because they can be more

quickly assembled, deployed, refocused and disbanded, usually in ways that enhance rather than disrupt more permanent structures and processes. Teams are more productive than groups that have no clear performance objectives because their members are committed to deliver tangible performance results. Teams and performance are an unbeatable combination.

The same team dynamics that promote performance also support learning and behavioural change and do so more effectively than larger organisational units or individuals left to their own devices.

Several well-known phenomena explain why teams perform well. First, they bring together complementary skills and experiences that, by definition, exceed those of any individual on the team. This broader mix of skills and know-how enables teams to respond to multifaceted challenges like innovation, quality, customer service, and personal spiritual growth.

Second, in jointly developing clear goals and approaches, teams establish communications that support real-time problem solving and initiative. Teams are flexible and responsive to changing events and demands. As a result, teams can adjust their approach to new information and challenges with greater speed, accuracy and effectiveness than can individuals caught in the web of larger organisational connections.

Third, teams provide a unique social dimension that enhances the economic and administrative aspects of work. Real teams do not develop until the people in them work hard to overcome barriers that stand in the way of collective performance. By surmounting such obstacles together, people on teams build trust and confidence in each other's capabilities. They also reinforce each other's intentions to pursue their team purpose above and beyond individual or functional agendas. Overcoming barriers to performance is how groups become teams. Both the meaning of work and the effort brought to bear upon it deepen, until team performance eventually becomes its own reward.

Finally, teams have more fun.

The deepest, most satisfying source of enjoyment comes from "having been part of something larger than myself".

Behavioural change also occurs more readily in the team context. Because of their collective commitment, teams are not as threatened by changes as are individuals left to fend for themselves. And, because of their flexibility and willingness to enlarge their solution space, teams offer people more room for growth and change than do groups with more narrowly defined task assignments associated with hierarchical job assignments. Because of their focus on performance, teams motivate, challenge, reward and support individuals who are trying to change the way they do things.

As a result, in the kinds of broad-based change that organisations increasingly confront today, teams can help concentrate the direction and quality of top-down leadership, foster new behaviours and facilitated cross-functional activities. In many cases teams, not managers, will figure out what the individuals on those teams should be doing and how they are performing. They are the most practical way to develop a shared sense of direction among people throughout an organisation. Teams can make hierarchy responsive change without weakening it, energise processes across organisational boundaries and bring multiple capabilities to bear on difficult issues.

Resistance to Teams:

1. **Lack of conviction.** Some think that teams cause more trouble than they are worth because the members waste time in unproductive meetings and discussions and actually generate more complaints than constructive results. Others think that teams are probably useful from a human relations point of view, but, are a hindrance when it comes to work, productivity and decisive action. Still others believe that concepts of teamwork and empowerment applied broadly to an organisation supersede the need to worry or be disciplined about the performance of specific small groups of people.

Teams rarely work without common goal, yet far too many teams casually accept goals that are neither demanding, precise, realistic, nor actually held *in common*. Most people remain unclear over what makes a real team. A team is not just any group working together. Committees, councils and task forces are not necessarily teams. Groups do not become teams simply because someone labels them as teams. The complete workforce of any large and complex organisation is never a team. Entire organisations can believe in and practice teamwork, but teamwork and teams differ.

Teamwork represents a set of values that encourages behaviours such as listening and constructively responding to points of view expressed by others, giving others the benefit of the doubt, providing support to those who need it and recognising the interests and achievements of others.

Teams are discrete units of performance, not a positive set of values. A team is a small group of people (typically fewer than twenty – preferably 2 – 15) with complementary skills committed to a common purpose and set of specific performance goals. The most fundamental characteristic that distinguishes real teams from non-teams – a relentless focus on performance.

Teams cannot exist for long without a performance-driven purpose to both nourish and justify the team's continuing existence.

Without question, teams and team efforts sometimes fail, but, more often than not, such failures lie in not adhering to the discipline of what makes teams successful.

2. **Personal discomfort and risk.** Many people fear or do not like to work in teams. Some are true loners who contribute best when left to work quietly on their own. Most people's discomfort with teams is because they find the team approach too time-consuming, too uncertain or too risky.

Some people are uncomfortable about speaking up, participating or being otherwise conspicuous in group meetings. Many people just do not like the idea of having to depend on others, having to listen or agree to contrary points of view or having to suffer the consequences of other people's mistakes. These concerns particularly afflict managers who find it difficult to be part of a team when they are not the leader.

Few people deny the benefit of teamwork values or the potentially useful performance impact of teams. But, at their core, most people have values that favour individual responsibility and performance over any form of group, whether it be a team or otherwise.

A reluctance to take a risk and submit one's fate to the performance of a team, therefore, is almost inbred.

3. **Weak organisational performance ethics.** The reluctance to commit one's own fate to a team pervades most organisations with weak performance ethics. Such companies lack compelling purposes that

appeal rationally and emotionally to their people. Their leaders fail to make clear and meaningful performance demands to which they hold the organisation and most important, themselves accountable. There is a built-in expectation that any decision of consequence must be made at the top or, at a minimum, be approved by enough other layers that the implementor of that decision is well covered. Politics displace performance as the daily focus and, inevitably, those politics play on individual insecurities that, in turn, further erode the conviction and courage to invest in a team approach. Bad team experiences become self-fulfilling prophecies.

Individually focused management structures and approaches with team-oriented designs will matter little, or even do damage, unless the organisation has a robust performance ethic.

4. Why do some Teams generally fail:

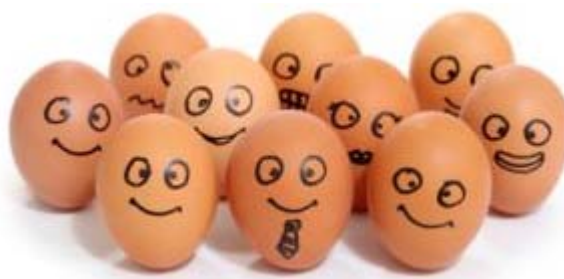
- a. Unclear direction and performance criteria set by management;
- b. Lack of respect from above;
- c. Very strong individual champions that find it difficult to work with others;
- d. To much free time.

Conclusion:

Teams, for example, do demand a merging of individual accountability with mutual accountability. Teams also do require lots of time together, indeed, it is folly to assume that teams can perform without investing time to shape and agree upon a common purpose, set of goals and working approach. Moreover, few groups become real teams without taking risks to overcome constraints imposed by individual, functional and hierarchical boundaries. Team members do depend on one another in pursuit of common performance.

The good news is that there is a discipline to teams that, if rigorously followed, can transform reluctance into team performance. Most of it builds on common sense ideas like the importance of goal setting and mutual accountability. This discipline applies equally well to teams that run things, teams that recommend things and teams that make or process things. What works at the front lines also works in the executive suite.

The bad news is that, like all disciplines, the price of success is strict adherence and practice. It requires constant practice and discipline. The fact remains that potential teams throughout most organisations usually can perform much better than they do. The key to such performance is in recognising the wisdom of teams, having the courage to try and then applying the discipline to learn from the experience.



TEAM BASICS: A WORKING DEFINITION and DISCIPLINE:

Why define team? Teams are a powerful vehicle for performance. Value is to support and build self-confidence in their members or to promote involvement, empowerment and broad-based teamwork. Teams add value onto short-term project work. Teams can waste time, squander resources and get in the way of decisive individual action and performance. Some believe teams expose them to unpleasant personal risks like the loss of hierarchical control.

The truly committed team is the most productive performance unit management has at its disposal – *provided there are specific results for which the team is collectively responsible and provided the performance ethic of the company demands those results.*

Most potential teams, as well as the companies they are part of, pay too little attention to either the company's performance standards or the purpose and goals of individual teams. Within teams, there is nothing more important than each team member's commitment to a common purpose and goals of individual teams. Each team's purpose is important to the success of the company and collectively they must keep each others honest in assessing their results relative to that purpose.

Companies with meaningful, strong performance standards encourage and support effective teams by helping them both tailor their own goals and understand how the achievement of those goals will contribute to the company's overall aspirations.

A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

Small Number:

Size differs from meaningful purpose, specific performance goals, common approach, complementary skills and mutual accountability. These five aspects of teams are absolute necessities. From two to fifteen is the workable size of real high performance teams.

One real team in the midst of a large group will influence overall group performance more effectively than any number of mission or teamwork statements.

Complementary Skills:

Teams must develop the right mix of skills, that is, each of the complementary skills necessary to do the team's job. These team skill requirements fall into three categories:

- # **Technical or functional expertise.** Product development groups that include only marketers or engineers are less likely to succeed than those with the complementary skills of both.
- # **Problem-solving and decision-making skills.** Teams must be able to identify the problems and opportunities they face, evaluate the options they have for moving forward and then make necessary trade-offs and decisions about how to proceed.
- # **Interpersonal skills.** Common understanding and purpose cannot arise without effective communication and constructive conflict that, in turn, depend on interpersonal skills. These include risk taking, helpful criticism, objectivity, active listening, giving the benefit of the doubt, support and recognising the interests and achievements of others.

The power of teams as vehicles for personal learning and development. Their performance focus helps teams quickly identify skill gaps and the specific development needs of team members to fill them. The shared commitment in teams encourages a healthy fear of failure as opposed to debilitating insecurity among those challenged to learn. Each team member's sense of individual accountability to the team promotes learning. Once harnessed to a common purpose and set of goals, natural individualism motivates learning within teams. Except for certain technical and functional skills, most of us have the potential to learn the skills needed in teams. Individualism drives the majority of us to find some way to make our own distinctive and individual contribution to the team. Accordingly, as long as the skill *potential* exists, the dynamics of a team cause that skill to develop.

The challenge for any potential team lies in striking the right balance selection and development as the means for building the full set of complementary skills needed to fulfil the team's purpose over time.

Committed to a Common Purpose and Performance Goals:

A team's purpose and performance goals go together. The team's near-term performance goals must always relate directly to its overall purpose; otherwise, team members become confused, pull apart and revert to mediocre performance behaviours.

1. **A common, meaningful purpose sets the tone and aspiration.** Teams develop direction, momentum and commitment by working to shape a meaningful purpose.

Most teams shape their purposes in response to a demand or opportunity put in their path, usually by management.

The best teams invest a tremendous amount of time and effort exploring, shaping and agreeing on a purpose that belongs to them both collectively and individually. In fact, real teams never stop this "purposing" activity because of its value in clarifying implications for members.

Set clear performance objectives aimed at increasing profits, reducing cycle-time along with work-in-progress inventory, cutting production costs, increasing customer satisfaction and improving on-time deliveries.

Teams often treat their purpose like an offspring in need of constant nurturing and care. Naturally they spend relatively more time in the beginning shaping their purpose; but, even after the team is operative, the members periodically revisit the purpose to clarify its implications for action.

Because of the intense discussions that mould a team's purpose, the purpose itself conveys a rich and varied set of meanings to guide what the team needs to do, particularly in meeting its goals. When challenges arise, team members can respond, confident that they have the trust and support of their team mates – so long as the actions taken make sense in light of the team purpose. Risks that otherwise might not be taken get done as a matter of course.

Armed with team purpose, everyone on the team knows when an individual may be getting out of line and must put the team first or else risk breaking it apart.

2. **Specific performance goals are an integral part of the purpose.** Transforming broad directives into specific and measurable performance goals is the surest first step for a team trying to shape a common purpose meaningful to its members. Team work-products must require roughly equivalent contributions from all the people on the team to make something specific happen that, in and of itself, adds real value to company (unit) results.

The specificity of the performance objectives facilitates clear communications and constructive conflict within the team. When such goals are clear, team discussions can focus on how to pursue them or whether to change them; when goals are ambiguous or non-existent, such discussions are much less productive.

The attainability of specific performance goals helps teams maintain their focus on getting results.

When a small group of people challenge themselves to get over a wall or up a mountain or through a desert – or to reduce cycle time by 50% – their respective titles (or lack of titles), perks and other "stripes" fade into the background. Instead, the teams that succeed evaluate what and how each individual can best contribute to the team's goal and, more important, do so in terms of the performance objective itself rather than a person's status or personality.

Specific goals should allow the team to achieve small wins as it pursues its purpose. *Small wins are invaluable to building member's commitment* and overcoming the inevitable obstacles that get in the way of achieving a meaningful long-term purpose.

Loving performance goals are compelling. They challenge the people on the team to commit themselves, as a team, to make a difference. Drama, urgency and a healthy fear of failure combine to drive teams who have their collective eye on an attainable goal. Nobody beyond the team can make it happen. It is *their* challenge.

3. **The combination is essential to performance.** The specific performance goals help a team track progress and hold itself accountable; the broader, even nobler aspirations in a team's purpose supply both meaning and emotional energy.

Usually a team's aspirations and purpose will grow out of a persistent pursuit of specific performance goals.

Directional intensity is so necessary for successful team performance which comes from the continuing integration of purpose and performance goals.

Committed to a Common Approach:

Teams also need to develop a common approach – that is, how they will work together to accomplish their purpose. A team's approach must include both an economic and administrative aspect as well as a social one. To meet the economic and administrative challenge, every member of a team must do "equivalent" amounts of real work that goes beyond commenting, reviewing and deciding. Team members must agree on who will do particular jobs, how schedules will be set and adhered to, what skills need to be developed, how continuing membership is to be earned and how the group will make and modify decisions, including when and how to modify its approach to getting the job done. Agreeing on the specifics of work and how it fits together to integrate individual skills and advance team performance lies at the heart of shaping a common approach.

Often many teams treat the social aspect of work as unrelated to performance. Effective teams always have team members who, over time, assume important social, as well as, leadership roles such as challenging, interpreting, supporting, integrating, remembering and summarising. In the best teams, each member assumes different social roles depending on the situation. As a result teams develop their own unique processes for energising and supporting one another and keeping each other honest and on track.

An example is that crew-based teams should remain intact. Example; quarry team of five should be shifted to new sites as a whole group and not be broken up and sent to two or more sites.

At the heart of such long and at times difficult interactions lies a commitment-building process in which the whole team candidly explores who is best suited to each task, as well as, how all the individual roles will come together. In effect, it establishes a social contract among members that relates to their purpose and guides and obligates how they must work together.

Mutual Accountability:

No group ever becomes a team until it can hold itself accountable as a team. Like common purpose and approach, this is a stiff test.

Team accountability is about the sincere promises we make to ourselves and others, promises that underpin three critical aspects of teams: commitment, respect and trust. By promising to hold ourselves accountable to the team's goals, we each earn the right to express our own views about all aspects of the team's effort and to have our views receive a fair and constructive hearing.

Accountability arises from and reinforces the time, energy and action invested in figuring out what the team is trying to accomplish and how best to get it done. When people do real work together toward a common objective, trust and commitment follow. Consequently, teams enjoying a strong common purpose and approach inevitably hold themselves, both as individuals and as a team, responsible for the team's performance.

If you observe a group of people who are truly committed and accountable for joint results, you can be almost committed and accountable for joint results, you can be almost certain they have both a strong team purpose and an agreed-on approach.

Conclusion:

The six basic elements of teams for review are:

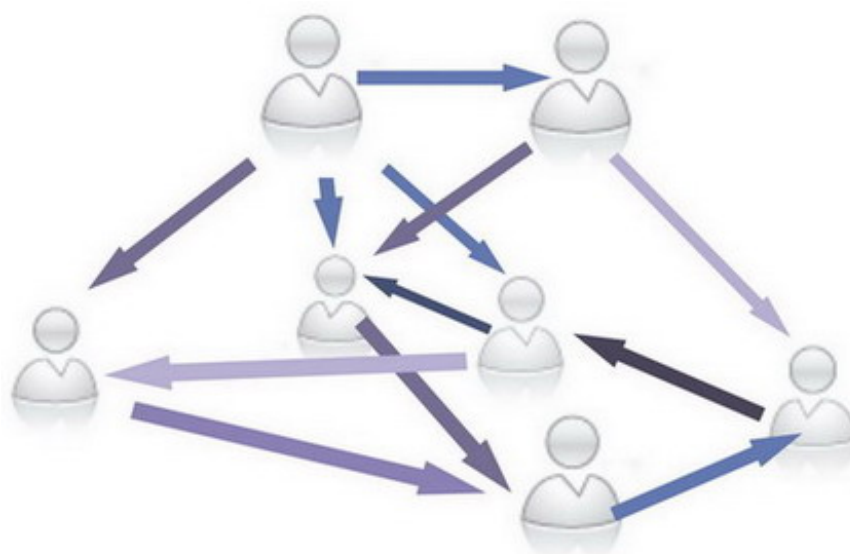
1. Small enough in number:
 - a. Can you convene easily and frequently?
 - b. Can you communicate with all members easily and frequently?
 - c. Are your discussions open and interactive for all members?
 - d. Does each member understand the others' roles and skills?
 - e. Are sub-teams possible or necessary?

2. Adequate levels of complementary skills:
 - a. Are all three categories of skills either actually or potentially represented across the membership (functional / technical, problem-solving / decision-making and interpersonal)?

- b. Does each member have the potential in all three categories to advance his or her skills to the level required by the team's purpose and goals?
 - c. Are any skill areas that are critical to team performance missing or under represented?
 - d. Are the members, individually and collectively, willing to spend the time to help themselves and others learn and develop skills?
 - e. Can you introduce new or supplemental skills as needed?
3. Truly meaningful purpose:
- a. Is it a *team* purpose as opposed to a broader organisational purpose or just one individual's purpose (e.g. the leader's)?
 - b. Do all members understand and articulate it the same way?
 - c. Do members define it vigorously in discussions with outsiders?
 - d. Do members frequently refer to it and explore its implications?
 - e. Does it contain themes that are particularly meaningful and memorable?
 - f. Do members feel it is important, if not exciting?
4. Specific goal or goals?
- a. Are they *team* goals versus broader organisational goals or just one individual's goals (e.g. the leader's)?
 - b. Are they clear, simple and measurable? If not measurable, can their achievement be determined?
 - c. Are they realistic as well as ambitious? Do they allow small wins along the way?
 - d. Do they call for a concrete set of team work-products?
 - e. Is their relative importance and priority clear to all members?
 - f. Do all members agree with the goals, their relative importance and the way in which their achievement will be measured?
 - g. Do all members articulate the goals in the same way?
5. Clear working approach:
- a. Is the approach concrete, clear and really understood and agreed to by everybody?
 - b. Will it result in achievement of the objectives?
 - c. Will it capitalise on and enhance the skills of all members? Is it consistent with other demands on the members?
 - d. Does it require all members to contribute equivalent amounts of real work?
 - e. Does it provide for open interaction, fact-based problem solving and results-based evaluation?
 - f. Do all members articulate the approach in the same way?
 - g. Does it provide for modification and improvement over time?
 - h. Are fresh input and perspectives systematically sought and added, for example, through information and analysis, new members and senior sponsors?
6. Sense of mutual accountability:
- a. Are you individually and jointly accountable for the team's purpose, goals, approach and work-products?
 - b. Can you and do you measure progress against specific goals?
 - c. Do all members feel responsible for all measures?
 - d. Are the members clear on what they are individually responsible for and what they are jointly responsible for?

- e. Is there a sense that "only the team can fail"?

Answering the preceding questions can establish the degree to which your group functions as a real team, as well as help pinpoint how you can strengthen your efforts to increase performance. Facing up to the answers can accelerate your progress in achieving the full potential of your team.



Many-to-many structures emerge with the help of team members' collaboration

LESSON in NATURAL LOVE

21 Feb 2009

Refusal to learn and apply Natural Love lessons may result in stagnation with one's embracement of Feeling Healing and Divine Love.

The development of one's soul with Feeling Healing and Divine Love incorporates all Natural Love lessons, but from an emotional soul perspective.

All lessons in love (either Natural or Divine) are from our Heavenly Parents, both Mother and Father's perspective, not our own.

There are literally 100's of Natural Love lessons, but if we receive God's Love into the soul, then these lessons will be automatically learned as long as we allow that process emotionally.

By living true to ourselves, true to our feelings, we are living true to God. It's that simple.

THE TEAM PERFORMANCE CURVE:

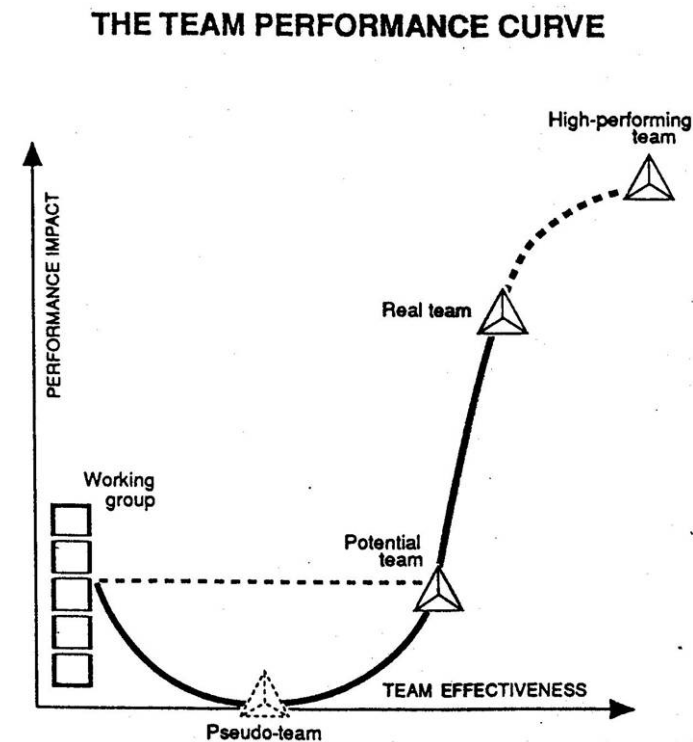
The "team performance curve" illustrates that how well any small group of people performs depends on the basic approach it takes and how effectively it implements that approach. Unlike teams, working groups rely on the sum of "individual bests" for their performance. They pursue no collective work products requiring joint effort. By choosing the team path instead of the working group, people commit to take the risks of conflict, joint work-products and collective action necessary to build a common purpose, set of goals, approach and mutual accountability. People who call themselves teams but take no such risks are at best pseudo-teams.

Potential teams that take the risks to climb the curve inevitably confront obstacles. Some teams overcome them; others get stuck. The worst thing a stuck team can do, however, is to abandon the discipline of the team's basics. Performance, not team building, can save potential teams or pseudo-teams, no matter how stuck.

All teams come to an end. Endings, however, do not need to sacrifice continued performance. The handoff of recommendations to others, arrival of new members, departure of old one and changes in team leaders – if seen as transitions calling for a renewal of team basics – enable most teams to exploit the performance potential even further, whether or not the team itself comes to an end.

Most team leaders must develop skills after they take the job. Those who succeed have an attitude that they do not need to make all key decisions nor assign all key jobs.

Effective team leaders realise they neither know all the answers, nor can they succeed without the other members of the team. The wisdom of teams lies in recognising that any person, whether previously an autocrat or a democrat, who genuinely believes in the purpose of the team and the team itself, can lead the team toward higher performance.



The Critical Choice:

A working group relies primarily on the individual contributions of its members for group performance, whereas a team strives for a magnified impact that is incremental to what its members could achieve in their individual roles. The choice depends largely on whether individual achievements can deliver the group's performance aspirations or whether collective work products, skills and mutual accountability are needed.

"Collective work-products" is the need for any team to produce something of incremental performance value that is more than the sum of each member's individual efforts – and that requires a real work contribution from each. It is the basic idea of everyone rolling up their sleeves and working together to something tangible accomplished.

Working groups thrive in hierarchical structures where individual accountability counts the most. The best working groups come together to share information, perspectives and insights, to make decisions that help each person do his or her own job better and to reinforce each other's individual performance standards. The focus is always on individual performance goals and accountabilities. Unlike teams, a working group uses its purpose solely to delineate individual roles, tasks and responsibilities. Working groups pay attention to individual outcomes and results. Members of effective working groups constructively compete with one another in their pursuit of individual performance targets. They also provide counsel and insights to each other and become concerned when any among them falters. Working group members do not take responsibility for results other than their own. They do not try to develop incremental performance contributions requiring the combined, real work of two or more group members.

Teams differ from working groups. They require both individual *and* mutual accountability. Teams rely on more than group discussion, debate and decision; on more than sharing information and best practice perspectives; on more than a mutual reinforcing of performance standards. Without discrete team work-products produced through the joint, real contributions of team members, the promise of incremental or magnified performance impact goes untapped.

The team options promises greater performance than the working group, but, it also brings more risk. Because of deep-seated values of individualism and a natural reluctance to trust one's fate to the performance of others, the team choice demands a leap of faith. Rugged individualists – and there are many, especially at the top – cannot contribute to real team performance without taking responsibility for their peers and letting their peers assume responsibility for them. Yet they instinctively believe that "if you want a job done right, do it yourself". It is against their nature to rely on others for the really important tasks in life.

Moreover, the price of "faking" this leap of faith is also high. When the team approach fails, members do get diverted from their individual goals, work-products do not add significant value, costs do outweigh benefits and people do resent the imposition on their time and priorities.

Working groups present fewer risks. Effective working groups need waste little time in shaping their purpose, objectives and approach since the leader usually establishes them. Meetings are run against well-prioritised agendas. They are efficient in the use of members' time. Decisions are implemented through specific individual assignments and accountabilities. Most of the time, if performance aspirations can be met through individuals doing their respective jobs well, the working group approach is more comfortable, less risky and less disruptive than trying for more elusive team performance levels. Indeed, if there is no performance need for the team approach, efforts spent to improve the effectiveness of the working group make much more sense than floundering around trying to become a team.

The Team Performance Curve:

The simple framework of the "team performance curve" is described as follows:

1. **Working group:** This is a group for which there is *no significant incremental performance need* or opportunity that would require it to become a team. The members interact primarily to share information, best practices or perspectives and to make decisions to help each individual perform within his or her area of responsibility. Beyond that, there is no realistic or truly desired "small group" common purpose, incremental performance goals or joint work-products that call for either a team approach or mutual accountability.
2. **Pseudo-team:** This is a group for which there could be a significant, incremental performance need or opportunity, but it *has not focused on collective performance and is not really trying to achieve it*. It has no interest in shaping a common purpose or set of performance goals, even though it may call itself a team. Pseudo-teams are the weakest of all groups in terms of performance impact. They almost always contribute less to company performance needs than working groups because their interactions detract from each member's individual performance without delivering any joint benefit. In pseudo-teams, the sum of the whole is less than the potential of the individual parts.
3. **Potential team:** This is a group for which there is a significant, incremental performance need and *that really is trying to improve its performance impact*. Typically, however, it requires more clarity about purpose, goals or work-products and more discipline in hammering out a common working approach. It has not yet established collective accountability. When a team approach makes sense, the performance impact can be high.
4. **Real team:** This is a small number of people with complementary skills who *are equally committed to a common purpose, goals and working approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable*.
5. **High-performance team:** This is a group that meets all the conditions of real teams and has *members who are also deeply committed to one another's personal growth and success*. That commitment usually transcends the team. The high-performance team significantly outperforms all other like teams and outperforms all reasonable expectations given its membership. It is a powerful possibility and an excellent model for all real and potential teams.

The curve shows that working groups have a wide range of potential performance outcomes and suggest the working group option remains sensible in many situations. The curve also shows that, for most groups, the largest performance gains occurs between the potential team and the real team and that the possible performance impact for the real team is significantly higher than for the working group. The dotted line between real team and high-performance team indicates the exceptional personal commitment required for high performance. The dotted line connecting the working group and the potential team symbolises the leap of faith involved in making that choice. Beneath that line lie the risks and disappointments of pseudo-team performance. One hopes to avoid them at all costs since the performance impact of pseudo-teams is lowest and over coming pseudo-team dynamics can be very difficult.

Pseudo-teams lament their failure to act like a team. Each person faults the other people on the pseudo-team, especially the leader. The remedy prescribed inevitably sounds like "we would do much better as a team if only the rest of them would work as a team in the way I think makes the most sense".

In creating a distinction between a working group and a potential team, we are not making a "good" or "bad" value judgement. We are simply arguing for a conscious choice that considers the alternatives and trade-offs in a disciplined manner.

Conclusion:

By asking the series of questions previously listed about small number, complementary skills, common purpose, performance goals, working approach and mutual accountability, most groups can figure out whether they are operating like working groups, pseudo-teams, potential teams or real teams. A second set of five vital signs that are helpful to monitor are:

1. **Themes and identity:** Teams inevitably rally around a favourite set of themes that convey meaning about their basic purpose and identity. The key to these themes lies in the richness of their meaning to the team. Like a special language or code words, team themes reflect shorthand ways to communicate what is important and why it is important inside the team.
2. **Enthusiasm and energy level:** Teams work hard and enthusiastically. They also play hard and enthusiastically. No one has to ask them to put in extra time; they just do it. No one has to remind them not to delegate jobs to others; again, they just do the work themselves. To outsiders, the energy and enthusiasm levels inside teams are unmistakable and even seductive. When you enter the team room you instantly feel the difference.
3. **Event-driven histories:** As teams evolve, their stories often progress through a series of galvanising events – often unplanned and sometimes "failures" – that propel team performance.
4. **Personal commitment:** Members' strong personal commitment to one another's growth and success is what distinguishes a high-performance team. When this commitment exists, it always enriches the team's sense of purpose, stretches its performance aspirations and makes its members' approach to working with one another more powerful.
5. **Performance results:** In the final analysis, performance is both the cause and effect of teams. Real teams almost always outperform similarly situation and challenged individuals acting as individuals. High-performance teams, in addition, outperform all reasonable expectations for the group, including those of the team members themselves. Without specific, tangible performance results, little else matters.

Two sets of vital signs indicate whether any specific group of people is a real team. The first set of signs includes the elements in the definition of a team – the team basics. Whenever any are missing or not quite right, the group can and should confront them directly and work on getting them right. The second set of vital signs – themes and identity, energy and enthusiasm, event-driven histories, personal commitments and performance results – includes equally powerful indicators of whether any particular group is a team.

If a review of either set of vital signs suggest a group is not a team, there may be reason to try improving performance as a working group instead of pursuing the team option. The important thing is to rigorously consider both options and then be disciplined about pursuing whichever choice is made.

HIERARCHY of TRUTHS

Physical – Scientific Truths:

These are the lowest form of truth that a medium can receive from a spirit from any sphere, such truths are usually delivered from spirits within the low spheres. They pertain to events, actions, and future possibilities or probabilities. Almost all channelling comes from 1st and 2nd sphere spirits on all subjects. There are spirits within the lower sphere who impersonate higher level spirits. These mind spirits from the Natural Love mind spirit worlds have been blocked from channelling by the Celestial Heaven spirits as of and from 22 March 2017.

Metaphysical (Spiritual Universe) Truths:

These pertain to the physical matter within the spirit world.

Moral Truths:

They tend to affect the soul. They are the next higher level of truths. Few mediums have a soul condition that can enable successful channelling of moral truths.

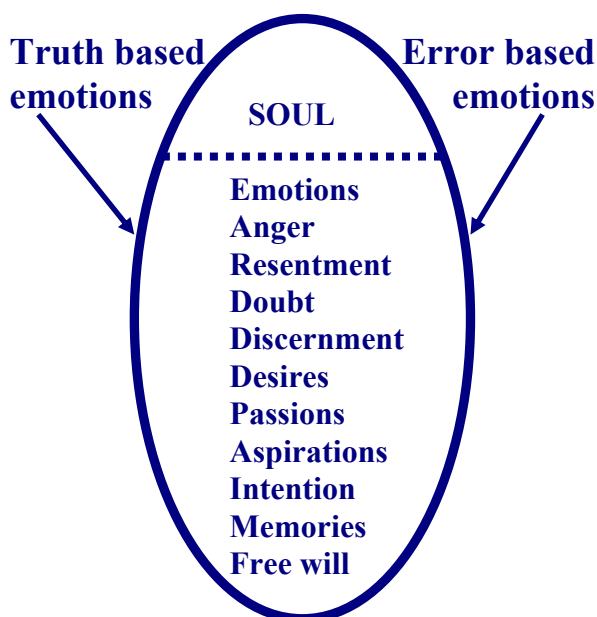
Natural Love Truths:

Next higher level of truths.

Divine Love Truths:

These are the highest level of truths. Divine Love laws will affect you for all of your existence both here in the physical world and also in the metaphysical / spiritual world. A medium needs to have received Divine Love to receive such truths.

TRUTH NEVER HURTS



A basic misunderstanding is that you can hurt someone with truth. That is never true.

You can never hurt someone with truth.

The way you can hurt someone is by with-holding truth– that is a lie.

It is error leaving the person that hurts them, not the truth entering them.

If that error was never within you then it would never hurt you to hear the truth.

MOVING UP THE CURVE: FROM INDIVIDUAL TO TEAM PERFORMANCE:

Real teams do not emerge unless the individuals within them take risks involving conflict, trust, interdependence and hard work.

Of the risks required, the most formidable involve building the trust and interdependence necessary to move from individual accountability to mutual accountability. People on real teams must trust and depend on one another – not totally or forever – but certainly with respect to the team's purpose, performance goals and approach.

Consequently, team performance demands that most of us are to adjust our attitudes as well as our normal behaviour. The adjustments must come primarily through action, not words.

Conflict, like trust and interdependence, is also a necessary part of becoming a real team. Seldom do we see a group of individuals forge their unique experiences, perspectives, values and expectations into a *common* purpose, set of performance goals and approach without encountering significant conflict. The most challenging risks associated with conflict relate to making it constructive for the team instead of simply enduring it.

Certain concerns almost always exist among the people entering a potential team situation. "What are the real agendas here?", "What is this going to mean for me?", "How can I make this person realise that he really does need to do things differently?", "How long is this going to last?" and "Is this loving?"

Real teams learn how to deal with such concerns through frank and open communication. Not all potential teams become real teams. Individual differences, threats of being personally disadvantaged, actions that destroy instead of build mutual trust and interdependence, un-constructive conflict, the inertia of business as usual – these and other forces can block team performance and can even produce pseudo-teams with worsening performance. When this happens, anyone who has worked hard to invest in the teams suffers lost time and disappointment.

As often happens with potential teams, spending time together away from the office helps the team relax, have more candid, open discussions and get to know each other. It also reminds them that they have an important assignment that management expects them to focus on and carry out.

Common approaches to building Team Performance:

There are a variety of common approaches that can help potential teams take the risks necessary to move the team up the performance curve.

1. **Establish urgency and direction.** All team members need to believe the team has urgent and worthwhile purposes and they want to know what the expectations are. The more urgent and meaningful the rationale, the more likely it is that a real team will emerge. The best team charters are clear enough to indicate performance expectations, but flexible enough to allow teams to shape their own common purpose, goals and approach.
2. **Select members based on skills and skill potential, not personalities.** Teams must have the complementary skills needed to do their job. Three categories of skills are relevant: 1) technical and functional, 2) problem-solving, and 3) interpersonal. The key issue for potential teams is striking the right

balance between members who already possess the needed skill levels versus developing the skills levels after the team gets started.

Most people can develop needed skills *after* joining a team. Ask whether the team, including its leader, will invest the time and effort to help potential team members grow.

Training works best when it is supplied "just in time" and is customised to meet specific performance needs of the group in question. Ensure that the timing and content of training relates to the specific performance challenge of the person or team requesting help.

3. **Pay particular attention to first meetings and actions.** Initial impressions always mean a great deal. Pay particularly attention to those in authority: the team leader and any executive who set up, oversee, or otherwise influence the team, and, as always, what such leaders do is more important than what they say.

4. **Set some clear rules of behaviour.** All real teams develop rules of conduct to help them achieve their purpose and performance goals. The most critical early rules pertain to attendance (for example, "no interruptions to take phone calls"), discussion ("no sacred cows"), confidentiality ("the only things to leave this room are what we agree will leave this room"), analytic approach ("facts are friendly"), end-product orientation ("everyone gets assignments and does them"), constructive confrontation ("no finger pointing" – "focusing on the process, not the people") and often the most important, contributions ("everyone does real work"). And truth in all things.

5. **Set and seize upon a few immediate performance-oriented tasks and goals.** Most teams trace their advancement to key performance-oriented events that forge them together. Potential teams can set such events in motion by immediately establishing a few challenging yet achievable goals that can be reached early on.

6. **Challenge the group regularly with fresh facts and information.** New information causes a potential team to redefine and enrich its understanding of the performance challenge, thereby helping the team shape a common purpose, set clearer goals and improve on its common approach.

Conversely, potential teams err when they assume that all the information needed exists in the collective experience and knowledge of the members.

7. **Spend lots of time together.** Common sense tells us that teams must spend a lot of time together, especially at the beginning. The time spent together must be both scheduled and unscheduled. Creative insights as well as personal bonding require impromptu and casual interactions just as much as analysing spreadsheets, interviewing customers, competitors or fellow employees and constantly debating issues.

8. **Exploit the power of positive feedback, recognition and reward.** Positive reinforcement works as well in a team context as elsewhere. "Giving out gold stars" helps to shape new behaviours critical to team performance. If people in the group, for example, are alert to a shy person's initial efforts to speak up and contribute, they can give him or her the positive reinforcement that encourages continued contributions. Similarly, when someone risks opening up a sensitive, conflict-ridden issue, the others on the team and especially the leader can use positive feedback to powerfully signal their openness to further such challenges.

Even the strongest egos respond to positive feedback – when it is real. Truth sets you free!

Conclusion:

Most potential teams can become real teams, but not without taking risks involving conflict, trust, truthfulness, respect, interdependence and hard work. For example, a common team purpose, set of performance goals and approach rarely arise without conflict. Indeed, quite the contrary – the most successful teams recognise their members, conflicting views and experiences as a source of strength. Similarly, mutual accountability requires trust and interdependence, which usually do not grow without risk taking. Finally, most potential teams include members who must develop the skills needed by the team after they have joined the team itself. This, too, implies risks and hard work for everyone on the team.

The eight "best practices" summarised here can facilitate the risks teams need to take. But each of the eight – like any team-building approach you or others might try – will only add value if it is employed in pursuit of performance.

Each team must find its own path to its own unique performance challenge. This is why the team basics of numbers, skills, common purpose, performance goals, common approach and mutual accountability are more of a discipline than a definition. Joining a team is a career risk, giving up individual control is a performance risk, acknowledging personal responsibility for needed change is a self-esteem risk, allowing others to lead is an institutional risk and abandoning hierarchical command and control is a stability risk. Taking such risks makes sense only if it unleashes a team's capabilities in pursuit of performance. Only then can people avail themselves of the wisdom of teams.



Working in

 Teams

Live true to your feelings, and you ARE living true, not only to your own soul, but also true to God's soul. So doing your Healing by honouring all your feelings, IS living the will of God. And being fully Healed, IS living even more truly the Will of your Mother and Father.

TEAM LEADERS:

By an outstanding leader making it clear to his people that he wants and needs their help, he instinctively reveals an attitude critical to team leadership: putting team performance first and recognising that he needs help.

Successful team leaders instinctively know that the goal is team performance results instead of individual achievement, including their own. Unlike working groups, whose performance depends solely on optimising individual contributions, real team performance requires impact beyond the sum of the individual parts.

The belief that "only the team can fail" begins with the leaders. Team leaders act to clarify purpose and goals, build commitment and self-confidence, strengthen the team's collective skills and approach, remove externally imposed obstacles and create opportunities for others. *Team leaders do real work themselves.* Yet, in each of these aspects, team leaders know or discover when their own action can hinder the team and how their patience can energise it. Put differently, team performance almost always depends on how well team leaders strike a critical balance between doing things themselves and letting other people do them.

Attitude is the key. Team leaders genuinely believe that they do *not* have all the answers – so they do not insist on providing them. They believe they do *not* need to make all key decisions – so they do not do so. They believe they *cannot* succeed without the combined contributions of all the other members of the team to a common end – and so they avoid any action that might constrain inputs or intimidate anyone on the team. Ego is *not* their predominant concern.

Simply abandoning all decision making to a potential team, however, rarely works either; the team leader's challenge is more difficult than that. He or she must give up decision space only when and as much as the group is ready to accept and use. This is the essence of the team leader's job – striking the right balance between providing guidance and giving up control, between making tough decisions and letting others make them and between doing difficult things alone and letting others learn how to do them. Just as too much command will stifle the capability, initiative and creativity of the team, so will too little guidance, direction and discipline.

There are no standard approaches or recipes that guarantee how to lead a team. Also corporate leadership, business unit leadership and team leadership differ.

Accordingly managers and others ought to worry much less about picking the ideal team leaders than about helping them to succeed afterwards – which means paying lots of attention to whether *specific* team leaders are in fact doing and not doing whatever *their* teams need in order to perform.

What team leaders do and do not do:

Those who lead small groups must look to the specific of the performance challenge to help them choose how best to lead. If the group can deliver performance as an effective working group through maximising each individual's contribution, then the leader can rely on the normal decision-making and delegation approaches often associated with good management. If, on the other hand, performance requires a team approach, then the leader cannot assume that good management will be enough. Neither the leader nor those he or she leads should expect the leader to make all the decisions about directions taken, how resources get deployed and how individuals are performing. Instead, the leader must show a belief in the team's purpose

and in the people who, individually and together, make up the team.

Moreover, the strength of the leader's belief in what the team is all about can be incredibly powerful.

1. **Keep the purpose, goals and approach relevant and meaningful.** All teams must shape their own common purpose, performance goals and approach. While a leader must be a full working member of the team who can and should contribute to these, he or she also stands apart from the team by virtue of his or her selection as leader. Teams expect their leaders to use that perspective and distance to help the teams clarify and commit to their mission, goals and approach.
2. **Build commitment and confidence.** Team leaders should work to build the commitment, respect and confidence of each individual as well as the team as a whole. There is an important difference between individual commitment and accountability versus mutual accountability. The leader must keep both the individual and the team in mind as he or she tries to provide positive, constructive reinforcement while avoiding intimidation.
3. **Strengthen the mix and level of skills.** Effective team leaders are vigilant about skills. Their goal is clear: ultimately, the most flexible and top-performing teams consist of people with all the technical, functional, problem-solving, decision-making, interpersonal and teamwork skills the team needs to perform. To get there, team leaders encourage people to take the risks needed for growth and development. They also continually challenge team members by shifting assignment and role patterns.
4. **Manage relationships with outsiders, including removing obstacles.** Team leaders are expected, by people outside as well as inside the team, to manage much of the team's contacts and relationships with the rest of the organisation. This calls on team leaders to communicate effectively the team's purpose, goals and approach to anyone who might help or hinder it. They also must have the courage to intercede on the team's behalf when obstacles that might cripple or demoralise the team get placed in their way.
5. **Create opportunities for others.** Team performance is not possible if the leader grabs all the best opportunities, assignments and credit for himself or herself. Indeed, the crux of the leader's challenge is to provide performance opportunities to the team and the people on it.
6. **Do real work.** Everyone on a real team, including the leader, does real work in roughly equivalent amounts. Team leaders do have a certain distance from the team virtue of their position, but they do not use that distance "just to sit back and make decisions". Where a person's risks are high or "dirty work" is required, the team leader should step forward.

There are two critical things real team leaders *never* do: *they do not blame or allow specific individuals to fail and they never excuse away shortfalls in team performance.* Real team leaders honestly believe that success or failure is a team event.

Conclusion:

Asking the following questions can help evaluate the team leader's attitude, behaviour and effectiveness:

1. Has the leader adopted a team or a working group approach? Does the leader:
 - a. make all important decisions in a loving way?
 - b. make all work assignments?

- c. make all evaluations of individuals?
 - d. ensure work is conducted primarily on the basis of individual accountability?
 - e. do any "real work" beyond decision making, delegating and agenda setting?
2. Is the leader striving for the right balance between action and patience within the team? Does the leader:
- a. promote constructive conflict and resolution in a loving way?
 - b. use distance and perspective to keep the team's actions and directions relevant? Intimidate anyone on the team?
 - c. constantly challenge the team to sharpen its common purpose, goals and approach?
 - d. inspire trust in people by acting in concert with the team's purpose and the team?
 - e. create opportunities for others, sometimes at his or her own expense?
3. Does the leader articulate a team purpose and act to promote and share responsibility for it? Does the leader:
- a. think about and describe his or her assignment in individual or hierarchical versus team terms?
 - b. identify and act to remove barriers to team performance?
 - c. blame individuals for failure to perform, either within or beyond the team – is unloving?
 - d. excuse away performance shortfalls by pointing to "uncontrollable" outside forces?

As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence. The next best, the people honour, praise and most of all, respect. The next, the people fear; and the next, the people hate. When the best leader's work is done, the people say, 'We did it ourselves'.



LAW of FREE WILL

19 Jul 2009

We will always enable the other person's free will.

We will never attempt to curtail another person's free will.

We will never attempt to manipulate them or control them to do what we want.

Golden Rule: that one must always honour another's will as one honours one's own.

TEAMS, OBSTACLES AND ENDINGS: GETTING UNSTUCK:

Obstacles are a continual fact of life for teams. They occur from the moment a potential team gathers until the team comes to an end. Obstacles also differ as much as the teams, performance challenges, organisational settings and business contexts that produce them.

Endings are also a fact of life for teams. They are one of the most critical obstacles that teams must face in achieving their performance potential. Some endings are planned, others spontaneous; some are abrupt, others drawn out; some are traumatic, others a relief; some perpetuate performance, others erode it. Most endings come down to one or two basic kinds of transitions that matter in terms of performance. Either the team must convey a continuing purpose and set of ongoing tasks to another group or team (as is the case with most teams that run, make or process things), or the team must ensure that its final recommendations are carried out by others who will implement them. In either case, unless the ending is a well-handled transition, valuable performance can be lost.

Dealing with Obstacles:

We are all familiar with the frustrations associated with stuck teams. They include:

- ✓ A loss of energy or enthusiasm ("What a waste of time.")
- ✓ A sense of helplessness ("There's nothing anyone can do.")
- ✓ A lack of purpose or identity ("We have no clue as to what this is all about.")
- ✓ Listless, unconstructive and one-sided discussions without candour ("Nobody wants to talk about what's really going on.")
- ✓ Meetings in which the agenda is more important than the outcome ("It's all show-and-tell for the boss.")
- ✓ Cynicism and mistrust ("I knew this teamwork stuff was a load of crap.")
- ✓ Interpersonal attacks made behind people's backs and to outsiders ("Dave has never pulled his own weight and never will.")
- ✓ Lots of finger pointing at top management and the rest of the organisation ("If this effort's so important, why don't they give us more resources?")

In the worst cases, stuck groups stop trying for team performance altogether and become pseudo-teams. The costs are high. Not only is the specific team performance opportunity lost, but such episodes demoralise people, resulting in much of the reluctance people have regarding the team approach in general.

Unless a team's own purpose and performance goals present a significant challenge, there may not be a foundation for a real team effort.

The parties involved must identify specific actions they can take together that will require them to "get along" in order to advance performance.

Management assumes, for example, that a new leader or new member – by reason of individual perseverance or skill alone – will make the critical difference to performance and get the team back on the right track. No one helps the team focus on the real performance results of getting unstalled. More disciplined attention to performance makes these typical approaches more effective.

Approaches to Getting Unstuck:

What can stuck teams do to get unstuck? There is no magic formula to fit all occasions. Sometimes the best thing to do is abandon the team approach and be much better off following a working group approach.

The key to getting unstuck lies in addressing the particular obstacles confronting the team with a strong performance focus. Five approaches work well. The first two, revisiting team basics and going for small wins, address performance directly. The other three – exposing the team to new information and different approaches, seeking outside counsel or training and reforming the team – provide indirect spurs that trigger a renewed team focus on performance.

1. **Revisit the basics.** No team can rethink its purpose, approach and performance goals too many times. All teams – and certainly, stuck teams – benefit from going back to ground zero and spending the time to uncover all hidden assumptions and differences of opinion that, when assessed by the full team, might provide the foundation for clarifying the team's mission and how to accomplish it.
2. **Go for small wins.** Nothing galvanises a stuck team as well as performance itself. Even the act of setting a clear and specific goal can lift a team out of morass of interpersonal conflict and despair. Achieving specific goals is even better. Cynics within a stuck group might find fault with revisiting team purpose and approach as an insincere and fruitless effort to discuss again what has already been discussed too many times before. Specific performance results, however, carry no such handicaps. Identifying and achieving attainable goals requires a lot of hard work, especially for stuck teams who too often assume they cannot alter their existing list of goals.
3. **Inject new information and approaches.** Fresh facts, different perspectives and new information play a major role in the development of teams. Competitive benchmarks, internal case histories, best practices, front-line work measures, customer interviews – these and other sources of insight can provide stuck teams with the fresh perspective needed to reshape their purpose, approach and performance goals.
4. **Take advantage of facilitators or training.** Whether they are complete outsiders or company employees outside the team itself, facilitators can get stuck teams moving in a constructive direction. Usually, successful facilitators bring problem-solving, communication, interpersonal and teamwork skills to teams who lack them. Unless the team immediately translates this new awareness into "trial" actions, it will return to its real task with nothing to show other than, probably, an increase in cynicism and despair. Just-in-time training and resources upon which both groups and individuals can call to help those teams solve issues exactly as and when issues arise.
5. **Change the team's membership, including the leader.** Many teams avoid getting or staying stuck by changing their own membership. Sometimes this occurs when teams literally separate or add members. In other cases, teams just circumvent stragglers without actually excluding them formally. Some teams actually set rules of membership that require periodic rotation of members to insure fresh input and vitality over time.

Teams, left to themselves, do not change their leaders as often as they change their membership. Rather, new leaders usually get inserted by higher management. The key to whether a new leader, like a new member, will help the team get unstuck lies in whether such moves enable the team to circumvent the obstacles blocking team performance.

Each of the five approaches to unfreezing a team can either spring from the team's own efforts or happen as a result of management intervention.

When a real team or high-performance team is in full gear, a change in formal leadership ought to favour insiders. Furthermore, if there is no other choice than to appoint an outsider, then management beyond the team, the departing leader, the new leader and the full team ought to discuss – as explicitly as possible – the implications of that move for performance.

Conclusion:

Teams must deal effectively with both obstacles and endings to realise their full performance potential. Each time a potential team overcomes an obstacle, it strengthens itself as a team. It develops confidence in itself as a team, learns how to work more effectively together and builds individuals and collective skills in the process. Unfortunately, almost every potential team encounters one or more obstacles that appear to be insurmountable. While it is constructive for any potential team to struggle with being stuck, it can also be discouraging and demoralising to the point of destroying the team.

Real teams always outperform similar groups of individuals acting alone or even as an effective working group. It is also true that an effective working group always outperforms a pseudo-team.

Being stuck, forces the members to rethink team basics, build confidence in and commitment to one another and develop a renewed source of energy by "overcoming" and moving on. Team endings can lead to purposes being reshaped, performance goals being extended and new skills and perspectives being introduced. While valuable momentum and continuity can be lost, the long-term benefits will outweigh the short-term losses so long as the focus on performance prevails.



TEAMS AND PERFORMANCE: THE REINFORCING CYCLE:

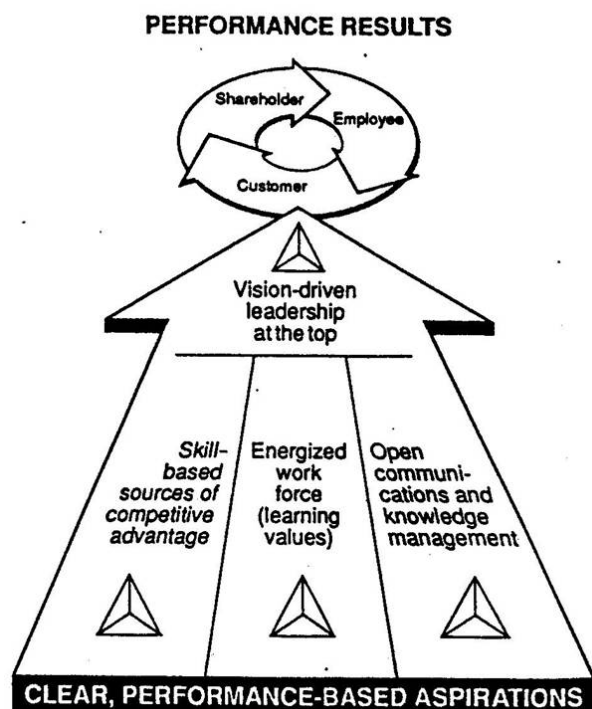
Teams will be the primary building blocks of company performance in the organisation of the future. Such organisations will not promote teams for their own sake. Rather, the performance ethic of the company – that is, the focus on balanced results that benefit customers, employees, shareholders and other key constituencies – will generate the challenges that give rise to teams. Teams, in turn, will deliver performance that enriches and sustains the company's overall performance ethic. This reinforcing cycle of performance and teams, teams and performance, will characterise tomorrow's winners.

To build such strengths, many companies must manage themselves through a period of major change that depends on people throughout the company becoming very good at things they are not good at today. Teams will help direct, energise and integrate such broad-based changes in behaviour. They will set performance aspirations, intensify focus and commitment, energise work forces, build core skills and spread knowledge to those who need it the most to perform.

Often, though not always, such transformations will be led by a team at the top. Building team performance at the top, however, is more difficult than anywhere else. Senior management groups find it hard to establish a *team* purpose, goals and work-products for which they can hold themselves accountable as a team. Absent these, such groups ought to exploit the working group option. Nothing is more corrosive to a company's performance ethic than a pseudo-team at the top.

The primary role of top management is to focus on performance and the teams that will deliver it. Top leaders increasingly recognise that teams improve individual performance, energise hierarchy and structure and enhance basic management processes. By finding the teams that excel and then supporting them as they reach for performance, top management can help spawn the teams that will help lead their companies to high performance. The wisdom of teams lies *not* in encouraging teams for their own sake, but, rather in helping those on potential teams have the chance to pursue their own performance challenges.

THE HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION



Significant performance challenges do more than anything else to foster teams. The issue is not whether such challenges exist; every organisation faces them. Indeed, as phenomena like customer service, total quality and continuous improvement and innovation become more important in sustaining competitive advantage, the kind of performance challenges that produce teams multiply.

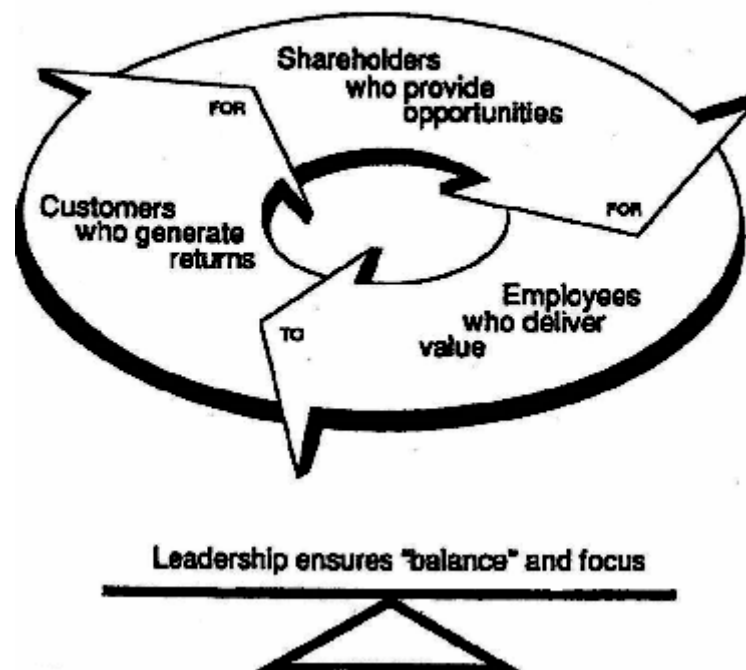
There is generally observed a mutually reinforcing relationship between the strength of a company's performance ethic and the number and performance of teams. Companies that have powerful performance ethics create and pursue the performance challenges that favour teams. Those teams, in turn, deliver results that help sustain the overall performance ethic.

The converse of this cycle also happens. Companies with weak performance ethics obscure or even destroy team performance opportunities.

What do we mean by strong performance ethic? Simply stated, we mean that everyone in the company relentlessly pursues common performance results. It also means they seek results that benefit at least three groups: customers, employees / associates and stakeholders. When this happens, there is an organisation wide commitment to performance that inspires meaning well beyond economics. People – not everyone, but certainly a critical mass – are proud to be a part of such companies.

To sustain this kind of balanced performance, such organisations 1) deliver superior value to their customers, which in turn generates both 2) attractive returns for the company's owners and 3) personal growth opportunities and attractive earnings for employees who, of course, are responsible for delivering superior value to customers. When other stakeholders exist (suppliers, regulators, communities, and so forth) they too get blended into this balanced approach to performance.

DIMENSIONS OF A BALANCED PERFORMANCE ETHIC



The clarity of the performance challenge, the number and difficulty of the obstacles and the confidence, readiness and skills of the people involved will more likely favour real team performance inside companies with strong performance ethics versus those with weak ones.

1. **Performance comes first so the team instinctively set clear performance goals at the beginning and never loose sight of them.** The leadership team have specific reject rates, on-time deliveries, number of corrections, cycle-time reduction and number of suppliers as critical. Accordingly, the team is able to quickly move beyond agreeing on common goals to tackling *how* the members will work together to do it.
2. **Practice values of cooperation and involvement, so the team leader instinctively involves all members in establishing the team's purpose, performance goals and approach.** Values reflect a dedication to "constant respect for people", "becoming best in class in people" and "participative management". The head makes it clear that he wants, needs and expects people throughout the group to help the division to become "the best". As a result, he may have many reassuring role models for sharing solution space with the people who reports to him. He can, with confidence, involve people in decision making.
3. **The management team can take bold steps in streamlining the supply management structure, so that the team has a precedent when it may decide to rid itself of managerial positions.** When the leadership team reorganises, say, the supply management function, it could reduce the number of levels in the hierarchy from say seven to four in order to improve both the speed and effectiveness of decision making. It would demonstrate that performance and contribution to performance are the critical yardsticks by which any managerial position should be evaluated. It would also demonstrate a belief that teams are the basic unit of performance.
4. **The company encourages open challenges of established policy to achieve performance, so the team is not out of line in questioning long-standing policy.** Reorganisation of the supply management activity, as an example, could explicitly address the link between the division's performance and the performance of its suppliers. Indeed, the supply management vision of "transforming the contributions of suppliers into the satisfaction of customers" could grow out of a desire to replace adversarial relations between the company and its suppliers with partner-like relations.

Groups are less likely to establish clear performance goals, managers appointed as team leaders are less likely to share decision-making control, teams are less likely to restructure themselves by removing jobs and established policies on "the way we do things around here" are less likely to get challenged when a company has poor performance ethics. In companies where mediocre performance is accepted as reality, potential team opportunities are more likely to generate personal disappointments than performance results.

Conclusion:

Performance results – that's what teams are all about. When the goals of the team do not define specific results that are important to the overall company's goals, team accomplishments are unlikely to be very powerful. Similarly, performance challenges create real teams. Not surprisingly, when those opportunities call for multiple skills and perspectives, people often become real teams. The rigour with which organisations set and pursue their goals provides fertile ground for the growth of teams, not only by highlighting performance challenges, but, also by making clear what kind of results teams are expected to produce and by persuading the people on teams that results matter more than politics.



Natural Love Flow

Natural love is Creation's love;

One can swap back and forwards between paths

I am God

Intellectual

Self reliant (trust myself)

Self-determination way of life

Mind dominates

Adult like

Control

Millions of paths (man created)

Peak possibility is 6th sphere

time to complete path:

100 years to over 1,000 years

Divine Love Flow

Divine Love is Soul's love.

I am God's son / daughter / child

Emotional

God reliant (God relationship)

Soul-spirit living harmony

Soul dominates

Child like

Feeling

Defined path (God created)

Peak possibility is infinity

(sphere / mansion world are same)

5 years to over 10 years to at-onement

TEAMS AND MAJOR CHANGE: AN INEVITABLE COMBINATION:

No serious business leader, adviser or scholar disputes the vital characteristics necessary for high performance in the 2000s and beyond: visionary leadership, empowered work forces, dedication to customers, total quality, continuous improvement and innovation, supplier partnering, strategic alliances, skill and time-based competition. Each is considered critical.

Whether an organisation faces major change depends on the magnitude of 1) the behavioural changes required for company performance, that is, how many people have to change their behaviours, skills or values and 2) the degree of readiness or resistance inherent in what is often described as "the way we do things around here".

Opportunities as well as threats can pose the need for major change. Sometimes the threats or opportunities are external.

Like most people, companies recognise and respond more readily to threat-based major change. Signals, such as poor performance, disappearing competitive advantages, confused or panicky top management and morale problems, help create the sense of urgency needed for change.

There are four fairly straight forward questions – two about magnitude and two about readiness – can help companies determine the degree to which they face major change:

1. Does the organisation have to get very good at one or more basic things it is not very good at now (e.g. new skills and values)?
2. Do large numbers of people throughout the entire organisation have to change specific behaviours (i.e. do things differently – in a loving manner)?
3. Does the organisation have a track record of success in changes of this type?
4. Do people throughout the organisation understand the implications of the change for their own behaviours and urgently believe that the time to act is now?

A "yes" answer to question 1 and 2 and a "no" to 3 and 4 indicate a major change situation. Managing major change, by contrast, requires working directly on what most people do day to day because that is the only way to foster new behaviours, routines and capabilities. Normal change involves monitoring established routines and processes to ensure that they achieve the purpose for which they were designed. Managing major change requires intentionally derailing and finding replacements for such activities. Finally, normal management involves relatively limited risk taking at the point where the cost and value of products and services are determined, especially at the customer interface. Managing major change demands risking new approaches and experimentation aimed directly at the most critical activities of the company itself.

Best path to managing major change. First, nearly every promising major change effort appears to attack change along three critical dimensions: top-down culture-shaping initiatives, bottom-up goal achievement and problem-solving initiatives and cross-functional redesign and integration initiatives. Second, the leading change efforts have moved along all three dimensions simultaneously and repeatedly instead of sequentially. Third, teams have played a critical role in all three dimensions.

As companies grapple with major change, they inevitably discover the unique role teams play in energising top-down, bottom-up and cross-functional initiatives. Team dynamics relating to focus, direction, size, skill

and mutual accountability promote both performance and behavioural change.

Bottom-up Goal Achievement:

In major change situations, bottom-up efforts must focus on shaping new values and changing behaviours at the front lines where the value and the cost of a company's products and services are determined, including the customer interface. Where teams fail to flourish, frontline behavioural changes either never start or falter once under way; where teams are successful, the needed skills and values – plus the desired performance – happen.

In a more fundamental sense, it makes its customers happy with unique products and services; it makes lots of money for its investors; and it makes employees both productive and satisfied with their jobs. In other words, a well-balanced performance ethic.

These skills include technical and functional mastery over multiple tasks and manufacturing processes. They also include problem-solving, decision-making, interpersonal, teamwork and leadership skills.

Cross-Functional Redesign and Integration:

Major change, by its nature, is intentionally disruptive and largely un-programmable. The change challenge, namely, to "unfreeze" an organisation and then guide it through the multi-year period usually necessary to learn the new behaviours, skills and values required for performance.

Conclusion:

During periods of major change, the performance aspirations of a company depend on many people throughout the organisation learning new, specific values and behaviours. The most effective efforts simultaneously provide top-down direction, bottom-up goal achievement and problem-solving actions and cross-functional systems and process redesign. In addition, two other patterns distinguish the best major change programs. First, all initiatives taken are driven by performance results. A new organisation structure, a new management information or compensation system, or even a new strategy do not become ends in themselves, but, rather are means to the end of balanced performance. Second, the underlying performance goals of the change programs or processes themselves practice the behavioural changes they are trying to bring about. If new levels of customer service are critical to performance, for example, then the change programs emphasise the identification, practice and measurement of specific customer service behaviours from the outset.

This all-important link between performance and behaviour change explains why teams contribute so much to major organisational transformations. Real teams powerfully join specific determinants of behaviours – commitment, skills and accountability – to specific performance purposes goals. Accordingly, teams can help identify and build the particular behavioural changes demanded by performance for any specific company.

Naturally, management should use organisational approaches in addition to teams to stimulate change. No approach matches the flexibility, unique performance and behavioural characteristics of teams.

Behavioural Changes Demanded by Performance in the 2000s and Beyond:FROM

Individual accountability.

Dividing those who think and decide from those who work and do.

Building functional excellence through each person executing a narrow set of tasks ever more efficiently.

Relying on managerial control.

A fair day's pay for a fair day's work .

Beings self-reliant.

TO

Mutual support, joint accountability, trust and respect-based relationships in addition to individual accountability.

Expecting everyone to think, work and do.

Encouraging people to play multiple roles and work together interchangeably on continuous improvement.

Getting people to buy into meaningful purpose, to help shape direction and to learn.

Aspiring to personal growth that expands as well as exploits each person's capabilities.

Being God-reliant.



TEAMS AT THE TOP: A DIFFICULT CHOICE:

There are deeper sources of resistance, more misconceptions and tougher obstacles to forming real teams at the top than at anywhere else in the organisation. The discipline required to shaping a team – and, in particular, the accountability characteristic of a team – depends on identifying collective work products and approaches that, at first blush, often seem elusive to executives.

Working Group Performance may be Enough:

Working groups are neither good nor bad. They are simply an approach that differs from that of a team. The performance results of a real team will almost always outstrip that of a working group. Working groups can and do help their members perform well in their individual roles.

Differences between Working Group and Team:

WORKING GROUP

Strong, clearly focused leader.

Individual accountability.

The group's purpose is the same as the broader organisation mission.

Individual work-products.

Runs efficient meetings.

Measures its effectiveness indirectly by its influence on others (e.g. financial performance of the business).

Discusses, decides and delegates.

TEAM

Shared leadership roles.

Individual and mutual accountability.

Specific team purpose that the team itself delivers.

Collective work-products.

Encourages open-ended discussion and active problem-solving meetings.

Measures performance directly by assessing collective work-products.

Discusses, decides and does real work together.

In the typical senior working group, individual roles and responsibilities are the primary focal points for performance results. There is no incremental performance expectation beyond that provided by individual executives working within their formal areas of responsibility. The performance contract is between each executive and the leader as opposed to mutual accountability among all members of the group. The dominant group activities are sharing information, reinforcing performance standards and expectations, strengthening basic values and making critical decisions. Most of each executive's time and attention is spent outside the working group with people in his or her part of the organisation. Finally, the group performance ethic revolves around total company and individual (as opposed to team) success and failure.

The more open, constructive and supportive the members of these groups are, the more effectively they share useful information and insights as well as help motivate one another. They can also be extremely effective in collectively reinforcing standards or values across the group and in bringing multiple judgements to bear on critical decisions.

The members of most executive teams possess an extremely rich set of skills and experience; their discussions are open, constructive and effective; they are clear on their vision for the corporation; and their aspirations are high.

Whereas some companies do not face performance problems and the executive office feel that they do not need to shift away from their current working group mode.

Why Teams are Tougher to Form at the Top:

Teams that run things – at whatever level in the company – must meet the same criteria and take the same risks as teams that make, do or recommend things. When such teams exist, they strongly influence the performance of their enterprises. Team performance at the top of any organisation is more the exception than the rule.

There are five popular yet misguided beliefs about how executives are expected to act at the top that bedevil the formation of real teams.

1. **"The purpose of the team at the top is identical to the purpose of the company."** Potential teams at the top, just like potential teams anywhere else, must identify a common team purpose and set of performance goals that require them to do real work together as a team. Groups at the top, however, tend to see their team purpose as synonymous with the overall company purpose.

The executives at the top are responsible for the company's purpose. The same thing is also true of potential teams elsewhere, although, to a lesser degree. Unlike at the top, however, potential teams elsewhere can more easily distinguish between their *team* purposes and their generic purpose of supporting the company.

By contrast, "leading a corporation" represents a relatively abstract challenge that takes a long time to realise, is often difficult to assess and is rarely suggestive of a clear set of team purposes, team goals and team work-products. Most groups at the top only measure themselves by how well the company does along various economic criteria. It fails to measure what they do as a team against performance goals and work-products they set for themselves.

2. **"Membership in the team is automatic."** It is counter-intuitive at best and unimaginable at worst, that someone who reports directly to the head of a company or a division, let alone the head himself or herself, would not be a member of the team. When "official" team members fail to meet those standards, the rest of the team operates without them, whether formally or informally.

This, however, is far easier to do down the line than at the top. Strong individual performers with advanced functional skills who lack teamwork or interpersonal skills are more difficult to exclude from the team, if only out of fear of losing their individual contributions. Ego, visibility, and even personal commitments and compassion can make it hard to exclude weaker performers. As a result, many potential teams at the top that face seemingly insurmountable skill problems feel like they are in a "damned if you do, damned if you don't" situation.

Notwithstanding the difficulties, however, team membership at the top does *not* have to be hierarchically dependent.

An intense focus on a specific performance challenge and set of joint work-products plus the "everyone does real work" standard of team membership permits real teams to form that can exclude some individuals without ostracising them.

3. **"The role and contribution of team members, including the leader, are defined by their hierarchical and functional position."** In the vast majority of groups that run things, the expected contribution from each person coincides with that individual's formal job description. The head of marketing, for example, worries mainly about marketing, operations about operations, finance about finance and so on. At the top of companies, *"my job" is far more clearcut and easier to commit to than "our job"*.

Deeply ingrained biases toward individual accountability and achievement reinforce the executive behaviour patterns that run counter to team requirements. Teams at the top, like teams elsewhere, must develop a sense of mutual trust and interdependence.

All of this puts even more pressure on the leader. Because of the leader's unique role and influence, it is commonly assumed that he or she alone will either make or break the group's performance. A corollary of this dictates that the leader alone must prescribe the group's purpose, goals and approach. Such assumptions reach beyond the executive suite. When big trouble threatens or occurs, boards of directors replace individual CEOs, not teams at the top. Consequently, everybody – the leader and the leader's direct reports – knows that the leader's job, not theirs, is most squarely on the line.

As a result, many leaders are cautious about giving up "solution space", even to individual executives, let alone to a team. They instinctively rely on their own wisdom and control rather than on team approaches to management. They are not expected to express uncertainty, depend on others for help and display attitudes of not knowing the answers. Hence, it is difficult for them to be team leaders, which in turn discourages the shared "purposing" required to develop common directions and mutual accountability. Meanwhile, the leader's colleagues find it more comfortable to hang back a little and play it safe rather than aggressively challenge the leader and themselves to establish a common purpose, set of performance goals and approach built upon the ethic of "only the team can fail".

4. **"Spending extra team time is inefficient."** Executives rarely have much discretionary time. They stick to well-prioritised agendas.

Unlike other teams, executive groups are not likely to "roll up their sleeves" and do real work together such as interviewing customers, digging into analyses and experimenting with new approaches. Consequently, each executive's contribution often reflects two aspects: 1) work done by other people; and 2) the executive's own judgement and experience. Each of these is essential to a well-functioning working group; neither equates with the "real work" of teams.

5. **"Team effectiveness depends only on communications and openness."** This all-to-common misconception equates teamwork with teams. Discussions and decisions of top management groups benefit from shared practices emphasising active listening, co-operation, sharing, giving the benefit of the doubt and recognising the interest and achievements of others. The purpose of such behaviours is primarily to enhance the quality of decisions that do not necessarily reflect joint team work-products or a sense of mutual accountability.

In combination, these five assumptions drive executive groups to the working group approach without any consciousness that a choice is being made. The essential work-product of such groups becomes decisions based on effective management discussions and other processes. These decisions then get assigned to individual members who are held accountable for carrying them out. Unless the group takes joint responsibility for the outcome of such decision, however, such activity does not constitute the kind of real work required for team levels of performance.

The work-products of a team reflect an incremental performance value that exceeds the sum of each member's individual effort. They also require the joint, real work of people on the team themselves and they build a sense of mutual accountability for results. Of course, real teams at the top do not operate without effective (defined agendas) "discuss and decide" meetings. When real teams make such decisions, accountability for carrying them out is mutual, not just individual.

When real teams meet to discuss and make decisions, they tend to focus entirely on performance, particularly on those issues that cut to the heart of the team's basic purpose and goals. They almost automatically avoid the administrative and bureaucratic issues that bog down other groups. In addition, the decisions that emerge are team decisions, for which everyone feels a strong sense of mutual accountability.

Breaking Through to Team Performance at the Top:

The most practical path to building a team at the top, then, lies not in wishing for good personal chemistry, but in finding ways for executives to do real work together. When they succeed, a discernible pattern emerges with respect to their assignments, approach and contributions, including:

1. **Carving out team assignments that tackle specific issues.** These are narrower and more concrete than leading the organisation as a whole toward the realisation of a vision, mission or strategy.
2. **Assigning work to subsets of the team.** Most teams we have observed do not create their work-products as an entire team. Task forces, project teams and worker teams almost always assign individual and subgroups within the team to do the preparatory work that can support a rich and meaningful full-team working session. Senior management groups, by contrast, spend nearly all of their joint time as a full team reviewing the work of others, discussing issues and making decisions.

The successful teams at the top have broken out of this pattern by assigning specific tasks to one or more individuals and by expecting them to deliver essential work-products for integration by the entire team in subsequent working sessions. This causes members to do real work together beyond full-team meetings, allowing *team* involvement and accountability to grow outside the context of discuss and decide sessions.

3. **Determining team membership based on skill, not position.** Skill-based membership relieves the difficult constraint of hierarchically imposed membership. Not everyone who reports to the CEO has to be on a single team. It is important to be tough-minded about the skill requirements and not simply assume that the formal position of the member defines his or her skills for team purposes. Otherwise, the team will suffer the fatal flaw of skill deficiency relative to its goals.

A skill-specific approach allows the option of multiple smaller teams, constituted to address particular issues and match up different skill profiles. The smaller groupings and the focus on single issues give top executives the chance to experience teams which, especially if membership in these subgroups overlap and interlock, offers the potential for a larger team at the top.

4. **Requiring all members to do equivalent amounts of real work.** In real teams, when tasks are assigned to team members, they are expected to do the work themselves. Each team member's sweat equity in the work-product is always evident. So is their firsthand knowledge of the output.

As a result, the members of the team doing any particular piece of real work had personally invested in its lessons and outcomes, earning a higher regard and deeper trust from their team-mates.

5. **Breaking down the hierarchical pattern of interaction.** The work assignments and the contributions to be made often should be unrelated to hierarchical position.

Such non-hierarchically oriented assignments provide fundamental building blocks for team work-products and team performance. When an executive *not* responsible for human resources, for example, interviews a candidate for a job *not* in that executive's division, other team members appreciate both the time and effort as a contribution *to the team*. Naturally, many of the contributions of executives must relate to their respective hierarchical roles and experiences. Without a consistent flow of contributions that go beyond those given roles, however, each person is deprived of the opportunity to do real work on behalf of the team.

6. **Setting and following rules of behaviour similar to those used by other teams.** Top managers, of course, must spend time together reviewing the work of others and making decisions. As we have suggested, the most critical distinction between the discuss and decide activities of teams versus working groups lies in the degree of mutual accountability for the results of decisions made. Senior management teams can facilitate a greater degree of mutual accountability by adopting the rules in the chapter headed *Moving up the Curve – From Individual to Team Performance*.

By identifying specific team tasks, assigning them to individuals or subgroups to do themselves and making sure that many of them call for non-hierarchical and non-formal contributions, top managers can and do deliver team work-products in support of team performance goals that have a major incremental impact on company results.

Conclusion:

The subtle and difficult choice between a working group and team is not a one-time event. Top groups need to periodically re-examine whether their chosen mode of operation best fits the changing performance challenges they face. By choosing a working group mode, groups at the top avoid the risks of making the leap and failing. Team performance requires an investment of time that must come out of already tight executive schedules, thus, team efforts can lead to neglect of individual responsibilities. A failed team attempt at the top, breeds scepticism about teams generally and can even cause the group to fall into pseudo-team attitudes and behaviours that are debilitating and difficult to break.

On the other hand, choosing the team approach promises significant performance potential and offers important benefits over a working group, some of which cannot be measured – for example, the higher degree of commitment in a team. In addition, of course, there is the tangible benefit of incremental gain that comes when team performance goals and work-products are achieved. Team performance possibilities at the top are not trivial, nor can the choice be dismissed lightly.

The capabilities and attitudes of the executives also influence the extent of the risks involved in moving

from a working group to team approach. The constructive conflict and hard work necessary to build trust, interdependence and mutual accountability will not occur without openness and candour. Since the personal stakes are so high for executives at the top of their companies and careers, such candour risks more than hurt feelings and bruised egos. Strong individualists may refuse to subordinate their personal ambitions to the team, and, if pushed, such people can and do leave.

The answers to a few key questions that help determine whether the group can establish a practical team purpose and goals, pull together the needed skills and shape a realistic team working approach; such as:

Team Purpose and Goals

1. Can we convert the company mission into a more *team* specific performance purpose for our group, including incremental performance goals that we can achieve together working as a team? If so, what are they?
2. What specific issues, opportunities or problems would lend themselves to a team effort and a set of collective work-products? Can we test the water by trying a team effort on one or two of them?
3. How can we ensure that we each subordinate our individual priorities to the group's purpose and goals?
4. How can we measure our mutual progress toward our goals as well as monitor our effectiveness in becoming a team?

Complementary Skills

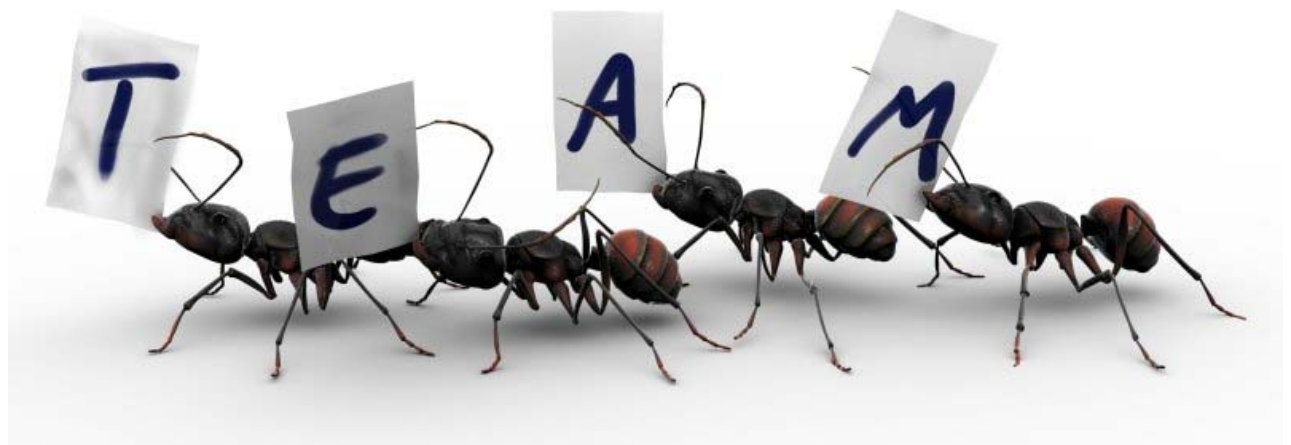
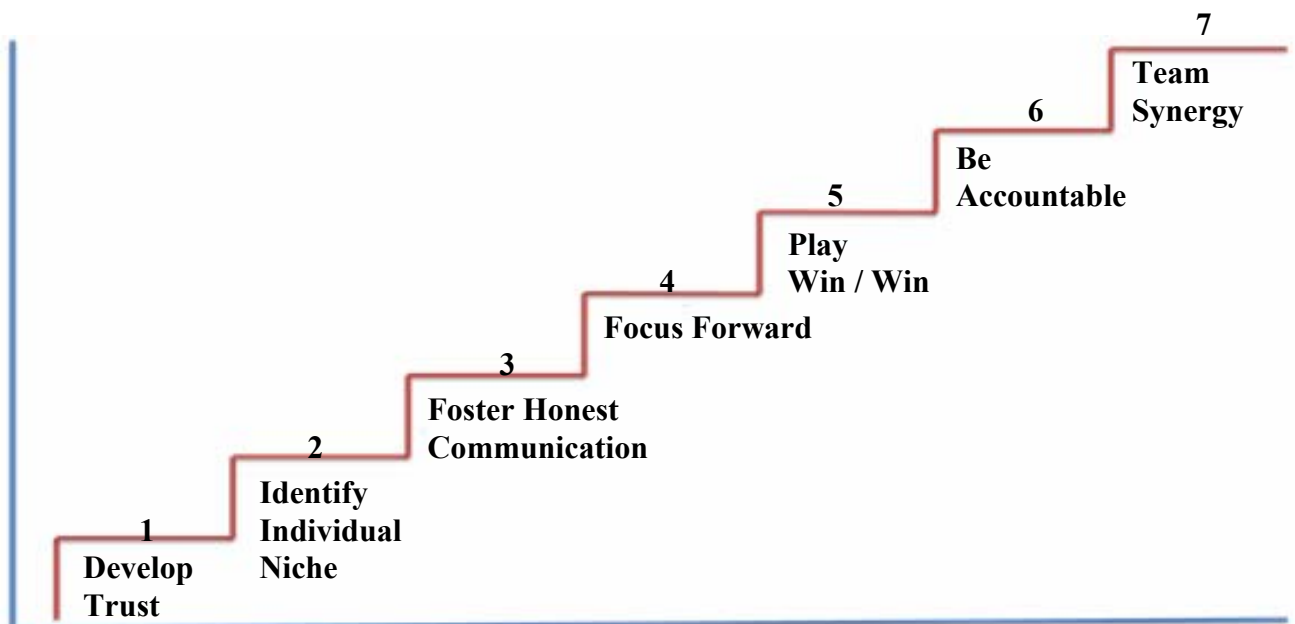
1. Do we have important skills that are *not* best captured by our formal roles and responsibilities?
2. Can we better utilise the basic skills and experience of our group by working together beyond, as well as, within our formal, functional responsibilities?
3. Could some of us build skills in other areas and thereby help strengthen the overall capabilities of the group?
4. Can we modify our membership to include others down the line to enhance our collective ability to achieve particular goals?

Working Approach

1. Can we break up hierarchical patterns by assigning work tasks based on skills rather than position?
Can we assign leadership roles to someone other than the CEO?
2. What specific rules would help us work better together and "equalise" our individual and real work contributions to group goals?
3. Can we reconfigure our group into sub-teams more appropriate to the specific issues, opportunities or problems identified?
4. How can we most effectively foster teams down the line?

It is both possible and useful to try the team approach on selected issues before moving completely away from the working group approach. Becoming a team at the top is difficult, but, it is not as hard as many would make it seem.

The Seven Steps to a Winning Team



TOP MANAGEMENT'S ROLE: LEADING TO THE HIGH-PERFORMANCE ORGANISATION:

Top management's role regarding teams is changing. In the past, it largely has left the nourishment of teams to others. In seeking to improve performance it has put its time and attention into changing strategies, individual assignments, larger organisational forms, management processes and important leadership initiatives.

The primary role of top management, of course, is to lead the organisation toward performance, not to create teams. Moreover, when considering the best means to tackle any specific performance challenge, teams do not offer an all-purpose panacea. Top managers must consider teams in balance with strategy, individual assignments, hierarchy, structure, basic management support and cross-cutting work-flow processes. Teams will be the primary building block of performance in high-performance organisation of the future. Effective top managers will increasingly *worry about both performance and the teams that will help deliver it.*

Teams at the top increasingly create powerful new visions and make them happen. Successful quality and business re-engineering efforts are team-based.

The key to top management's evolving role regarding teams lies in focusing its attention as well as company policies and resources on the teams that matter most to performance. By policies, we mean the actual practices that people throughout the company look at to judge how important teams really are to top management and why.

If team assignments are not, as a matter of policy, an integral part of normal, successful careers, they will not attract the best people, generate enthusiasm and produce team performance results. So long as individual accomplishments overshadow team accomplishments, people will remain cautious about joining teams. By contrast, policies that ensure that people routinely have team experiences and get rewarded for their team contributions as handsomely as for their individual contributions will encourage team formation and team performance.

Even more critical than policies, however, is how management uses company resources plus its own time and attention to foster team performance. Here, top management's role is threefold. First, it needs to identify which teams will most affect performance. Second, it needs to know how to help teams move up the performance curve. Thirdly, top managers need to know what to do about the issues unique to teams that run things versus teams that recommend things versus teams that make or do things.

Teams that Run Things:

These includes groups from the top of the enterprise down through the divisional or functional levels. So long as the group oversees some business, ongoing program or significant functional activity, it is a team that runs things. Unlike teams that recommend things (e.g. task forces), these groups typically have no clear end dates. In a sense, their work is never done.

Most top management attention to groups that run things takes the form of monitoring individual responsibility and performance. Increasingly, that focus must shift to team performance. The relevant challenges most unique to teams that run things include: 1) the choice between team and working group, 2) the role of team leader and 3) the problem of transitions. If the group must deliver substantial incremental performance requiring real, joint work-products, the managers involved should take the risks to move from

working group to potential team to real team.

The toughest challenge for potential teams that run things often comes in trying to identify specific team purposes, goals and collective work-products.

For a real team to form, there must be a team purpose that is distinctive and specific to the small group and that requires its members to roll up their sleeves and work together to accomplish something beyond individual end-products.

Top management can help such teams tremendously by working with them to think through what the group should do as a team and how it should measure itself. This requires helping it find the right balance between individual work, delegated work and team work-products and the right potential skill mix and resource support. It is also important that top management pay continuing close attention to how well the team works these things out for itself over time.

In addition, top management can help the team by helping the executive in charge improve his / her team leader attitude and skills. Most leaders of teams, especially those that run things, must develop their team leader skills on the job because: 1) managing a working group differs from leading a team, and 2) each team challenge poses its own set of variations. Good managers, for example, expect – and are expected to – make most decisions and delegate most assignments. By contrast, good team leaders seek to develop a team approach to decision making and accountability.

When potential team that run things do become real teams or high-performance teams, top management can contribute a great deal by carefully handling the team transitions and endings caused by membership and, especially, leadership changes. A new member poses both a threat and an opportunity to a team. So top management can help simply by reminding the team to pay attention to how it integrates new members. A new leader, on the other hand, poses more than just a transition if he or she comes from outside the team itself. Thus, top management ought to favour current team members if possible. If someone new is picked, top leaders should work carefully with the team to avoid lost momentum and disappointment.

Teams that Recommend Things:

These teams include task forces, project groups and audit, quality or safety groups asked to study and solve particular problems. Unlike most teams that run, make or do things, teams that recommend things typically have predetermined completion dates, although a few, like plant-level safety teams, might be ongoing. If top management asks such a group to address issues of performance as opposed to administration then almost by definition the group "matters". Accordingly, top managers can best manage the time and attention they need to devote to such teams by limiting how many they set up.

The key to potential teams that recommend things getting off to the right start lies in the clarity of their charter and composition of their membership. In addition to wanting to know why and how their efforts are important, task forces need a clear definition about who management expects to participate and the time commitment required. Management can help by ensuring that the teams include people with the skills and influence necessary to crafting practical recommendations that will carry weight throughout the organisation. Moreover, management can help the team get the necessary co-operation by opening doors and dealing with political obstacles.

The transfer of responsibility for recommendations to those who must implement them demands top

management time and attention. The more top managers assume recommendations will "just happen", the less likely it is that they do.

The more involvement task force members have in actually implementing their own recommendations, the more likely they are to get implemented. Top management can exploit the performance opportunity inherent in task force recommendations by allowing the members to make them happen.

At a minimum, anyone responsible for implementation should receive a briefing on the task force's purpose, approach and objectives at the beginning of the effort as well as regular reviews of progress along the way.

Teams that Make of Do Things:

These teams include people at or near the front lines who are responsible for doing the basic research, development, operations, processing, marketing, sales, service and other value-adding activities of the business. With some exceptions, like new product development or process design teams, such teams tend to have no set completion dates.

In deciding which of these potential teams matter most to performance, top management should concentrate on the performance challenge at the company's "critical delivery points" – that is, places in the organisation where the cost and value of the company's products and services are most directly determined. Such critical delivery points might include where accounts get managed, customer service performed, products designed and productivity determined. If performance at the critical delivery points depends on combining multiple skills, perspectives and judgements in real time, the team options make sense. If, on the other hand, an arrangement based on individual roles and accountabilities is the best way to deliver the value customers require at the right cost, teams may be unnecessary and possibly disruptive.

There will be more and more teams at the front lines whose performance challenge includes specific goals tied to customer service, total quality and continuous improvement and innovation. *This does not mean, however, that teams are always necessary.* In many situations, the clear division of labour based on individual accountability will continue to make sense.

When an organisation does require a significant number of teams at the critical delivery points, the sheer challenge of moving so many groups up the team performance curve will demand a carefully constructed and performance-focused set of management processes. Put bluntly, the problem for top management is how to build the necessary systems and process supports without falling into the trap of appearing to promote teams for their own sake.

It is impossible for top management to speak about the important performance role of teams without talking about teams themselves. But, so often, when they do discuss teams – even with explicit reference to performance – people down the line do not make the connection. This unintended consequence is even more likely if management announces the team initiative without tying it to performance.

Top management needs to build structural and support systems that focus on the performance challenges, measurement and skills necessary to broad-based team performance at the front lines. This may include organising work around teams as the primary performance unit and emphasising just-in-time training. Such training might include team problem-solving, decision making, interpersonal and leadership skills. The choice depends on the performance needs of each team.

More than anything else top management must make clear and compelling performance demands on specific teams themselves and then pay relentless attention to their progress with respect to both team basics *and* performance results.

Teams and the High-Performance Organisation:

Focusing on both performance and the teams that deliver it will materially increase top management's prospects of leading their companies to become high-performance organisations. The dynamics that drive teams mirror the behaviours and values necessary to the high-performance organisation and because teams are so practical.

No one argues over the value of such company attributes as being "customer-driven", "informatted", "focused on total quality" and having "empowered work forces" that "continuously improve and innovate". Behind these lie a set of six characteristics:

1. **Balanced performance results.** A balanced performance ethic that benefits the primary constituencies of any large business organisation: customers, employees and shareholders / owners.
2. **Clear, challenging aspirations.** Whether it goes under the name of "vision", "mission", "strategic intent" or "directional intensity", the company's purpose must reflect clear and challenging aspirations that will benefit all of its key constituencies. The purpose, meaning and performance implications of visions must communicate to all who matter that they will benefit both rationally and emotionally from the company's success.
3. **Committed and focused leadership.** High-performance organisations follow leaders who themselves almost evangelically pursue performance. Truly committed leaders inspire confidence throughout the organisation that the pursuit of performance is the single best path to economic and personal fulfilment.

Such leadership does not require teams at the top. The power in such teams is undeniable because of how well the members keep each other committed and focused.

4. **An energised work force dedicated to productivity and learning.** The "learning", "adaptive", "self-directed" and "evergreen" characteristics of high performance organisations depend on a critical mass of people who are turned on to winning, the challenge, as well as to the change that winning requires. The people of the organisation must share an eagerness to ask questions, to experiment with new approaches, to learn from results and to take responsibility for making changes happen.

5. **Skill-based sources of competitive advantage.** Companies should always seek and make best use of intrinsically valuable assets like access to natural resources, control over powerful distribution channels, strong brand names, patents and other government licenses. Innovation, customer-driven service, total quality and continuous improvement are examples of the capabilities companies need for high performance.

Core skills invariably depend on team skills. Whenever adding value depends on the real-time blending of multiple skills, experiences and judgements, a team performance challenge exists. Teams provide an excellent crucible for on-the-job skill development.

6. **Open communications and knowledge management.** Real teams *always* seek fresh facts and share information both within the team and with others beyond. Real teams communicate and learn whatever is necessary to get their job done. Team "doors" are always open. Moreover, through the "extended team" influence, the communications and knowledge management of others work better.

First, future organisations designs will seek structures simpler and more flexible than the heavily layered command-and-control hierarchies that have dominated the twentieth century. Second, they strike a balance in favour of organising work and behaviour around processes instead of functions or tasks. Thirdly, they all emphasise teams as the key performance unit of the company.

Conclusion:

The increased emphasis on teams that we observe and advocate enhances rather than replaces the value of other more familiar aspects of organisation direction and design. Top management will continue paying attention to where and how to compete (formulating strategy), changing individual roles and assignments (new job descriptions), realigning reporting relationships (reorganising the boxes), modifying management policies and processes (reworking the systems). Yet, top management is turning increasingly to teams for three compelling reasons.

First, teams strengthen the performance capability of individuals, hierarchies and management processes. Team performance require high-level contributions from every member of the team. Each must bring commitment, skill and real work to bear on the team's purpose. Moreover, they must do so by working together as well as working as individuals. Teams do not succeed without both mutual accountability *and* individual accountability. Accordingly, collective and individual achievement go hand in hand, making teams a primary vehicle for both extra performance and personal growth. Somewhat unexpectedly, the people on the teams do not run into any career obstacles because of their team roles or participation.

Teams also improve the performance impact of basic management processes such as planning, budgeting and evaluating.

Teams and hierarchy make each other perform better because structure and hierarchy generate performance within well-defined boundaries that teams, in turn productively bridge in order to deliver yet more and higher performance.

Second, teams are practical. By that we mean most people can make teams work. Teams thrive on performance challenges and set objectives. Teams have leaders. Teams have discipline.

Thirdly, teams get results. Real teams almost always perform better than any similarly situated set of individuals acting either separately or in a working group.

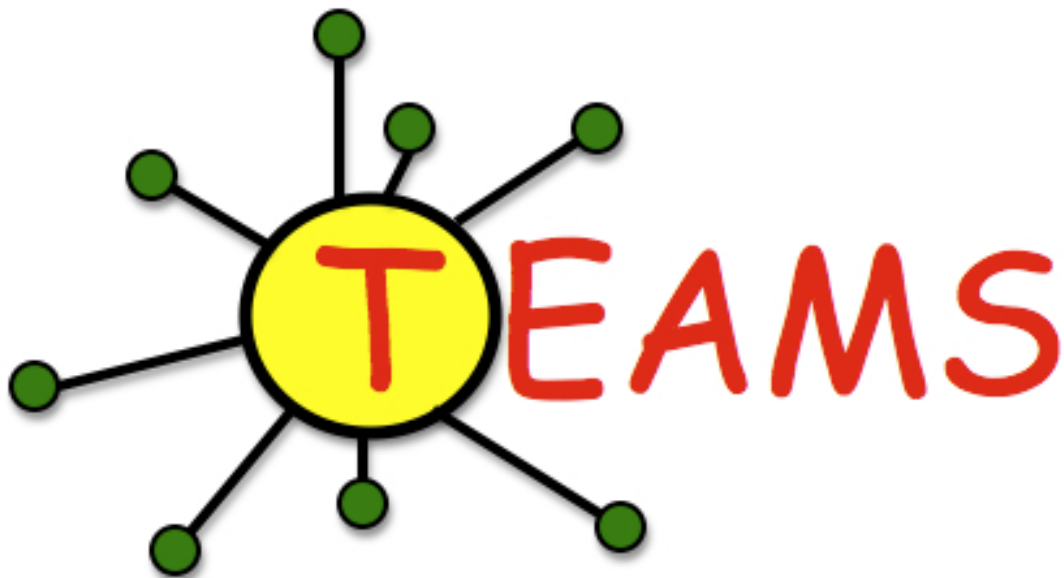
Ft Edwards was one of GE's more traditional plants – unionised, hierarchical and relatively unprofitable. Today, the 400 workers operate in 27 teams all of which report directly to the plant manager. The teams vary in degree of achievement along the team performance curve. But all of them select their own leaders, set their own goals and share their own working approach. In less than two years, the plant's productivity has turned up, costs are declining and customers say they are being served much better. The enthusiasm and performance focus may strike you as odd in such a strong, traditional union shop. To us, this is a compelling illustration that most people instinctively want to perform better.

Teams invariably are more powerful than individuals and more flexible than larger organisations units. Teams support the risk taking and experimentation so important to learning, change and skill development. Teams provide sources of motivation, reward and personal development that can never be duplicated by company-wide compensation and career planning schemes. Teams are a microcosm of the high-performance organisation itself.

In the end, the wisdom of teams is within the team itself. It is not in creating the high-performance organisation, managing transformational change, enforcing corporate performance ethics or inspiring new dimensions of leadership. It is in a small group of people so committed to something larger than themselves that they will not be denied.

The characteristics of high performance team incorporates extreme commitment to one another as well as to their team's purpose and performance, out of which blossoms an incredible ethic of work and fun, complementary and interchangeable skills, shared leadership and dramatic results.

Unbridled enthusiasms is the raw motivating power for teams.



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Golden Rule: that one must always honour another's will as one honours one's own.



ALWAYS BE TRUE TO YOUR FEELINGS

