Building High Performance and Effective IG Teams

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Objectives

• What is a team?
• Being an effective team leader
• Talented and committed team members
• Effective team processes
• Four stages of team development
• Team management
What is a team?

• A team is a group of people who are committed to working together to achieve a desired goal.

• Working together includes talking, sharing ideas, debating issues, collaborating, making decisions, establishing goals, and dealing with changing priorities.

• In general, teams tend to be small in nature, particularly within the context of a larger organization.
  • Most research indicates the ideal number of people to have on a work team is between 5 and 12.
High Performing Teams

- High performing teams share three things in common:
  1. An effective team leader
  2. Talented and committed team members
  3. Effective team processes
Effective Team Leader

• The team leader plays a major role in the success of any team.
• The best team leaders have **three** important skills:
  • **Task skills** - The ability to set goals, establish priorities, assign roles and responsibilities, plan and run effective meetings, and monitor results.
  • **People Skills** - The ability to connect with people, resolve conflicts, motivate, inspire and celebrate success.
  • **Diagnostic Skills** - The ability to evaluate situations and determine what’s needed to move forward when faced with challenges.
Effective Team Leader

• Effective team leaders know when and how to use various management/leadership styles to engage team members and get the work done:
  • Directing – Telling people what to do and how to do it
  • Discussing – Asking the right questions to engage people and solicit their ideas
  • Delegating – Empowering others to take ownership for tasks and relationships with others
Talented and Committed Team Members

• Having team members with the required **skills and motivation** is critical for success. You want people who are committed to both the task and supporting/helping each other.

• Team success hinges on having the **right people for the right roles**. Create a list of the skills, qualifications, and experiences needed for the team. Use this list as you recruit and select team members.

• **How much diversity do you want on the team?** In some cases, you want diversity, or a mixture of males and females, ages, education, work history, thinking styles, etc. A cross-functional team, where people bring different skill sets, is desirable when you are dealing with major initiatives that affect the total organization.
Building Your Team

• Finding the right people is essential
  • Be clear about what you are looking for; define the role
  • Skills to achieve team goals
  • Capacity and attitude to operate as part of a team
  • Beyond experience, consider the ability to learn, trustworthiness, and conflict resolution skills
  • Staff to your weaknesses
  • Consider future needs, not just what is needed today
  • Be on the lookout for talent

“Teamwork is no accident. It is the by-product of good leadership.”
—John Adair
Building Your Team

• It’s helpful to have team members who can perform various roles, including:
  • **Strategic Thinker** – Sees the big picture and connects the dots at a high level.
  • **Detail Taskmaster** – Detail-oriented and can identify all the relevant specifics needed to get the job done.
  • **Facilitator** – Engages people and helps the team stay on track and follow a logical process.
  • **Driver** – Someone who keeps the team moving forward to accomplish the desired goal.
Effective Team Processes

• There are three core strategies high-performing teams use to perform very effectively. They include:
  1. Communicating
  2. Making decisions
  3. Holding people accountable
Effective Team Processes

1. Communicating

• Good communication is vital for team success.
• Team members need to be open and honest and say what’s on their mind.
• This requires a foundation of trust and openness to all ideas and points of view.
• High-functioning teams have serious, heated debates and even encourage disagreements in their meetings.
Effective Team Processes

• When team members become defensive, take things personal, or are guarded in their comments, the discussion ceases to be productive.

• To help prevent this, high-performing teams often establish rules related to effective communication including the following:
  • One person speaks at a time
  • No side conversations in meetings
  • Speak up and say what’s on your mind
  • Focus on the problem, not the person
  • Listen and fully consider all ideas
Effective Team Processes

2. Making Decisions
   • Teams need to make decisions about goals, plans, assignments, etc.
   • There are several ways teams can approach the decision-making process, such as:
     • Team leader decides
     • Group consensus
     • Majority rule
     • Team members decide
Effective Team Processes

• High performing teams often establish rules related to how the team will make decisions. They may:
  • Consider all options
  • Strive to reach consensus
  • Make timely decisions
  • Avoid “analysis paralysis”
  • Disagree and commit
Effective Team Processes

3. Holding People Accountable

• Effective team leaders hold people accountable for assigned tasks and upholding the team’s values.

• An employee not meeting standards means other team members must endure some measure of consequences, even chaos, and pick up added work for which they usually are not recognized or rewarded.

• Team members on high-performing teams not only set the example but also hold each other accountable.
Effective Team Processes

• High performing teams often establish rules and values to assist in holding one another accountable:
  • Be responsible
  • Complete all action items on time
  • If you are going to have difficulty meeting a deadline, ask for help
  • Avoid surprises
  • Communicate often
Stages of Team Development

• Teams, like personal relationships, go through stages. Teams don’t become great teams overnight. It takes time for team members to develop trust, learn to collaborate, and understand each other’s thinking styles and behavior patterns. **Team development is a process, not an event.**

• Bruce Tuckman in 1965 conducted research on small group interactions and described four stages of team evolution - **Forming, Storming, Norming** and **Performing.** Each stage includes new challenges and opportunities to resolve issues, build relationships, and clarify roles.

• Remember that teams are living, changing organisms.

• Teams don’t always progress steadily in one direction; change in leadership or unanticipated change can derail them.
Forming Stage

• Team members meet for the first time. They communicate in a polite, tentative manner.

• Extroverts dominate conversation.

• Little, if any, conflict exists.

• Team members form impressions about their colleagues’ personalities, work habits, and motivation.
Forming Stage

• Team leaders need to focus on three things:

  1. The Task
     • Discuss why the team was formed and what their deliverables are.
     • Include expected output, timeframes and time commitments.
     • Establish task roles and responsibilities for each team member.

  2. The People
     • Give people a chance to get to know each other.
     • Schedule activities such as lunches and perhaps an after-work get-together.
     • Take a skills inventory.
     • Be clear on who can do what - people need to understand how they will use their skills and work together.
Forming Stage

3. Operating Rules
   • Establish operating rules all team members agree to follow.
   • Rules center around how team members will communicate, make decisions, and be held accountable for results.
   • Develop the rules as a group, put them in writing, and distribute them to all team members.
Storming Stage

• Hidden agendas, hurt feelings, and interpersonal conflicts often develop. Arguments and differences in work styles arise.

• The conflicts may be about goals, priorities, roles, and responsibilities. Some team members may not agree with their role or feel their ideas aren’t being considered.

• Team members need to learn how to work through conflicts and find productive ways to disagree, negotiate, collaborate, and work together.

• Conflict isn’t bad, but it must be handled in a professional and productive manner. Mishandled conflict can create hurt feelings, lack of trust, and disengagement.

• Handled appropriately, conflict becomes an opportunity for learning, fostering stronger bonds of respect, and even building team morale.
Storming Stage

• Actions that team leaders can take:
  • When problems arise, mediation should be timely to keep team processes in check and resentment from escalating.
  • Remind all team members of the team’s key goals.
  • Help team members understand and appreciate their similarities and differences.
  • Conflict is an inevitable fact of continual interaction.
  • If the conflict is between two individuals, consider addressing privately.
Norming Stage

• Having worked through conflicts and disagreements, team members now understand each other better and appreciate each other’s knowledge, skills, and experience.
• Team members become more interdependent and discover there are many benefits to working together.
• Team norms or standards become established regarding task performance and people interactions.
Norming Stage

• Some of the norms that high-performing teams establish regarding people interactions include the ability to effectively:
  • Respect and trust each other
  • Assume good intent
  • Be open to other ideas
  • Identify common ground
  • Utilize candor – direct communication

• Actions that team leaders can take:
  • Set the example – model the desired behaviors
  • Highlight the norms
  • Praise team members whose behavior aligns with team norms
  • Hold people accountable
Performing Stage

• At this stage, the team is performing at a high level. All team members are fully engaged—participating, collaborating, and achieving great results.

• Team members understand and accept their roles and responsibilities.

• Team members are able to openly discuss ideas and resolve disagreements on their own.

• They learn quickly and are committed to continuous improvement.
The Team Leader (attitude is everything)

As a leader, you set the **tone** for your team.

What attitudes do you project?

- **A leader of strong teams**
  - Wants to help team members achieve success
  - Communicates to build trust
  - Creates team cohesion
  - Cares about the well-being of team members
  - Has confidence in the team
  - Leads by example
  - Shares credit and shoulders responsibility
  - Gives team members necessary skills, then steps back to let them thrive

- **Great team leaders don’t have all the answers; they just ask the right questions**
Making A Connection (building trust)

• What people really seek from their leaders
  • Authenticity
    • Being yourself, sharing mistakes and shortcomings
  • Transparency
    • Honest and open communication
  • Continuous Feedback
  • Career Development
Effective Team Management (What can you do?)

Model Good Behavior

- Allow conflict to exist
- Model decisive and consistent behavior
- What does “us” as a successful team look like and how do we know when we are there?
- Hold self and team members accountable

Promote Clarity

- Always practice clear communication
- It’s okay to ask questions and restate your points numerous times
- Be clear about what you are empowered to do and what not to do
- Obtain guidance when needed

Provide Structure

- Meet on a regular basis
- Make sure everyone is heard
- Find methods to measure success
- Be dependable and persistent
Questions?

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