Handbook on Team Building

CENTRE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE
Knowledge • Technology • People

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1 Introduction

Groups in governmental context

Government is the main agency for development and maintenance of interventions for people. It is divided into various parts and segmented as several sections, constituents, departments, ministries and other hierarchies. Due to its nature, it is required to provide specialist services through specialist departments. However the division of the government into different departments and sections requires it to find mechanisms and use them to integrate itself and perform its various functions effectively and efficiently. Many agents work for similar or same objectives. As a result, a lot of coordination is required.

No single individual can do all the work. In development sector and administration of people, there is a lot of work to be done; hence the need for teams. The team and its meanings change depending on the context. In the larger context, the Cabinet is a team and should work like a team. Groups of health centre staff or a group of teachers in the school, a group of policemen in a station, a group of revenue collection officials in a mandal, various groups in the district offices, etc. all constitute teams. If they are effective, they can accomplish their departmental goals and achieve the objectives with speed and efficiency.

When a group of people work together for the same cause, they form a team. The teams may start from two-person teams to large size teams. They may be close at physical proximity to virtual teams working at different locations and communicating through electronic media like e-mails, cellphones, video conferences etc.

However, many dynamics interfere from getting the best out of the group of individuals who are supposed to work as teams. It is important and necessary to understand the various dynamics that operate and influence the members. A good understanding of the teams - the way they are formed, the dynamics that operate them, the difference between functional and dysfunctional or effective and less effective teams - will help the government agents to build, manage and utilise teams and synergise their work. Teamwork and teambuilding at grass-root levels will help all agencies in achieving their objectives synergistically.

When teams work, the output may be equal to the sum of outputs they have produced individually, less than the sum or more than the sum. When teams work effectively, the output will be more than the sum total. If it is not, then the team is not effective.

In government, to ensure that the sum total effort of a few individuals (team output) is equivalent to or more than the sum of their individual outputs, a hierarchy is established and a senior officer is placed. An important role therefore of every senior officer is to ensure that the team effort is more than the sum of individual effort. Thus, the team leader has an important task of performing an integrative role and ensuring a smooth flow of work. Team outputs are determined, to a large extent, on how effectively every senior officer in charge of it performs this integrative role.
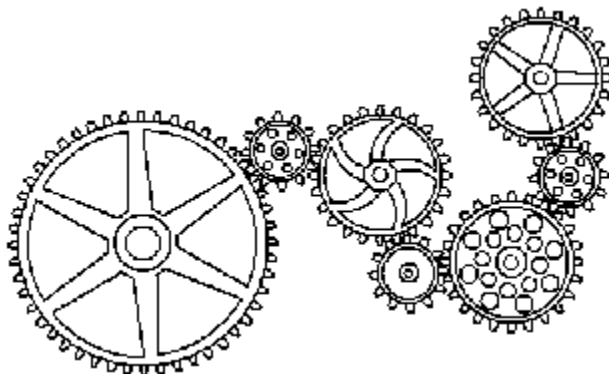
2   Importance of teamwork

Individuals may have learnt from their experience. This learning might be in the form of new ideas or insights that are valuable in coping better with the changing context. But, this learning may not get transferred to the team. If individual ideas and insights do not get translated into group ideas and insights, the final actions and initiatives do not get positively influenced.

Skills developed need to be propagated to other individuals and to other teams. Teams should become the means for change, a means for individual growth and also for organizational learning. In other words, the team's accomplishment should set the tone and establish a standard of learning together for a large organisation.

Of late, there has been increasing emphasis on using the team approach. There are certain underlying reasons why organisations want to establish and promote teams. Firstly, there is a belief that productivity will increase   when staff is involved in local problem-solving and decision-making. Secondly, teams involve employees, both in day-to-day and strategic planning and change implementation. Finally, there is an increased value of personal and professional learning with the team being viewed as a place to share knowledge, learn new skills and take risks.

Hence, modern learning organizations create and operate through learning teams to facilitate increase in productivity, assist in the process of change and develop collaboration. Concerted team work culture is a fundamental aspect of organisation development. This reflects the reality that much of the organizational work is accomplished directly or indirectly through teams and the assumption that work team culture exerts a significant influence on individual behaviour. The benefits of teamwork are numerous. Some of them are depicted in the following diagram:
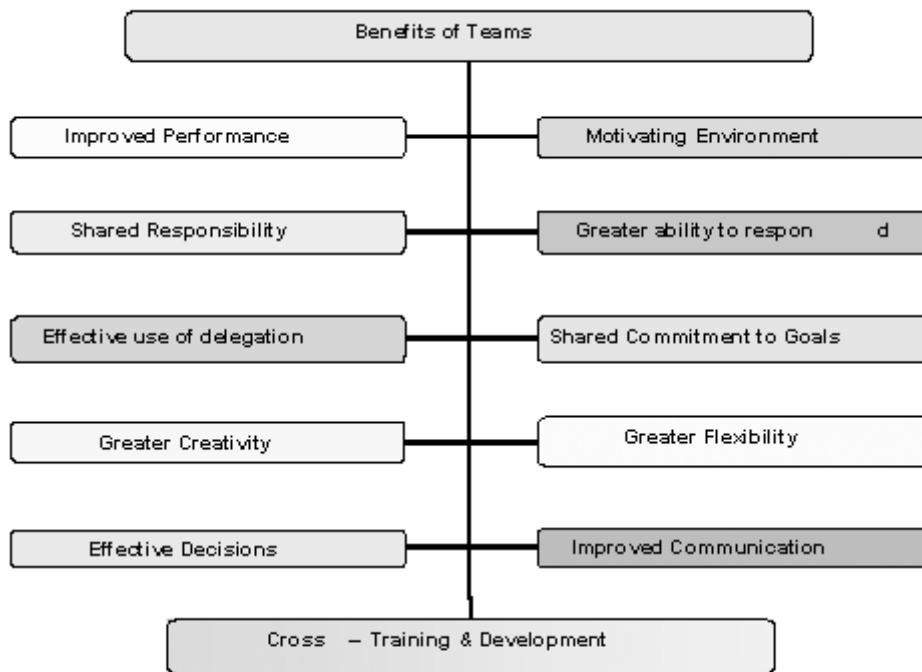
How do we distinguish between groups and teams?
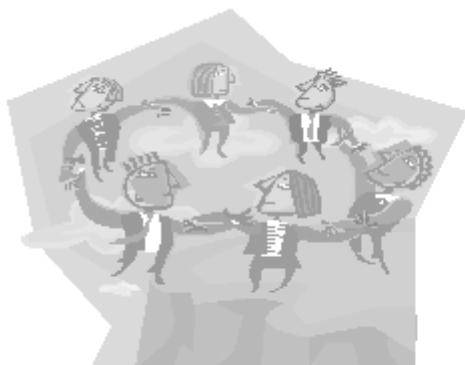
A group is a number of persons, usually reporting to a common superior and having some face-to-face interaction. A group is also characterized by interdependence of people in the group in carrying out tasks for the purpose of achieving the organizational goals. Groups are usually assembled and they have a designated leader. The effectiveness of the group is measured by the influence it has on the organizational performance.

A team is a form of group, but has some characteristics in greater degree than ordinary groups. This includes higher commitment to common goals and a greater interdependency and interaction among the members of the group. Teams are built with specific intention and team leadership is sometimes shared and also rotated. Teams imply a sense of shared mission, and collective respon sibility to a common purpose and performance goals.

A team is a small number of people with complementary skills, who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves collectively accountable. This distinction is particularly relevant in conceptualizing the kind of teams desired, and in the creation of self-managed and high-performance teams.

What leads to team synergy?

A team's purpose is defined by its mission. The team mission is something that the team intends to do. It is the object for which the team exists, as determined by the team leader and team members together. It is a clearly stated purpose that serves to direct and motivate the team in pursuit of its goals.

The team's mission is driven by the organization's vision. The organization's vision provides a "big picture" perspective that serves to align people, ideas and attitudes. The organizational vision may be as vague as a dream, or as clear as a specific outcome. It must, however, be communicated to team members in such a way that they are inspired to be a part of it. To be successful, the team must align its purpose or mission to the organisation's vision.
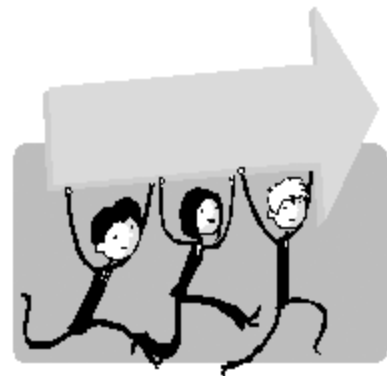
A team goal is an end that the team strives to reach; it directly supports both the mission of the team and the organisation's vision. Teams that agree on their agendas can direct their energies towards task accomplishment.

Effective team goals are determined by all team members. When everyone takes part in establishing the overall goals of the team, individuals on the team have a clear understanding of what is expected and can develop a commitment to working with one another in pursuit of team goals. Common goals provide team members with purpose, clarity and direction.

The specific goals to be achieved by teams differ from team to team and organisation to organisation. The challenge in integrating the efforts of individuals in teams working on the projects is to ensure that they achieve the set organizational goals.

Innovation is a very important part of teamwork. Bringing together people having a variety of experience and expertise to address a common problem or task increases creative thinking, which is the bedrock of new productive ideas.

Some of the characteristics of productive teams are given in the box below:

- The team culture engenders trust, sharing, spontaneity and risk-taking.

- Members participate in setting-specific and realistic goals. They agree with the goals and are committed to them.

- Team goals are as important as individual goals.

- Members contribute a diverse, yet appropriate mix of skills and experience.

- Members clearly understand their roles and shift responsibilities as needed.

- The team has clearly identified norms for managing conflict.

- Intra-team competitiveness is managed.

- All members feel empowered.

- Members are honest, straightforward, supportive and tolerant of mistakes.

- Members are open to new ideas and perspectives, and are eager to do the right thing.

- Decision-making is by consensus rather than majority vote, when appropriate.

- Decisions are made on the basis of substance, not by the style or status of the individual proposing the idea.

- Communication includes all members and a range of opinions is encouraged.

- The team works constantly on improving its interactions as well as its performance.

What factors weaken teams?

Teams consist of individuals and teams survive in different environments. Teams may or may not function effectively due to a lot of internal and external factors: Typically, some of the key symptoms that are evident when the teams function poorly in a certain environment is:

1. Resentment due to lack of resources: If the team does not have enough resources to do the job, it is inevitable that some will carry too heavy a load. Resentment, often unexpressed would result in lack of focus on targets.

2. Cost overruns: Often inevitable, cost overruns become a problem when proper measures are not taken. The whole team should know early on when cost becomes a problem, so the team can seek additional funding.

3. Schedules: When deadlines are not met, there are definitely issues within teams and there is an impact on the quality of the goal, and interpersonal relations get affected.

4. Members are not exactly aware of their responsibilities: Each team member must know what areas are assigned and who is accountable for them.

5. Attention is diverted to other areas: Sticking to the project at hand and avoiding being sidetracked into other things is extremely critical. Typically, when one or two essential members of the team lose their focus or get diverted, the team focus also gets sidetracked.

Causes of poor team performance

When teams fail to perform as well as they are supposed to, there may be many reasons for their failure. Typically, the first thing that people think about is the internal process. Effective teams and their leaders consider whether their negative internal team processes are responsible for poor performance; but they do not stop there. Teams do not exist in a vacuum and their internal processes do not unfold in isolation. The external forces acting on a team may also be the cause of team performance problems. The external system comprises outside conditions and influences, that exist before and after the team is formed. Important features of the external system to consider include team design, culture, team member selection, team training and the reward system.

Factors responsible for team differences:
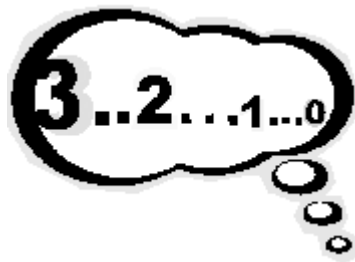
Poor team performance arises from differences. When individuals come together in work teams, their differences in terms of power, values and attitudes, and social factors all contribute to poor performance. Quite often, these differences do not reveal themselves and tend to work surreptitiously. These causes can arise from numerous sources within a team setting and generally fall into three categories:

Communication factors:

Barriers to communication are among the most important factors and can be a major source of misunderstanding. Communication barriers include poor listening skills; insufficient sharing of information; differences in interpretation and perception; and nonverbal cues being ignored or missed.

Structural factors:

Structural disagreements include the size of the organization, turnover rate, levels of participation, reward systems, and levels of interdependence among employees.

Personal factors:

Personal factors include things such as an individual's self-esteem, personal goals, values and needs. In order for conflict to be dealt with successfully, managers and team members must understand its unpredictability and its impact on individuals and the team as a whole.

To lead to effective teams, it is essential to be able to identify the key causes of poor team performance and be aware of the same.

1. Team size: If teams are structurally very large or lean in size, they may not be able to give the desired output due to improper division of task, lack of adequate knowledge and interpersonal issues. Hence, identifying the suitable number of people in a team is important.

2. Team design: Team design implies the mix of people who constitute the members of the team. The kind of people with the required skills for the established purpose and with the needed attitude to be included in the team defines good team design. The lack of it would create issues in a very short time span.

3. Lack of communication: Both formal and informal communication channels, at all times, are very important for the success of any function, team or organization. The lack of it would give no clarity to any member and the goal cannot be achieved.

4. Clarity of purpose: If the team members are not clear or have differences on the goal/purpose for which they have come together, it will lead nowhere. The team cannot perform effectively, since they would not know which direction to proceed.

5. Leadership: Lack of good leadership would also lead to poor performance in teams. All teams at all points of time would need someone they can look up to, especially at times of crisis.

With more and more research being done, it is evident that a successful organization is one characterized by effective teamwork and leadership, rather than management. Organizations are realizing the importance of developing teams that can work in a coordinated, efficient and creative manner.

Broad principles of team building

Team Building has a few fundamental principles:

1. Vision:

Vision means being able to excite the team with large, desired outcomes. Large outcomes mean devising goals that attract missionaries. The first step in vision is to project such a goal. This goal must be bigger than a pay check. It must contain challenge, appeal to personal pride, and provide an opportunity to make a difference and know it. Then the goal can become a powerful vision. Next, team leaders position the goal by picturing success. Initial questions might be, "What will it look like when we get there?", "What will success be like, feel like?" "How will others know?" When a large, mission-friendly goal has been pictured and clearly communicated, the vision is complete.

2. Commitment

Commitment can be a dangerous concept because of its attendant assumptions. Some may assume, for example, that commitment means long hours, while to others it may mean productivity. When expectations are defined, success rates soar. When leaders assume that everyone "should" be committed, as a matter of course, we overlook the difficulties many have with certain commitments. If people cannot initially commit, it does not mean they don't care. More often, it means they do care, and they are caught up in a process of doubt. This process precedes every meaningful commitment. Effective leaders catalyze

this process, so that the critical mass of people can pass through this stage efficiently on their way to genuine commitment and innovative strategies.

This pre-commitment process is the same for team leaders and members. When we ponder a new commitment, we climb up to a kind of mental diving board. Commitments contain unknowns, and some warn of possible failure. It is common for people to neither jump nor climb back down the "ladder," but rather to stay stuck at the end of the board, immobilized in pros, cons, obstacles, and worries. In this state of mind, the obstacles begin to rule, obscuring the vision, blunting motivation. When leaders do not understand the commitment process they tend to seek accountability without providing support. Without the means to process doubts and fears, people often feel pressured to commit, but cannot. One option, often unconscious, is to pretend to commit, to say "yes" and mean "maybe" at best. The pretended commitment is a form of wholly unnecessary corporate madness. The solution to this set of problems is two fold: establish an atmosphere of trust, and within that atmosphere encourage inclusion.

3. Trust

Trust is the antidote to the fears and risks attendant to meaningful commitment. Trust means confidence in team leadership and vision. When trust prevails, team members are more than willing to go through a difficult process, supported through ups, downs, risk and potential loss. Trust is most efficiently established when leadership commits to vision first, and everyone knows those commitments are genuine. The process for leaders to commit is the same as for everyone else: assess pre-commitment doubts, questions, unknowns and fears. This involves three simple steps:

- List the unknowns.
- Assess worst case scenarios and probability of overcoming them.
- Research the unknowns.

The list of unknowns reveals some answers and raises further questions. Some of these questions lend themselves to research (others' experience, a small pilot plan), and some have no apparent answers from our pre-commitment position. These latter comprise the

bottomline or irreducible risk. We learn the outcome only after commitment. Every major commitment contains some irreducible risk, some lingering unknowns. We, therefore, make every major commitment constrained by partial ignorance. Leadership now understands the potential loss and gain involved in the new vision. At this point, leadership can commit itself, and prepare to include other team members. That preparation must include a plan for leadership to share visibly both risk and reward with the other team members who will be coming on board. With leadership's commitment to a clear vision, and a genuine plan to share risks and rewards, the atmosphere for trust is in place. We are now ready to include others in our team effort.

4. Inclusion

Inclusion means getting others to commit to the team effort, helping others through their "diving board doubts" to genuine commitment. Since leaders now understand this process first hand, we need only communicate with the potential team members to complete inclusion. The best setting to obtain buy-in and build trust is in small groups that facilitate thorough give and take. The basic tasks are to communicate the vision, make sure it is understood, communicate leadership's commitment (including sharing risk and reward, and how), and elicit and address peoples' doubts. Leaders will need three communication skills to achieve inclusion. These are non-assumptive questions, good listening, and directed response.

1. Non-assumptive questions ("What do you think?", "Can you tell me what is happening with this report?") invite real answers because they are inclusive, not intrusive. Questions containing assumptions ("Why are you skeptical?", "Why is this report so incomplete?") invite defensiveness. When converting an atmosphere of change and possibly skepticism to trust, added defensiveness is counter-productive.

2. Listening means separating the process of taking in information from the process of judging it. Kept separate, both processes are valuable. Mixed, especially when the receiver is a designated leader, the sender is invited to stop communicating or to change the message midstream.

3. Directed response. Effective team leaders demonstrate responsiveness. Since leaders have already processed their own pre-commitment doubts, many questions can be answered on the spot. Some require research and a time line for response. And some, which relate to the bottomline, irreducible risk, require a truthful "I don't know. I'm in the same soup as you."

5. Help Exchange

The final step in creating the team is to establish a corroborative, balanced strategy for reaching the committed vision. This plan will consist of all of the tasks and efforts necessary to realize the overall vision. Your team-mates themselves are in the best position to supply this information. Since by this time you have laid the groundwork for trust, and established good buy-in, your team-mates are likely to be enthusiastically cooperative.

At this point, the leadership role is to catalyze consensus, not to issue orders. Consensus means that team members agree to, whether they necessarily agree with, a particular approach. Consensus occurs easily when most feel their ideas were heard and considered, whether or not the team ultimately chooses those ideas. Obtaining consensus again requires use of leadership communication skills: non-assumptive questions, good listening, and directed response. Effective teams often produce lively discussions of divergent viewpoints before reaching consensus. Diverse views can mean unresolved argument, or they can mean increased team intelligence and ultimate consensus. The difference is a well built team.

Teams are not ends in themselves; they are a means by which to achieve other organizational goals.

3 Stages of Team Development

A team's internal processes usually change over time. Like individuals, teams develop their skills, the more they use them. Team functioning generally improves after the team has been together awhile. The developmental stages that teams commonly go through are:

Forming:

During the forming stage, a work-team focuses on orientation to its goals and procedures. The amount of information available and the manner in which it is presented are crucial to work team development. Most members are anxious about what the team and they, as individual members are supposed to do. In newly formed teams, relationships often are guarded, cautious and noncommittal. Understanding leadership roles and getting acquainted with other team members facilitate development.

Storming:

The storming stage begins when competitive or strained behaviors emerge. Initially, the storming process may involve resistance and impatience with lack of progress. A few dominant members may begin to force an agenda without regard for the needs of other team members. Team members may challenge the leader, or they may isolate themselves from team discussion. If conflict spreads, frustration, anger and defensive behavior may appear. If conflict is suppressed and not permitted to occur, resentment and bitterness may result, which in turn can lead to apathy or abandonment. Although conflict resolution is often the goal of work teams during the storming stage, conflict management is generally what is achieved.
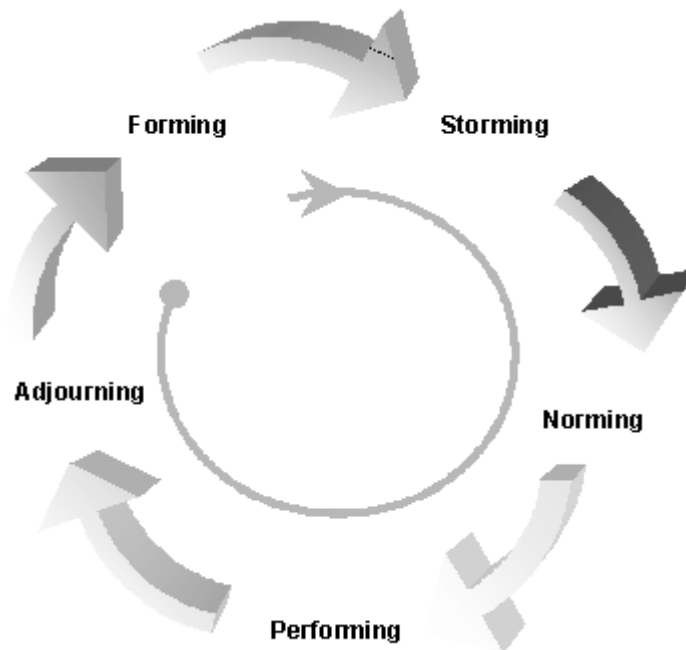
Norming:

In the norming stage, team members become increasingly positive about the team as a whole, the other members as individuals and what the team is doing. At the beginning of the norming stage, the dominant view might be: We are in this together, like it or not, so let us make the most of it. Thus, the team members may begin to develop a sense of belongingness and commitment. Task related and role behaviors of members increasingly are resolved through cooperation, open communication and acceptance of mutual influence. The rules of behavior that are widely shared and enforced by team members develop. If the work team gets to the end of this stage, most members may like their involvement a great deal.

Performing:

Members usually have come to trust and accept each other. To accomplish tasks, diversity of viewpoints is supported and encouraged. Members are willing to risk presenting 'wild' ideas without fear of being put down by the team. Careful listening and giving accurate feedback to other focused team members on the team's tasks can reinforce a sense of clear and shared goals. Leadership within the team is flexible and may shift among members in terms of who is most capable of solving a particular problem. The following characteristics lead to high levels of team performance:

- Members direct their energies towards their goals.

- Members have adopted procedures for making decisions, including how to share leadership

- Members have achieved trust and openness among themselves

- Members experience a sense of freedom to be themselves while feeling a sense of belonging with others.

- Members have learnt to accept and deal with conflicts

- Members know how to diagnose and improve their own functioning

Adjourning:

The adjourning stage involves terminating task behaviors and disengaging from relationships. The stage is not always planned and may be rather abrupt. Adjournment for a work team changed with a particular task should be set for a specific time and have a recognizable ending point.

Work teams tend to develop slowly at first. Then, as deadlines approach, team members feel more pressure to perform and often respond by resolving or setting aside personal differences in order to complete the task. No particular period of time is needed for a team to progress from one stage to the next.

Coming together, sharing together, working together and succeeding together.

TYPES OF TEAMS

Functional teams	These are teams that perform the same function. They spend a lot of time together and speak the same functional language – finance teams, production teams, activating teams etc.
Work teams	These are those teams where every one has the same skills, but is assigned a specific task. Employees often form groups that have little to do with completing tasks required by their employer, such as bowling leagues and parent support groups. Only some groups in an organization are formed for the purpose of doing the organization's work, and it is these teams that are generally referred to as work teams.
Project teams	These are teams of people with different expertise; each tackles a different part of the task.
Inter-organizational teams	These are those teams where membership is drawn from different departments or ministries to address common problems or issues across representative organizations.
Intra-organizational teams	These can be any teams consisting of members from across all levels of the organizations or representatives of the concerned interest groups, constituted to resolve issues or problems.
Leader–led teams	These are teams that have designated leaders. The leader is appointed or nominated at the time of the formation of the team or as soon as the team is formed. The leaders play a dominant coordination role and normally the role of the leader is defined.
Leader–less teams	These are those that are appointed without a leader and are normally given the choice of having a coordinator who will not act as a leader but as a coordinator.
Problem solving teams	It is a group of 5 to 12 employees from the same department, who meet for a few hours each week to discuss and solve work-related problems. Such a team may meet one or two hours a week on a continuing basis to discuss ways to improve quality, safety, productivity or morale. Not all problem solving teams have indefinite

|	life spans, however. Temporary task forces are familiar examples of problem solving teams that exist just long enough to deal with a specific problem.
Self-managing teams	Also called as autonomous work group, it is a work group given responsibility for a task area without day-to-day supervision and with authority to influence and control both group membership and behavior.
Cross- functional teams	They consist of a group of employees from about the same hierarchical level, but from different work areas who come together to accomplish a task. A task force or a project team comes under this category. These teams are created to deal with a specific problem and are usually disbanded when the task is completed or the problem is solved. A team is a formal organization team usually relatively long lived, created to carry out specific organizational tasks.
Quality circles	They are groups of employees who meet regularly to identify, analyze and propose solutions to various types of workplace problems. Meetings usually lasting an hour or so are held once every week or two, during or after regular working hours. Quality circles normally do not have the authority to implement their proposed solutions, which are presented to the management for further consideration and action.
Task forces	These are teams that are formed to accomplish a specific, highly important task for an organization. Task forces often meet intensively during the course of a few weeks or months and then disband. Task force members usually are expected to continue working at their normal jobs during the duration of the task force. Also typical of task forces is diversity in the backgrounds and expertise of the members. Managers often create task forces to help accomplish strategic orientation, to help gather data about the external environment and to help design approaches for implementing new strategy.

Characteristics of effective teams:

1. The atmosphere tends to be relaxed, comfortable and informal

2. The group's task is well understood and accepted by the members

3. The members listen well to each other; there is a lot of task relevant discussion in which most members participate

4. People express both their feelings and ideas

5. Conflict and disagreement are present but are centered around ideas and methods, not personalities and people

6. The group is self conscious about its own operation

7. Decisions are usually based on consensus, not majority vote

8. When actions are decided upon, clear assignments are made and accepted by the members

9. There is clear purpose of the aim to be accomplished

10. The members are informal and frank with each other for better effectiveness

11. There is a high level of participation at all levels

12. Leadership is shared and viewpoint of everyone in the team is valued

13. The diversity of styles in the team helps them to get a variety of exposure and deliver better quality

Creating effective teams:

1. Balanced roles: People with different work preferences must gain entry into teams rather than like minded people.

2. Open communication: Communication should be open, flexible and capable of building trust between people.

3. Handling stress: Working with others in close proximity can itself be stressful. Additionally, we tend to react differently to various work pressures. The key skill which effective teams develop is the ability to recognize when either individual or collective stress is becoming a problem and to reduce it together.

4. Team choices: These choices must be made explicit. Once the range is known, alternatives could be ascertained. Suppose someone from the team says, "I think teams are good in principle, but in practice they can be complete waste of time." Once a response like this comes out, the team can begin to deal with it.

5. Team Goals: Teams make sense only when there is a common goal, which requires collective action. Defining the team's purpose is vital. What are we trying to achieve and why? This, then, gives team members a focus for their energy and action. It is also helpful to set some short-term goals to create gains, which sustain the team as it pursues longer-term goals.

6. Review mechanisms: For a team's success, there must be proper control over team's activities and outcomes. A periodical review is needed to keep everything on track. If it is missing, team work will become just another 'flavour of the month'.

7. Shared leadership: Teams need different forms of leadership at different times. Both the leader and the members must be willing to exchange roles, depending on the situation.

8. Facilitation skills: Ensure that team meetings are well organized, allowing enough room for all to express their feelings and thoughts properly.

9. Shake off the constraints of the past: All relevant issues affecting the functioning of a team must be discussed, debated and resolved.
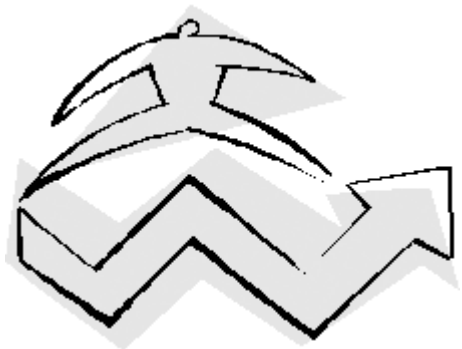
10. Consensus: Team decisions need to be based on consensus, so that all members can agree with and be committed to implementing important decisions. Consensus building does not imply 100 % agreement on the part of members. It only indicates the willingness of a member to support the decisions on reaching a certain stage or point.

One underlying assumption regarding teams in organizations is that resources are available to the individuals in the work unit. They have the capability to address and deal with issues if given the time, encouragement and freedom given to honestly work towards solutions. Team development in its best sense is creating the opportunity for people to come together to share their concerns, their ideas and their experiences. The basic building blocks of organizations are teams and one of the basic building blocks of organization development is team building.

4 Team Structure

For many people the experience of working with a team is a new one. There is an adjustment to be made by everyone to the needs and temperaments of the other team members. The team members must learn to handle the demands of sharing, keeping pace with others, explaining, listening, and carrying one's own portion of the load to meet deadlines and goals. It is expected that some members will have more trouble than others in making the adjustment. The process is part of the learning experience. An open atmosphere should always be maintained so that the team can always be honest with itself. The team leaders should spend time discussing the importance of learning, to work well together. Thus, teamwork demands various roles to be played by the members.

Task roles & Process Roles

When involved in teamwork people usually take on one or more typical roles. Task roles help the group achieve its aims and goals. Process roles help the group to remain focused and harmonious. Group members usually take more than one role or play different roles in different groups. Some task and process roles:

Task roles	Actions and behaviors
starts the group working	initiates action by proposing goals and tasks
suggests directions	develops plans for approaching the task and sharing responsibilities; helps group focus on the task
offers information and opinions	offers facts, opinions, ideas, suggestions and relevant information

Process roles	Actions and behaviors
listens actively	welcomes others' ideas while expressing his/her own; is receptive to others' ideas and gives verbal and non-verbal feedback to the speaker
encourages	warmly encourages participation from all group members, clearly values and accepts contributions
compromises and harmonizes	tries to reconcile disagreements when opinions differ or conflict arises

Types of Roles in Teams

In any team, a variety of roles can be performed. These include:

1. Goal or Direction setting roles

2. Maintenance Roles, including tension releasing, energizing etc.

3. Quality Assurance or Quality eliciting roles

4. Monitoring roles

5. Summarizing or consolidating roles

6. Empowering, participation roles

7. Decision making or consensus building roles

8. Renewal or rejuvenation roles

9. Leadership roles

10. Membership roles

These are a few of the possible roles. The roles could overlap. They could be given or taken by one or more individuals. Normally, the leader has the responsibility to play most of these roles and facilitate group work. However, as leaders are busy with task performance, they may not often be able to perform these roles well. In such cases, specific responsibilities can be delegated to individuals who have the requisite competence to perform them effectively.

- **Task Focused Roles:** Task clarification or Direction Setting: This role deals with clarifying the nature of the task, assigning roles to different members, ensuring that the standards are set, or clarifying standards and expected outcomes, stating the resources available, time frame, quality etc.

- **Quality or Standard Setting Roles:** In this, the group or its members focus on meeting the quality or standards of performance.

- **Process or Maintenance Focused Roles:** They ensure that the members performing the task are kept happy, energized and utilize their talent. It ensures that there is enough of sharing, participation, satisfaction, motivation and morale.

- **Monitoring Roles:** These include reminding members about the progress with respect to time, quality and standards; giving feedback, analyzing the situation etc.

- **Input Providing Roles:** These include information giving roles where members provide information needed to complete the task or perform the task.

- **Information Seeking Roles:** These include asking for information to perform the task.

- **Summarizing or Consolidating Roles:** These deal with summarizing the progress and providing milestones for members to recapitulate their progress.

- **Empowering Roles:** These deal with providing sanctions required to legitimize the participation or energize the participation. These include acknowledging the contributions of other members, building on the ideas of other members, complimenting for contributions etc. These also include resolving conflicts when they occur, encouraging humour to release tension in the group, asking for breaks, designing other intervention that keeps the morale of the team high.

- **Consensus Building Roles:** These include ensuring that every member gives inputs, involving those who did not participate etc.

Supportive Roles

The Clarifiers

Are we saying that ....?

Let me state in my own words what I'm hearing from the team

Let's see if we can put this into perspective

The Initiator

Let's try this

Is there a chance this might work?

The Information Giver

Other organisations found that …

The literature says that …

Benchmarking studies found that …

The Encouragers

Your idea has a lot of merit

The idea is workable, but we may have to make small changes

What you said will really help us

The Gate Keepers

Who has not given us opinions on this yet?

Should we keep our options open?

Are we prepared to make a decision or recommendation, or is there additional information to be received?

The Consensus Takers

Let's see if the team is in agreement

Let's take a vote on this

Let's see how the rest of the group feels about this

The Harmonizers

We sort of agree, don't we?

Your ideas and mine are close together

Aren't we saying the same thing?

The Information Seeker

Have we tried anything like this before?

Do we know of other organizations where this has worked?

Can we get this information?

Destructive Roles

The Blocker

Likes to criticize

Rejects the views of others

Cites unrelated examples and personal experiences

Has multiple reasons why project management will not work

The Withdrawer

Is afraid to be criticized

Will not participate openly unless threatened

May withhold information

May be shy

The Devil's Advocate

Finds fault in all areas of project management

Refuses to support project management unless threatened

Acts more of a devil than an advocate

The Recognition Seeker

Always argues in favour of his / her own ideas

Always demonstrates status consciousness

Volunteers to become the project manager

Likes to hear himself talk

Likes to boast rather than provide meaningful information

The Dominator

Always tries to take over

Professes to know everything about project management

Tries to manipulate people

Will challenge those in charge for leadership role

The Topic Jumper

Must be the first one with a new idea / approach to project management

Constantly changes topics

Cannot focus on ideas for a long time unless it is his/her idea

The Aggressor

Criticizes everybody and everything on project management

Deflates the status and ego of other team members

Always acts aggressively

Role Taking versus Role Making

Normally in designing the teams, most organizations pay little attention to various roles. The roles are most often assumed rather than prescribed. The most usual roles prescribed are that of the Leader and, at best. the recorder or the secretary or coordinator. Normally, the leader is required to play all the roles - setting direction, reviewing, reminding the members of the tasks and the processes, maintaining the morale of the team, summarizing the outcomes, and providing feedback. These roles are performed whether the teams are of permanent, temporary or semi-permanent nature. Defining the roles well in advance will enable the groups perform to the maximum.

Some members are particularly good at performing certain roles. For example, some members are very good at conflict resolution etc. They are humorous, have a high degree of empathy and hence make sure that there is periodic release of tension and steady progress towards the goal.

It is, therefore, recommended that periodically the roles performed by various teams and their members are reviewed, any significant lapses are identified and timely feedback is provided to them.

The following are the most essential roles to be remembered:

1. Setting direction

2. Setting the culture and norms

3. Converting the larger goal into specific tasks and assigning to various members: (Division of labor, assigning specialist duties etc.)

4. Conflict resolution

5. Ensuring participation of all members

6. Driving to consensus

Role Taking versus Role Making

7. Summarizing and reviewing the progress

8. Documentation

9. Humour and releasing tension

10. Supplying information and other resources

11. Logistic management

12. Closing and reconvening etc.

13. Communicating decisions to others

Interventions

The reason that team building produces such powerful positive results is because it is an intervention in harmony with the nature of organizations as social systems. Under a system of division of labour, parts of the total organizational task are assigned to teams, and then that team assignment is broken down and assigned to individuals. In most cases, individual members of the team are interdependently related to each other, and must coordinate and integrate individual efforts in order to achieve successful task accomplishment.

The most important of interventions in OD is team building activities, the goals of which are the improvement and increased effectiveness of various teams within the organization. Team building interventions are typically directed towards four major substantive areas: diagnostics, task accomplishments, team relationships, and team and organization processes.

Types of Interventions

The following are some of the key techniques used for team building interventions:

Role Analysis Technique:

It is designed to clarify role expectations and obligations of team members to improve team effectiveness. In organizations, individuals fill different specialized roles in which

they manifest certain behaviour. This division of labour and function facilitates organizational performance. Often, however, the role incumbent may not have a clear idea of the behaviours expected of him/her by others and, equally often, what others can do to help the incumbent fulfil the role is not understood.

Ishwar Dayal and John.M Thomas developed a technique to clarify the roles, which is particularly applicable for new teams, but can also be used for established teams where role ambiguity or confusion exists.

In the role analysis technique, role incumbents, in conjunction with team members, define and delineate role requirements. The role being defined is called the 'focal role'. Upon the conclusion of this step, the focal role person assumes responsibility for making a written summary of the role as it has been defined; this is called a role profile and is derived from detailed discussions. The accepted role profile constitutes the role activities for the focal role person. This intervention can be a non-threatening activity with high payoff. Often the mutual demands, expectations and obligations of interdependent team members have never been publicly examined. Each role incumbent wonders why "those other people" are "not doing what they are supposed to do", while in reality all the incumbents are performing as they think they are supposed to. Collaborative role analysis and definition by the entire work group not only clarifies who is to do what but ensures commitment to the role once it has been clarified.

Responsibility Charting:

In reality, a decision to have someone do something is somewhat more complex than it appears. Because, there are in fact multiple actors involved even in the simplest task assignment. There is the person who does the work, one or more people who may approve or veto the work, and the persons who may contribute in some way to the work, while not being responsible for it. The issue is, "who is to do what, with what kind of involvement by others?"

A technique called responsibility charting helps to clarify who is responsible for what on various decisions and actions. It is simple, relevant and very effective technique for improving team functioning.

Step 1: Construct a grid. List the types of decisions and classes of actions that need to be taken in the total area of work under discussion along the left hand side of the grid. List the actors who might play some part in decision-making on those issues across the top of the grid.

Step 2: The process then is of assigning the behaviour to each of the actors opposite each of the issues. The four classes of behaviour are –

a) Responsibility **(R)** – the responsibility to initiate action and to ensure that the decision is carried out. For e.g.: it would be a department head's responsibility (R) to initiate the departmental budget.

b) Approval required **(A-V)** – the role occupant must review the particular item, and this person has the option of either vetoing or approving it.

c) Support **(S)** – providing logistical support and resources for the particular item.

d) Inform **(I)** – must be informed and by inference, cannot influence.

Actors ⟶ Decisions ⟱					

Force Field Analysis:

It is a device for understanding a problematic situation and planning corrective actions. This technique rests on the assumption of moving from the existing state to a desired state. The steps for the same would be:

Step 1: To decide upon a problematic situation that needs to be improved and carefully describe the current condition. The need is to understand the current state and "why is there a need to change?"

Step 2: There needs to be a careful and complete description of the desired conditions. It needs to be defined what would be the desired state.

Step 3: Identification of the driving and the restraining forces towards and against the desired conditions.

Step 4: There needs to be close examination of the influencing forces. The division needs to be done on the basis of forces under control and influences vis-à-vis forces not under control.

Step 5: Look at strategies for moving the equilibrium from the current condition to the desired state through increasing driving forces and reducing restraining factors. As the desired condition is reached, action plans can be worked out to maintain the state.

Step 6: Implementation of action plans to stabilize the desired state.

Team Building Workshops:

These workshops focus on different parameters of teams to enhance the synergy and give a strengthened focus on interpersonal effectiveness for better organizational growth. Team building workshops take the participants through the entire process of:
• Managing self
• Role clarity
• Personal effectiveness
• Empathy

- Listening skills

- Interpersonal sensitivity

- Team collaboration and consensus building

These workshops allow participants go through a series of self awareness tools and conceptual inputs, which give them an enhanced understanding of the need for and impact of positive team work.

Role Negotiation Exercises:

When the causes of team ineffectiveness are based on people's behaviour of unwillingness to change because it would mean a loss of power or influence, role negotiation could help to a great deal. It directly intervenes in the relationships of power, authority and influence within the group. The change effort is directed at the work relationships among members. It avoids probing into the likes and dislikes of members for one another and their personal feelings.

To carry out this technique, it takes one whole day. A two-day session with a follow up meeting a month later is best. The steps are:

Contract Setting:

The focus is on work behaviours, not feelings about people. There needs to be specificity in stating what is needed in terms of:

- what needs to be started being done;

- what needs to be stopped being done; and

- what needs to be continued being done.

The session will consist of individuals negotiating with each other to arrive at a written contract of what behaviours each will change.

Issue Diagnosis:

Individuals think about how their own effectiveness can be improved, if others change their work behaviours. Then, each person fills out an issue diagnosis form for every other person in the group. On this form, the individual states what he or she would like the other to do more, less or unchanged.

Influence Trade:

Two individuals discuss the most important behaviour changes they want from the other and the changes they are willing to make themselves. The negotiation ends when all parties are satisfied that they will receive a reasonable return for whatever they are willing to forego, agreed through a contract. It is best to have a follow-up meeting to determine whether the contracts have been honoured and to assess the effects of the contracts in terms of their effectiveness.

There are many other types of interventions like outward-bound training programmes, sensitivity training, interdependency exercises, visioning etc. The focus broadly is on the process to enhance the awareness of self-roles, the impact created by self on the team, and the shift or clarity needed for strengthening team performance. Team building interventions are effective based on many organizational factors like the support and encouragement of the top management, the available resources, ability to understand the need and cope with the necessary actions, and above all a willingness to change.

Belbin Team Roles

Dr. Meredith Belbin defines a team role as: "A tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way." Belbin identified nine clusters of behaviour – each of which is termed a team-role. Each team-role has a combination of strengths and allowable weaknesses. The value of Belbin's team-role theory lies in enabling an individual or team to benefit from self-knowledge and adjust according to the demands being made by the external situation. The nine team roles are:

1. The Co-ordinator

This is a leadership role.   The co-ordinator is the one who controls and organizes the activities of his team, making best use of resources available.

a) The co-ordinator likes to identify people's skills and abilities and use them. He will give colleagues the feeling that their contributions are important and that their skills are there to be recognized and utilised.

b) He encourages team members to put their personal objectives in second place. He provides positive feedback on their performance.

c) He smoothes over disagreements and unproductive competition by a blend of tact, insight, detachment and firm control.

d) He will involve colleagues in decision making. At the same time, he retains a focus on the task and ensures that he does not lose control and get things done.

e) He exercises personal self-discipline and perseverance in acting as a focal point for group effort, especially when things get difficult.

f)

BELBIN Team-Role Type	Contributions	Allowable Weaknesses
PLANT PL	Creative, imaginative, unorthodox. Solves difficult problems	Ignores incidentals. Too pre-occupied to communicate effectively.
CO-ORDINATOR CO	Mature, confident, a good chairperson. Clarifies goals, promotes decision-making, delegates well.	Can often be seen as manipulative. Off loads personal work.
MONITOR EVALUATOR ME	Sober, strategic and discerning. Sees all options. Judges accurately.	Lacks drive and ability to inspire others.
IMPLEMENTER IMP	Disciplined, reliable, conservative and efficient Turns ideas into practical actions.	Somewhat inflexible. Slow to respond to new possibilities.
COMPLETER FINISHER CF	Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors and omissions. Delivers on time	Inclined to worry unduly. Reluctant to delegate.
RESOURCE INVESTIGATOR RI	Extyrovert, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores opportunities. Develops contacts.	Over - optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.
SHAPER SH	Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. The drive and courage to overcome obstacles.	Prone to provocation. Offends peopies's feelings.
TEAMWORKER TW	Co-operative, mild, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens, builds, averts friction.	Indecisive in crunch situations.
SPECIALIST SP	Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated. Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.	Contributes only on a narrow front. Dwells on technicalities.

The phases below are indicate and representative of the kinds of behaviour preferred by the co-ordinator:

"What we are here to do is...."

"Let's do this first and that later..."

"To summarize, the main points seem to be..."

"Perhaps you could... then he will..."

"To get back to the main issue, would you...."

Behaviour to be avoided

a) Leadership style that is inappropriate to the team and/or the situation.

b) Rigidity and obstinacy posing as grit and determination.

c) Lack of recognition of ability and merit in the team and/or not using all possible team resources.

d) Competing with major team resources, and refusing to admit superior ability in other team members.

e) Abdicating leadership role in the face of powerful competition

Additional Points

If a co-ordinator is also a leader of the team, he could employ his talents overtly. In a more junior role, he should support harmony, co-ordination and structure in the team without making his contributions in any way a threat to the appointed leader. Always, the coordinator should remember that, while he has many of the qualities that underlie other team roles, he must be prepared to play the role or roles that ensure the most effective team performance. He may have to shift between disguising his talents and taking a leading role according to

his resources and the situation, and despite his strong ego, he must know which part to play and when.

2. The Shaper

The shaper gives drive, enthusiasm and clear direction to the team. He gives shape and form to the team's activities.

Potential Strengths

a) He directs the team's attention to the need to set objectives and establish priorities clearly.

b) He takes a broader perspective of the team's purpose and helps members perceive their own role and contribution within the overall scheme.

c) He exerts a directive influence on group discussions and sums up the outcomes in terms of the objectives and targets set.

d) He keeps an objective view of the team's progress and achievement. This helps him to intervene when the group gets carried away with an inappropriate idea or suggestion or when they seem to veer from a relevant and appropriate path.

The phrases below are indicative of the kinds of behaviour associated with the role of a shaper:

"What we have to do is...."

"We are wasting time. We have to..."

"No - you're wrong. The most important issue is..."

"If we put what you've said with his suggestions , we can..."

Behaviour to be avoided

a) A directive style that assumes undue authority.

b) Being too intrusive in making summaries, appraisals or interventions; lack of tact.

c) Becoming isolated or aloof from the team and losing identity as an integral team member.

d) Competing with other team members

Additional Points

If the shaper is in a formal leadership position, he will need to adopt more of a coordinator role and take a more positive controlling/organising position. This may require him to become more involved with routine activities that require some additional self-discipline.

In a more junior status, he will obviously need to time his contributions and interventions diplomatically, possibly putting them in the form of leading questions.

3. The Plant

The plant is the prime source of ideas and innovation for is team.

Potential Strengths

a) The plant has a highly creative mind and likes to search for new ways of doing things. He energises the team by suggesting new ideas, proposing solutions to problems, advancing new approaches and formulating new ways of organising data.

b) He looks for possible new ways and means of approaching the problems with which the group has been confronted for some time.

c) As many teams seem to operate at the level of mediocrity, the role of the plant may be of crucial importance in feeding new ideas to both senior management and other organisational teams.

The phrases below are indicative of the kinds of behaviour associated with the role of the plant.

"What about..."

" Let's get underneath that..."

"It ought to be this way...."

"Turning that on its head gives us..."

"We mustn't overlook effects of these factors..."

"Why don't we go back to basics...."

Behaviour to be avoided

(a) Attempting to exhibit his capabilities over too a wide field.

(b) Devoting his efforts and creative capabilities along lines of his personal interests rather than his team's needs.

(c) Getting too inhibited about putting his ideas forward, especially in a dominant unappreciative or over-critical group.

Additional Points

As a manager, the plant must exercise considerable self-discipline and be prepared to listen to his team's comments on his proposals. On the other hand, he must not let the stresses of controlling the team stifle his creative input. It will take all his ingenuity to combine the roles successfully

In a less senior role, the plant can hope to be used as a resource. But, if this does not turn out, he should devote some of his energies and talent towards establishing himself as the person the team turns to for ideas, solutions and fresh view point.

4. The Monitor Evaluator

The monitor evaluator analyses ideas and suggestions both from within and from outside the team and evaluates their feasibility and practical value in terms of his team's objectives.

Potential Strengths

a) At operational, rather than strategic level, he certainly has a clear idea of what will work and what will not.

b) Using his critical thinking ability, he simplifies complex issues and analyses ideas for his team members.

c) He possesses a judicious blend of experimenting outlook and critical appraisal.

d) He builds on his team members' suggestions helping to develop their ideas to relevant and practical fashion.

e) He makes a firm but tactful case against his team's adopting unsound approaches to their problems.

f) He develops a close working relationship with the team's plant, if there is one.

The phrases below indicate the kinds of behaviour associated with the role of monitor evaluator.

"The problem with..."

"We have to watch out for...."

"Let's not overlook...."

"If we pay attention to the gist of this, we should..."

Behaviour to be avoided

a) Using his critical thinking ability for his own advancement at the expense of his team's objectives.

b) Negative thinking: Allowing his critical powers to outweigh his open-minded receptivity to new ideas,

c) Tactless and debunking of colleague's suggestions.

d) Competitive behaviour, particularly with the chairman or plant.

e) Lowering his team's morale by being too critical, objective and damning at an inappropriate moment.

Additional Points

A successful monitor evaluator combines high critical thinking with personal qualities of fair-mindedness, practicality and receptivity to change. When the ME is also the team leader, he must take extra care that he does not over-dominate the other members of the team and stifle their contributions.

At a less senior level, the ME has the problem of making his point heard. If he can avoid becoming unduly sceptical and cynical in the process, his experience at this stage will stand him in good stead as he rises in the hierarchy.

5. Implementer

The implementer is the one who is involved and committed, who tries to upgrade knowledge and skills, and ensures high quality work and products.

Potential Strengths

a) He is down-to-earth, conscientious and disciplined and as such can easily accept rules and procedures, seeing them as necessary constraints.

b) He helps ensure that the team's tasks have been structured and the objectives clearly outlined.

c) Maintains a steady, systematic approach whatever the pressures, or lack of pressures, that exist.

d) Perseverance in the face of difficulty and strives to meet targets.

e) Provides practical support and back-up to other team members.

The phrases below are indicative of the kinds of behaviour associated with the implementer.

"Given the time we have got, we could..."

"We can certainly do X within our budget..."

"Let's get this up on the board..."

"If we nail that part down, we'll be more sure of this result."

Behaviour to be avoided

a) Non-constructive criticism of team members' ideas and suggestions.

b) Lack of flexibility. He has to accept that there may be better ways of doing things. An implementer's contribution is greatest when he can strike a balance between perseverance and adaptability.

c) Competing for status within the team through his strong sense of personal identity.

Additional Points

It is not advisable for an implementer to be the leader of a team. This is because leadership, by its very nature, demands vision and the capacity to look beyond the immediate. The implementer, in contrast to this requirement, lacks vision and reacts badly to situations that may involve ambiguous information and change. However, as a manager, the implementer's strength lies in his concern for clarifying objectives in practical terms, introducing and maintaining structure in a team and keeping a watchful eye on quality.

6. The Team Worker

The team worker is the harmoniser and relationship healer in the team. He is good at achieving and maintaining team-cohesion.

Potential Strengths

a) He is emotionally stable and does not have a competitive streak.

b) Observes the strengths and weaknesses of members.

c) Supports members in their strengths, for example, building on suggestions.

d) Helps group members in overcoming their shortcomings by personal assistance or by finding appropriate resources.

e) Improves communication between members.

f) Fosters a sense of team spirit by setting an example in team members.

The following phrases are indicative of the kinds of behaviour associated with the team worker.

"Mr. A, I think you should listen to Mr.Y...."

"Let's give Ms X's idea a chance."

"No need to fight about...."

"Why don't you say more about..."

"When Mr. D gets back from the hospital, we would...."

Behaviour to be avoided

a) Competition for status or dominance in the group.

b) Siding with one member against another.

c) Behaviour which might give the group a negative image, both to the members themselves and to outsiders.

Additional Points

The team worker's role can be exercised at different levels of status within the group. As a manager, the team worker should strive to be an effective delegator, providing opportunities for colleagues to gain development experiences valuable to their careers. At a junior level, he may act as a behind-the-scene helper, so that he can help build team spirit and heal the wounds caused by interpersonal differences. As a team member, his qualities of conscientiousness and perseverance will help ensure that projects are completed to standard to schedule.

7. Resource Investigator

The resource investigator is the link with the world outside the team. He explores outside resources and develops contacts that may be useful to his team.

Potential Strengths

a) He makes good use of his ability to get on with people quickly and easily to extend the range of the team's contacts and useful friendships.

b) He is interested in exploring new ideas, methods and possibilities outside the immediate working environment and introducing them to his team.

c) He is the team's point of contact with outside bodies, keeping up to date with all developments that may be relevant to the profession. He looks for examples of good practice in other organisations and is enthusiastic about introducing ideas acquired from training or development sessions outside the place of work.

d) He helps in maintaining good relationships and harmony within his team and in encouraging fellow team members to make best use of their talents, especially in times of pressure and crisis.

The phrases below are indicative of the kinds of behaviour associated with the role of RI.

"What a great idea..."

" I know someone who can..."

"Don't worry, I can get them wholesale..."

"I can persuade Sales to...."

Behaviour to be avoided

a) Allowing the liking for talking and sociability to lead into unproductive use of time.

b) Relaxing too much when the pressure of work eases.

c) Getting too involved with one's own ideas at the expense of exploring others.

8. The Completer

The completer seeks to ensure that all the team's efforts are as near perfect as possible and that nothing is overlooked.

Potential Strengths

a) He keeps an eye on progress and standards of performance of the team and thus acts as the team's major control mechanism.

b) He actively searches for aspects of the work, which need a more than usual degree of attention.

c) He constantly endeavours to raise the standard of all the activities of the team by vigilance and help as required.

d) He maintains a sense of urgency within the team.

The phrases below are indicative of the kinds of behaviour associated with the role of completer.

"Let me check that..."

"We'll never... unless..."

"What about..."

"No, we must.... Everything - to get it to work"

"What about article 3 in sub-paragraph IV, paragraph G, in the ninth volume..."

Behaviour to be avoided

a) Unnecessary emphasis on detail at the expense of the overall plan and direction.

b) Negative thinking or destructive criticism. Lowering team morale by excessive worrying.

Additional Points

The completer role can be exercised at different levels of status within the group and can also be happily combined with another team role. The completer as a manager should be careful to keep his interference with subordinates to a minimum and to pay careful attention to his skill at delegation. At a more junior level, he must obviously employ tact and discretion and avoid earning a reputation for "not seeing the wood for the trees". At all levels, he is the possessor of nervous drive that must well be controlled and directed if it is to have positive results.

9. The Specialist

Specialists have highly developed expertise and provide advice and information in very focussed areas.

Potential Strengths

a) Inclusion of specialist in the team is based on his technical expertise and his behavioural role is secondary in a team sense.

b) The specialist provides professional or technical information that the team needs for specific projects.

c) The specialist is self-motivated, single minded and dedicated to his own area of expertise.

d) He provides a professional perspective to problem solving and other discussions.
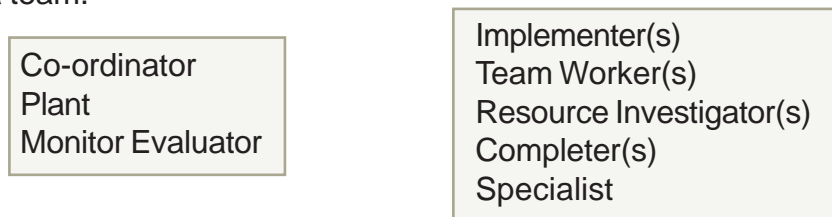
Behaviour to be avoided

(a) Communicating anxiety to the rest of the team in his attempt to get their views across.

Additional Points

A specialist may not be a member of fairly permanent or long-term teams, but may join temporarily to share or provide technical or professional expertise, as the occasion arises. As an intermittent member of the group, he should take care not to misinterpret other members' reactions. He has to simplify complex concepts, communicate effectively and be patient with other members.

Building an Effective Team - Some Guidelines

Dr. Meredith Belbin's research shows that technical/functional resources and skills within the team are employed to best advantage only when there is a right balance of team roles. The notion of balance suggests that the presence of all nine roles would make a perfect team. However, it is highly unlikely that a team of workable size will have all the roles, and hence it has been suggested that there are some roles that are probably essential for the success of a team.

| Co-ordinator
Plant
Monitor Evaluator | Implementer(s)
Team Worker(s)
Resource Investigator(s)
Completer(s)
Specialist |

Ideal Team Composition

Those in the smaller box are almost certainly vital to real effectiveness of the team.

The role of the co-ordinator is more satisfactory and supportive to the effective functioning of the team. In leadership positions, co-ordinator ensures the focus on people and their needs and tries to create conditions, which allows him to work with people rather than over them. The creativity of the Plant may also be critical to success. Belbin found that when 'Planted' in an ordinary team (hence the name Plant), he could transform the team from a state of mediocrity to one of high achievement. There is a widespread conviction in the management literature that most teams have a need for the Plant. They are, however, in short supply and that may partly explain why many organizational teams are no more than average performers.

The role of the Monitor Evaluator is central to some of the key purposes of the team, which include processing complex information, sifting ideas for flaws and selecting the optimum solution. The presence of a Monitor Evaluator having critical analysis capabilities ensures that high quality decisions emerge.

Those roles in the larger box may be described as important contributing elements to the effectiveness of the team. For example, teams need a disciplined approach to task performance and meeting targets. The completer and the implementer are the key exponents of these roles. Similarly, the chances of a congenial working environment and relatively harmonious relationships are higher in the presence of a Team Worker.

Belbin has also noted that certain roles are more vital at certain stages of the activities of the team than others. For example, when a team is going through the process of setting project direction or establishing needs, a co-ordinator or shaper is essential. When they reach the stage of actual planning, however, a Monitor Evaluator is invaluable. The particular roles that may be essential at different stages of the task include:

Different Stages	Roles essential
Direction and needs	Co-ordinator, Shaper
Ideas	Plant, Resource Investigator
Contracts	Resource Investigator, Team Worker
Organization	Implementer, Co-ordinator
Follow through	Completer, Implementer

Implications for Managers

(a) Those in a position to select the members of teams have to take their (members') ability to contribute to the workings of the team into consideration, just as much as their specialist technical skills. People with creative talents need to be sought out and their special skills need to be supported and used. They can contribute enormously to team success.

(b) Putting together people who are all of one type, whether in terms of technical skills or role denomination can be problematic. In considering team membership, there needs to be heterogeneity, where skills and abilities are complementary rather than duplicated.

It has also been observed that a balanced team is more likely to be successful, because it has the presence of key roles. A good Co-ordinator, a Plant and a Monitor Evaluator can provide the nucleus of a high performing team. These roles, therefore, are central. Very often, if a few influential team members provide these roles, the team may be successful despite the role gaps and inadequacies amongst the other team members. Individuals should also be encouraged to develop potential strengths of their preferred roles in support of the team.

Team norms concern how team members will interact, communicate and conduct themselves as members of the team. Norms express intentions; they help team members agree on how they would like to get along. Furthermore, norms provide a context for discussing grievances about team behaviour, thereby preventing tensions from mounting and frustrations from festering. Norm setting gives team members an opportunity to express what is important to them and to learn what is important to their teammates.

Communication

Developing the Team's Communications Strategy

The biggest issue for virtual (distributed) teams is communications. A critical task for team leaders is to engage their teams in creating (and continuing to review and revise) an effective communications strategy. How can we create and follow a communications strategy for our team which adds value rather than creating overload?

Too much communication about the wrong things is just as problematic as too little communication about important things.

- What, when (and how much) are we going to communicate?

- Where and how will we communicate? (What media will we use?)

- Who will play what roles in the team's communications?

One way to start developing a communications strategy is to find out what all tasks a team is expected to accomplish and figure out what kind of a communication strategy is needed to support that work. There is a continuum which describes how individuals (or sub-groups) on the team are working from autonomously to interdependently. For example, there may

be some tasks which team members can do on their own without interacting with anyone else on the team. Other tasks may require more collaboration among team members.

Another continuum can describe whether the patterns of our work - the problems, the tasks, the day-to-day activities - are repetitive and routine, whether these patterns are changing, or whether new patterns are emerging.

The nature of communications about different parts of the work - including the frequency, the volume, and the degree of interactivity - is different depending on where that work falls in the matrix.

<div align="center">

Teamwork Matrix

</div>

	What are the communication norms we need?	
	When we are working …	
	Autonomously	**Interdependently**
When patterns of work are **Emerging**		
Routine		

What kinds of tasks fall into each quadrant? Therefore, what kinds of communications norms do we need?

Routine/ Autonomous

To the extent team members are working autonomously on tasks which remain static, there is little need for a lot of cross-team communications. Communications should be: Minimalist, Local, Compliance-Oriented where necessary and Automated whenever possible.

The danger for virtual teams is that the "disconnected" feeling of a distributed team sometimes leads to over-reporting as a strategy to give people the feeling of "knowing what's going on." Sometimes, team members generate a lot of reporting in order to make sure the team leader "knows" that they are working. This kind of communication creates

sludge in the team's arteries. It is a common cause of information overload which can sometimes result in team members avoiding engaging in the communications which actually are important to the team. The team needs to agree on a strategy to defend itself against communication sludge! Be on the lookout for what can be eliminated.

Routine/ Interdependent

Team members need to provide enough information to each other about areas where their routine work is interdependent to enable them to coordinate. Communications should be: Standardized, Organized, Easy, "Pull" v. "Push" (You go get what you need when you need it rather than having it pushed at you automatically). The danger for virtual teams is that because we have technology which allows us to exchange and store large amounts of information, we do it because we can without really addressing whether doing it adds value. The team needs to agree on a strategy to manage and coordinate this communication. Choose a few, processes for exchanging critical information and make a commitment to sticking to agreements about when and what will be produced by each member of the team.

Emerging/ Autonomous

When individuals (or sub-groups) on the team notice changes emerging in the work they have been doing, it is critical to make this "intelligence" available to the team as a whole. Communications should be: Timely (it can't wait for the next face-to-face meeting), "Push" v. "Pull" (to make sure that nobody misses a key indicator). The danger for distributed teams is that a weak communications strategy results in missing signals where something new happening in one place is bell weather for something that will sooner or later have an effect on other parts of the system. A team that does not share this kind of intelligence is less than the sum of its parts. The team needs a strategy for scanning, scouting the environment within which they are operating, noticing pattern changes to make sure that important things show up on the team's radar screen soon enough when something which has been static starts changing. But it is not enough to simply report the information, it is critical that the whole team has an opportunity to discuss its meaning.

Emerging/ Interdependent

When members of a team can work together on developing strategies to respond to changing conditions, you get the biggest payoff for having teams. This is where the team becomes more than the sum of its parts. Communications should be: Rich, Conversational, Continuous and Involve everyone. The danger for distributed teams is that their communications in this area become disjointed, because the team lacks the environment to support substantive, ongoing (between face-to-face meetings) discussions. New skills are required to engage with each other effectively at different times from different places. This is where the team should spend the bulk of its communications resources (time, energy and supporting technology). A team that does this well can become a complex adaptive system which creates strategies, processes, and new approaches flexibly in response to changing conditions (politics, competition and new products).

The team leader's role shifts as the team works in different quadrants of the matrix.

Leader's Role in Virtual Team's Communications

	Autonomously	**Interdependently**
Emerging	3. Lookout	4. Facilitator
Routine	1. Defender	2. Manager

Defender: Be a buffer between your team and the rest of the organization. Defend the team against unnecessary and overloading reporting requirements. Make sure that the team is not generating excess information, because you are not present enough to make them feel confident that you know what is going on.

Manager: This is where you need to exercise classic management techniques for coordination. Help the team develop habits to make these processes run smoothly and reliably.

Lookout: You need to be a "lookout" - constantly scanning the landscape of the team looking for indicators of problems and changes. Sometimes people call the role in this

quadrant that of "helicopter" management, because you kind of hover above the fray and then can swoop down as needed. Just as team members need to be watching for indicators of change within their view, you need to do the same with your view of the larger organization within which the teams are operating.

Facilitator: This is where you have the opportunity to add the most value. This is the most difficult quadrant of activity, because it requires significant collaboration and engagement. You need to facilitate the processes through which the conversations that matter will happen. This role could also be thought of as "producer" - you need to bring together all the key players and make sure that each is contributing effectively to the collective just as a theatrical producer pulls together the director, actors, and technical experts to create the whole drama.

Trust

For teams to work effectively, they should nurture the personal confidence of each team member. The establishment of trust among team members is essential. Trust means that: "I don't have to "do" everything; if I try something and fail, my peers will be supportive of my efforts; I will not be laughed at or made to appear foolish; my ideas and comments will be considered without ridicule."

An individual will seldom take a physical or emotional chance, if he/she perceives callousness and unreasonable risk as part of that risk-taking. A group surrounded with positive experiences and successes will experience trust growing quickly along with personal confidence.

Trust, within the framework of a team is gained with patience, thoughtfulness and care over a period of time, and can be damaged or lost in a second by carelessness or inconsiderate behaviour. Cultivate and protect the trust that an individual offers and shares.

Conflict Management

Sources of Conflict in Teams
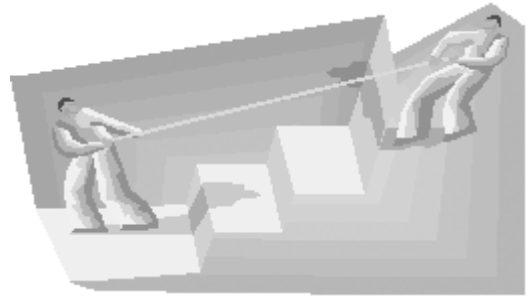
Sources of Conflict	Definitions
Conflict over project priorities	Views of project participants differ over sequence of activities and tasks
Conflict over administrative procedures	Managerial and administrative oriented conflicts over how the project will be managed
Conflict over technical opinions and performance trade-offs	Disagreements over technical issues, performance specifications, technical trade-offs
Conflict over manpower resources	Conflicts concerning staffing of project team with personnel from other areas
Conflict over cost	Conflict over cost-estimates from support areas regarding work breakdown structures
Conflict over schedules	Disagreements about the timing, sequencing, and scheduling of project-related tasks
Personality conflict	Disagreements on interpersonal issues

- *Withdrawal*: retreating or withdrawing from an actual or potential disagreement.

- *Smoothing*: de-emphasizing or avoiding areas of difference and emphasizing areas of agreements.

- *Compromising*: bargaining and searching for solutions that bring some degree of satisfaction to both the parties in dispute. Characterized by a "give-and-take" attitude.

- *Forcing*: exerting one's viewpoint at the potential expense of another. Often characterized by competitiveness and a win-lose situation.

- *Confrontation*: facing the conflict directly, which involves a problem solving approach whereby affected parties work through their disagreements.

Confronting (Collaborating)

- When you and the conflicting party can both get at least what you wanted and maybe more
- To reduce cost
- To create a common power base
- To attack a common foe
- When skills are complementary
- When there is enough time
- When there is trust
- When you have confidence in the other person's ability

Smoothing (Accommodating)

- To reach an overarching goal
- To create obligation for a trade-off at a later date
- When the stakes are low
- When liability is limited
- To maintain harmony
- When any solution will be adequate
- To create good will
- When you'll lose anyway
- To gain time

Forcing (Competing)

- When you are right
- When a do–or–die situation exists
- When stakes are high
- When important principles are at stake
- When you are stronger
- To gain status or to gain power
- When the relationship is unimportant
- When a quick decision must be made

Withdrawing (Avoiding)

- When you can't win
- When the stakes are low
- To gain time
- To unnerve your opponent
- To preserve neutrality or reputation
- When you think the problem will go away
- When you win by delay

When is a Conflict Destructive? When Conflict …..

- diverts energy from more important activities and issues

- destroys the morale of the people or reinforces poor self-concepts

- polarizes groups; so they increase cohesiveness in sub-groups, but reduces inter-group cooperation

- deepens differences in values

- produces irresponsible and regrettable behaviour, such as name-calling and fighting

- increases hostility and aggressive behaviours

- creates a negative climate

When is a Conflict Constructive? When a conflict …..

- opens up issues of importance, resulting in their clarification

- results in the solution to problems

- increases the involvement of individuals in issues of importance to them

- causes authentic communication to occur

- serves as a release to pent-up emotion, anxiety and stress conflict, celebrating in its settlement and learning about each other

- helps individuals grow personally and apply what they learned to future situations

We need to understand that …

- Conflict is inevitable.

- Not all conflicts are bad. Without conflict there can be no learning.

- It prevents stagnation and stimulates curiosity.

- It fosters creative thinking and cooperative problem-solving.

- It energizes people and leads to new ideas.

- It motivates change.

- It serves as a safety valve to indicate problems.

- Badly resolved conflicts create future conflicts.

- So, it is important to examine our own approaches to conflicts.

Teambuilding Interventions

Process Consultation

Process Consultation is the building of a helping relationship. Process consultation is the series of steps taken by the team to involve the member needing help in -

1. The definition of the problem

2. The development of possible solutions

3. The proposal for a final recommendation.

In this way, the member takes an active role in solving his/her own conflict, rather than solely relying on the team's opinion. This direct involvement in the process will in all likelihood enable the member to be more independent of the team when facing future conflicts.

Counselling

Counselling is a way of addressing problems by talking them through with someone who, whilst supportive, is not directly involved in the situation.

A Counsellor will:

- listen carefully to what you have to say
- enable you to express your feelings
- help you to explore and understand your difficulties
- help you to try and find ways of managing these more effectively

Although it may sometimes be appropriate to offer advice or guidance, the emphasis is very much on enabling you to achieve change, rather than telling you what to do.

6 Team Leadership

Leadership Styles

Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. There are normally three styles:

• Authoritarian or Autocratic

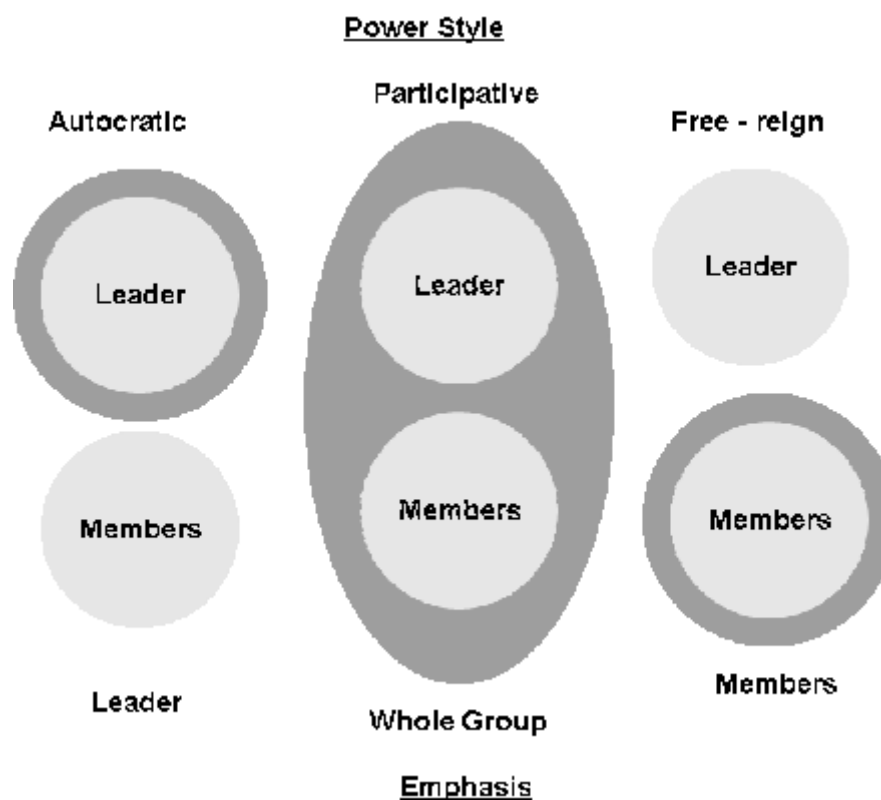• Participative or Democratic

• Delegative or Free Reign

Although good leaders use all three styles with one of them normally being dominant, bad leaders tend to stick to one style.

Authoritarian / Autocratic

This style is used when the leader tells the team members what he/she wants done and how he/she wants it done, without getting the advice of the team members. Some of the appropriate conditions to use it is when you have all the information to solve the problem, you are short on time, and your team members are well motivated.

Some people tend to think of this style as a vehicle for yelling, using demeaning language, and leading by threats and abusing their power. This is an unprofessional style of leadership, characterized by bossing people around. It has no place in a leader's repertoire.

The authoritarian style should normally be used on rare occasions. If you have the time and want to gain more commitment and motivation from your employees, then you should use the participative style.

Power Style

Participative / Democratic

This participative style involves the leader and one or more team members in the decision making process (determining what to do and how to do it). However, the leader maintains the final decision making authority. Using this style is not a sign of weakness; rather it is a sign of strength as this style of leadership will command the respect of team members.

This style of leadership is relevant when you have part of the information, and your employees have other parts. Note that a leader is not expected to know everything — this is why you have *knowledgeable* and *skillful* team members. Using this style is of mutual benefit — it allows them to become part of the team and allows you to make better decisions.

Delegative / Free Reign

In this style, the leader allows the team members to make decisions. However, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. This style of leadership is relevant when team members are able to analyze the situation, and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. You cannot do everything! You must set priorities and delegate certain tasks.

This is not a style to be used so that you can blame others when things go wrong; rather this is a style to be used when you have the full trust and confidence in the people. Do not be afraid to use it, however, use it wisely!

Leadership Style and Its Perspectives

Leadership styles are demonstrated in different ways and they have their own impact on the people around. There have been different research findings on different styles and they all broadly focus on the following:

1. **Vision:** Outstanding leaders articulate an ideological vision that is congruent with the deeply held values of followers; a vision that describes a better future to which the followers have a moral right.

2. **Passion and Self Sacrifice:** Leaders display a passion for and have a strong conviction of the moral correctness of their vision. Their attitude, behaviour and a sense of self-sacrifice in the interest of their vision is clearly evident.

3. **Confidence, Determination and Persistence:** Outstanding leaders display a high degree of faith in themselves and in the attainment of the vision they articulate. Theoretically, such leaders need to have a very high degree of self-confidence and moral conviction, because their mission usually challenges the status quo and therefore is likely to offend those who have a stake in the established order.

4. **Image Building:** Outstanding leaders are self-conscious about their own image. They recognize that followers must perceive them as competent, credible and trustworthy.

5. **Role-Modelling:** A leader's image becomes the basis effective role-modelling, because followers identify with the values of the role-models who are perceived positively.

6. **External Representatives:** Outstanding leaders act as the symbolic spokespersons for the organizations they represent.

7. **Expectations of and Confidence in Followers:** Outstanding leaders communicate high performance expectations of their followers and strong confidence in their ability to meet such expectations.

8. **Inspirational Communication**: Outstanding leaders communicate their messages in an inspirational manner using vivid stories, symbols, and ceremonies.

These leadership behaviours and approaches are not specific styles per se, but cumulatively they probably represent what is currently known to be the most effective style of today's leaders/managers. In any case, there is accumulating evidence to suggest that a leader's style is the key to the formulation and implementation of strategy. There is little doubt that the style of leadership impacts not only the performance of the leaders but also the team members.

Characteristics of Effective Leaders in a Team

1. **Set a Positive Example:** All members in the team scrutinize leaders. If you are a team leader, make sure that you "walk your talk." When you make mistakes, share them with your team. Les Wexner, owner of The Limited, a chain of women's clothing stores, shares his mistakes with his team in his "Hall of Shame." His staff discusses their challenges and what they have learned. This creates a very open environment.

2. **Give Support to Create Trust:** Leaders must create a feeling of trust in order for their team to succeed. When someone makes a mistake, leaders can discuss what went wrong and how to set it right. Yelling at an employee in front of his or her peers does not work. It only decreases morale and reduces self-esteem. Sir Edmund Hilary, and Sherpa Guide, Tenzing Norgay, took to their graves the question of who reached the summit of Mt. Everest first. Norgay said, "It was a partnership, Sir Edmund and I, we together, from start to finish." This is one question that will never be answered.

3. **Develop an Open Line of Communication:** Create an atmosphere where employees can communicate ideas to you. Convey these ideas to the entire team. A common complaint from non-management team members is that they feel uninformed. Quality teams share

the vision of their team leaders. Newsletters or bulletins are especially helpful. Now is the time to enlist the creative writers on your team. Suggest them to communicate the team's ideals and goals. 360-degree feedback is a very effective strategy. Productive teams are willing to be honest with each other. Employees evaluate leaders, leaders evaluate employees, and employees evaluate employees. We all have blind spots, characteristics and traits that others can see, but we are not able to recognize ourselves. Think of constructive feedback as a gift. This technique takes some serious training, and when it is done correctly, the team grows together.

4. Create Regular and Productive Meetings: The leader does not have to be present at every meeting. Leaders can initiate the discussion and leave the meeting. The team may feel more comfortable and empowered to discuss challenges without the leader. This gives space for more creativity and ability to take decisions.

5. Assess Strengths and Weaknesses: Knowing the strengths and weaknesses is the attribute of a quality team. It can prove fatal if teams ignore their weaknesses. Teams need to constantly ask themselves: "How can we improve, and what areas need to be strengthened?" Teams need to find out what they can do to become competitive. Constant improvement is mandatory for teams to excel.

7 Assessing Team Effectiveness

Why Team Effectiveness Needs to be Measured?

Building better teams is not an end in itself. The aim is to build teams that work more effectively together to achieve the organizational goals. As a result, a measurement system needs to be designed around the team performance and achievements. The real goal is to measure that the right teams are selected in the first place, and that the team is working in an optimal way to the best possible outcome.

Underlying team effectiveness assessment is the belief that the intangibles of human interaction frequently separate average performance from outstanding execution. Unless a team can improve its interpersonal, team, and organizational effectiveness, the team's technical achievements alone will not reach the level of execution necessary to accomplish its goal.

1. ASSESS YOUR TEAM CULTURE

Assess using the following 5-point scale: 4 = This is very true – almost always

3 = This is mostly true – mostly about 75%   2 = This is somewhat true – about 50%

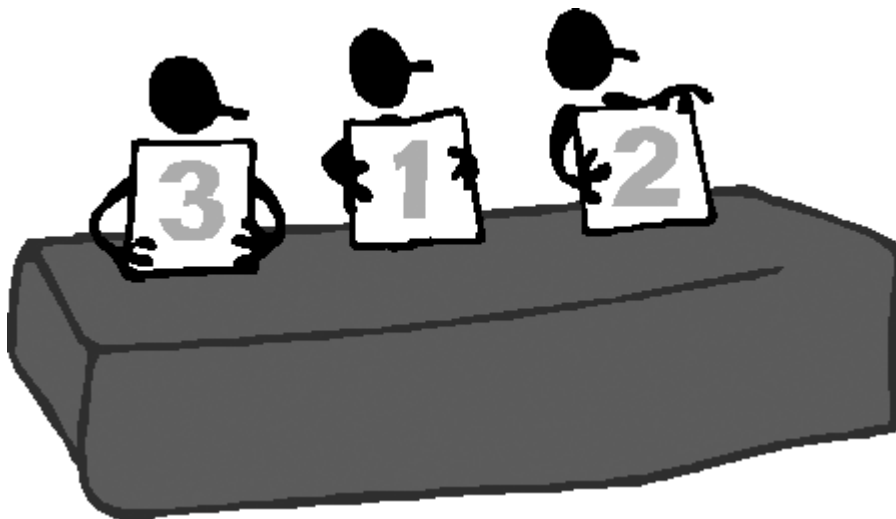1 = This is only a little true – about 25%   0 = This is not true

S. No.	Statement	Response
1	I am very clear about my role	
2	All our staff are clear about their roles and what is expected of them	
3	I have full knowledge of the goals and objectives of my department/ work unit	
4	The goals and objectives of the department are widely shared by all members here	
5	I am very excited to work for the goals of the organization/ department/ ministry	
6	The employees here have a high commitment to the goals of the organization/ department	
7	I enjoy working with my team	
8	All employees enjoy working with other members of the team	
9	I get the help I need from my colleagues to do my work well	
10	Employees here are helpful to each other and support each other's work	
11	I get from my seniors all the information I needed to do my job well	
12	Our top management ensures that all employees get the information and support they need to do their work well	
13	I feel free to share my views and opinions with others, including on sensitive issues	
14	Employees in this place freely share their opinions and views on various issues, including sensitive decisions	
15	I take part in all meetings and events that are organized from time to time	

S. No.	Statement	Response
16	People take active part in meetings and other events that build team work and promote 'we' feeling	
17	I enjoy being a part of the team	
18	There is a good degree of morale and 'we' feeling here	
19	I rarely get into conflicts with others	
20	Employees don't waste their competing with each other	
21	I receive the support I need from others here	
22	There is a high degree of collaborative culture here People collaborate rather than compete	
23	I am considered as a trustworthy person and am known to keep my promises	
24	People trust one another here	
25	The leadership here (the top management/ unit head etc.) foster a high degree of team spirit	
26	The seniors here empower their juniors to put their talent to use and get the best out of them	
27	The leaders set direction for the team very clearly and keep reminding the team about it	
28	The leaders of this team (top management) set personal example in follow ing norms and values of the workplace	
29	The leaders here share information and integrate the work of all employees	
30	The leaders go out of way to resolve conflicts and ensure that team spirit is not affected	

Scoring:

1.   Add all the scores of the first 25 items. Maximum possible is 100. Scores below 60 indicate low team spirit. Scores above 75 indicate a very high team spirit. Scores below 25 indicate a low team spirit.

2.   Subtract each pair of odd item from the subsequent even item for the first 24 items i.e. subtract 1 from 2, 3 from 4, etc. Find the difference. The total should not exceed 24 points. If it does, it indicates poor team support.

3.   Add all odd items upto 24. 12 items X 4 = 48 is max score. Score below 24 indicate low team involvement or engagement with the team by you.

4.   Add all even items. Scores above 24 indicate high team engagement and high degree of team work.

Add items 25 to 30. Max Score is 24 and 12 is mid-point. Low scores indicate weak leadership.

2. TEAM VIBRANCY

Assess using the following 5-point scale: 4 = This is very true – almost always

3 = This is mostly true – mostly about 75%   2 = This is somewhat true – about 50%

1 = This is only a little true – about 25%   0 = This is not true

1 [_____]   Our team members get ideas all the time

2 [_____]   Out team is experimenting with something or the other all the time

3 [_____]   Our team members bring new thoughts and ideas every day to work

4 [_____]   Our team members are very active

5 [_____]   Our team members share information regularly with one another

6 [_____]   Our team members always work together and fast to resolve any internal issues

7 [_____]   Our team devotes more time to final productivity and impact-related issues than process-related issues

8 [_____]   Our team consists of go-getters. They solve all problems creatively as they occur

3. MEETING MANAGEMENT

Assess using the following 5-point scale: 4 = This is very true – almost always

3 = This is mostly true – mostly about 75%   2 = This is somewhat true – about 50%

1 = This is only a little true – about 25%   0 = This is not true

1 [_____]   Team Meetings (TMs) are quite frequent here

2 [_____]   TMs are very productive

3 [_____]   TMs are very informative

4 [_____]   TMs provide opportunity to all to express themselves exhibit their talent

5 [_____]   TMs are filled with spirited discussion

6 [_____]   TMs are not a waste of time

7 [_____]   A lot of problems get solved through TMs

8 [_____]   A few people dominate in TMs all the time

9 [_____]   A few people are lawyers withdraw in our TMs.

10 [_____] Our TMs don't ensure uniform participation

11 [_____] What is discussed in TMs is taken very seriously and implemented

12 [_____] TMs are useful in solving problems

13 [_____] TMs contribute to team spirit and 'we' feeling

14 [_____] TMs are informative

15 [_____] TMs promote integration of work by the teams

16 [_____] TMs are dysfunctional

17 [_____] Dysfunctional behaviour is taken care of by members in TMs

18 [_____] TMs are good savers of our time

19 [_____] Quality of decisions taken in TMs is good

20 [_____] Employees' self-regulation in terms of participation is of a high order in

           this team

4. BEHAVIOR INDICATORS: TEAM

Assess each member of you team on a five point scale on the following Indicators of Team Effectiveness. You can use this as a 360 Degree Feedback Tool.

1. [_____] Attends meetings on time

2. [_____] Listens to others

3. [_____] Open to ideas and suggestions from other members of the team

4. [_____] Encourages innovations and creativity in the team

5. [_____] Sets team interest above individual interest

6. [_____] Encourages team members for self-growth

7. [_____] Manages differences among team members

8. [_____] Readily shares info with all team members

9. [_____] Encourages team members to take risk

10. [_____] Helps team members to learn from mistakes

11. [_____] Is not status conscious

12. [_____] Seeks feedback from team members

13. [_____] Meets team members regularly

14. [_____] Sets goals in collaboration with team members

15. [_____] Involves members in decision making

16. [_____] Allocates work in a manner acceptable to team members

17. [_____] Shares credit with team members

18. [_____] Monitors team performance regularly

19. [_____] Motivates team members to pursue higher targets

20. [_____] Understands the difficulties of the team

21. [_____] Sets personal example in following team values and norms

22. [_____] Maintains objectivity in relation to team decisions

23. [_____] Utilizes team resources effectively

24. [_____] Shows concern for quality in meetings and discussions

25. [_____] Encourages people to share personal difficulties

26. [_____] Offers coaching help to other members of the team

27. [_____] Maintains credibility with other members of the team

28. [_____] Protects the interests of the team members

29. [_____] Focuses constantly on team goals

30. [_____] Fosters "we" feeling

THE MAGIC OF TEAM WORK

We end this manual with an article by *Sam Pitroda.*

Lack of teamwork and co-operation is one of the most serious problems affecting progress in all areas of India and wherever Indians work worldwide. The key problem in India is always implementation, not lack of policies. We have great policies and ideas about how to do things, but severely lacking in teamwork.

When the Japanese came to work in India to develop the Maruti Suzuki car, a joke went around that one Indian was equal to 10 Japanese: Indians were very smart, capable and dedicated individuals. But 10 Indians were equal to one Japanese: Indians lacked team spirit and co-operation.

What makes matters even worse is our "crab" mentality – if someone is trying to climb higher and achieve more, the others just drag him down. The signal that the others send out is, "I wouldn't do it; I wouldn't let you do it; and if by chance you start succeeding, we will all gang up and make sure that you don't get to do it."

The question is: Where does this attitude come from, and how do we recognize and handle it?

Part of the problem is our cultural background. We've had a feudal and hierarchical social system in which whoever is senior supposedly knows best. Hierarchy comes naturally to our minds. This was fine in earlier times when knowledge and wisdom were passed on orally; but in modern society, there is no way that one person can know everything. Today, you may find that a young computer-trained person has more answers for an accounting problem than a senior accountant has. *Until we understand how best to leverage this diversity of experience, we will not be able to create and fully utilize the right kind of teams.*

(One Indian = 10 Japanese, 10 Indians = One Japanese)

What Derails a Team?

Group work requires a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of individuals, irrespective of their hierarchy. Because of our background, we often don't learn how to exercise and accept leadership - to lead and to follow – simultaneously. Some gravitate toward exercising leadership, and others gravitate toward accepting the lead of others. But in true teamwork, everyone needs to do both.

Being a good team player implies respect for others, tolerance of different points of view and willingness to give. *The ability to resolve conflicts without either egotism or sycophancy is a very important aspect of being a team player.* You have to agree to disagree. I find that people in India somehow tend to focus on achieving total agreement, which is almost always impossible. So, before work begins people want everyone to agree on everything; instead they should say OK. This is what we agree on, so let's start working on this. What we don't agree on, we will resolve as we go along. For things to move forward, it's important to work on the agreed-upon aspects and not get bogged down in the areas of disagreement. Yet another snake that kills teamwork is people's political agendas. You've got to be open, clear and honest to be a good team player. Most people though, have a hidden agenda – they say something but mean the exact opposite. I call it "split-

level consciousness". *To say and mean the same thing is a very critical part of a good work ethic.*

Criticizing the individual or the idea?

In a group, if you tell someone that his idea is no good, he automatically takes it personally and assumes that you are criticizing him. No one can have a good idea everyday on every issue. *If you disagree with my idea, that does not mean that you have found fault with me as a person.* Thus, it is perfectly acceptable for anyone to criticize the boss - but this concept is not a part of the Indian System. So from time to time, it is important for a leader to get a report on the psychological health of the firm. How do people in the team feel? Are they stable? Confident? Secure? Comfortable? These are the key elements of a team's success. For a boss to be comfortable accepting criticism from subordinates, he must feel good about himself. *Self-esteem is a key prerequisite to such a system being successful.*

Another serious problem facing India is the dichotomy and difference in respectability between physical and mental workers, which seriously affects team performance. *Diversifying tasks increases workers' self-esteem and motivation and makes them team players. Teamwork is key to corporate and national governance, and to get anything done.*

The fundamental Issues are respect for others, openness, honesty, communication, willingness to disagree, resolution of conflict, and recognition that the larger goal of the team as a whole is far more important than individual or personal agendas.

Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.