Leading
High-Performing
Teams

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A baseline...
Question for you: Why use teams?

Teams play key roles in almost all organizations…

Why?

(i.e. what are the benefits of using a team?)
Brief exercise: Thinking about team highs and lows…

- Take a few minutes to remember:

  **Left side of room**
  Your most positive experience in a team

  **Right side of room**
  Your least positive experience in a team

- Write down some notes about what made them so positive or negative; for example, was it because of:
  - Design
  - Structure
  - Goals
  - Task
  - People
  - Norms
  - Culture
  - Environment
  - Leadership
  - Outcomes
The answer...

Teams frequently lack the conditions that enable them to achieve success.
The team effectiveness model

What allows teams to be effective?
Our goal: **Effective teams**

…but what does it mean for a team to be effective?

1. Task output that is (at least) acceptable to those who receive, review, or use it

   ![Output](image)

   **Team Effectiveness**

   - Collaborative Ability
   - Individual Development

2. Members increase their competence in working together as a team.

3. Experiences in the team foster members' personal growth and well-being

   Hackman (2002)

   ![Team](image)

   Expand your horizon. Make an impact.
On the basics: **Team Effectiveness**  
**Enabling Conditions**

- **What?**
- **Who?**
- **With?**
- **How?**

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**Positive Processes**
- **Supportive Context**
- **Strong Structure**
- **Compelling Direction**
Team Effectiveness model

1. Compelling Direction
Core question: Does my team share a common goal?

- Does my team’s goal meet the “3C” criteria?
  - Clear
  - Challenging
  - Consequential
Team Effectiveness model

2. Strong Structure
Core question 1:  
**Does my team have the appropriate people?**

- Does my team have the right people in terms of...
  - **Skills and Traits**
  - **Diversity**
  - **Number**
Core question 2: *Is my team a “thing”?*

- **Is my team…**
  - *clearly bounded?* (not just informal helping)
  
  **Warning:** this is not as easy as you think…

- *meaningfully interdependent?* (not business units called “teams” e.g. MS Office 2010 “team”)

- *stable over time?* (not constantly shifting “sand dunes”)
  
  **Remember:** Teams aren’t bread…
Team Effectiveness model

3. Supportive Context
Enabling Condition 3: Supportive Context

Core question: Does my team have what it needs to succeed?

- **Rewards**
  There are favorable and measurable consequences for good team performance

- **Information**
  Team has access to data needed for the work

- **Resources**
  Team has sufficient material resources needed for the work

- **Education**
  Team has required training and/or technical consults
Team Effectiveness model

4. Positive Processes
**Enabling Condition 4: Positive Processes**

- **Does we avoid common team process pitfalls?**
  - Too much / wrong type of conflict
  - Conformity pressure
  - Counterproductive norms
  - Common information effect

**We spend most of our time focused on what we all have in common**

- Because common information is...
  - **Visible:** More likely to come up
  - **Safer:** Know others will agree
  - **Trusted/Valued:** Commonality as proxy for truth
Where’s the leader in all of this?
...So what IS the role of the team leader?

1. Make sure the work is appropriate for a team.

2. Get the enabling conditions in place…
   …and keep them there.

3. Coach at the margins to help the team take full advantage of its favorable performance circumstances.

   And do it all in your own way - there is no single best leader personality or style.
On interaction between design and leadership...

- You can’t lead yourself out of a bad design

**Note:**
Across all teams, amount of leadership (irrespective of quality) did not account for significant variance in team effectiveness.

- Three top design conditions driving effectiveness were:
  1. Purpose clarity;
  2. Task interdependence *(designed, not perceived)*
  3. Group rewards

![Graph](LEADERSHIP VS DESIGN)

- **Well-Designed/Good Leadership**
- **Well-Designed/Poor Leadership**
- **Poorly-Designed/Good Leadership**
- **Poorly-Designed/Poor Leadership**

EFFECTIVE TEAM SELF-MANAGEMENT

LITTLE | LOTS
---|---
1 | 1
1.5 | 2
2.5 | 2.5
3 | 3

Expand your horizon. Make an impact.
An important question: **Do these enabling conditions matter?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Percentage of performance variance explained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytic teams in intelligence agencies</td>
<td>70+%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior leadership teams around the globe</td>
<td>50+%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes, quite a bit in fact!
Effectiveness Model Checklist

- Strong Structure
- Supportive Context
- Positive Processes
- Team Effectiveness

Expand your horizon. Make an impact.
Enabling Conditions Checklist

1. Compelling Direction

☑ Does my team share a common goal?
☑ Is my team’s goal clear, compelling, and consequential?
   - **Clear**: members know and agreed on expectations
   - **Challenging**: goal is between difficult and impossible
   - **Consequential**: team’s work matters to members, client, and/or society
Enabling Conditions Checklist
2. Strong Structure

☑ Does my team have skills/expertise needed
to achieve its goal?
   (incl. subject knowledge, team process, project management)
☑ Is my team diverse in skills, perspectives, experiences,
   & intra-personally?
☑ Is my team big enough for task, but not too big?
   (minimizing coordination, contribution, & communication problems)
☑ Does my team have a “high bottom”?
   (i.e. have avoided “weak links”)

☑ Is my team clearly bounded?
☑ Are my team’s members meaningfully interdependent?
☑ Is my team appropriately stable?
Enabling Conditions Checklist
3. Supportive Context

☑️ What does my team need most to succeed?
  – **Tools, Technologies, and Resources**
  – **Rewards**: Desirable and measurable consequences for performance
  – **Information**: Access to required data
  – **Education**: Access to training (if needed)
  – **Protection**: Buffering from external pressures/demands

☑️ What does my team have that it can most afford to give up?
Enabling Conditions Checklist
4. Positive Processes

☑ Is my team avoiding conformity of perception, thought, and decision-making? (in both information sharing and analyses)

☑ Are my team’s members making appropriate contributions? (i.e. no social loafing or free-riding)

☑ Is my team surfacing and actively managing conflict?

☑ Is my team developing innovative ways of working; avoiding mindless routines?
Putting it in practice...
A quick self-assessment: Grade your team (0-100, A-F)

Enable Conditions

Compelling Direction

Strong Structure

Supportive Context

Positive Processes

Effectiveness

Ability to collaborate

Individual development

Output

Team Effectiveness

Grade your team (0-100, A-F)

A quick self-assessment: Grade your team (0-100, A-F)
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