

Building Better Teams:

Ensuring Team Effectiveness



Jae Limited

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Course Overview

Teams have become a principal building block of the strategy of successful organizations. Whether the focus is on service, quality, cost, value, speed, efficiency, performance, or other similar goals, teams are the central methodology of most organizations in the private and government sectors.

With teams at the core of business strategy, your success as an organization can often depend on how well you and other team members operate together. How are your problem-solving skills? Is the team enthusiastic and motivated to do its best? Do you work well together? Do you know of any mixed agendas, poor communication episodes, or even personality conflicts in the past? Though discussions and enjoyable exercises, you will be able to practice your skills and overcome obstacles under expert instructor guidance.

In most teams, the energies of individual members work at cross purposes. Individuals may work extraordinarily hard, but their efforts do not translate into team effort, and these results may be in wasted energy. By contrast, when a team becomes more aligned, a commonality of direction emerges, and individual energies harmonize. You have a shared vision and an understanding of how to complement each other's efforts.

Course Objectives

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- Share proven ideas for developing your team.
- Understand the value of working as a team and learn to work together.
- Develop team norms, values, ground rules, goals, and team contracts.
- Identify your team player “*style*” and how it can be used effectively with your own team.
- Understand and work with others’ behavioral styles.
- Identify the stages of team development and how to help a team move through them.
- Identify and overcome team hurdles and build trust.
- Communicate well in building and maintaining a team atmosphere through exercises and by practicing giving constructive feedback.
- Design long-term performance goals with your own personal coaching plan.



Your Personal Objectives

Section 1. Defining Teams



What is a Team?

Team, unit, club, group, panel, committee, task force; these are related words and their alternative definitions confuse people.

Glenn Parker has a recognized definition of a team: *“A group of people with a high degree of interdependence geared toward the achievement of a goal or the completion of a task.”* (from *Team Players and Teamwork* by Glenn Parker)

Members of a team agree on a goal and agree that the only way to achieve that goal is to work together. Some groups have a common goal but they don't work together to achieve it. For example, many teams are really groups because they work independently to achieve their goal. Some groups work together without a common goal.

Teams are the principal building blocks of the strategy of successful organizations. The focus of your organization may be on service, quality, cost, value, speed, efficiency, performance, or any other similar goals, but teams remain the central methodology of most organizations in the private, non-profit, as well as government sectors.

When a team becomes aligned, a direction and focus emerge, and individual energies harmonize. This becomes a shared vision as well as an understanding of how to complement each other's efforts.

Types of Teams

Knowing the type of team you are in can help you choose how to plan your work and what you expect as outcomes. Teams are everywhere, and their role as part of an organizational framework continues to evolve just as businesses and marketplaces do. From a practical perspective, most of us belong to multiple teams. Common types of teams are:

Natural Work Groups/ Work Force

This is a group of people who work together each day using the same machines and processes for one person. The supervisor is in charge. With a new task or not, the human resources team, security team, administration team always function effectively throughout the year and hence are permanent teams.

Management Team

This type of team consists of a group of managers and the person they mutually report to. Within a single organization, there can be different levels of management teams (executive, middle, and front-line, for example).

Such groups are formed in organizations where team members work together under the expert guidance of a leader. A leader or the supervisor who generally, along with the team works hard to achieve a common goal. The leader all through must stand by the team and extract the best out of each team member.

Self-Managed Team

This is a group consisting of individuals who work together for a common purpose but without the supervision of any leader. Here, as the name suggests, every individual is accountable for his or her individual performance. The team members of self-managed teams must respect each other and should never lose focus on the target. No leader is appointed and the team members have to take their own responsibility. They take the initiative on their own and are their own guides and mentors. This is also referred to as a **self-directed** work team because everyone has authority and responsibility for the decisions made.

Committee

These groups are generally formed to work on a particular project either temporarily or permanently. They are individuals with common interests who may even share the same background and attitude. Committees are selected to organize events or projects. Committees can raise funds, plan events and work for causes. The members work together and design strategies to successfully accomplish their goal.

Task Force Team

This group comes together for a specific time to work on a special project, task or a very critical problem. This group has also been called an “ad hoc group.” It is usually a cross-functional group assigned to work on one purpose only – when that purpose is resolved, the group disbands.

Virtual and Remote Teams

With this type of team, members see one another in person rarely or not at all. They connect most frequently using video conferencing, the Internet, telephone, and e-mail. What makes these teams different (and sometimes challenging) is that they have to work together to accomplish goals, but they may not know each other that well. They can share traits of the types of groups listed above.

Which types of teams have you experienced?

What worked well in the one of the teams you experienced?

What didn't work well in one of the teams you experienced?

Benefits vs. Detriments of Creating a Team

What are some benefits and potential detriments to working in teams?

Benefits	Detriments

Highly effective teams have:

- A clear, elevating goal
- A results-driven structure
- Competent members
- Unified commitment
- A collaborative climate
- Standards of excellence
- External support and recognition
- Principled leadership

Why Teams Fail

Competing Influences:



Unclear Goals:

Unspecified Roles:

Out-dated Processes:

Poor Relationships:

NOTES

Section 2. Establishing Team Norms



Characteristics of Teams

Advantages	Disadvantages

Team Contracts

A team contract outlines the ground rules for the team. Even though it is created and then monitored by the team, some people get offended by the idea of a team contract, so it's not ideal to make one in every situation. Here is a sample contract below. If you do decide to create a contract, team members should have input on its contents, and each person should sign and date this document.

Sample Contract

As a team, we will:



Code of Conduct

- Be proactive and positive.
- Keep other team members informed.
- Focus on what is best for the team as a whole.

Ground Rules

- Be respectful, fair, and honest in all communications.
- Encourage opinions and discussion from all members.
- Be open to new approaches and listen to new ideas—don't put anyone down.
- Look at conflict and change positively.
- Work together to achieve maximum results.
- Follow best practices for decision making, communication, and meeting management.
- Celebrate accomplishments and milestones.

Meeting Guidelines

- Begin and end each meeting on time.
 - Have an agenda for every meeting and stick to it.
 - Agree to prepare for meetings.
 - Mute (or perhaps not) cell phones.
-

Ground Rules

Having ground rules helps every team to succeed. Ground rules ensure that people on the team know what is expected of them and that they all understand where they are going.

What I Want in My Team	What I Don't Want in My Team

What are the three to five rules that are most important to your group?

Section 3. The Stages of Team Development

As early as the 1970's, researchers were discovering that groups of individuals working together go through four distinct stages of development. The most famous representation of this model is Tuckman and Jensen's Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing model. Over time an additional stage has been added to reflect the natural end to a group: Adjourning. The stages are similar to human development: infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.



One of your roles as a team leader or member is to help the group grow and develop. Sometimes the team is together for a very short time, so you will try to move them to a productive stage as quickly as you can. Other times, the focus will be on relationship building.

Think of how you felt when you learned you were coming to this course. While that isn't a perfect example of the other stages of team development, you may see a similarity between how you felt upon learning you would be in this course and how a new group or team member might feel.

Every group, whether they are a team or just a group working together, grows and evolves. The five stages of this development are detailed here: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning.

Stage 1: Forming

Characteristics of this stage:

- Group members may be anxious, adopt wait-and-see attitude, or be formal.
- No clear idea of goals or expectations.
- Not sure why they are there.

In this phase, leaders can support the group by:

- Planning introductions and an orientation.
- Using icebreakers.
- Establishing ground rules.
- Determining decision making methods.

What you can do to help:

Stage 2: Storming

Characteristics of this stage:

- Team members eager to get going.
- Conflict can arise as people bring different ideas of how to accomplish goals and notice differences rather than similarities.
- Some members may drop out mentally or physically.

In this phase, leaders can support the group by:

- Modeling appropriate behaviors.
- Separating problems from people.
- Enforcing ground rules and their role by maintaining control of the process.
- Keeping in mind that conflict can be healthy.

To move to the next stage, participants must put the group's needs ahead of their personal interests.

What you can do to help:

Stage 3: Norming

Characteristics of this stage:

- People begin to recognize ways they are alike.
- They realize its sink or swim; they're in this together.
- People get more social.
- May forget their focus in favor of having a good time.

Many groups don't make it to this stage, where there is much more cooperation and understanding than previous stages.

In this phase, leaders can support the group by:

- Being observant of any emerging group behaviors.
- Encouraging the team to express their differences positively.
- Helping the team to stay focused on the objectives.

What you can do to help:

Stage 4: Performing

Characteristics of this stage:

- Team members are trained, competent, and able to do their own problem-solving.
- Leader asks for critical self-assessments and looks at ways to challenge them and develop them.
- Members are mature and understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Members want more input in processes.
- Members are self-motivated and self-trained.

In this phase, leaders can support the group by:

- Ensuring that individual ideas are considered.
- Not intervening in the process unless the group becomes stuck.

The transition to this phase happens as a demonstration of high levels of trust. However, the team can be susceptible to “*group think*,” so a leader must help ensure that individual ideas are considered. The leader must avoid intervening in the process unless the group flounders, or they regress to a previous stage and erupt in conflict.

What you can do to help:

Stage 5: Adjourning

Characteristics of this stage:

- Winding down and saying goodbye.
- Setting goals for future work independently and/or as part of new groups.
- Groups may adjourn because they finish a defined project (ad hoc) or because they are no longer challenged. If there are new members, that can shift the group into a previous stage.

In this phase, leaders can support the group by:

- Celebrating members’ participation.
- Describing what’s going on.
- Looking for and encouraging contribution from everyone as the group winds down.
- Encouraging continued productivity.

What you can do to help:

Exercise: As a group, identify tips to use to help a team work through the five team stages.

Stage 1: Forming

Stage 2: Storming

Stage 3: Norming

Stage 4: Performing

Stage 5: Adjourning

Section 4. Identify Your Style as a Team Player Exercise

Glenn Parker devoted his whole life's work to studying teams. His survey will help you identify your style as a team player. The results assess your current strengths and provide a basis for a plan to increase your effectiveness as a team player.

Teams may also use the survey to develop a profile of team strengths and discuss strategies for increasing team effectiveness.

Directions: Since this is a survey, there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item according to how you feel you function as a team member, rather than how you used to be, or how you would like to be.

Complete these 18 sentences. Each sentence has four possible endings. Please rank the endings in the order in which you feel each one applies to you using the following scale:

- 4 – most applicable to you**
- 3 – second most applicable statement**
- 2 – third most applicable statement**
- 1 – least applicable statement**

For example:

As a team member, I am usually concerned about:

- 1 a. meeting high ethical standards.
- 4 b. reaching our goal.
- 3 c. meeting my individual responsibilities.
- 2 d. how well we are working together as a group.



Please do not create ties. It is possible that some of the sentences will have two or more endings that apply to you or will have none that apply to you but you should assume these are your only choices and rank them accordingly. Each set of endings must be ranked 4, 3, 2, and 1.

1. During team meetings, I usually:

- a. Provide the team with technical data or information
- b. Keep the team focused on our mission or goals
- c. Make sure everyone is involved in the discussion
- d. Raise questions about our goals or methods

2. In relating to the team leader, I:

- a. Suggest that our work be goal-directed
- b. Try to help him/her build a positive team climate
- c. Am willing to disagree with him/her when necessary
- d. Offer advice based upon my area of expertise

3. Under stress I sometimes:

- a. Overuse humor and other tension-reducing devices
- b. Am too direct in communicating with other team members
- c. Lose patience with the need to get everyone involved in discussions
- d. Complain about lack of progress toward our goals

Building Better Teams: Ensuring Team Effectiveness

Desk Reference Guide

Stages of Team Development

Stage	What Members Do	What Leaders Do
One: Forming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be anxious, adopt wait-and-see attitude, and/or be formal • Have no clear idea of goals or expectations • Need to get to know one another • May not be sure why they are there 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan introductions and an orientation • Use icebreakers • Establish ground rules • Determine decision making methods
Two: Storming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are eager to get going • May be impatient with delays • Conflict can arise as people bring different ideas of how to meet goals • People notice differences rather than similarities • Some members may drop out mentally or physically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model appropriate behaviors • Separate problems from people • Enforce ground rules and their role by maintaining control of the process • Keep in mind that conflict can be healthy
Three: Norming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to recognize ways they are alike • Realize they are in this together • Get more social • May forget their focus in favor of having a good time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be observant of emerging group behaviors • Encourage the team to express their differences positively • Help team to stay focused on objectives
Four: Performing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are mature • Understand their roles and responsibilities • Want more input in processes • Are self-motivated and self-trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that individual ideas are considered • Avoid intervening in the process unless the group becomes stuck
Five: Adjourning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind down and say goodbye • Set goals for future work independently and/or as part of new group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate participants' participation • Describe what's going on • Look for and encourage contribution from everyone as the group winds down • Encourage continued productivity

Types of Teams

Natural Work Groups/Work Force

Members work together each day in the same location, using the same machines and processes. The supervisor is in charge.

Management Team

This team is a group of managers and the person they report to. There can be different levels of teams (executive, middle, front-line, etc.).

Committee

These groups are generally formed to work on a project either temporarily or permanently. The members typically have common interests.

Self-Managed Team

Members manage themselves. No one in the group has the authority to make all decisions about the events impacting the group. This is also referred to as a **self-directed** work team because everyone has authority and responsibility for the decisions they make.

Task Force Team

This group comes together for a specific time to work on a special project, task or a very critical problem.

Virtual and Remote Teams

Members see each other in person rarely if at all. They connect most frequently using web portals, the Internet, telephone, and e-mail.

A Climate of Trust

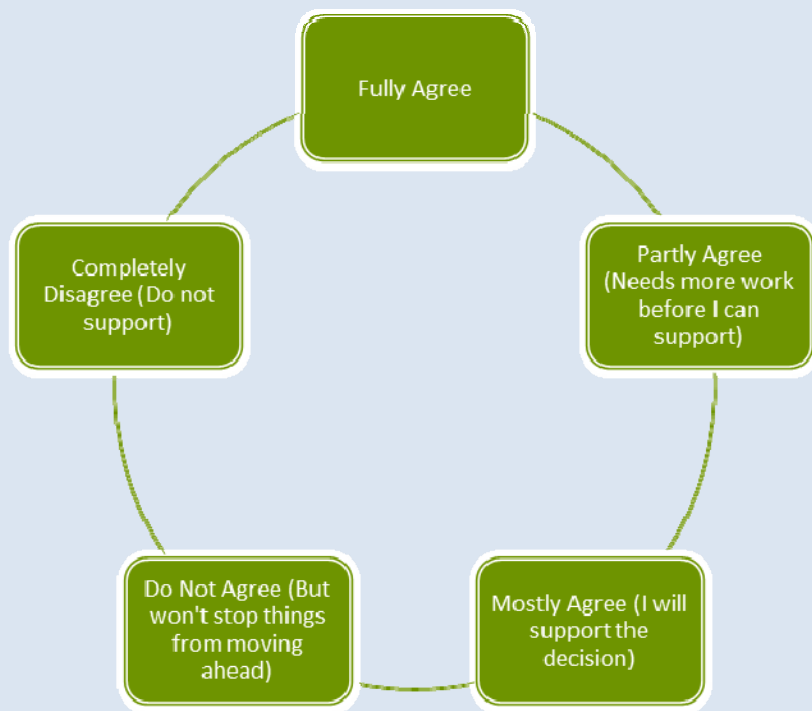
- **Honesty:** Integrity, no lies, no exaggerations
- **Openness:** A willingness to share and receive information, perceptions, opinions, and ideas
- **Consistency:** Predictable behavior and responses
- Treating people with **dignity** and **fairness**

Tips for Building Trust

Here are some ways that you can build trust with your team:

- Doing what you say you will do
- Treating everyone fairly
- Being consistent
- Going to bat for an employee
- Build relationships by learning more about other team members, including their likes and dislikes
- Encouraging, modeling, and valuing diversity
- Doing social things together
- Creating a “we” atmosphere

Degrees of Support



Tips for Becoming a Better Team Player

- Engage the team at the beginning of a meeting through small talk, an icebreaker or energizer.
- Check in with members regularly to see how they are feeling about the process.
- Use the degrees of support to facilitate discussion and problem solving.
- Benchmark and share the results of measurements so that the whole team knows where they are at.

Sample Team Contract

Code of Conduct

As a team we will:

- Be proactive and positive
- Keep other team members informed
- Focus on what is best for the team as a whole

Ground Rules

- Be respectful, fair, and honest in all communications
- Encourage opinions and discussion from all members
- Be open to new approaches and listen to new ideas
- Look at conflict and change positively
- Work together to achieve maximum results
- Follow best practices for decision making, communication, and meeting management
- Celebrate accomplishments and milestones

Meeting Guidelines

- Each meeting begins and ends on time
- Team has an agenda for every meeting and sticks to it
- Team members agree to prepare for meetings
- Cell phones will be muted - or perhaps not, if you are encouraging people to openly participate, share their thoughts, and accept the prevalence of these devices in the workplace

The TORI Model

Developed by Jack and Lorraine Gibb in 1978, the TORI principles of team building still hold true today.

- T is for **Trust:** Interpersonal confidence and absence of fear.
- O is for **Openness:** Free flow of information, ideas, perceptions, and feelings.
- R is for **Realization:** Self-determination, doing what you want to do.
- I is for **Interdependence:** Reciprocal influence, shared responsibility, and co-leadership.

Tips for Becoming a Better Listener

- Make a decision to listen.
- Don't interrupt people.
- Keep your eyes focused on the speaker and your ears tuned to their voice.
- Carry a notebook or start a conversation file on your computer.
- Ask a few questions throughout the conversation.
- When you demonstrate good listening skills, they tend to be infectious.