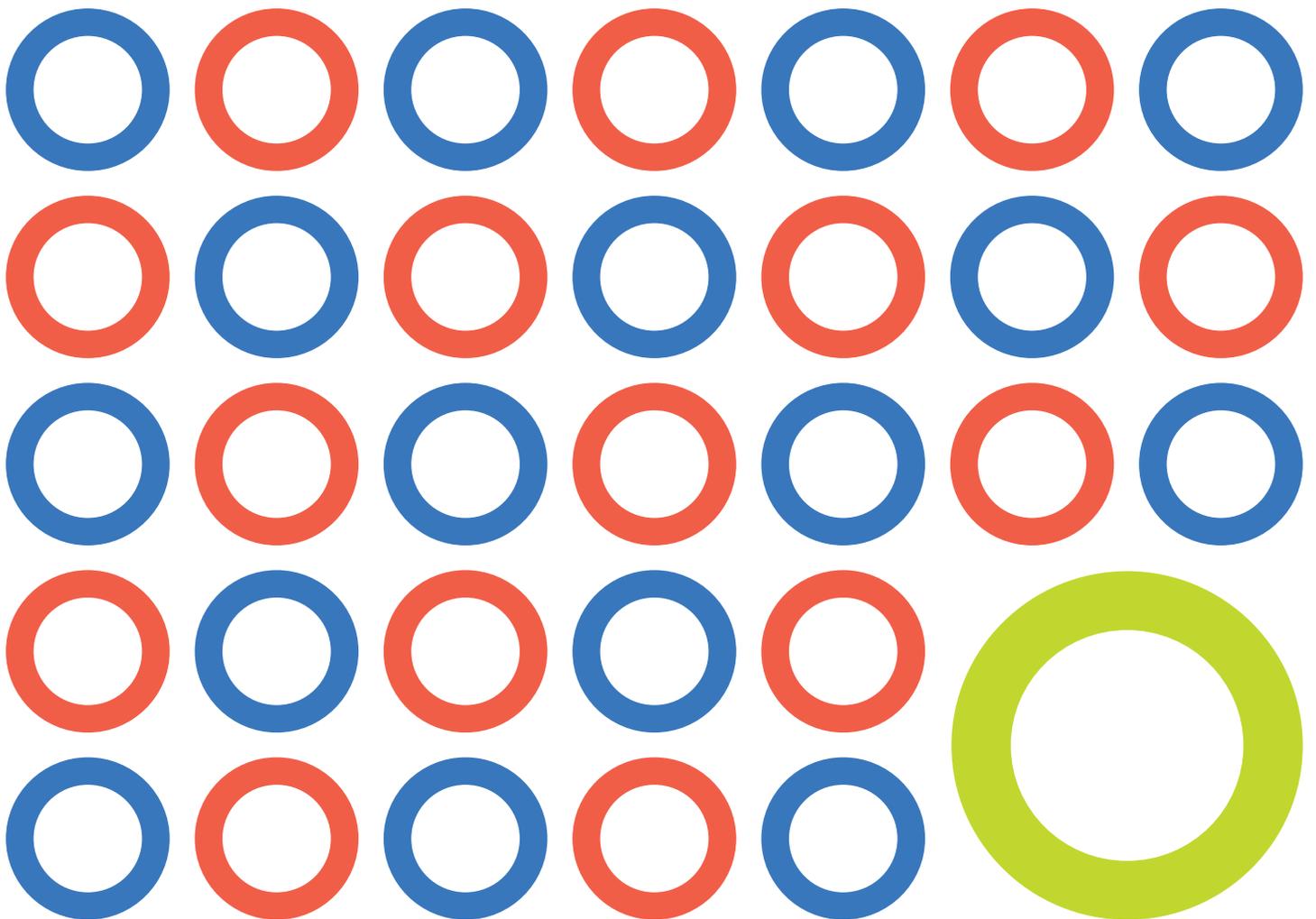


Team Development in Organisations



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School of Human Relations

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Introduction and Background

Rationale for Teams and Teamworking

Background

There have been a great many changes to the way organisations work in recent years: changes to what they do; where; who with and how. It has been an ongoing process of managing change and development; a major move toward a different style of working that involves people becoming more directly engaged with one another over common tasks and agreed goals (or targets).

Increasingly, it is recognised that a commitment to manage change is an expectation on all managers and all of us have things to learn about how we go about doing that. Team development and knowing more about how work groups operate is an important aspect of that change process.

The work organisations undertake is diverse in the range and breadth of the activities they cover as well as the geographical area they reach. Such changes place increased importance on staff developing greater inter-dependence in the way they work together and involves the need to 'let go' of what is often termed the 'silo' mentality; i.e. seeing work in the narrowest of terms and affecting only the most immediate of interests.

The need for interrelated working is part of a growing ethos across an organisation, and, as part of that change, work groups and teams will, from time to time, need to come together and reflect on their progress. They will be at varying stages of development and they will have differing needs if they are to be helped in moving forward. It is important when responding to any work group or team to offer interventions that relate to those features of the group or team's needs that will most help it develop.

More Talking at Work

Organisations are recognising the value and the necessity of a culture of dialogue – of the need for more open interaction and communication between staff at all levels. In part, this is in order to encourage individuals to make a greater contribution to the work they do and to influence and shape the effort they make.

As part of these kinds of developments, there is an increasing interest in more collaborative forms of working, and teamworking¹ particularly. This manual is written to help those involved think about the issues that are raised when an increasing inter-dependence is needed by people in the workplace. Throughout the manual the terms 'team' and 'teamworking' are repeatedly used because this is shorthand that is familiar to most people. They are used to illustrate the need for a greater degree of co-operation, but, in fact, teams are a special kind of work group and they need to be considered very carefully, whereas encouraging greater collaboration can be done without necessarily setting up teams. It is also the case that the nature of teamwork can vary according to the culture of the organisation and the wider society in which it operates, its style of working, the marketplace and its place in the market.

When looking through this manual and drawing on its resources, the reader needs to bear these points in mind. Sometimes what you may be looking for is some idea about how to improve a working relationship and not necessarily about how to develop a team; sometimes you may be looking at the team's composition and you need to think carefully about this. As you become familiar with the manual, it should be clear whether the section you are reading is discussing collaborative styles of working in a general sense or the specifics of a team approach.

Not all work is done in teams just as not everyone is a member of a team. Teams are not the answer to everything either, but they are the answer to some things and when they are they need to work effectively. The fact is they often don't and that is not always the fault of those in the team. Team difficulties can be caused by the way the team is set up, the work it is asked to do, the impact of other players on its efforts and so on. This manual is written to assist those involved in teamwork and collaborative working generally to understand and to act more effectively.

¹We use the term 'teamworking' to highlight the importance of improved communication at work, whether or not, strictly speaking, people are in 'teams'.

What is in the manual?

The manual includes and outlines how to distinguish work groups, project groups and teams from one another; how to separate out the task that the group or team is working on from the process that they go through. It describes the main stages of development to be expected when a team is formed or a group is established. It examines the contribution of individual members to the work of the group and provides some diagnostic tools and some developmental exercises for improving a working group's efforts together.

It is written for individuals who are members of staff, whether as members of work groups, teams or simply as individuals contributing to the collective effort; for managers who will increasingly have to manage the dynamics of groups and teams in pursuing the organisational effort; for facilitators (who may be managers or staff with a development role) who may be working with individuals as members of a team or a group, or who might be facilitating teams themselves.

Chapter 1: Why Teams: Organisational Themes

'A team: a device for concerting actions co-ordinating a set of individual activities.' (Dingwall, 1980)

Pressures and Changes in Organisations

Organisations have moved toward organising work in more co-ordinated ways in recent years, often through the use of teams, as a result of a number of pressures that are likely to increase in the future.

Pressures and Changes in Organisations

1. Flatter structures
2. High levels of accountability
3. Autonomous professionals
4. Relationships – relationships – relationships – plus
5. Corporate style/approach
6. Consistent throughout
7. Service-based

Box 1: Pressures and Changes in Organisations

1. Flatter structures: hierarchical organisations are slower to function, often have unnecessary layers of responsibility and management. They are cumbersome when it comes to managing change and being 'flexible' and 'adaptable' (the two terms that are most often used about what is needed in organisations of the present and future).

Once you reduce the number of layers, more responsibility has to be shifted down the organisation – nearer the source of the information. Some people argue that the nearer the source of the information, the better, in general, the decision is likely to be, but this is true only so far as people are prepared to take increasing responsibility and are given some guidance about how to innovate and how to implement change.

2. High levels of accountability: as a result of the flatter structures, we have higher levels of accountability for those who hold any position of responsibility within the modern organisation. This, too, brings mixed results. If individuals are more accountable than they were and they are managing teams, then they may take their accountabilities so seriously that they micro-manage the team and undermine its capacity for getting on with the job.

Or they may take the opposite view that the team is capable of managing itself (or ought to be). Apart from 'dropping in' from time to time to be reassured that 'all is well' the manager gives off another subtle message. This message is: 'Even if all is not well, don't bother me, I am already so busy.' In this kind of climate, the increase in accountability may not be matched with an increase in effectiveness. Preparation is important and briefings plus support to both managers and teams about how they might relate are vital.

3. Autonomous professionals: many workplaces increasingly rely on the contributions of semi-autonomous professionals, i.e. people who have been educated to consider themselves as independent practitioners who happen to be employed by this or that organisation. This has mixed effects. On the one hand, it does mean that nurses, to give one example, will often put the needs of the patient before those of the organisation. On the other, the organisation may be attempting to impose change on groups of people who claim it is their sovereign right to this or that condition, which happens to be costing a small fortune to maintain.

The history is that the more professionally trained the employees, the more likely it is that people will be expected to manage themselves and 'know' how to work with others of like background. This is a costly generalisation to make, but one that could be turned to the benefit of the organisation if it developed effective ways of valuing the autonomy of the professionals it has, on the one hand, and, on the other, of creating ways to bring them together to learn how to work effectively. Even individuals who have worked successfully in teams in the past need to learn how to function in *this* team. Of course, the experience they bring helps enormously, but it doesn't guarantee success in *this* team at *this* time – it has to be worked at.

4. Relationships – relationships – relationships – plus: contemporary work depends upon and requires much greater reliance upon the effectiveness of the working relationships of those involved. Preparation and training is absolutely indispensable, as are guidelines and some form of mediation service for those times when goodwill breaks down.

5. Corporate style/approach: many organisations have recognised that identity (often shortened to ‘brand’) is a key element of their market position and their continued success. This need for a corporate style or a corporate approach has encouraged the development of teams and teamworking.

The idea behind it is that people who more closely identify with the organisation will communicate that loyalty to those they serve and, by association, it will have an impact. There is a measure of utility in this argument, for example, if staff at B&Q aren’t distinctive then how will customers know who to approach? And ASDA doesn’t spend what it does on its team ventures just so people know how to fasten their ties properly or when to wear their outfits. It does so because it believes that the more there is a corporate sense as well as a corporate identity, the more it will impact on the customer and create a stronger identification with the ethos of the organisation.

6. Consistent throughout: as above, once the organisation has grasped the benefits of team approaches then the associated benefits also become apparent. Most organisations benefit from increased consistency of procedures and ‘culture’ – which can be one of the benefits that comes with greater teamworking.

7. Service-based: the more the organisation is service-based and customer-led then the more consistency is vital. The phenomenon of the last 20 years has been the application of this kind of rigorous consistency of approach by organisations that have either a national or global brand. Every Little Chef, for example, replicates itself; every Tesco is nigh on the same; every branch of Next has similarities. This all reassures the customer that they are in for a similarly consistent experience – which is what they want.

Public service organisations often treated individuals anonymously, impersonally and without any great regard; this provided consistency of approach but it is not a welcome one. The service revolution of the last 25 years has left most public service organisations far behind in their customer responsiveness.

Organisations, Teams and Individuals

Organisations may often integrate their members into their structure via the use of teams. Thus most teams will exist long before particular members arrive and will often have been established for reasons that may no longer be clear to anyone or without any great consultation with those who are to make up their membership.

There is one view that teamwork is about enhancing mutual support and another that it ensures compliance. This usually means that teams are structured to reflect the way in which the organisation works as a whole. If it is a traditional hierarchical organisation, its teams will tend to have a similar structure and operate in similar ways. At one level it is only to be expected, however many traditional organisations are faced with dilemmas and challenges that will not be met by employing traditional methods or recreating more of the same forums of organisational structure.

A critical factor is to generate the membership and structure of a team capable of achieving what is required, rather than reproducing a mode compatible with the existing structure of the organisation. Traditional hierarchical structures have a number of costs and benefits and each needs to be weighed against the other before concluding what is or is not required.

Costs	Benefits
Formal operation Inflexible to sudden change Individual contributions can be shifted	Clarity of structure Responsibilities clearly known Roles easy to identify Individuals easy to locate

Table 1: Costs and Benefits of Hierarchical Structures

Chapter 2: Teams or Groups?

Introduction

The use of teams is increasing in organisations – and the use of the word certainly is. Sometimes those talking of ‘teams’ mean a loosely connected group of people who happen to work together in the same section or department of an organisation and sometimes they mean a group of people closely reliant on the efforts of each other to get something done for which they are each responsible and for which they are accountable together. It is in this sense that the word ‘team’ really makes sense.

Working more closely together, needing more direct contact with colleagues in other parts of the organisation, say, and developing improved links of communication are all important and make the efforts of staff easier. They are not always examples of teamwork or the results of people being in a ‘team’, though they are often described that way.

The first thing to be clear about then is, ‘Does the language match the reality?’ Are we talking of a team, a work group, project group or something else? It is important what we call them and what we think of them as being. How you describe things influences what you expect of them and how they perform.

The starting point is to work out what you want from the people you are thinking may be a team, and to work out how far they need to be interdependent² upon each other’s efforts. In a simple way, it is the need for people to be interdependent that gives an indication that they might well be a team.

Much of what is written here about teams applies to any work group that sees the benefit of developing closer working relationships or that recognises the need to spend time together, at least occasionally, reviewing how they operate together in order to look at how and where they might improve their performance. It is not written exclusively for teams. Where there are references to teams and only teams we’ve made it clear.

Team Boundaries

Teams operate within a context and they must decide, if it is not decided for them, the limits and purpose of their activity. They must therefore establish some boundaries and decide upon a domain in which to work. They must also have content: a set of tasks that require skills from the members to perform adequately. Skills are usually related to the roles members occupy and the status they are perceived to possess by other members, colleagues or peers.

Very often in teams (and in groups for that matter) the boundaries of activity, action or conduct are only discovered in their violation. In other words, you have to do something wrong to know what the standards or ground rules of the team are. Minor indiscretions by new team members are often reacted to as flagrant and outrageous examples of insensitivity and are often used to remind newcomers of their place.

Boundaries are ritually important to a team, they set, literally, the limits of its existence, and if it does not care to express or investigate them sooner or later, it will be challenged to state them. For most teams, to express a boundary under pressure is likely to mean seeking the least difficult response – which is not always in the long-term interest of the team. A succession of such accommodation can give a team a rigid set of not very useful boundaries that impede its development.

Members must not simply be selected or invited into a team and be expected to contribute; all members need to take the initiative to ensure the required conditions of trust, safety and acceptance are created to enable people to contribute what they have to offer.

Summary: Boundary Issues

Extent of activity

Time scale

Frequency of meetings

Membership: criteria; open or closed

Sanctions or penalties

Norms of contributing

² Issues of being dependent, independent or interdependent are very important in organisations and their teams, project groups and work groups. Dependency suggests a situation where one team simply cannot exist or function without input or contributions from outside itself. This may be from managers, individuals outside their organisation or other teams within their organisation. Independence describes a team that can stand alone and function effectively and successfully in isolation. Inter-dependence is the position where teams (or individuals) need each other in order for each to fulfil their tasks efficiently and effectively.

What Are We?

To be a team and act together requires individuals to form themselves into groups, yet *not all groups intend to become teams*. One simple way of thinking about the differences between teams and groups is that an *effective team* is a special kind of group. It has additional tasks and goals to that of a group and is therefore a more complex system, open to more interference to its functioning and more sensitive to disturbance than a group.

“Teams are made up of individuals with particular expertise; each of whom is responsible for making individual decisions; who together hold a common purpose; who meet together to communicate, collaborate, and consolidate knowledge from which plans are made, actions determined, and future decisions influenced.” Naomi I Brill, *Teamwork: Working Together in the Human Services*, JB Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1976.

A group, on the other hand, can be thought of as a collection of individuals who come together to realise their individual projects through collective effort. It may be that each one can only achieve his or her individual goal by working with others but that goal does not necessarily have to be shared by other group members. For example, an individual may belong to a work group and in order to fulfil their particular task – tracing customer responses to a service or product, say – they seek information and assistance from their colleagues.

Such an individual is part of a group but not a member of a team because not everyone in the group is involved or committed to the goal being pursued. Individuals can pursue their individual tasks with the help of others in the group or in groups and these groups may have very low levels of association and contact. In turn, this may mean they need little in the way of servicing or maintenance – an occasional meeting perhaps being enough to keep everyone sufficiently up-to-date. A team, however, works at a higher level of collaboration and the interaction between the different contributors is much more crucial for the successful accomplishment of the team’s task.

The distinguishing feature of a team as opposed to a group is an overriding and shared sense of direction above individual tasks.

Most groups within organisations can be viewed as functioning sub-systems within a larger unit; a team, however, has a certain measure of functional autonomy and this is one of its defining characteristics. A football team is not all there is to a local football club, but when it is on the field playing, it has a certain degree of functional autonomy – much to the consternation of the manager and the chairman.

The individual who is part of a work group is very likely to see the need for some loose form of attachment between members in order for each one to achieve their particular task and such association will be almost self-evidently necessary, even hallowed, by tradition and custom. However indifferent the content of meetings might be, many workers in organisations realise that meetings are a necessary means of passing on information. What is much more open to challenge is the question of individuals who have loose associations in their working lives thinking and operating as a team at any effective level.

Example 1: a group: an adult education course is advertised inviting all those interested in teaching their specialised topic to others to attend. The course lasts 15 weeks and will cover a range of topics related to teaching and classroom management. The individuals attracted to such a course will necessarily have to work together to achieve what they seek but they will not have to become a team in order to achieve it i.e. they will not have to identify a shared course goal and work towards it. They can satisfactorily achieve their individual goals through working as a group.

Example 2: a team: a group of staff from a college meet together regularly to discuss teaching/learning issues; over a period they gradually develop a common set of understandings about the way they want to develop their teaching methods within a department. To achieve this they invite an outside trainer to help them. Over three days it becomes clear that the participants see themselves as belonging to a group and have not considered that they are, in fact, a team attempting to execute a common policy as well as develop individual teaching skills. Only gradually do they recognise that they have a shared set of goals to establish in addition to their individual goals about improving their teaching methods.

Example 1 is much closer to most people's experience of working with others than Example 2. Indeed, it is almost the case that only when group members come together to develop a new task or redirect their activities in some fundamental way do they begin to realise there is a collective dimension to their association, and one that has to be articulated, understood and shared. It is then that most individuals and most teams come face-to-face with some often very painful truths about the range of conflicting underlying assumptions that influence the way individuals behave, and how wide are the differences in philosophy and values the team have successfully evaded examining in the past.

Inviting people to look at their core values when they are usually under pressure to respond to some urgent demand – hence the need to look at how they operate in the first place – is a recipe for anguish, uncertainty, challenge and conflict. A task most teams would rather avoid or accomplish only partially.

In this way, many so-called teams are little more than slightly developed groups which leave individuals to contribute their idiosyncratic efforts as they like, and maintain such a loose definition of their common task that even the milkman and paperboy could find a legitimate role. Such diffuse statements of purpose and aims only serve the team in the short run. For, sooner or later, in the nature of things every collective is challenged to give account of itself. When that happens a team, like any other system, requires all its energy to meet the extended challenge and not turn inside itself to fight a battle over just what it is claiming to be. If the common purpose is too loosely described, the resulting debate may well leave the team alive but in a state of collective paralysis; still functioning officially but in terms of individual interest and commitment to all intents and purposes passive.

Individual Specialisation

All teams require a degree of specialisation of individual function. How far this needs to go will depend on the nature of the tasks and the diversity of membership. Where teams operate with high levels of role specialisation – medical teams, for example – there can be considerable difficulties in overcoming role stereotyping by different professional groups of each other, which may impede the team's development.

Specialisation takes two principle forms. There is internal specialisation related to the need for allocation of roles and tasks within the team in order for the team to function at all, and there is role specialisation relating to the professional allegiances individual members have outside the team. Teams of mixed professionals may well become outraged in the mixing of issues concerned with internal functioning and role specialisation.

Example 3: a group of staff is meeting to plan a new programme of professional development for their trained staff within the organisation. All have some expertise to contribute and to offer to peers. In a series of meetings they quickly establish a series of training modules suitable for staff. Because they have not come to regard themselves as a team but more as a collaborating group, they have no mechanisms to review the impact of their training, to develop new ideas or to consider the impact they either hope or expect to have on the organisation. Also they have never considered if and how far their external role specialisation and professional backgrounds might come to influence their 'operational style' when training others.

Past Influences

There is one further factor that can have a critical influence upon newly formed teams or new team members and that is the effect of 'baggage' from the past. Baggage might include hostility to membership of the team itself, the process and method used for selection, the enforced demand to switch commitment for other tasks, or a past history of unsatisfactory team experiences.

If team members are not encouraged and enabled to raise such issues and deal with them the result is likely to be limited commitment and at least some individual effort withheld from the team objective. Any potential that is withheld is dysfunctional to a team's efforts but teams can work satisfactorily enough with reduced commitment for some of the members for some of the time; illness, anxieties of various kinds and so on. But there is a level of commitment below which the team's effort to function satisfactorily is seriously impaired, making membership itself a cost barely worth paying.

The bond a group needs in order to establish itself can be thought of as the minimum level of commitment required to function effectively enough to accomplish the tasks it is set up to do.

As it says above, what we are determines what we do and what others expect of us in any organisation, and all of us come with previous experience of being in teams from our schooldays, if from nowhere else. That gives us our first clue about how people feel about teams. They have been in them and many people don't like what happened to them. They got 'left out'; they didn't get 'picked'; they were 'picked on'; they had to do what other people said; they never felt recognised in the way they hoped for. You can add to the list endlessly. Often the experience of being in teams as children is far from happy or fulfilling, so people bring that baggage with them when they are recruited into a team (even if they can't remember it clearly).

By contrast, some people remember their membership of teams as the highlight of their childhood and their youth. Many people remain members of teams for large parts of their life, whether it is a quiz team at the local pub, bowls in the park or team games on a family evening. And many people enjoy the sense of belonging; the sharing of effort and the working things out that is restricted to playing the game (more usually winning the game) that creates such a concentrated experience of working together and being together. Such team experiences provide people with intense experiences of 'belonging' that may not be met in other ways in other parts of their lives.

The Sports Team

The other major influence about our thinking about teams is from the world of sports, especially football. Our 'national game' is a team game – in a proper sense of the term too. It is a competitive struggle with clear rules (not always in practice); a well-recognised playing area; easily identified individuals contributing; restricted numbers and a definitely measurable result. If you could get staff to collaborate together over a common goal in the way a football team does then you would improve the efficiency of the organisation immensely.

It is largely this focused effort to meet a commonly agreed and well-recognised end result (winning) that makes the team an attractive idea in organisations. However, as a few minutes' thought will illustrate, there's a lot of difference between a 90 minute match on a Saturday afternoon and day-to-day organisational life; between chasing a Cup and keeping to an organisational plan; between the concentrated resources and almost limitless amounts of money that can be injected into a failing team on the soccer pitch and the kinds of resources with which most work groups have to manage.

Chapter 3: Team Building

What is Team Building?

Team building: a planned event with a group of people who have common organisational goals that is designed to improve, in some way or another, their effectiveness in working together.

Team building is concerned with bringing about change and, as Blake (1964) says, there are two factors which are most important in this process, both of which interact, particularly in work teams:

1. Breaking fixed habit patterns.
2. Breaking fixed organisational cultures.

He goes on to identify eight major goals for teambuilding:

General

1. For each manager to discover, not only through their own efforts but also through the eyes of their associates, their management style and to consider the implications for improving their own performance.
2. For each work team to investigate its manner of working by examining its own traditions, precedents and past practices, its characteristic way of doing things and its culture, as a basis for improvement.

Specific

3. To replace outmoded traditions and practices with a problem solving culture.
4. To increase personal objectivity in self-assessment of work behaviour.
5. To set standards for excellence.
6. To establish objectives for team and individual achievements.
7. To increase teamwork skills.
8. To use the concept of 'critique' for learning.

He suggests that organisational learning takes place best when those who face the same problems diagnose them and develop solutions for them with little or no outside intervention.

It is clear that team building is concerned with all matters which impinge on the effectiveness with which a team operates. One commonly held myth, which needs to be dealt with, is that team building is concerned with setting up arrangements whereby people always work in groups or on committees. Blake probably deals with this as well as anyone:

“The fact that people are interdependent does not mean that they are always physically together. It does not always mean groups or committees but means that each person is effectively contributing that aspect of the total for which he is uniquely responsible.” R Blake, *The Managerial Grid*, Gulf Publishing, 1964.

Team Building Methods

There are a number of well-trying and tested methods for 'team building'. Perhaps the most important thing to be said at the outset – once again – is that knowing just what you expect of the group and being clear to what degree it needs to learn how to function as a team is the single most important feature in improving the performance of a group of individuals before applying any teamwork method of development.

The approaches vary from the low-risk and task-focused to the high-risk interpersonal encounter, where individuals are being invited to relate to one another much more strongly as the people they are rather than as representatives of the roles they happen to fulfil. As might be expected, the need for third party help decreases with increasing structure.

And there are many approaches that fall somewhere in the middle, which ask people to move beyond simple role responses and share something, but only a limited amount, of their personal lives that relates to the work in question. Some methods are based on creating a better 'team feel' – 'bonding exercises'. Outward Bound sessions and activity-based learning can often be undertaken for these kinds of benefits.

The important thing here is that no one expects there to be a direct transfer between a group getting across a rope bridge and the way they pass papers around the office once they get back, but the atmosphere of collaboration engendered by attempting something that will be unfamiliar to almost everyone requires people to put aside their usual pattern of responses to one another and to act outside their usual repertoire. As a result, they will often see new aspects of other people and display aspects of their own personality that are novel to their colleagues and which can do much to unlock the very fixed views people working together day-after-day often demonstrate. We could typify the different approaches under a series of thematic headings.

1. Task-focused analysis and discussion based methods: with or without external contributions.

2. Belbin-type instruments and other test contributions: individuals complete some form of questionnaire that highlights aspects of their strengths and limitations and the team then works on the 'gaps' or areas of performance in which the instrument highlights they are currently deficient.

3. Process-based approaches and methods of working: interpersonal encounter and so on. These much more open-ended approaches essentially rely upon people being willing to open themselves to the views and feedback of their colleagues, and to separate out the personally-loaded from the more objective observations. Such an approach requires enormous skill on the part of those facilitating and a great deal of trust by those attempting it. Learning the art of feedback is crucial.

4. Reviewing: regular reflective periods. Methods that rely upon 'time out' in the workplace, outside or overnight are an increasingly common way for teams and groups to assess aspects of their performance. Assessment may be assisted by reports written by external figures, by managers or by team members themselves. Here the main issue is setting the agenda and learning how to work through the key points, as opposed to those things people are exercised about but which may not be important beyond the moment.

It is surprising how often managers believe that the issues that teams need to tackle are understood and common to just about everyone, only to find this is not the case. Even when it is, managers are surprised by just how many variations of view there are to take into account. As a result, review sessions, unless the team or group have learned the art of time management, listening to one another, sorting out priorities and working methodically, can leave things more unclear than when they began.

5. Content-based approaches: to identify and resolve specific issues. Specific issues are highlighted through surveys or simply through regular team meetings and time is set aside to deal with them. Initial preparation is almost always useful. If people give time to thinking about the way the issue impacts upon them and others, what might or might not have already been tried and so on, they will almost always contribute more effectively than if the meeting gathers with a notional agenda and then gets clearer as the session proceeds.

6. Problem-solving approaches: action reviewing of actual or simulated problems to identify blockages. Here typical team problems that might occur or which have occurred are 'run through' with careful analysis and observation to examine the way the team managed itself and what can be learned for the future. In some well-functioning teams this approach is used to identify future problems before they occur and the team begins to work out long-range modifications to its way of operating that it can incorporate as the expected changes begin to arrive.

7. Task-differentiation approaches: re-examining how and why tasks have become divided up as they are. This is a fundamental re-looking at how the team is composed; which roles relate to which and how well the whole structural arrangements are suited to the current circumstances. It is a fairly fundamental form of review and reconstruction and not one to be suggested as a routine activity.

8. Applying task and skill analysis: this may be based on external information provided by consultants or it may be that individual team members do their own analysis and appraisal. In this event, following the individual appraisal they come together to look at the team goals and the individual contributions required and then assess their own profiling in the light of the work they have been doing. Redesigning the contributions individuals make in the future is a second and obviously essential phase of this work – though it is surprising how often it is left simply ‘to happen’ without support and guidance.

9. Role integration: deciding priorities, specialisation, allocating tasks. A team may need to reconfigure the skills and competencies of individuals differently. There may be a requirement for a wider group of individuals to have skills that have previously been needed by only one or two, for example.

If the team is working towards the idea of individual interchangeability – i.e. that most team members can do most things most of the time – then moving toward such a situation requires a good deal of knowledge about what is needed, how it can be done and how much leeway there is between performances that still count as adequate. For example, everyone can answer a telephone, but not everyone’s performance is adequate to the demands of the work. If everyone is going to answer the phone from now on, knowing the range of acceptable responses is crucial and practising them before the day vital.

The Three Elements of Team Building

The three crucial elements of teambuilding are **choosing goals, ways of working and relationships.**

1. Choosing goals: it is important to be clear about goals and common tasks. This is also connected to the membership of the team, i.e. ‘Who is here and why?’ and, ‘Who should be here?’ Membership, therefore, is determined by the goals set and the tasks to be accomplished.

2. Ways of working: the style in which the team is going to operate will influence the structure, the roles and the general running of the team. Beware of falling for a conventional structure and form that does not serve the needs of the group or its task. Questions to be addressed include:

- a. Do we need a Chairman?
- b. Do we need a note taker?
- c. How often should we meet?
- d. Should we have critique?

3. Relationships: the relationships between team members are a crucial factor in the success or otherwise of the team. This relates to the relationships that develop as a consequence of being members of the same team as well as those relationships that already exist, such as social settings or other teams/groups prior to meeting in ‘this’ team. How well do team members know each other? It is important to remember that the relationships team members may have in other places will have an influence on the team. Helpful attitudes include:

- a. ‘Unlabelling’: see each other as ‘becoming persons’ with increasing respect for each other.
- b. ‘Consciousness’ is the added ingredient and, once recognised, members will never wish to regress.
- c. Do not just hear the content but address the issues (which are as important as content).
- d. Separate content from the functional exploration.

The Four Kinds of Teams

There are four main kinds of teams for which team building activities might be appropriate.

1. Hierarchical teams: people who form a normal manager/subordinate team e.g. company or division boards. Examples might include:

- a. A director and heads of department.
- b. A plant manager with supervisors.
- c. A supervisor with a payroll team.

2. Co-ordinating committees: people who have some shared goals, such as:

- a. Works managers from different divisions of a company on a shared site.
- b. People from different functions forming a business team.
- c. Long-term planning committees.

3. Project teams and task forces: changes in environmental demands, in technology and in organisational needs can all lead to the establishment of project groups. Their characteristics include:

- a. Loyalty to the organisation.
- b. Healthy social structure.
- c. Shared values.
- d. Acknowledgement of expertise.
- e. Freedom within clear limits.
- f. Identification with organisation.
- g. Clear sanctions.
- h. Structure built around the individual.
- i. Necessary range and levels of skills.
- j. People appointed for a specific project, including:
 - Those involved in specific capital projects
 - Those involved in specific research projects
 - Those involved in some specific task e.g. a reorganisation or development of quality standards.

4. Common interest groups: people who may well have no organisational links but who share some common roles, organisational, professional or other interests, such as:

- a. Groups of like-minded professionals: personnel managers, doctors, shop stewards etc.
- b. People interested in or in charge of training.
- c. Surveyors, engineers, accountants etc., from different parts of an enterprise exchanging information, sparking ideas off each other and so on.

Another meaningful classification would be to differentiate between new and existing teams. Developing a team from scratch requires a somewhat different approach from developing an existing entity.

Factors Influencing Team Building Events

A study of individual team building activities suggests that the likelihood of success is influenced by four major elements.

1. The people involved.
2. The relevance that the team building activity has to organisational and personal problems.
3. The timing of the event.
4. The amount of freedom that the team has to make changes.

1. The people involved: some of the people factors which seem to be important are that the team building should be supported by the manager, and that the individual members of the team involved want to do it. It also seems to be important that the group either has the internal skills to study its own process or that there should be the involvement of a third party consultant who is credible and acceptable. Team building is helped by either some or all of the individuals involved having had previous training of a problem solving or human relations type.

2. The relevance of the activity: when a leader or manager is involved in a team building exercise with their team, its success is greatly enhanced if they can behave with minimum defensiveness and domination. It is also helped by the team having a high motivation to achieve results by individual members feeling that there will be some benefit to themselves from the activity and for the team to be the correct one for dealing with the major issues that require attention.

3. The timing of the event: the timing of a team building event can have a major impact on its success. Apart from the need for there to be enough time for the activity, it can be helped considerably by occurring when the team feels organisational pressure, resulting possibly from a change in the structure or from need to improve business results, whilst it can be inhibited by people's defensiveness when there is a threat of possible redundancy. There is also a greater chance of success where there is adequate time and resources for the necessary data collection in advance of any team building activity, and enough time and involvement of a third party consultant to ensure that there is an appropriate design and level of team building to meet the team's needs.

4. The degree of freedom: team building tends to be more successful when the freedom for the team to change has been considered before the event and there has been recognition of the organisational constraints in which the team has to work. As a result of this, the team's and individual's expectations of the activity become more realistic and the level at which the activity operates can be better matched to the environment in which the team has to work.

Possible Outcomes of Team Building

Possible outcomes will range from *modest but important modifications to the procedures* the team uses (such as changes in agenda and priority setting procedures or in the ways in which results are communicated), to *major sociological changes* (such as changes in the style of management and decision-taking, changes in behaviour, both group and between individuals, changes in work group objectives, changes in respective roles, changes in problem-solving approaches).

In general the outcomes fall into three main groups:

1. Those which relate to the way in which the group works.
2. Those affecting the group's relations with the rest of the organisation.
3. Those specific to individuals.

The main outcomes can also be seen as value shifts:

1. From a task to a task-and-process orientation.
2. From a task to a task-and-people orientation.
3. From a short-term to a short and long-term emphasis.
4. From operating on principles and generalities to a situation of perpetual diagnosis and relevant action.

The most common result of team building activity in this area is for groups to rethink their organisational role and ways of fulfilling it. For service units in particular, who all too often perceive themselves as ends in themselves, this can lead to quite different statements of role with all the implications these have for their relationships with the other parts of the organisation which they serve.

Groups generally become much more concerned about other people's perceptions of themselves and much more concerned to do something about adverse comment. Generally this in turn leads to mutual exploration of interfaces with other groups, with mutual development of understanding of how the other party operates and of the difficulties each causes the other. This in turn leads to more supportive attitudes towards other parts of the organisation and to a much greater sense of corporate identity.

Hazards and Pitfalls

So far, we have concentrated on favourable results but, in order to maintain balance, it is important to draw attention to some of the hazards and traps there are in moving into team building activities and to mention some of the things which might go wrong and which need to be guarded.

Something which is sometimes forgotten is that individuals have their own personal aims, concerns and problems and it is just as important to face up to these as to those shared by the team. If individuals, for example, are trying to work their own personal agendas and such issues are not faced up to, it can have a very bad effect on group cohesiveness and the success of the team building activity. For example an individual, to gain credit in his boss's eyes, might be more concerned to maintain the party line rather than play a constructive part in an inter-departmental problem solving activity.

Another problem is that of the group facing up to its position in the wider system and recognising its powerlessness. It is important to help such groups see positive roles and contributions which they might make rather than let them lapse into frustration, apathy and an unwillingness to take initiatives. The other side of this particular coin is to prevent groups from developing such a sense of identity and cohesiveness that they attempt to become self-sufficient and forget about their contribution to the wider system.

The habit people have of giving each other stereotypes and having preconceived ideas of what is likely to happen makes it possible for communication to break down in a particularly dangerous manner. People can easily interpret each other's cues so as to confirm their stereotypes and lock each other into roles from which it is difficult to escape. B may, for example, be a little unsure of himself and lack confidence when dealing with others. His approach will tend to be low-key and diffident as compared with A's, who may, in fact, know less, but B's approach will convince the others that he has nothing to say. They will therefore stop listening, thus confirming B in his stereotype of himself and causing him to contribute less and less until he finally becomes a non-contributor. This is known as a *self-fulfilling prophecy*.

In addition, there are examples of the investment of time and effort in building a team that are unrealistic in terms of the known life of the team. This can happen particularly when the team building is being initiated by the leader of a group who is not aware of organisational changes that are proposed in the comparatively near future. There are also examples of team building activities with groups that are seen as entities in the organisation but which are not really teams in the sense that there is a common purpose and set of objectives. This means that the group is unable to become cohesive and it can lead to a high level of frustration.

Team building is unlikely to be successful if any of the following are present:

1. If the team building is used as a substitute for management action and allows managers not to face up to an uncomfortable decision.
2. If the third party works during the meeting to their own goals and personal philosophies when they are not in line with those of the group.
3. If the senior member of the group is using team building as a screen for getting their own purposes met, whether these are organisational, in which case they will be seen as manipulating, or personal, in which case they may well be seen as emotional.
4. If members of the team concerned have strong feelings of insecurity, either as individuals or in the organisation, which arise from external circumstances and therefore cannot be worked on within the group.
5. If a highly cohesive group is built of people whose ideas, beliefs and attitudes are very different from those generally held in the organisation. This is a possibility that the third party and the senior member of the group have to face up to and make sure that it does not occur unless they are prepared to cope with the problems of linking such a team to the rest of the organisation.

Chapter 4: Issues in Teams and Teamworking

Where teamworking makes sense of the context and the work, then it brings benefits to those involved, providing they have been sufficiently prepared and are satisfactorily managed. However, as we have already noted, there are also some difficulties and disadvantages to teamworking – one being the time it takes to manage the interpersonal connections people have and the frustrations many people discover at the outset because they are unfamiliar with how to be an effective member of a group or how to take part in a group. How individuals behave in groups and why, we look at later, yet it has to be acknowledged at the outset that teamworking is not a quick-fix solution but a long-term committed approach.

Joining a team or teamworking is not everyone's 'cup of tea' either. This can create a real dilemma. Some people are so antagonistic to the whole idea of working as part of a group or seeing themselves as members of a team that they refuse to take part, on the grounds that it is not part of their job. But this is going to be less and less a sustainable objection. No one can take part in work in the 21st century and not relate to others in the workplace. If you need to relate to others then you need to be willing to explore how you do that and how you might do it better.

The days when the workplace would tolerate the awkward individual or the clumsy interpersonal are long gone. Working relationships are vitally important to most enterprises today and being open and willing to learn how you 'come across' is simply part of what is required in the modern workplace.

Objectors and Refusers

Whilst there are still people who find the whole idea of working more closely with others a form of affront, those initiating the process need to work out a strategy and a policy for managing it. Individuals cannot make their personal pathological objections undermine a rationally worked out organisational process or the organisation risks being hijacked over other issues at other times. In order to minimise the risk of the 'objector' becoming a 'refuser', it is crucial to have many forms of support available. This would include offering support to assist people to make a more effective contribution, good preparation, one-to-one coaching and mentoring sessions, and so on.

Of course, if the team has a vital role and someone is unwilling to play a realistic part in its work then the initiators and *holding group*³ would have to think again. Anyone responsible for the team, either manager or facilitator, can't, as a rule, jeopardise the work of the group by having a dysfunctional individual sabotaging the collective effort. It may be better, as a temporary measure, to find a way for the rest of the team to keep on working without the individual attending, but only on the understanding that efforts are being made to explore the situation. This includes:

- Evaluating if the team/group can function without the individual concerned
- Clarifying what the individual's 'resistance' is about and then making a decision about their return or not
- Coaching the team member to overcome the obstacles that have inhibited their contribution.

All the time it is important to remember that when an individual is clearly dysfunctional, it is not necessarily their 'fault'; there may be issues around the way the team is constructed and/or managed.

Objections of such force are rare, but they can happen and in an organisation that is developing such an approach the objections raised may be more about the approach than the specific requirements to join a team. It may be a reflection of an individual's displaced anxiety about what is really happening to their job or a fear about what else they may have to get used to, or whether the rumours that are going around are true. Not all team objectors are unable to learn how to work in a team or are objecting about teams *per se*. Hence the comment above about individual sessions.

When an individual has to voice their objections initially in a public forum they tend to make them more vehemently than they might if they had first had a chance to talk things over privately, for example. In part this is because it takes a great

³ The 'holding group' is a group made up of representatives of all the parties involved. They will meet from time to time to evaluate how the intervention is going.

deal of courage to object in front of colleagues who are going along with something. Making oneself feel so exposed isn't easy, so if an individual is going to go to all that trouble they are likely to make the strongest point they can.

In addition, objectors can have the effect of mobilising the fears and concerns of other members who are not so vocal. You can then end up with a less than interested group who are very much more unsure of the enterprise they are embarking on than you expected. Helping people recognise the specific benefits of the arrangements and being realistic about the obstacles on the way there (as described elsewhere) helps.

Issues of Rivalry, Competition and Status

Organisational work is designed around individual contributors relating to other individual contributors to generate the end result – the product or service that keeps the organisation in existence. Generally speaking, the more complex the work, the more people's roles will overlap and become interdependent. Sometimes it is straightforward and obvious and sometimes much more subtle.

Management in increasing numbers of organisations has to be more carefully and more realistically co-ordinated. There is much talk of teamwork at management levels and some indication that organisations are beginning to understand how far a group of managers need to become a 'team' and how far improved teamwork would benefit their efforts.

One of the difficulties for management teams (and others too, but especially management teams) is the question of rivalry, competition and status. It is possible for individuals to demonstrate all the appearance of being 'in the team' when they are under scrutiny (i.e. in the meeting) only to plough their own furrow once outside. It is not uncommon for individuals to learn how to be a team player in front of the CEO but be far from collaborative at other times. These are common realities, not exceptions, and they are part of the organisational world that has to be understood, accepted and worked with rather than simply opposed or outlawed.

What this point illustrates, perhaps more than anything else, is that teamwork is something that has to be understood, learned, adopted consciously and regularly reviewed. More co-ordination gives rise to:

- More need for teamwork responses
- More understanding of the issues facing others at related points in the flow of the work
- The breakdown of individual isolation.

There are fewer and fewer people who arrive at work and who can get on irrespective of the efforts of others around them. Once your work depends upon someone else's contribution – if only in supplying you with the raw material for your task – then an element of teamworking is beginning to display itself.

If your work moves beyond you to another colleague then your effort can make or break the pattern of their performance. Said like this, it is an obvious feature of most modern workplaces. Yet how many workplaces, from the outset, enable individuals truly to understand just what role they play in the overall effort and how those before and after them in the sequence of the work affect, and are affected by, this particular individual contribution?

Fewer Layers

As organisations become less hierarchical they have fewer 'layers' and there are fewer rungs up the organisational ladder. In turn this means more is expected of people all the way 'through' the organisation and much more direct communication is needed for things to happen. In addition, the more an organisation delivers services, the more the collective effort is likely to require interdependent effort and the more the actions of one person can make a great deal of difference to the overall performance and reputation of the organisation.

For example if I buy a new machine – TV, fridge, car – and it is faulty I can get it replaced, often with a minimum of fuss these days. If I am on the receiving end of bad service at the opticians, the travel agents or some other service provider and I don't like what I get, not only do I feel put out by the individual who served me but the experience also tends to colour my judgement of the enterprise as a whole.

This is one reason why service-based organisations are putting increasing efforts into customer ‘management’, or customer ‘care’. It has many names, but essentially it means educating all staff in the importance of the relationship between the customer and the organisation. It takes only one person to put the organisation’s future relationship with that individual at risk. Poor customer relations invites catastrophe in any organisation.

There are, for example, some staff members whose contributions interrelate, such as one individual who manages the customer before passing them on to a colleague. If they do this well and appropriately, the customer experiences being in the hands of an organisation that is impressive and thoughtful; if the transition between one individual representative and another breaks down, the organisation’s reputation suffers.

Bringing people together and helping them work out how better to manage these key points of transition or major turning points in the work they do in order to smooth out the glitches is part of the increase in collaborative working, and may or may not be part of teamworking.

Benefits of Teams and Teamworking

It is clear therefore that teams and teamworking benefit organisations and contribute to services in many ways, including the following.

1. Teamwork is often important in *creating a smooth, seamless service delivery* experience for a customer in a service-based organisation. Consistency in customer management is very important to new customers or insecure individuals who are unfamiliar with the way a system operates.
2. Groups of individuals who are jointly responsible for the delivery of some product or service or who have a maintenance responsibility can *enhance the quality, speed and overall performance* of their joint efforts by working more closely together. They become aware of each other’s contributions and are able to plan ways to make best use of those contributions in the overall effort.
3. Teams that have a very specific role at key points or on key occasions in an activity or work pattern can *make all the difference between outright failure and success* – members of the fire and rescue service are only one extreme example that illustrates this point. There are many groups in organisations that have a key part to play in getting things out on time or finished effectively that know their power and can make either good or mischievous use of it.
4. Individuals whose contribution is vital to the *well-being of the organisation* often require teamworking skills in order to plan, decide and review their contributions effectively. The point to make again here is that such teamwork involves individuals in:
 - Learning how to listen to one another
 - Becoming better at managing difference: conflict is not so feared or avoided
 - Understanding the contributions others make
 - Knowing how all the contributions fit together
 - Respecting that people with different roles and different skills are nevertheless crucial to the overall effort.

Summary: Benefits of Teamworking Approaches

Individuals become better at managing difference.

Listening to one another increases.

Understanding of issues and individual views deepens.

People begin to take things less personally.

People distinguish between critical assessment and disagreement.

Greater involvement in the work and a wider interest in how it is evolving.

Creates smooth, seamless service delivery.

Enhances quality, speed and overall performance.

Another strong and growing influence in promoting collaborative and team approaches is related to *innovation and new initiatives*. Increasing the creativity of the organisation is likely to become more and more important as organisations are challenged to maintain their position and develop their identity to distinguish themselves from others.

Innovation is a fashionable term and it may not last. It is certainly not an easy thing for organisations to foster, since organisations are more used to predictability and routine (though, as we've suggested here, that is changing) rather than flair, creativity and the risky process of innovation. Organisations will move in this direction more and more as time goes by, if for no other reason than because such challenges help to keep staff motivated and engaged with the work they do. If they are not engaged then service slips, performance becomes lethargic and the organisation slowly goes into hibernation.

Collaborative Working

It is worth making the point again that teamworking, in many ways, goes against the individual performance culture of many organisations; teamworking is much more about valuing the collective contribution than in looking for and promoting individuals as 'stars'. A history of individualism is therefore challenged by any serious team effort and many people see teams as merely necessary devices for them to pursue their own agendas.

This doesn't mean they undermine or make the team effort difficult, only that they haven't grasped the critical feature of teamworking when it is serious, which is that *each member recognises that all other members have a legitimate and vital contribution to make to the overall effort no matter what they earn or what title they hold.*

Collaborative approaches to working together, for the kinds of reasons outlined above, are gathering momentum. In some organisations, the groups charged with a particular task are left to decide how that task is organised and how it is performed – as long as they reach the required quality standard⁴ – and then the delivery mechanisms are established around their customer interaction. Changes of these kinds involve more people talking about what they are doing than used to be the case. And talking at work may be nothing new, but talking *about* work certainly is. It is something we don't yet do well.

Where there is a need for a collective effort by people who work together and share a similar aim, the need for a conscious effort to create a team may be the answer – and this manual describes how to decide about such a question, as well as what to do about it if you think it makes sense. Tackling it in a planned and thoughtful way, however, is essential. The most desirable change to encourage may be a team spirit that ensures staff, as they move into different groups and teams, take with them a *collaborative way of working* enabling them to get underway relatively quickly.

Restructuring Teams

Restructuring will often not only break up existing teams and re-form them into others but may be motivated these days by the need to:

- Improve the links between staff groups and functions
- Ease the flow of communication
- Ensure the customer gets the service they need rather than the service the organisation would like them to have.

Organisational restructuring, as all who have been through it know, is stressful and most organisations these days are in a state of semi-permanent restructuring. Teamworking may form part of such a change process but, almost certainly, increasing encouragement for greater collaboration will form part of the rationale of those wanting to make significant organisational changes.

When existing teams are broken up or new teams formed, the impact is far greater than most people imagine. If individuals have worked in a group that has gone well and there is some camaraderie, leaving it to go to a new group is likely to give rise to anxieties about what it might be like having to work with new people. People who have negative experiences in one team rarely look upon joining another team as likely to bring about improvement; they are more likely to look upon it as a repetition of something they have already had more than enough of.

⁴ It is much harder to quantify a quality standard and to maintain consistency in service-based organisations than in product-based concerns.

The Future of Teamwork

There is increasing evidence, largely from firsthand experience and reading, that many agencies, institutions and organisations are experiencing new challenges and demands to their existing operations. Where in the past new demands were often met with increased resources, allowing the organisation to expand, this is less and less possible. Resources are scarcer; finding money to throw at problems is therefore not the obvious solution it once was. One strategy is to create a new work group or team to meet the challenge or demand. This means taking existing staff and redirecting part of their efforts to focus upon a new area of activity and investigating the potential or otherwise of any further investment.

A feature of such developments is inter-agency teams (a team composed of members from different agencies but somehow reflecting a core of common interest), or networks (looser associations but which share many of the same features). It seems likely that such teams will play an increasing role in organisational life in the future.

Am I ready for the future?

This is the question that all this poses. The manual is a way of helping readers think how best to prepare themselves for the kind of future that is outlined here. Teamworking and collaboration are not just about working in this team now, but are part of the working climate growing throughout the organisation.

Discussion, dialogue, joint problem solving – organisational conversation of many kinds – helps keep the work in front of people and keeps them thinking about how they can change or improve it. The phrase ‘continuous improvement’ is more about incremental individual modifications than large-scale major change initiatives.

So wherever you are in the organisation, discussion and collaboration are almost certainly going to play a bigger part in how you go about doing what you do than was once the case.

Chapter 5: The Underlying Theory and Long-term View of The Manager, the Team and the Task⁵

Teams and Management

We've been using the term *teamwork* loosely to describe the 'spirit' of collaboration amongst those working together, but they are not necessarily a team; they may be a group with or without a designated leader engaged upon its task. A team can be defined in terms of several interacting features and would also include the process of managing its own emotional and interpersonal life, and for generating an atmosphere or culture that is particular to itself.

In addition, most teams are ultimately responsible to someone else outside their own membership – to a manager or senior individual. Even though we use the term 'self-managed', such teams are not teams that wholly direct what they do; they more usually manage the work they do, but they are accountable elsewhere, and it is essential for any work group or team to know clearly to whom and for what they are responsible. A team is also partly defined in terms of how it is established, how it is managed and its task.

The Manager

The working relationship between these two elements (the team and the manager) is a fundamental dynamic of how the teams operate in the long-term. The morale and sense of effectiveness of team members will often be mediated through the manager and the responses the manager gives or doesn't give to the work of the team.

We've already pointed out that a team is more than just a loose association of people co-operating together – such a definition is more fitting to the work group or the project group. A team has to have at least enough structure for someone to have a managerial role that is acknowledged by its members and a clearly defined task in the organisation, which is also acknowledged by its members. The manager may be:

1. Formally appointed to the role by an organisation.
2. Formally elected in some democratic way by team members or their representatives.
3. Self-appointed to recruit and lead a team.
4. Given the role by custom, convention and social practice.
5. Informally selected.

The Manager as Facilitator

Managers are increasingly viewed as becoming more of a facilitator of personal development in the workplace. They are, therefore, people who are able to select responses from among all the many options available that will create a managerial style that progressively moves toward:

1. **More delegation to team members.**
2. **Increased self and peer determination** at the site of work in managing both quality and productivity; i.e. more *accountability* by the team for what the team does, how and when and to what standard.
3. **Increased participation in central policy-making and planning:** more delegation to the team for how it views what needs to be done within the wider parameters laid down.
4. **Increased self and peer regulation and discipline in handling wayward behaviour:** *increased responsibility* for the working atmosphere and human relations of the team members with one another and less appeal to formal procedures etc.

⁵ This chapter is a short overview of the theoretical background that informs a lot of current thinking about where organisations are going and why.

5. **Increased self and peer initiative in generating knowledge and understanding through work**, and in giving meaning to work; i.e. increased recognition of the need for the team to call ‘time-out’ and review its work in the light of what is happening and what it is learning.
6. **Increased self and peer attention to job satisfaction**: whole person satisfaction within the conditions of work, and interpersonal relations i.e. increased collaboration within the team for how to manage and deal with the issues that inevitably arise from time to time with working patterns; holiday arrangements and similar issues as a precursor to looking at ways to enhance work itself.
7. **Increased self and peer commitment to generate and sustain core values**: the team takes responsibility for reviewing its core purpose, mission and so on in the light of new conditions or new challenges. Mission statements do not need to be delivered by others and the team exhorted to follow. The operative word here is ‘increasing’; it does not mean total or absolute so much as increased delegation compared with the traditional norm of over-control from above. It needs balancing with negotiation and direction.

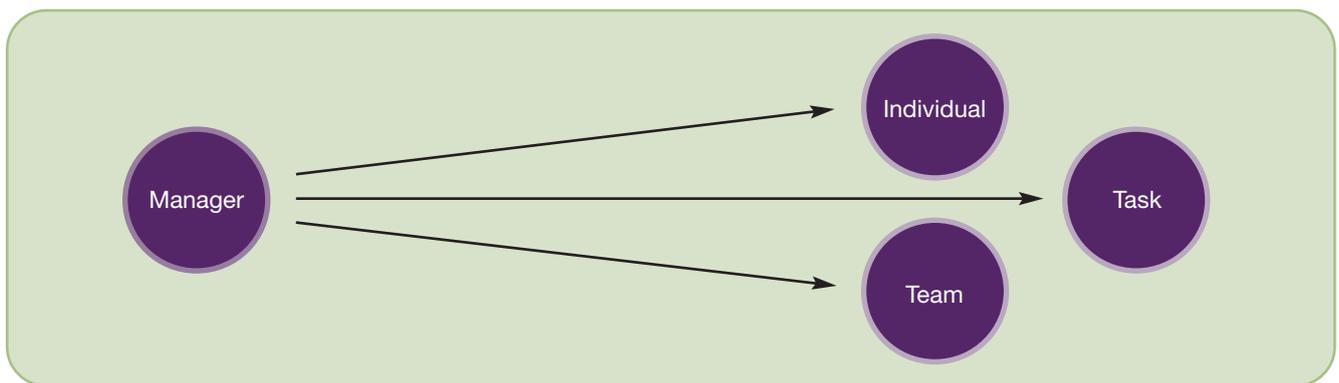


Figure 1: Areas of Facilitation

The Processes Involved

An important point is that the more these self and peer processes increase, the greater the decentralisation of work. And that also means there will need to be a matching increase in co-ordinating centres to bring the work together. In turn, this generates the need for such centres to develop a more collaborative relationship between and amongst themselves. The organisation becomes more a federation of increasingly interdependent groups that have a much greater understanding and awareness of how the contributions of each affect the work of the others.

We are a long way from this at the moment, but we are heading that way. It is the developmental challenge of the future for people at work and it is the move towards more *whole person* dimensions that underlies this shift:

- **The values of integrated self-determination** (as opposed to doing your own thing regardless)
- **Co-operation with peers** (from a position of openness to difference)
- **Up-hierarchy⁶ participation in decision-making and the down-hierarchy exercise of responsibility** to those in ‘charge’ encouraging the take-up of greater and greater responsibility so that the load is shared.

The more we encourage and bring about self and peer determination at the decentralised end of the scale, the more down-hierarchy responsibility is needed to bring about a balance at the federal end of it. In other words, the more staff demonstrate what they can do, the less need there is for those formally in charge to keep looking for reassurance and they can let go of some of the control.

⁶‘Up-hierarchy’ and ‘down-hierarchy’ are terms coined by John Heron to indicate the following: ‘up-hierarchy’ is the building of decision-making and power from the bottom upwards, in contrast to the ‘down-hierarchy’ which is the traditional model of a hierarchy with those above holding more power than those below. Heron sees us moving from this power over model to much more of a *power sharing* (or *power with*) model and even, in some cases, to a *power to* model of ‘up-hierarchy’, based on self and peer processes.

The Impact upon People

Personal development in the workplace will increasingly mean that everyone has some experience of these polarities (the spectrum from decentralised power balanced with increasing responsibility and their values in expression – values, bridged by the up-hierarchy), interacting to enhance everyone’s personal development and the work being done.

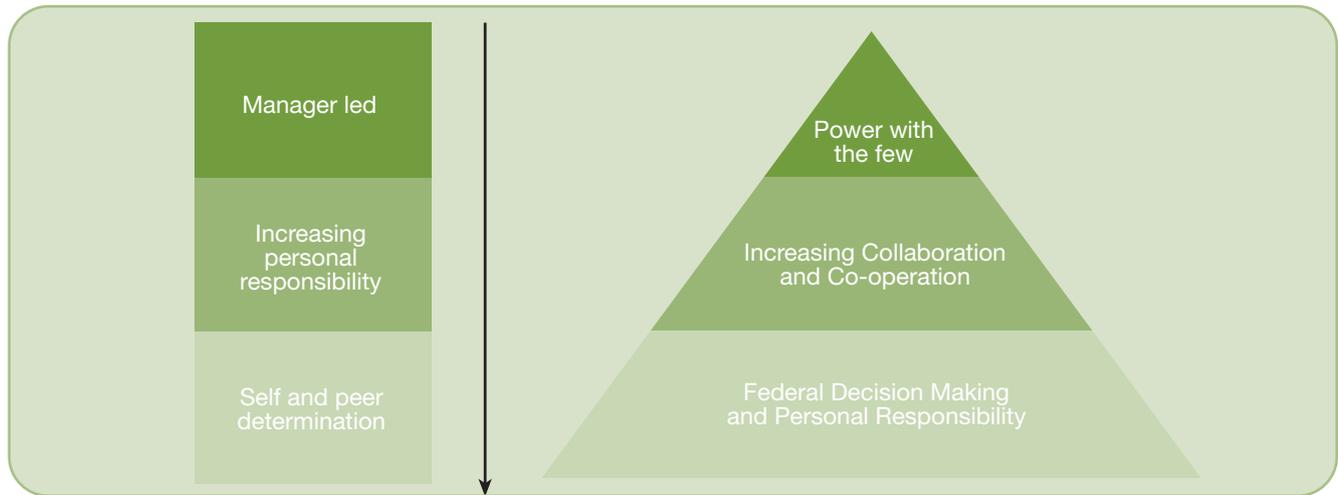


Figure 2: The Effects of Increasing Personal Development amongst the Workforce

Increases in self and peer processes are not brought about by immediate massive delegation, but by a graduated development in which direction, negotiation and delegation are progressively mixed in varying proportions.

Such a programme may typically start with a strong element of direction and move toward a significant amount of negotiation and delegation. But such a generalisation is misleading. It is impossible to give any detailed account of this sort of development, since it is entirely situational.

“It depends on the nature of the team: what its task is – whether renewal, development, production or crisis, the kind of organisational or professional culture in which it is embedded, what stage in its history has been reached, who its members are, their education and experience, their level of personal and professional development.” John Heron, *The Complete Facilitator’s Handbook*, HPRP, Guildford, Surrey, 1977.

Transforming Power

The manager who is using *direction* (power over or hierarchy), *negotiation* (sharing power with or fostering co-operation) and *delegation* (devolving power to or promoting autonomy) in varying proportions in order to empower personal development in the workplace is exercising a higher-order kind of *transforming power*.

The term ‘transforming power’ is taken from Torbert, for whom it means seeking to empower others through the creation of ‘liberating structures’ within organisations. Such structures are ones in which there is:

- A sense of shared purpose among subordinates
- An increasing self-direction among subordinates
- A commitment to generate quality work among subordinates.

They are structures which simultaneously encourage both quality improvement and other aspects of productivity on the one hand, and a greater degree of action inquiry and personal development on the other.

“If liberating structures succeed organisational members will increasingly take executive responsibility, will increasingly treat one another as peers, and will increasingly create their own liberating structures.” William Torbert, *Action Inquiry – The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, 2004

For Torbert, the leader exercising transforming power of this kind essentially invites mutuality and participation in power, but will also use what he calls ‘unilateral, diplomatic and logistical power’ to further this end. There is, therefore, a strategic irony in the whole business.

The outcome of transforming power will be in the form of increased self and peer determination, which is equivalent to the redefinition of political authority in the learning environment through their own action inquiry⁷ into using the three decision-modes of:

1. Power over.
2. Power to.
3. Power with.

The manager is seeking to create a team whose members are also engaged in a way of working together that moves more and more towards a form of self and peer action inquiry, and who also see their work as an arena for experiential learning.

⁷Action inquiry is a form of learning through experience. Attentive to the nature of what happens, the action inquirer begins to think about, plan, do and then review the topic under consideration. Action Learning is one of those methods often employed in the workplace to stimulate greater awareness of the actual phenomenology (the stuff) that happens and to get past individuals’ prejudices, pet theories or beliefs about what ‘ought’ to happen. Only when you know what is happening can you begin to have a chance to influence it in some useful way. Action inquiry is almost a form of discipline once someone has the hang of it.

Chapter 6: Team and Organisational Development

Organisation Culture Change

New ideas will change reality, if people commit themselves to the realisation of those ideas.
Without that they become illusions and fantasies.

An existing reality is based on ideas of the past, which have become part of people's habitual thinking.
This forms a natural source of resistance to new ideas.

The past has to be transformed into the future: some people and/or organisations are very dominated by the security the past offers, whereas some pioneers race ahead with their ideas about the future leaving all that has been grown in the past behind them, missing the opportunity for building and transformation. Most business people have directed their lives towards controlling and changing the world around them, but an organisational culture will not change unless people review their own values, habits, patterns and life style. On the other hand, becoming too inward may lead to stagnation in the outer world.

An organisational team culture will not develop unless leading teams make an in-depth investment. Those leading teams will then be able, helped by their own experiences, to develop processes for creating a team culture within the wider organisation. Without the actual experience of 'top-teams' there will be no commitment for a development strategy and expressed ideas will be ungrounded and will be of the 'head in the clouds' variety. However, to begin with the *will* needs to be found for a 'no short-cut' real process for top-team development. An organisation may opt for one of two main cultures:

1. **Equality of contribution:** where everybody is equally important and therefore each others' tasks are interchangeable.
2. **Clarity of contribution:** where individuals' functions are explicitly separated and understood by all.

The more differentiated the work, the more difficult it is to maintain any effective equality of contribution in anything like a realistic form.

The potential for cultural change to occur is enhanced by:

- People who communicate well, making use of systems that serve the needs of people
- Small, flexible teams working together on complex issues that require a multi-disciplinary approach or the exploration of policy issues
- Continuous development for the people, which goes beyond the filling of functional slots
- Whilst maintaining the strictest standards for technological safety, encouraging people to experiment with new ways of working against a non-punitive background, thus creating a working organisation that is also a learning organisation.

These are just some examples for potential cultural change, and Mario van Boeschoten⁸ summarised it like this:

"... an organisation, which has a lively and open team culture, in which responsible individuals act intelligently with an understanding of the larger scenario of which they are part."

⁸Mario van Boeschoten is an organisational mentor to Oasis. He has an international background in organisational development.

The present autocratic, hierarchical and expert-driven culture is far removed from that. The statement, 'leadership is making other people do what you want them to do' would meet with very little disagreement, unless perhaps one compares it with, '*leadership is empowering people to make the right decision for every new situation they have to confront.*'

A distinction needs to be made between what an organisation wants to achieve and the way in which it plans to achieve it. It is important that the values that are expressed in the 'what' are equally expressed in the 'how'. So, for instance, if you want a culture of responsible individuals, then your change process ought to address them as such. Or, to the extent in which the change process is expert and top driven, manipulating people to accept the changes you have designed, you will continue to express all the old values from which you wanted to free yourself. You may have to compromise, but it remains, nevertheless, a significant choice of principle.

Attitudes to Change

People are ambivalent with regard to change. On the one hand they feel attracted to it, because it keeps life interesting; on the other hand it creates fear, because there is the risk of failure. Most people in organisations have negative feelings about change because in their experience they have been manipulated or coerced into change that was willed and designed by others. We have three reactions to this:

1. At the level of thinking or **ideas**.
2. At the level of feeling or values and **attitudes**.
3. At the level of **will**.

1. At the level of thinking or ideas: when we are told our ideas are no longer valid and we should now replace them with this new idea, our initial reaction is one of doubt. ('Have I been wrong?' or, 'Surely, that cannot be right.'). A new idea can be incorporated, if we can relate it to familiar concepts ('Ah, now it makes sense!') or if we can see the steps or process that have led to a particular conclusion. Thus we can make a new idea into our own.

2. At the level of feeling or values and attitudes: when someone tells us we have to change our attitude into something else, we feel resentment or anger. Our values have much more to do with us; they are much more personal. It offends us if others start to question them, particularly if this is done out of a sense (or position) of superiority. In order to develop new values and attitudes we need to try and examine our present values and understand how they do or do not work for us in our present life/work situation.

Sometimes we need to understand the biographical origin of our beliefs and assumptions in order to feel free to change them. Exploration on the basis of human equality, often done in group situations, can be productive; only thus can new values and attitudes be owned and become effective. We cannot change other people's values; they can only do it themselves, having been met with respect and having widened their inner horizon through increased consciousness. Otherwise people ape the values imposed upon them from above or try their luck somewhere else, depending on how actively they can mobilise themselves.

3. At the level of will, where we harbour our aspirations and deeper motives. If someone changes our future perspective of our life or career or forces us into new (untried) behaviour, our reaction is one of fear. Change of behaviour patterns can become effective if people are clear about the ultimate aim and can commit themselves to it – if they can experiment with new behaviours in a non-blaming, non-punitive environment and if the principle of gradualism and a step-by-step process is applied carefully.

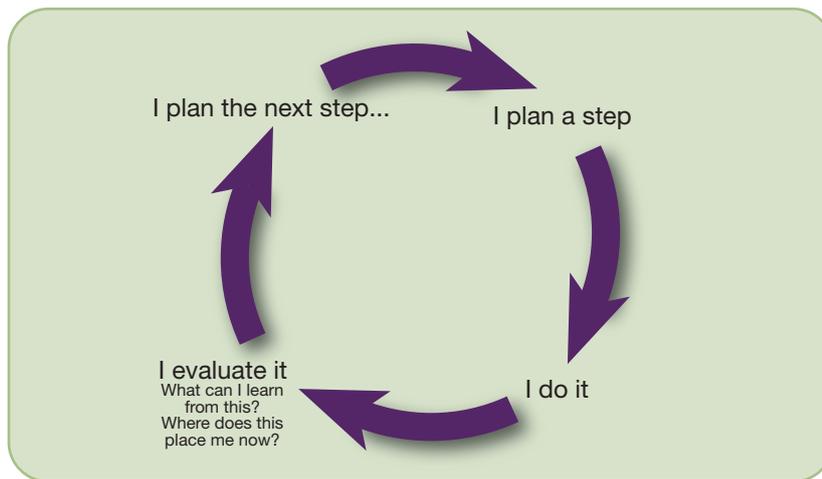


Figure 3: Step-by-Step Process for Behavioural Change

There are no massive roll-outs, but small beginnings, getting practice in pilot situations, before you go 'bigger'. Such an approach creates real, lasting change. It may seem to take longer, but it actually works much more quickly.

Organisational Goals and Team Development

Teams that are not used to looking at how they operate together can easily come to focus attention on the negative elements of their contact and overlook the positive strengths upon which they can build. Also, if they are more used to looking at the 'what' they do rather than *how* it is achieved, the process outlined here might be unfamiliar and potentially threatening. Looking at team behaviour is best accomplished in an atmosphere of openness and free from any suggestion of sanction.

Getting the goals clear is often the single most difficult task any team has to encounter and also often the most neglected. Rather than establish *clear and agreed goals* many teams settle for vague generalisations to which everyone can subscribe but all interpret differently. The result is often seen in much disagreement and frustration later.

As we have already seen, teams come together in order to achieve some task; they are therefore *goal-directed*. The goal of the team may be clear, simple and specific, or it may be uncertain, ambiguous or developmental, i.e. it may change in the light of activity. Many teams do not pay any great attention to the exploration of how team members view the goal, define what the goal is, or decide how they will know they have achieved it.

Teams also exist within the setting of some wider area of activity; a department, a section in an organisation. The organisational setting will influence how the team goes about its task and the culture in which the members work together. In many ways the culture of the organisation will influence *how* the group proceeds; it will suggest how people should relate to one another, what is permissible, who can be approached for what, and what resources can be mobilised by the team.

The questions outlined below are designed to help team members focus upon various areas of their activity that will influence and affect the team's ability to succeed. Not all will be equally relevant. This is more a diagnostic tool for teams to identify their difficulties before working on them.

Goals

- What are the goals?
- Who decides?
- How far is there agreement of these goals?
- Are they realistic?
- How far do goals influence behaviour and planning?

- What gets in the way of these goals being fulfilled?
- What are the most significant barriers to progress – at the moment? Internal? External?

Communication

- How satisfactory are the present communications mechanisms?
- How does information get passed around? Is it open, free, undistorted, shared, blocked, misinterpreted, held back?
- What do we communicate most effectively about?
- What do we communicate least effectively about?
- Are relationships governed by status?
- Can everybody play a satisfactory contribution at appropriate times about issues under consideration?

Processing

- Do individuals take responsibility for their own behaviour?
- Do we give straight, open and confrontive feedback?
- Do we pussyfoot around some people?
- Are we aware enough of what goes on?
- Do we disclose our awareness frequently enough?

Decisions

- How are decisions arrived at?
- Are the means appropriate and effective?
- Do we usually have the most reliable information to act on?
- Do we take decisions too soon, too late, avoid them, or panic into action?
- What was the most important decision in the last six months?
- How was it made?
- What contribution did you make?
- What was the outcome?
- How did you feel?
- How did you act?
- What did you learn from that process?

Control

- Where is the power in the group?
- Who exercises power?
- What word or phrase fits the style?
- Would you like it changed? If so to what?
- Is there an informal system of control? If so, does it support or subvert the formal system?
- What sanctions are enforced? Are they enforced openly or punitively?

Relationships

- What level of trust exists?
- What gets approved of, rewarded, acknowledged?
- What is put down, discounted or punished?
- Are people ever scapegoated?

Motivations

- What kind of effort gets rewarded?
- How do people get promoted?
- Are people encouraged to innovate and take responsibility?
- Can people improve their work?

Training/appraisal/development

- Are staff encouraged to improve their performance?
- Does the organisation make use of the training people have obtained?
- What resources are given to training?
- Is performance regularly reviewed?
- Are people's strengths identified and extended?
- Do people know where they can go in the organisation?
- Is negative feedback offered supportively?
- Can people make mistakes and learn from them?

Leadership

- Does the leadership style fit the task, the team, the organisation?
- What words describe the leadership style for you?
- Is there delegation of task/activities?
- Are there opportunities for others to develop their leadership potential?

Team Development

Team development and conflict resolution are not the same thing, though team development is often used as a way of dealing with difficulties in teams (it rarely works, they should be tackled separately and independently). The role of middle management in team development is very important. It is essential to grasp that middle management is not a blanket: managers have a job to do and it is important not to see them as people who smooth things out, as 'emotional first aiders'. Neither must they stifle, but they should give space for people to fulfil their roles. Those elements which need to be explicitly understood when considering working with team development are described below.

Team Development

Review criteria for membership of the team.

Ways of working need time spending on them.

The need for review and evaluation.

Silence needs to be seen as valuable.

Minute-taking is not useful; shared notes are far more useful.

Learning to sense the mood, formulating it and testing it out with others is a risk worth taking.

The decision to 'wait until', is not 'putting off' or 'parking'.

Recognising the interrelatedness of teams is often important.

Team development requires the investment of time and money.

Aim for continuous development towards responsibility and greater flexibility.

Look to gain more from less. If you put in the effort, it works.

Box 2: Team Development

In the workplace of the future most people could undertake most aspects of most roles – to one degree or another. This is the principle of *interchangeability*. In other words, competence will be high across roles and tasks in organisations. Flatter structures will mean that differences will not be so great between functions and those fulfilling them, and, therefore, the relative positions of individuals will be related to choice, life stage, and personal circumstance – a drastic reorganisation of the social system.

Chapter 7: An Approach to Team and Organisational Development

This model suggests that in looking at any organisation – industrial, educational or public service – or even a department within that organisation, there are six factors that need to be monitored:

1. Purpose	2. Relationships	3. Rewards
4. Structure	5. Helpful mechanisms	6. Leadership

Box 3: Factors in Team and Organisational Development

These factors are interrelated and many organisational problems arise from concentrating too much of the available time and energy on one area alone, thus creating an imbalance within the organisation. Imagine the department under consideration as the centre circle in the diagram below; within this circle all six boxes play their part. The next circle represents the rest of the organisation, which creates pressures for the department and is itself influenced by the department.

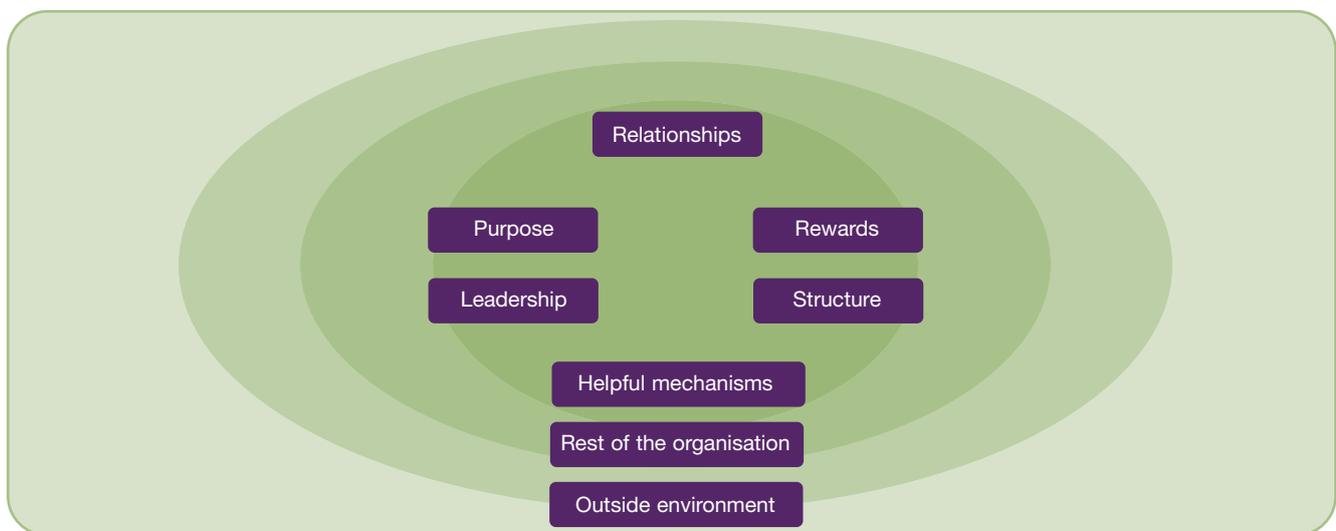


Figure 4: Factors in Team and Organisational Development

Surrounding these two circles is the outside environment, including customers or clients, politicians, legal framework, the general public, and so on. These environmental factors will add further to the pressures on the department. Organisational problems can be created by a variety of internal and external pressures and demands, and, since these are always changing, the department head needs to monitor all six boxes regularly. In this way, action can be taken or work delegated to ensure that each box is maintained and improved while the manager checks that all boxes are in balance.

1. Purpose

This box relates to the work being done by an organisation whether industrial, educational or medical. Any department within an organisation needs to be clear about the aims of the organisation and how its own aims fit that overall purpose.

Key questions:

- What business or activity are we in?
- What is our aim?
- Can we express it simply so that everyone understands?
- How much agreement and understanding does the purpose have?

- e. How specific is it?
- f. Is it clear and direct enough?
- g. Are we attempting to claim more than we can realistically deliver?
- h. Is it achievable?
- i. Is it appropriate for us?

2. Relationships

Work relationships that matter in the context of fulfilling the organisation or team's aims are those:

- a. Between peer colleagues.
- b. Between people of different status within a department.
- c. Between people in different departments which need to co-operate.

Key questions:

- a. How well do we work together? How do we know?
- b. Do we need to work together? How did we decide?
- c. How do we deal with conflict? Do others agree?
- d. Does conflict between different groups reduce the effectiveness of the organisation as a whole?
- e. Are differences openly expressed and resolved or left to create unexpressed resentments?

3. Rewards

In this box it is just as important to consider the psychological incentives and motivators as well as the financial rewards for the work people undertake. These questions can be summed up by asking, 'What incentive is there for someone to do good work?'

Key questions:

- a. What are the major incentives for doing good work? Who decides?
- b. How do people know how they are doing? Who tells them?
- c. Is good performance rewarded? By what?
- d. Are there any important tasks which have no reward?

4. Structure

Structure is about the division of labour. Its function is to ensure that the purpose is effectively achieved and the type of structure most appropriate will depend upon the nature of the organisation or team.

A particular structure can be seen as effective if people in the organisation are motivated and work well together. They accept that some conflict is necessary and manage that conflict rather than smoothing over the situation. Finally, they share a sense of achievement in attaining the purpose of the organisation.

Key questions:

- a. What type of structure do we have?
- b. Can we draw it clearly?
- c. Does it fit the purpose, the people?
- d. Who designed it?
- e. Who was consulted?
- f. How easy is it to change it?

5. Helpful Mechanisms

This includes any idea, policy, procedure, technique, or co-ordinating device that helps people work together more effectively. It provides feedback to the organisation and assists integration of the work of different people and different departments.

Key questions:

- a. What are the most helpful mechanisms in this organisation?
- b. How do people and departments know how they are doing?
- c. Where are the gaps?

6. Leadership

The role of the person(s) in this factor is to monitor the other factors and maintain a balance. It is not necessary for the leader to be active in each factor but to be responsible for ensuring that each one is maintained at the appropriate level.

Key questions:

- a. Is there a system for monitoring and maintaining a balance among the boxes? Who is involved?
- b. Which box, as leader, do I like best to work in?
- c. Which do I like least?
- d. Who looks after the box I like least?
- e. What style of leadership do I have?
- f. Is there any connection between the leadership style and whether or not certain issues are attended to?

Chapter 8: Introducing a Team Approach

Adopting a team approach across an organisation is a major innovation and takes some thought. Once the decision is made to develop a team approach and those involved have worked out what that means in broad terms – what the benefits are, the likely styles of working it will bring about, how it will affect the organisation's structure, what impact it will have on the opportunities for people as well as how it will influence their expectation and so on – the next stage is preparing the ground for implementation.

In any significant initiative, different individuals will have different contributions to make. There will be some people whose job it will be to oversee the project itself; there will be others who will take part in developing the teams and the staff involved in the practical changes required to begin working in a more interdependent way.

The Initiators and the Holding Group

The initiators are the people charged with bringing teamworking to the organisation and embedding it in the working arrangements. In addition, there will be a need for some form of 'holding group' – a group made up of representatives of all parties involved – who can meet from time to time to evaluate how the intervention is going and gather what is being learned, especially from some of the initial efforts.

Once this group is formed, they (the initiators and the holding group) will need to consider the *pace* of the intervention in the light of what is being learned:

- Where to apply the team approach next
- How to manage those who are finding it awkward
- What to do about the unintended consequences that occur whenever anything new is introduced into an organisation.

They also need to hold their nerve if there are some major hiccups. There is a difference between an ill-conceived, poorly executed and inappropriate intervention and one that has a tricky time of it at some stage. Most interventions in organisations have their trouble spots or come up against unexpected challenges. Sometimes these come from those involved not having grasped quite what was intended and sometimes it is the sheer 'buggeration' factor that other priorities also need attention during a time when the intervention is at a critical stage and those involved find it difficult to attend to too many tasks.

Initiators and holding group members have to manage the fine line between supporting an initiative with which they are identified and becoming fanatical; between listening to objections and difficulties and not redesigning the initiative at each criticism. They need to have confidence in what they have to deliver and a willingness to hear what is really being said so that they distinguish temporary irritations from substantial criticisms. When they do get substantial criticisms, however, they need to demonstrate that they can not only listen but also modify the plan or the style or the timing of the intervention to respond to the criticisms that have been made.

Preparation for Working in Teams

An increased need for greater interaction helps to generate a spirit of *teamness* – of more collaborative working. These are some of the considerations for all involved to bear in mind.

Important Considerations in Teamworking

1. Teamworking asks more of people.
2. Overlapping membership of differing groups makes team skills useful.
3. Restructuring: adding clarity to roles and responsibilities.
4. Consider the services provided by different groups/teams.
5. Understanding the organisational position and function of the team.
 6. Organisational vision and commitment.
 7. Team culture needs to be able to travel.
8. Thinking about work costs money but it can be well worth it.
 9. Forming strong well-functioning teams.
 10. Which teams are we talking about?
 11. What grouping makes sense?
12. Explicit expectations are important.

Box 4: Important Considerations in Teamworking

1. Teamworking asks more of people: the more people interact, the more things go wrong! This isn't an argument against developing a more collaborative approach but to recognise that there are more questions to consider, more viewpoints to take account of and more options to consider. Learning how to work efficiently – to know what is worth talking through in detail and what isn't, what can be set aside and what needs real attention – is something that (for most of us) has to be learned – together.

2. Overlapping membership of differing groups makes team skills useful: one of the major benefits of this is that the skills once learned go everywhere the person goes since the skills are in *them*. Improved ways of communicating in individuals means that the whole organisation can, over time, become more conversant with collaborative styles.

3. Restructuring: restructuring that adds clarity to roles and responsibilities enables team members to make a more direct contribution. Paradoxically, if you are hoping people will work with greater initiative in situations of greater uncertainty, it is important they are clear about the limits of their roles. This includes the duties they cover, the leeway for action they have, the likely difficulties they may face and what they might or might not do about them. At one level this is no more than saying they should be well-briefed but, in reality, it is more than that. Team composition should make sense, not only to those who designed the grouping but also to those assigned to it. This may need spelling out because what may be obvious to you, the manager, is not always so to those implementing the plan.

4. Consider the services provided by different groups/teams (and their relationship to performance): within many organisations, some teams are set up to serve other teams; to help someone or something else happen. However effectively they operate they are, therefore, to some degree, dependent upon how others respond to them. The 'interface' between the work of the team and those it relates to may be a cause of difficulty that they can do little about without some external support or a decision being made. A team that is suffering from such a problem can lose heart if their difficulties are not appreciated and nothing is done – especially if it affects their performance-related pay!

5. Understanding the organisational position and function of the team: this is important to make it work. Understanding the function of the team and its position in the organisational effort is a prerequisite for gaining the most useful contribution from all involved. This applies to the individual within a team, the manager of a team, or a responsible individual anywhere in the organisation. A team approach needs explaining, not simply in terms of the dynamics within the team but as part of the organisational purpose.

6. Organisational vision and commitment: this, together with a champion, is needed to make it work. It follows from the above that introducing teamworking and the effort involved needs to be part of a clearly understood and embraced organisational development process. It also requires to be 'held' by someone on a day-to-day basis as well as the holding group described earlier.

7. Team culture needs to be able to travel: however, if it is to do that it will take time to embed the approach. Teamwork asks a lot of people and may take longer than anticipated before you see the results throughout the organisation. Initially, it may be in pockets of activity where the approach makes most sense, or where there have already been some attempts to work in greater collaboration.

8. Thinking about work costs money but it can be well worth it: review opportunities away from the work do help – when they are prepared for and managed effectively. ‘Away days’ are now a familiar part of organisational routine so the case for taking time out to review is not so hard to make as it once was. However, team development is a tricky process – at times – and there can be some unpredictable disruptions to the process that may need attention. It is far better to get a team away for an afternoon when something is gathering pace than to wait until the whole thing has broken down and you have a major crisis on your hands. Like any maintenance activity, you don’t see the benefit until you stop doing it and the machine breaks down through lack of care.

9. Forming strong well-functioning teams: how you reshape the organisation to move into a greater team approach is, to some degree, arbitrary. Sometimes the boundaries between one activity and another are very evident, but in some cases they are not. Work might be organised meaningfully in more than one way and when it comes to team composition these issues have a particular impact. You want the team that makes most sense of the people, the work and the location. It is not always obvious how they come into any kind of balance, but, in general, it is often better to compose the team according to the best match of people that gives the range of skills and abilities you need.

10. Which teams are we talking about? It is rare for an organisation to rely on teams and teamworking for everything. Some functions don’t lend themselves to it, but if the spirit of the change is to create a more interactive organisation with more and better communication all round, then the spin-offs need to travel even to those least affected. Whether it is in the form of briefings and notes or some event that involves everyone in some way, the approach does need to be put across the organisation to all.

11. What grouping makes sense? Where the intervention begins and who with are critical questions. Do you decide on a team that needs to improve its performance; a team that has most chance of demonstrating the benefits to the rest of the organisation; or a team that makes a critical contribution to the organisation’s performance? The rationale you adopt is perhaps less important than that you do have one and that you know why you picked it over others.

12. Explicit expectations are important: earlier, we noted the importance of all involved having a clear idea of what is expected. It just can’t be emphasised enough.

The approach works better if the need for mutual trust and minimal competition is recognised, understood and embraced.

Chapter 9: Implementing a Team Process

Trust and Self-awareness

Team development, as we describe elsewhere in the manual, is a shorthand way of talking about a series of changes to the way people are learning to work together. Teamworking itself is the most sophisticated of those processes that requires everyone involved to make stronger connections – when it works well. In turn, that enables them to come together more quickly on other issues as the work develops.

Whatever else we may say in this manual about team development, underlying it all is the recognition that *trust* and *self-awareness* determine how individuals actually perform in any work group. Without sufficient trust to let people know what the individual is thinking or feeling, contributions are restricted; without a willingness to become more self-aware, individuals are likely simply to repeat their well-rehearsed views of things. Looking together at work issues inevitably means being open to learning how others view things and adjusting one’s own view in the light of their observations. This is not about pretending to agree or finding a phoney compromise so much as being willing to learn.

Sometimes individuals do find themselves unwilling to move on an issue, as a result of very strongly held beliefs and for very good reasons, and when that occurs, they and those around them need to recognise there are likely consequences to such a stand. More usual in organisations, at the present time, is the pursuit of a messy agreement that attempts to defuse real differences to no one’s satisfaction.

Tasks and Roles in Teams

Tasks and Roles in Teams	
Tasks	The components of the job to be done.
Roles	The expectations that exist – defined by various people – of a particular worker or their position.

Table 2: Tasks and Roles in Teams

The tasks are usually determined by putting together the total workload and splitting it up amongst the contributing members. This makes sense at a rational level but overlooks the fact that a considerable measure of individual behaviour is not rational. People have emotional ties and irrational ‘needs’ which undermine the most rational allocation of efforts, and those planning team operations should take such information into account.

Roles are, in some important senses, independent of individual occupants but they are modified by individual ‘actors’. Role expectations are a complex interplay of pressures, demands, hopes, aspirations, concerns, anxieties and fears and will be influenced by groups outside the team and by team members.

The demand for new roles seems to arise not from existing professionals deciding to develop, but as a result of the build-up of pressures upon existing levels of operation forcing the team to enlarge its membership. Two examples of teamwork developing and changing are:

1. Multi-disciplinary teamwork in health services.
2. Para-professional involvement in teams.

Both widen professional boundaries and such developments tend to raise status questions and problems of role allocation.

Example: a group of mixed professions come together to agree to examine areas of common practice in handling a common 'client' group. The discussion soon becomes cumbersome and progress halted as individuals are confused about whom they represent (the role expectations of their agency), and how they are expected to 'be' in the present group (lack of role expectations awaiting).

As the discussion labours on, it gradually emerges that the individual with highest status outside begins to assume it in the group. When it becomes apparent that resources will have to be found to continue the group's discussion, the representative from the wealthiest (comparatively) agency does not command sufficient influence to authorise permission for future meetings at the venue in which they are meeting.

Roles are very often generated from assembling groups of related tasks together. This may well mean those joining new teams assume they will adopt the same role they occupy in their other work groups or teams. One way of allocating what needs to be done in teams is to examine the goals and then identify the roles required to achieve them i.e. a *functional* approach. Again this is eminently rational but overlooks two problems:

1. Many people have immense difficulty understanding and accepting new definitions of what needs to be done i.e. adapting to change.
2. Many allow roles from the past to continue to intrude upon new expectations and demands i.e. they cannot let go of elements of the role. Most people acquire increasing tasks at the expense of letting them go; they thus become over-burdened, experience 'role strain' and 'role conflict', and a diminishing commitment or 'burn-out'.

What is a Team Player?

This is an extremely fraught question and the principle reason for writing this manual. Everyone who has a will to contribute and who knows what the team's purpose is can be a useful contributor. Anyone who has a major gift, but who is more interested in taking up the time and effort of the group in managing them (i.e. the *prima donna*) can undermine the most impressive team's performance.

A team player may be:

1. **A good goalkeeper:** someone who makes sure things are not left unconsidered.
2. **A great defender:** someone who takes care to keep things moving but isn't after any great attention for themselves.
3. **A star player:** someone who might shine momentarily, get a lot of attention and make a critical contribution but who is also a bit of a *prima donna*.

And we all have off days. Describing what makes a good team player is an endless subject and is based upon what we value about:

- People and work
- People working together
- The goals of the organisation being followed
- How free we are in our commitments to the team and so on.

Whatever theory you have for what is a good team player, there will be exceptions and contradictions. It is this aspect to teamworking that is often overlooked and gives rise to the great hopes people place in teams. It amounts almost to the belief that if we create teams and if people belong to a team they will somehow mysteriously absorb the skills of being a good team player. Or if they don't, we will immediately recognise it and be able to deal with it. Not so; as experience and reflection will readily bring to mind.

Even when people begin with a willingness to 'give it a go' they can quickly lose heart if they encounter unexpected setbacks at an early stage. So what makes a team player is far from straightforward, but this is no excuse for not considering the team-playing capacities of the prospective team member. Much more useful than any theory is the actual knowledge and understanding you have of the people involved:

- What motivates them and what doesn't
- What personal circumstances they are dealing with
- What ambitions they have or don't have
- What relationships they have at work or not and so on.

An interest in the people who are to make up the team is, in the end, the best guide to how far this group will 'gel' to become the team you hope they will become.

What is teamworking?

How we think of working together as a team is critical to evaluating any performance. How closely people need to be engaged with each other's contributions will influence how much they need to work out their differences and manage or respect their distinctive styles and approaches to the work they put in. This is especially the case if they are not to come up against one another but intend to integrate their efforts effectively. There are four features to bear in mind here.

1. The importance of assessing the culture: as you approach the team development process, it is important to gauge the overall 'culture' or atmosphere that prevails. This may be a rough and ready 'finger in the wind' testing out or a studied survey, but do it – if only to sense where you are starting out from so you can compare that against where you get to.

2. Setting the scene at the outset: by the time you get the initiative in place and are approaching the opening session, you will no doubt have thoroughly understood the point and purpose of the whole exercise. Not everyone else will and not everyone will remember why they are there. Some people will have other things on their mind – unless you tackle the session with some scene-setting.

3. Levels of clarity and commitment: there needs to be clarity about what those being invited will be committing themselves to. It is out of this that commitment will come and it relates to:

- a. The collective effort to accountability: milestones of where and when are helpful to guide effort and to give some indication of the likely progress that is expected.
- b. The conditions under which they will work.
- c. The difficulties they are likely to meet.
- d. The resources upon which they can draw: ensuring people know – both individually and as a group – where support lies. (If there isn't any, why are you asking people to embark on a complex process without it unless you are indifferent to their likely success?)
- e. Relationships a group/team will have to manage.

4. A degree of realism: unless you are realistic you can't expect the group to learn how to be realistic either. Be real with yourself and with them. Give them the benefit of the difficulties you know they have to encounter (without making it sound like they are going on their personal Odyssey with little expectation of returning).

It is easy to make difficulties sound like insurmountable challenges or to minimise them as though they are momentary blips on an otherwise clear course. Unless people have some sense of the map ahead they will not know how to assess the realities they do encounter.

Reminders for Starting Out

A. To the initiator of the intervention

1. Alignment: the work you are planning to introduce has to match the needs and function of the group and be mindful of their history. It is easy to be over-ambitious or to mismatch one of these three elements. There also needs to be the match between:

- a. What is wanted.
- b. What you have by way of resources to bring it about.
- c. What is expected from those implementing it and those who are going to take part in the process.
- d. The results planned for and those likely to arise once the work is underway.

2. Outline clearly, and make sure individuals know, the fundamental principles upon which *this* team is based – tasks, roles, timescales, performance indicators and so on. This is a form of *orientation* and not to be assumed or treated as a boring nuisance. It is, very literally, crucial. It forms the basis of the contract everyone who is involved has, both with themselves and each other. If it isn't spelt out that way then individuals have an opportunity to overlook just what is expected of them or to rely on their very personal interpretations.

3. Outline where and how accountability will operate: within/across and from the team; as well as from you to and beyond the team.

4. Outline the background 'diagnosis' of the need for the team process upon which you are embarking. There is a distinct difference between the rationale for undertaking a team process and the process by which that process is implemented. People need time to consider implications of two key elements:

- a. This is *why* we are doing it.
- b. This is *how* we are going to do it.

Many individuals are not able to take in the big picture at the same time as information about their own contribution so it is important these two dimensions are outlined on separate occasions. It is also important to remember that a feature of most change initiatives is that the implications for those who want the change are very different from those who have to make the change.

5. Make sure people know the provision for maintenance and review: a sense of what surrounds the team by way of support and interest is as important, often, as knowing the place and importance of the contribution they will make. Much team performance slips because the amount of time required to manage more sophisticated interrelationships is overlooked. Think about what you are now asking people to do in comparison to what they have been used to and you might well realise they will need a reasonable amount of time to learn how to do it, as well as opportunities to reflect on how well they are doing.

6. A model of teamwork: groups and teams go through clearly recognisable stages in their development. Although it is not always easy to spot them as they change and shift, it is useful to know what they are. Make sure you know the symptoms of stages and understand the 'maps' and frameworks you use to help you identify where they are and what the key questions of any particular stage are. For example, asking people who rarely spend time together to work out major issues in an afternoon suggests the model you have is inadequate.

7. Ensure individuals know what they can do for themselves: how much autonomy do they have to act and over what areas? Outline any 'grey' areas at this stage.

8. Fallback position: have in mind – if not say – what your fallback position is if things start to unravel. Consider how you and/or they will manage crises and catastrophes.

9. Difference and conflict: check how familiar you are with working with difference and even conflict.

B. In Relation to group or team members

1. Some people see change as a threat but not always: sometimes it becomes a threat when it is underway – a surprise to many.

2. People work in roles: the roles need to be *aligned*, but sometimes they generate conflict. People do not always see it is a *conflict of roles* that creates their difficulties with one another and act as though it is a *conflict of personalities*. It is a distinction that can lie at the bottom of what seems an intractable difficulty between people who otherwise would get on fine.

3. How much trust do we need in order to create the level of interaction we require to perform well and enjoy what we do? There is no point in people working to develop levels of trust that are never to be tested, nor assuming that the trust will develop without outlining to people why it will be necessary or providing opportunities to explore what it means *for them in this context*.

4. Differing starting points: in an organisation-wide initiative there will be a cross-section of starting points. There will be different dynamics, levels of evolution, suitability of composition of the different work groups and even work roles within groups. Bear this in mind when planning where to start and with which groups and the message gets around about how the intervention is going long before people get their 'turn'.

5. Levels of participation: indicate, in whatever way possible, and by example, the likely level of participation expected/required by the changing arrangements.

6. Written responsibilities: it is useful for everyone to have, in written form (jargon-free), a working understanding of the key responsibilities that the team will undertake.

7. Ways of working: although you can't ensure that the group will work harmoniously together, you can make sure you have outlined the way of working together that is expected and give some clear indicators of how they will be enabled to get there.

8. Managing inappropriate demands: if the group lacks experience or has some dysfunctional individuals, you will have to work out how you intend to manage inappropriate demands, overlooked issues, difficult individual contributions and so on. If you let the team loose after a minimum of preparation, it is almost certain to collapse or become subject to the control needs of one of the members.

9. Interpersonal 'clearing': if you want to promote effective cross-team communication with no ill-feeling, then you will need to set aside time for interpersonal clearing. This is about dealing with the issues that inevitably arise when people are together and have things to do. Illustrating how to go about it and being part of it may be a major challenge, but it will pay-off in greater cohesion all round if you do.

10. Review: ensure there are places for periodic review of the team's state, culture, performance – long before they are threatened with an 'evaluation'.

Initiating a Team

There are particular issues to be considered and kept in mind when setting up a team from scratch. It is especially important to be clear about the difference between *functional* teams and *corporate* teams – between those people who are getting on with a part of the organisational effort and the senior players who are representing the corporate view. In addition, there is often a need for a process of ‘clearing’ – getting at the history that may live in the group even though the present individuals might themselves have not been involved in the original situation. The other key issues are described below.

Initiating a Team

1. Where is the starting point?
2. What kind of team or group do we need to be?
3. Where are we now?
4. What steps would we need to take?
5. What stages of team development are we likely to observe?
6. What is ‘history’ and what is ‘now’?
7. What can be dealt with in what order?
8. Let’s not go for the ‘big hit’ but for the ‘early win’

Box 5: Initiating a Team

If there is time and commitment to working relatively closely together, a willingness to reflect upon individual *biographical experience* and share the learning of individual experience of team efforts from the past can help individuals ‘see’ the other person in ways that help them understand the responses that appear as the group develops its work together.

Such a starting point, however, is high risk in that it requires sensitive facilitation and is unlikely to be satisfactorily done from within the team. The equality and peer relationship that this kind of starting point encourages is best achieved with outside facilitation.

Chapter 10: Facilitating Team Initiatives

Facilitating is a way of enabling others to learn;
it is more about working alongside people than telling them.

Facilitation, however, doesn't mean sitting there and watching people struggle for the want of some simple information that you could provide. Yet, at times, people need to struggle to get their own answer because in the process of doing the struggling they are learning how to rely on one another rather than depend on someone outside the group – 'the expert'. This illustrates one of the dilemmas of the facilitator. The job is not as easy as it looks when it is going well; when it is not going so well then you look like you are the incompetent one. Yet the satisfaction of seeing people work through some important organisational questions or work-related problems can be tremendous.

However able you, the manager, may be, it may well be not a good idea to manage a group and facilitate its development. On the other hand, it might be just because you are the manager of the group or team that you are the very one who needs to do it. You might decide it would be better to ask a colleague to facilitate the group and live to regret it the rest of your organisational life. Or you might hire someone to come and do it as a one-off piece of work and leave it in their hands. Whatever you decide, it is important to know what rationale you are giving yourself for the decision you are making, because it will have consequences.

In general terms – and these are very general terms – specific circumstances need to be thought through carefully. Managing a process that you are responsible for makes sense – if you can do it and if the issues aren't too intense.

If you are asking people to engage in a routine review or development process that has little controversy about it, then you might be well-served to learn how to do it. It would:

- Help deepen your connection with the group
- Keep you and they more aligned in the overall effort and over the wider issues.

That said, there are times when it is better to 'get out of the way' and for the group to air their concerns with a stranger, vent their frustrations and do their moaning and whingeing without you having to squirm or defend yourself. 'Discharging' our irritations (to use a technical term) is a necessary by-product of organisational life. If people don't have ways and places to get rid of their accumulating frustrations then those concerns go underground and surface sideways and in indirect remarks – all much harder to deal with. The consequence is that it helps to develop a culture of pretence. When you are around it is one way and when you aren't it is the way it is.

Another thought to bear in mind is that even though you might be able to manage *this* review process, it might just pay to have someone else come in and do it. This would be someone who is not invested in what the group members may have to say and who can help 'facilitate' them through to a consideration of the issues that are reflected in their emotionally charged remarks. It is often difficult for a manager to assess what a group or team might find controversial: what is seen as a routine review by a manager may be viewed as an opportunity by other people to air an issue of which the manager had been unaware.

This is not to say that the team members are being awkward or difficult or even trying to hijack a meeting, they are simply taking the one opportunity they see appearing in front of them to get their point across. The manager however, taken by surprise, can often be on the defensive without even realising it. As a result, the team members feel their points are not really heard or 'taken on board' and the review gets mangled in the process.

So there are some hazards in facilitating team processes, no matter which way you decide to go.

Effective teams tend to work towards the consensus end of the spectrum.

Aspects of Facilitation

Here we separate two distinct types of facilitation⁹ and make the distinction between the facilitator whose primary task is to move the organisational agenda forward – promote a change initiative, for example – and the facilitator who has a wider, more educational brief to free-up the climate. It is worth working out the priority of the facilitation that you intend to commission.

1. Facilitator as *change agent* (internal or external): this is facilitation as a way of helping introduce or, better still, create an improved way of working or establish a process and a structure. The change agent carries forward the organisation's interventions and may use presentations or frameworks to explain what is required. This usually requires a good deal of preparation and some good support if it is to be attempted internally. The individual(s) chosen need to think about their post-facilitation role – will they have one?

2. Facilitator as *animateur*: the facilitator is to loosen the reins a little at a time; to free up people's thinking and to get more ideas circulating. The *animateur* works with the team on stimulating their contribution and will work with the experience of the group in how it goes about what it does. This is facilitation as a way of helping manage issues of participation – dealing with the need for thoughtful challenge etc. It is also a way of raising awareness and drawing out the agenda of those involved – not setting it.

In any assignment there may be a number of these features to the facilitation role, but there are usually one or two that are the priority for the session. Getting clear where the focus needs to be can help steer the processes that unfold and make it easier to point out to people that *this session is about this topic* and that there may be other places to deal with their particular concern. Without some focus, team development and group process sessions may leave everyone feeling they had a say, but not sure about what and certainly without any expectation that anything will result.

Potential Results in Group/Team Functioning

There is invariably a great deal of personal learning and growth in team building activities. Not only do people develop deeper understanding of group dynamics but they also begin to see themselves through other people's eyes and become much more sensitive to their own impact on others. Often when the impact is not what they would wish, they develop a strong desire to modify their behaviour in order to make a more effective contribution. The team building activity is an opportunity to develop new skills and new interpersonal relations and to experiment with new approaches and new patterns of behaviour.

The manager in any team building activity is usually in an exposed position and, more than anyone else, gets a great deal of feedback on his management style. Though this can be rather threatening for him, it is usually tempered with a very supportive attitude from his team who can perceive his problems in, for example, increased delegation and their responsibility to give him sufficient feedback for him to keep in touch and not to feel out of control.

The questions and issues to consider in group functioning and potential positive results include:

1. Are we a team?
2. How meetings are run.
3. The use of time.
4. Problem solving groups.
5. Power and the way in which it is manifested.

⁹Other styles of facilitation are explored fully in *Issues in Facilitation*, available from Oasis Press.

1. Are we a team? The group might well start out by exploring the issues:

- a. Are we a team or not?
- b. Should we be?

Such exploration leads to clarification of team purposes, rewriting of longer- and shorter-term goals and objectives and the resetting of priorities.

2. How meetings are run: there is usually a great deal of dissatisfaction within groups about how they run their meetings. Raising such issues as:

- a. The frequency of meeting
- b. Who should attend
- c. How the agenda is formed and the reasons for including agenda items
- d. The pre-circulation of information to avoid time wasting in meetings
- e. Chairmanship
- f. Formality
- g. Individuals' contributions
- h. Listening, understanding, building on ideas
- i. Review of effectiveness etc.

3. The use of time: apart from time wasted in meetings, groups are often concerned about time wasted in general. Potential outcomes therefore include better planning, re-distribution of workload, changed roles, better identification and use of resources both within and outside the group, more mutual help and support, sub-grouping for some tasks, performance reviews, etc.

4. Problem solving groups: problem solving groups usually have more difficulty in tackling new problems than in dealing with their more routine day-to-day tasks. As a first step, they often need to develop a common problem solving approach but then usually move on to explore the more interpersonal aspects of problem solving:

- a. How they influence each other and take decisions
- b. How they use the skills and resources in the group
- c. How to prevent premature evaluation of significant way-out ideas, etc.

5. Power and the way in which it is manifested: most groups consist of several hierarchical levels, often with manager/subordinate relationships. Issues of delegation and control, responsibility and authority are key and are usually the basis for fruitful debate, often leading to changes in the underlying management style but with a better understanding of the need to use different styles according to different situations.

Good open discussion can lead to significant changes in the way a group operates. There will generally be:

- a. Much greater group cohesion
- b. Greater risk taking
- c. More initiative-taking
- d. More creativity
- e. A greater preparedness to face up to problems and issues
- f. A greater desire to influence the wider system
- g. A longer-term and wider 'business perspective'
- h. A greater ability to self-improve
- i. A much greater ability to face up to conflict and use it creatively.

Relationship issues in teams

If members of a team are hostile to another, have other agendas running, actively dislike each other or, on the other hand, have cosy cliques, this will adversely affect how the team can develop, function and work effectively. Three key dimensions, each of which need considering, are especially relevant here:

1. Structure and relationships
2. Boundaries and relationships
3. Common team problems and relationships

1. Structure and relationships

- Pattern of communication
- Pattern of interpersonal liking
- Pattern of power
- The effect of individual roles
- Flow of work between members
- Status influences.

2. Boundaries and relationships: different forms of boundaries and relationships include:

- Mutual relationships: boundaries between people are consistent
- Overlapping: roles cover the same territory for same groups
- Parallel: same domain, but do not share work
- Distant: gaps between team members' roles.

3. Common team problems and relationships

- Communication problems
- Power problems: dominance and submission; power and responsibility; social structure
- Conflict: liking, rivalry, affection and sexual attraction; conflict as a cyclical phenomena; substantive issues and emotional issues.

Achieving a Healthy Team

These are the conditions for developing a healthy team:

- Clarity of joint aims and common task
- Commitment of members to this aim/task
- Working processes that are effective in relation to each task that is to be undertaken – based on creativity in designing appropriate working processes
- An atmosphere of respect, understanding and trust amongst the members of the team
- Regular self-critique for the continuing development of the team.

As the task progresses, new aspects may appear which would require a review of the original task, therefore regular reviews of the aims are required in order to remain well focused and retain commitment. Any member of a team becoming unclear about their commitment to the team's work should signal this immediately.

Most meetings stick to a standard format of dealing with issues of the (standard) agenda, however, when a process for dealing with an issue is consciously planned it can be much more effective and a more appropriate form can be found. Teamwork becomes more focused and effective when it becomes regular practice to plan, implement and review each single task. The extra time invested in planning and review is money well spent as it has a direct bearing on the quality of the work.

A healthy team culture creates commitment for the common tasks and empowerment for the individuals in the team and it requires development of some significant skills, which should also be sustaining a leadership role outside the team. The four main skills are:

1. Feedback skills
2. Listening and empathy
3. Dealing with tensions and conflict
4. Conceptualising.

It is possible to focus on each of these areas in order to further develop the skills and effectiveness of the team. The ways in which this will be approached will depend on the circumstances and needs of a specific organisation. To name but two options: the areas could be grouped together in a programme or they could be fed in small doses as part of team days.

Conflict management requires more conceptual background as well as practice than the other subjects so it deserves a separate time, but it is better to do this after having practised some feedback and listening skills.

Sharing personal biographies, if done at the 'right' level, creates 'moving' rather than fixed pictures of each other; individuals begin to see each other in a process of 'becoming'. This increases the level of respect, gives opportunity for support for further individual development and provides a much stronger basis for honest and helpful feedback. A precondition for self-evaluation or critique of a team is a quality of objectivity through which one can really look at:

- What did we set out to do?
- What happened?
- Where has it taken us?
- Where do we go from here?

People looking at past behaviours usually mix up opinions about their intentions, explanations of motives and selective perceptions with what actually happened. 'What actually happened' also includes actual real feelings that were felt by team members! In order to acquire the skill of objective observation, observing needs to be practised. It is a skill related to listening and, again, there are exercises to assist in developing competence in observation and listening.

The Mature Team

In a mature team a new member will be integrated through a process to prevent any regression (a typical group reverts to 'flight and fight'), and it will integrate task and people. The mature team also develops its *creativity*, where there is a personal development focus and part of the agenda is the development of team members. People can experiment with new behaviours: 'May I behave differently and will you all provide me with feedback?' Further, issues once dealt with do not recur; they have not been pushed 'under the carpet' to re-emerge at a later date or when the team or individuals are under pressure. In addition, the team leader of a mature team should also explore the values of the interaction between their team and other teams.

These dimensions are based on the realisation that with every change of membership there will be a new mix of people, each with their unique qualities to bring into the team. In order to be creative the team needs to bring out to the fullest possible extent the potential of each member, therefore, no matter how well the present team may function, to ask the new member to conform to the mode of working of the present team would be an unproductive restriction. The team is now a new team and the task is to integrate the new member, not to ask them to conform.

Integration of New Members

1. It is important that the new member is aware of how other members see their role in relation to the newcomer's role.
2. In individual conversations they need to explore areas of productive interaction, potential overlaps that could cause friction, their style of managing and communicating.
3. It would be helpful, if they could draw up a temporary working contract (say for the next six months) between them, to be reviewed after some joint experience and changed into something more permanent.
4. The team leader should take the new member through the present meeting structure, the purpose of various types of meeting, as well as some of the history of the team.

Box 6: Integration of New Members

A mature team also thinks about endings. It *harvests* what has been learned and what can be transferred. It prepares for letting go and for new situations.

Chapter 11: Third Party Involvement in Team Development

The Role of the Third Party

The role of the third party in team building, particularly in the less structured forms and in inter-group activity, is crucial before, during and after the event.

Before the event they play an important part in diagnosing the underlying problems facing the group. Because they are independent of the group and not a member of its hierarchy, people will speak freely to them about their problems and concerns with minimal feelings of threat.

During the team building activity, because they are not emotionally involved in the issues they are able, mentally, to stand back from the group and observe what is going on. They can help draw people in, check understanding of what people are saying, point out apparent contradictions and ensure that a group moves forward with general consensus.

After the event they can act as process consultant at regular meetings, they can act as coach to key organisational members (some may express the need for this during the event) and they can help the group tackle specific problems where they believe the independent third party could help.

Qualities of a Skilled Third Party

Since the third party consultant actively involves himself in the change process, their skills and, indeed, their manner and style are particularly important. A skilled third party will:

1. Possess **diagnostic skills**.
2. Possess **behavioural skills** in breaking impasses and interrupting repetitive interchange.
3. Possess **attitudes of acceptance** and the personal capacity to provide emotional support and reassurance.
4. **Understand change strategies** and be inventive in adopting them to the situation they are in.
5. **Be highly sensitive listeners and observers**: they must respond to the organisation and its people and not apply a standard 'cure'.
6. **Use language, possess personal qualities** and ways of working that are acceptable to the organisation they are seeking to help.
7. **Have the courage and independence to remain impartial**, hold to an honest position and not sell out.

Summary: The Role of a Third Party

They can help ensure that discussion is forward-looking and constructive rather than centred on the past and destructive.

They can be confronting and take risks in surfacing issues which people are avoiding.

They introduce alternatives based on their wide experience when the group is getting bogged down.

They can raise awareness of dysfunctional group norms and standards.

They can help people to cope with feelings.

They can encourage fantasy and reality testing and coach the group in new behaviour patterns.

They can give appropriate theoretical inputs to clarify what is happening in the group.

They can introduce exercises to give greater understanding of some of the dynamics in the group or to relieve tension.

From experience, one thing is clear – there is no one right third party style. It is important for each third party to develop a style suited to their strengths and needs – that is once they have emerged from their apprenticeship and developed in skill and competence. For some people this will be a more passive, reflective style; for others more inter-ventionist and confronting. There is much evidence to show successful third party help of both types and, indeed, for the whole spectrum of intermediate styles. However, it should never be forgotten that the client group often has expectations which have an important bearing on what is an appropriate style to adopt in a situation, particularly at the start of a team building activity.

Gaining Commitment

This is a most important preliminary stage. The manager may feel that a team building activity is important but the third party must be satisfied that this is the consensus of the whole team. It is usually best to have the manager call a meeting at which the purposes and the typical progression of such an activity can be explained and to explore any concerns that team members may have. It is also most important that the team leader should appreciate the exposed position they are likely to occupy and the need not to take up a defensive posture.

It is only when people understand what they are about to undertake and, as a group, believe that it is likely to be of value to them in improving their working relationships and effectiveness, that the third party is in a position where they can agree to help.

Alignment and Accountability

Unrealistic expectations are a major concern when looking into teams – not only for those setting up teams and those managing them but also for team members themselves. If people set out with unrealistic goals they are going to fail. (One useful definition of failure is pursuing unrealistic goals.)

At the outset in any team building, team development or team making effort those involved, and especially those managing the process, need to maintain a close eye on their realism for the people in front of them, given the aspirations behind the effort.

It is important to have thought through some of these issues in relation to the group of people you are putting together or the team you are developing. The risk is that the organisation invests time and money in a 'team building' exercise only to find there is no team to build or that the group has little clarity about the necessity for the exercise. Preparation is everything.

For the person developing the work there are some useful checks to make before starting out. The first questions below relate to *checking the brief* i.e. making sure that there is enough alignment between all those with an interest to give the effort a realistic chance of making useful headway. You can rarely guarantee success in teamwork but you can usually go some way to assessing the likelihood of the difference the work will make if you give time to the questions and concepts below.

1. What is the rationale for the move? Know why the group is brought together.
2. How is this group expected to improve the overall effort? Know what their overall contribution to the wider effort is – as a group.
3. Who have you got and what are they going to be doing? Is that different from what they have been doing in the past and, if so, how?
4. Identify the individual roles and responsibilities and how they align together.
5. To whom is the team accountable? Is it as individuals, as a group or as both? Ensure they know and you know who they report to and how.

6. What is the view taken by the person to whom the team reports?
7. How is an individual's future affected by the team/group effort? Ensure they know and you know how they are measured in their performance.
8. How does their group performance affect their individual rewards (bonuses/promotion etc)?

Useful Tools and Tricks of the Trade

There are many well-recognised ‘tricks of the trade’ that can be very useful when looking to work with a team development process. The box below highlights a number of key strategies.

1. Improving the meeting: to encourage building on ideas. When ideas in the group are ten a penny but everyone is keen to get his idea on the table and is not at all interested in any one else's ('That was a good idea but... now hear mine!'), a useful ground rule is that before anyone makes his contribution he must repeat what the last person has just said.

2. To stop everyone talking at once: everyone talking at once is a common failing in meetings. A simple way of dealing with this is to develop a ground rule that the only person who can talk is the one holding a particular object such as a bottle of water or a piece of fruit etc. It is surprising how the group usually contrives to keep the object from the dominant members of the group; the feedback to such group members is very powerful indeed. Another way is to develop the ground rule that one may only speak if one stands up.

Summary: Useful Tools and Tricks of the Trade

1. Improving the meeting
2. To stop everyone talking at once
3. Developing a clearer understanding of a people problem
4. Making more progress within a larger group
5. Dealing with an impasse
6. Developing realistic expectations of a meeting
7. Dealing with unresolved interactions between group members
8. To cope with situations when words are inadequate
9. Improving interpersonal relations

However, it is also true that dominant members can take possession of the object and prevent it being passed around. All these kinds of strategies only work if they are interpreted in a helpful way: they can all be circumvented!

3. Developing a clearer understanding of a people problem: the approach, known as Force Field Analysis and based on the electrical analogy, is to first define the desired end result of the problem solving and then to produce two columns, one of ‘driving forces’ (those pushing in the direction of the desired result) and the other of ‘resisting forces’ (those opposing such movement).



Table 4: Driving and Resisting Forces

To attempt to increase the driving forces will, in all probability, simply lead to an increase in the resisting forces so a more fruitful way of dealing with the problem is to develop ways of minimising the resisting forces so that the existing driving forces will then be sufficient to achieve what is required.

4. Making more progress within a larger group: it is often difficult to make progress if the group has a membership of more than six or eight. Indeed, interests may vary and what is of over-riding importance to some may be of much less interest to the others. To deal with such difficulties, it often helps to break the bigger group into two or more sub-groups. If the problem is simply one of size, the sub-groups can all discuss the same issue; if interests are different, different groups can tackle different issues.

The problem with such an approach, and particularly with sub-groups working on the same problem, is that they may come up with mutually exclusive ideas. To avoid this it is important that they are not allowed to develop their thinking too far before testing it out in a plenary session.

5. Dealing with an impasse: sometimes a group will be split into two or three factions all wishing to take different directions. In such a situation, a good ploy is to let the main group split but have the ground rule that members may wander around from group to group at will.

It is usually surprising how soon one group will begin to grow and the consensus course of action will thereby emerge. In moving from group to group individuals have the opportunity to hear arguments for and against the different courses of action and can weigh these themselves and decide, without being subjected to the same loyalty pressures as they would have in the big group, which is most appropriate.

When a group is at a loss about what to do, a 'fish bowl'¹⁰ is often a good idea. A small number of volunteers, who have some ideas or the energy to do something, sit in a circle within the larger group, leaving an empty chair within the small circle. The inner group discuss their ideas and anyone from the outer group can contribute provided that he sits on the empty chair. It is surprising how soon more and more members of the outer group wish to contribute and, at an appropriate time, the sub-group can be dissolved and the discussion taken over by the total group.

6. Developing realistic expectations of a meeting: quite often people can have unrealistic expectations about what is likely to happen, outcomes, and so on. Breaking into sub-groups to explore individual members' expectations is frequently a very fruitful means of starting an event or a meeting before sharing the sub-group findings in the full meeting. This gives a chance of dealing with unrealistic expectations and also has the desirable secondary effect of breaking ice.

7. Dealing with unresolved interactions between group members: role-playing can quite often resolve such situations. Members of the group substitute for one or more of the principals and when the scene is fully enacted or has reached an impasse, group members take part in a critique. In the case of an impasse, others may then take over the roles. Ultimately the aim is to get to the situation where the principals are again playing themselves and making progress.

A similar approach, where a boss and subordinate are concerned, can be for the two to exchange roles or for one to play both parts, changing chairs to confirm the role reversal.

8. To cope with situations when words are inadequate: though words are ostensibly used to communicate, we are sometimes very skilful at using them not to communicate at all. As the saying goes, 'actions often speak louder than words' and non-verbal activities of one sort or another can often bring considerable learning and self-insights when used at an appropriate time.

For example, one person may feel he has been excluded by the group. If the group is asked to form a scrum and try to keep him out and he is told to get in, he will inevitably get inside in due course. Once he has achieved this from then on, in every sense, he is a member of the group.

There are many such non-verbal exercises to deal with a whole variety of situations. Properly used, such methods, though apparently simple, can be powerful means of relieving tension, drawing people closer together and helping people learn a lot about themselves and others.

¹⁰ 'Fish bowls' can of course be used in many other ways but these do not fall within the scope of this paper.

9. Improving interpersonal relations: getting to know each other. This is very important, especially with a group of people who have been brought together for the first time e.g. a new project team. It is quite clear that in team building, little progress can be made until interpersonal relations are established at a fairly deep level. This means people lowering some of their barriers and pretences, letting others see them more as they really are. In this respect it is often surprising to people to find that what they believe that they have been revealing to others, they already know. There are a number of ways of breaking down the barriers:

a. People are asked to pair off and ask a number of fairly personal questions of each other, such as:

- What do you like or dislike about your job?
- What are your career or life objectives?
- What do you like or dislike about the way you do your job?

The group then reconvenes and each member introduces his partner to the rest. (This sort of interviewing can be made less personal and done in clusters of three or more or introductions made to sub-groups if the total group is very large.)

b. Group members can be asked to describe each other in terms of vehicles, animals or inanimate objects. Some of the choices can be very revealing, some without explanation, e.g. 'flashy sports car with mini engine', 'tank', 'bull in a china-shop', 'mantrap', etc. Others may need more explanation like 'a cold flat iron' (needs pressing hard to make him work!!). The final session at which members explain to each other what they meant is full of learning and goes a long way towards breaking down barriers.

c. A similar approach can be to get the group members to assess each other along three dimensions using 1-5 scales: 'friendly helper', 'tough battler' and 'clear thinker'. Again, the ensuing discussion can be very helpful in improving mutual understanding. This can quite easily be combined with b. above.

d. At a somewhat greater depth, individuals in triads can be asked to tell the other two something about themselves which they have never revealed to anyone before. A great deal of time is needed for this. Triads are often going strong until the early hours of the morning and very strong trusting relationships are usually developed.

e. When interpersonal relations are well developed, straight feed-back sessions¹¹ are often appropriate and may well be asked for by the group themselves. The 'victim' sits in the hot seat and the rest of the group give him feedback, both positive and negative, on their perceptions of him. He is not allowed to argue or defend but is allowed to ask for clarification. Such an experience is full of learning but the group must have developed a sufficient level of trust to make it possible, particularly as it is a group of people who will still be working with each other.

¹¹ The Blake Grid Seminar uses this approach: group members giving each other feedback and then translating this into dominant and back-up grid management styles.

Chapter 12: Team Phases and Stages

Two models of team development are presented here. The five stage model highlights the phases of process issues in groups and teams, whilst the seven stage model¹² describes the ways in which groups and teams manage both the task and the process.

1. A Five Stage Model of Team Development

This is perhaps one of the simplest models of team development.

A Five Stage Model of Team Development			
Stage	Features	Phase and Process	
Forming	Coming together Getting started	Phase I	
Storming	Honeymoon over Interpersonal conflicts Rivalry over power/structure 'Fight/flight'		Power
Norming	Getting down to it Working relationships established Atmosphere clearer Issues dealt with Process and task separated		Relationships
Performing	Getting on with it Planning targets: met or revised Relationship not a pre-occupation Satisfaction in achievement	Phase II	Personal
Mourning	Closure, loss, flight behaviour by some Minimising achievement Romanticising the past Looking ahead		Relationships

Table 5: A Five Stage Model of Team Development

'Forming, storming, norming and performing' do not necessarily happen without outside pressure; some groups stay stuck at stage one or two, and vacillate between them. Team development is often a 'cyclical' process and the team may 'regress' to earlier phases to overcome new challenges.

¹¹ This model is based upon The Seven Stage Model of Human Relations, which is described in depth in *Working with Others* by Bryce Taylor, Oasis Press, 2004.

2. The Seven Stages of Team and Group Development

Stage	Process
Stage one	Orientation or seeking acceptance
Stage two	Positioning or 'fight/flight'
Stage three	Task-oriented or adapted
Stage four	Getting real or team building
Stage five	Maturity
Stage six	The creative team or learning team
Stage seven	Closure and ending

Table 6: Overview of the Seven Stages of Team and Group Development

Stage one: orientation or seeking acceptance: this is the opening stage of a working relationship; it is the time of arrival and coming together. People are meeting via the positions they occupy, the roles they play and the tasks they are required to undertake.

This provides both a way of coming into acknowledgement of one another and the potential for limited exchanges, which are related only to the most expected of concerns. Formalities are safe to rely upon and hide behind.

There is a show of friendliness. What happens internally is questions such as, 'Am I going to be alright?', 'Who am I here?' This is a transition phase and, in terms of achieving its purpose, the group or team is not really getting anywhere. This kind of cosiness does not tend to last long.

Stage two: positioning or 'fight and flight': sooner or later, if the contact is to continue and progress is to be made, wider issues will begin to be included. At first, these may refer to 'safe topics' outside the areas of potential for difference or disagreement.

There is a growing realisation that we need to become a bit more 'real'. People begin to 'feel each other out'. 'Fight and flight' positions begin to take place – in a bit, out a bit – as individuals venture out a little more. Little islands of seeming commonalities occur for short durations and there is often a looking for supporters in the group. Stones are tossed into the pond and ripples are made but no building or cementing of the group occurs.

There can be a tendency to 'score points' off one another. In some groups this can become the culture, however this is usually too uncomfortable. Organisations can stay in this stage for a long time.

Most frequently at this stage, however, the two parties are making an effort to maintain a 'business-like' relationship and would not want to risk 'stepping out of line' i.e. outside the expectations of the culture in which they are operating. Behaviour is therefore relatively highly adapted and circumspect.

Stage three: task-oriented or adapted: it is often something of a relief when the work begins to take off, the assignment begins to get underway, and the awkward initial stages are left behind. However, 'getting on with the job' can be undertaken prematurely, leaving assumptions that it would have been wiser to surface to appear later, when they are much more difficult to manage.

If there are any tensions or concerns about the potential of the working relationship or if there is a lot at stake, the team may simply take flight into activity rather than exploring the issues.

A lot may get done yet its effectiveness is often open to doubt, but once committed to the work stage, it can appear suspicious to want to go back to talking about 'how we are doing'. If team members are not careful, they may simply fall into a way of conducting their time together that, although unproductive and possibly even unsatisfactory, nevertheless ensures the time is passed.

Some work relationships, however, are very satisfying at this stage and need not progress beyond it. The agenda is clear, the roles understood and the task is progressing. There is a recognition there are tasks to do. There is a clear call for 'law and order'. A decision is made to appoint a leader although there is little real clarity about the role, other than keeping people in order. Agendas are created and minutes are produced – and who sets the agenda is crucial as they hold a lot of power. Functions are created and there is a tendency to speak from your own 'patch' or function and not to interfere with other people's patch.

In large hierarchical organisations these kinds of groupings do not experience too much of a problem as tasks do get done; all that is needed is maintenance. However, a significant step can be made to address what is going on as soon as the team begins to say such things as:

- 'We are not getting there,'
- 'We are not really a team,'
- 'We are a team within a team,'
- 'The quality of the work is not really sufficient.'

Without this step, a group faced with significant change at this stage tends to regress to stage two.

Stage four: getting real or team building: only in this stage does more freedom of action and thought – more choice – begin to enter into the equation. There is the potential for collaborative development, for moving beyond the givens and 'getting underway' so that their joint efforts flourish.

If the working relationship is sound enough, then it becomes possible to explore how to do things differently, how to assess each other's different views of the same task, all without feeling overwhelmed and threatened.

They are likely to become more productive because there is more of an investment in the relationship than in the previous stage and a recognition that 'learning' is taking on a wider understanding.

This is a distinct stage and 'stays forever' once developed. It is the point at which the group/team sees itself as a developing unit and as such sees its development as continuous. Different responses emerge to 'what is the purpose of this group' and the purpose, more than anything else, determines the direction. It is a time when the nature and quality of relationships within this group/team is reviewed with increasing transparency and clarity of roles.

Processes and procedures are examined; timing, priorities, aims, 'what we say and what we do'. This stage requires investment.

Stage five: maturity: it may be that members have different roles and levels of responsibility, but if they move into this fifth stage of a working relationship then those differences are of only marginal importance. Members know they are there, they respect the influence they have, but they do not get in the way of the joint work and their interest in each other's contribution and learning.

A 'mandate' system can work at this stage; each member of the team has the freedom to act on behalf of the team. This is not the same as *making decisions* on behalf the team – though sometimes this does happen in situations where 'executive decisions' need to be taken.

If a challenge arrives from outside the relationship – new organisational decisions for example – it may affect what they do, but it doesn't have to damage their own working relationship. The interest in each other is more than the task requires. It is a genuine level of involvement with one another's wellbeing and it becomes possible to share deeper doubts and concerns without loss of face or feelings of inadequacy.

This team is doing all things well: timing; prioritising decision-making; taking time out to work with conflicts and people. It is an integration of task and people. The team's confidence at handling conflict increases, which, in turn, increases the scope and capacity to handle complex issues.

There exists a quality of decision-making and a commitment to self, others and the organisation or community.

Stage six: the creative team or learning team: issues are so complex we need a different level of creativity to be encouraged. Something else needs to be brought in. At this stage the step is to take on a level of responsibility for each other's development within the team/group. An opportunity to experiment with new behaviours is embraced. Some groups or teams never need to reach this level.

This stage often comes with the approach of a major transition or change to the working relationship, when we know that one of the team is to move on, or the organisation requires us to take up new endeavours.

The team can then be creative and find ways to assess and gather in the learning they have achieved – 'learning' that may go far wider than the narrow confines of the organisational remit.

They may be able to look back at their accomplishments and express to one another something of the pleasure and pain through which they have held faith together.

They know that their learning goes with them and it may be that they are not going to continue their relationship beyond this phase, but they will respect the period and all it has brought about.

Stage seven: closure and ending: *endings need managing.* No group has eternal life. All groups benefit from dissolving properly. When work has been done together, it is important to enter into a process of review and evaluation of what individuals have achieved. It is a time when appreciation for and to each other and others can be expressed. It is a chance to look at where those involved are going now (as a dis-engaging process), what to celebrate and how to view the adventure. It is bringing to a close not only the work but also the relationships.

A good relationship can get messy for fears and concerns that arise out of not knowing how to bring good things to a close or routine tasks to a completion. As things begin, so they end; if the beginning was messy the end is likely to be, unless a conscious effort is made to change it.

If members of the team can face the upset and potential distress of the ending – for they have to look at what they have each brought to the situation – then they can leave with a clearer sense of the result.

If they simply cover up the difficulties of this phase with platitudes and avoid talking through what it has all been about, they are likely to learn a good deal less than they could, and only reinforce their difficulties of facing endings to come in the future.

Factors Influencing Individual Behaviour in Teams and Groups

One highly significant factor upon newly formed teams or new team members is the effect of 'baggage' from the past, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Summary: Factors Influencing Individual Behaviour in Groups

1. Past experience
2. Anxiety and insecurity
3. Emotional competence
4. Interpersonal skills
5. Existing operating strategies
6. The group's task(s)
7. Levels of Interest
8. The norms in existence

In addition, all groups and teams have *norms* i.e. sets of assumptions about what is right and what is wrong about both individual and group behaviour. Norms are powerful controllers of behaviour and are being set up all the time in dealing with new situations e.g. a member challenges the chairman and the group decides whether this is acceptable. One norm which is particularly key in group performance is the level of aspiration – does the group always aim high?

Some norms are explicit and others implicit and these may be in conflict:

- Speak one's mind (*explicit*) vs. don't challenge seniors (*implicit*)
- All members in the group are equal (*explicit*) vs. seniors speak first (*implicit*).

It is important that groups should understand the effects of their norms on their behaviour and that such conflicts are resolved.

Social Drives

People always have problems in joining a new group. First of all there is the problem of identity. People need to have a role which is acceptable to themselves and of value in the group: should they be a dominant leader or quiet listener? Then there are questions of power, control and influence: most people have some needs in this area but at first, being strangers, there is inevitably a lot of fencing, testing and experimenting. This needs time.

Another issue that invariably causes concern is that of individual versus group needs. People often do not invest much energy until they see which way things are going and whether the group goals are likely to satisfy their own needs. And finally there are problems of acceptance and intimacy. People are concerned to know whether they will be liked and accepted.

An individual's contributions reflect the needs they have in becoming a member of the group in the first place. These needs must achieve sufficient recognition and a minimum level of satisfaction, otherwise the individual's contribution will decrease and their involvement decline to the point where they may well leave the team or group. It is the result of the mix of personalities and the way the team works in solving its problems that gives a minimum level of satisfaction to those taking part.

Some individuals require more interpersonal contact than others. Some people feel the need to gain more attention than others. Some people wish to exercise power and influence rather more than others. Some people are more willing to deal with conflict than others and so on. All these *social drives* come together to produce the starting point for the group to begin working out its own pattern of interaction. This helps explain why different groups possess different characteristics: some being 'cosy', others 'tasky' and others 'prickly'.

Each of the social drives is a continuum along which individuals may move their position according to the presence, or absence, of a number of factors. These factors include experience, temporary anxieties, the situation, the role that they are performing and so on. This is a temporary *state*. In addition, however, they will tend to move within certain broad limits along any particular dimension. For example, it would be unusual to find someone with a high need for dominance continuously acquiescing to other people's decisions. The overall position which remains fairly stable is termed the 'trait'. A mature point of balance can be identified within each of the social drives.

Many of these social drives and concerns, both individual and group, and the indicators of whether or not they have been resolved are outlined in the following table overleaf.

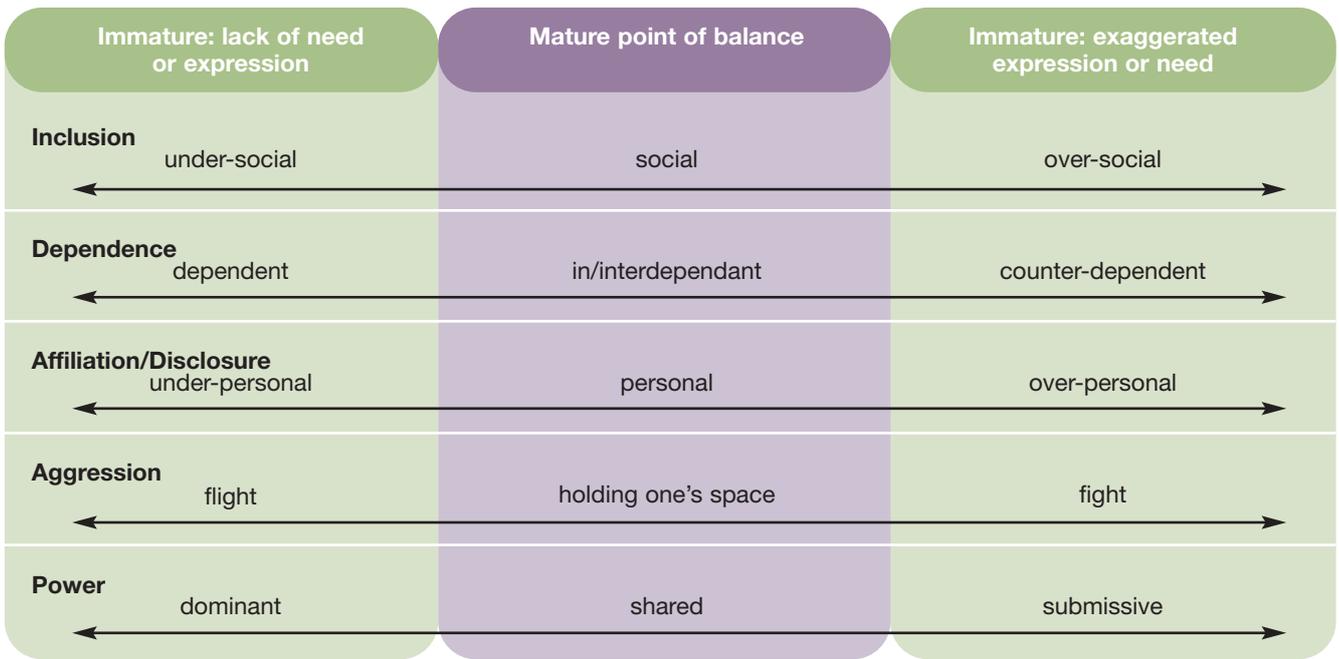


Table 7: Social Drives Continuum

The Three Needs of Interpersonal Relationships

A highly influential model of the phases of group life derives from the work of Will Schutz, who developed his theory of ‘Fundamental Interpersonal Relationship Orientation’ (FIRO) in the late 1950s as a piece of academic research. The theory was further developed in the late 1960s and 1970s and it is still widely used as a reliable method of establishing individual performance within the realm of interpersonal relationships. Schutz suggests that there are three major needs that individuals seek to meet in their interpersonal experience, each of which has a *wanted* aspect and an *expressed* aspect. The three needs are:

1. **Inclusion:** the need to belong, being ‘in’ or ‘out’.
2. **Control:** the need to establish a satisfactory level of security. This is concerned with ‘top’ or ‘bottom’.
3. **Openness:** the need to satisfy the desire for relative closeness toward others that is outside role and status demands.

The three needs each have two aspects within them; a wanted aspect and an expressed aspect.

Individuals meet these needs in order. In other words, individuals seek to resolve their *inclusion* issues before moving into *control and openness* needs. This pattern of movement is predictable and universal, and closure of the group follows a similar process as the formation of the group – in reverse. In other words, there is a phase of leaving the openness behind, the re-emergence of control issues and then the excluding phase as individuals drop out before the end, or make great efforts to keep the group alive long after it has completed its work.

These three needs combine to stimulate an individual to relate toward others in order to attain a satisfactory relationship with their *human environment*. As a result of experience and other factors, these needs are not always harmoniously present in individuals or in groups and how the individual and the group balance each of these needs gives rise to the particular style of relationship. This helps to illustrate why we see different kinds of relationship develop between people and the particular flavour of the group atmosphere. The balance of these needs within and between people also gives an indication of the way the group will have issues and difficulties to face and resolve.

A need may not be met fully or satisfactorily. An individual with a high need of control, for example, may pursue responsibility to the point of over-commitment; they may well find that they cannot manage effectively, but cannot *let go* either. Though the original need for control was to gain security, the way the need is manifested ensures that the individual rarely feels they have the right balance. There can be discrepancies between the amount of any of the three needs that a person offers and the amount they actually wish for or need.

1. Inclusion: the need for inclusion is related to interaction and association. Inclusion is about your place in the order of things: being a part of what is happening. At a feeling level, *inclusion is defined as the need to establish and maintain a feeling of mutual interest with others*. It thus covers things like the need for attention, recognition, status and even fame. This process can be friendly and warm, but is likely to be conducted through ritualistic behaviour and through role relationships. Only as people begin to separate out and become visible to one another does the potential for closer relationships really emerge. Some individuals fear this later stage and are only too happy to keep things chummily superficial.

2. Control: control is about finding a way to feel secure and enough in charge to be safe. Alternatively, it is about finding ways to get others to display sufficient control in the situation that enables you to feel safe. Emotionally, this is defined as a need to establish and maintain a feeling of mutual respect for the competence and responsibility of others – the sense of trust we hold in relation to others. Control behaviour therefore relates to decision-making and boundary issues in relationships. Power, authority, dominance and rule-making are all part of the control aspect; rebellion, resistance and submission suggest a lack of sufficient positive influence.

There is no necessary relation between an individual's need for control of others and the need to be controlled themselves. For example, many people who are good at exercising authority are often good at receiving and obeying orders. They do not always have to be giving them, they simply need to know who is, what they are and what place that leaves them in. This gives the sense of security that they are seeking. A control need may be resolved by deciding to be the power behind the throne (a profile of low inclusion and high control). To hold control does not always mean that others have to notice or acknowledge it; indeed, it may be important to do it behind the scenes.

3. Openness: the area of openness is related to deeper meeting rather than superficial encounters. It is focused upon the expression of deeper feelings and highlights the issue of *lovability or lovingness*. A way to avoid meeting the emotional demands of this stage of group development or a relationship is to be equally close to everyone and not make choices. However, popularity of this kind may be more an expression of inclusion behaviour. It is interesting that there isn't any easy way of describing this phase. It is also one, sadly, that few groups rarely do more than visit briefly yet when they do, something qualitatively different comes into the room and the relationships!

Emotionally close, liking, personal and so on are all terms which indicate an affection and/or an openness, though the same terms are sometimes used to describe inclusion stages of relationships. One of the problems people with high openness needs have to face is that *much inclusion behaviour is passed off as openness when it clearly isn't*. Having to wait until the relationship has progressed through the earlier stages into the area of openness makes those with high openness needs often wonder if they will ever get their needs met.

Chapter 13: Effective Teamwork and Functioning

Elements of Effective Teamwork

Effective teamwork depends upon the members involved having considerable clarity in a number of areas.

1. Clarity of organisational purpose and the team's position: where does the team's work fit in with the rest of the organisation? What are the consequences of the team not fulfilling that contribution effectively? Rarely does a team set its own goals, since it is usually brought into existence by other parts of the organisation in order to accomplish some organisational task. Its position is clearly outlined by someone else and it usually reports to others outside its own boundaries.

Many teams spend a lot of time talking about their global mission and the values that inform their work, without realising that these are limited by the tasks they were set up to perform and the organisation's purpose to which they have already subscribed.

2. Clarity of contributions: members knowing why they are there. Individuals not only know how they contribute, but also how everyone else contributes and the overall 'meshing' that goes to make up the 'team effort'. This also means the team being willing to work out better ways of interacting, given the actual circumstances they face rather than the ones everyone thought they would be dealing with.

3. Clarity of structure: to function effectively a team and each of its members needs to have a clear sense of the structure within which they are operating. Who reports to whom about what, how frequently? How do the parts work together in order to get what done? And so on. Mapping out the structure of the team and how it is supposed to work and then looking at what actually happens is often very instructive.

4. Clarity of working arrangements: this refers to overall conditions, specific conditions, the method for going about the tasks that fit the type of work they are doing, what the team is expected to do about particular issues. It is also important to be clear that these arrangements can vary. The more the parameters are given and clearly understood by all involved, the freer the team will be to do what it is able to do without undue anxiety.

5. Clarity of procedures: the day-to-day operation of a team is laid down in the procedures that it follows but teams are made up of people who find better ways to do many of the things that the procedures suggest. Over time this creates a drift between what is supposed to happen and what occurs in practice. Whilst with some things this doesn't matter, with others it is critical. Setting time aside to review whether the procedures make sense and if they need amending is a useful part of any team development process.

6. Clarity of roles: most teams are established with some individuals playing different and complementary roles in order for the whole activity to work effectively. Over time, and given individual preferences and differences, the roles get modified and can become seriously askew. Reviewing the roles and whether they are still needed in the way they are performed can liberate a lot of potential. This often reduces the interpersonal 'hassles' that arise when roles come into conflict with one another.

7. Clarity about level of responsibility/accountability: the team's ability to develop self-chosen forms of accountability and monitoring of their own work can act as a model to other groups in the organisation. The team needs to know how far it can devise its own measures of performance and effectiveness along with any that the organisation sets. And if the organisation doesn't set them, the team should quickly invite the organisation to do so or set about creating and proposing a set of them as their view of what their accountability and responsibilities are. Without some agreed view, the way lies open for a lot of effort being trashed because it was not what the organisation needed.

8. Adequate processing time: every team needs time out to reflect and review its progress and effectiveness. In the light of changes coming their way they need to anticipate how they will respond; as a result of incidents and events that have occurred, they need to amend their way of working. Even if things are going well, opportunities to spend time together and consider how the atmosphere and the working relationships are holding up can be a great boost to morale. Much team development work, however, is put in place when things are adrift and the work then gets focused upon returning to normality from a situation of crisis or, at least, difficulty.

9. Arrangements for arrival/departure/progress: satisfactory arrangements for the arrival, induction, integration and leave-taking of members should be attended to thoroughly both for the individual and for the well-being of the team. Rarely do teams – even when they are well established and thoughtfully maintained – pay sufficient time and attention to the departure of members and the arrival and induction of newcomers. A process is needed and it needs to be managed. A few nods around the table and the comment that the newcomer will ‘soon get the hang of things’ is dismissive not only of the newcomer but of the team’s efforts.

Team Characteristics

Most teams share a substantial number of the characteristics noted below, and they serve as something of a superficial checklist when looking at the functioning of any team.

Team Characteristics

1. Common goals
2. Shared responsibility
3. Individual contributions
4. Allocated tasks
5. Structure for operating
6. Recognition of the context
7. Recognition of agency values or goals
8. Recognition of the process element
9. Acknowledgement of personal development for members
10. Changes in teams

Box 7: Team Characteristics

1. Common goals: teams need common goals. Not all members need to support them equally and one important characteristic of a successful team is the amount of individual differences it can tolerate without feeling its very existence threatened. Teams that can cope with high levels of individual differences tend to be more cohesive than teams that discourage individual discussion. Beyond a certain point, however, too much permission for individual differences leaves the team with insufficient common purposes to function.

2. Shared responsibility: individuals have responsibility at two levels in teams. The first is to contribute their particular expertise (usually the one clearly understood) and also to contribute to the structure required for the team to function (not usually acknowledged).

3. Individual contributions: members must not simply be selected or invited into a team and then be expected to contribute. All members need to be willing to take initiative to ensure the required conditions of trust, safety and acceptance are created to enable people to contribute what they have to offer.

4. Allocated tasks: it is a quick measure of the sophistication of a team to look at how far it has moved in allocating tasks to various members to maintain itself and how these tasks are performed. Rigid allocation may encourage a stereotypic hierarchical system. A laissez-faire form of operation may adopt a haphazard structure in which few tasks are not reliably covered.

Teams frequently move to one or the other of these extremes rather than confront the question of what tasks the team requires of whom. The reason for this is that such a discussion pressurises the team members to know why they are there but in most teams this discussion does not take place.

5. Structure for operating: a team has to maintain itself. How it structures its work will determine the kind of culture it promotes and the normal standards it expects members to fulfil.

6. Recognition of the context: most teams are functionally autonomous units of some larger whole, a corporation, a department, a business, an organisation.

7. Recognition of agency values or goals: a team wishing to work effectively must pay attention to the context in which it is being asked to operate and the values and assumptions of the organisation as a whole. If there is conflict between the team's purpose and the organisation this has to be attended to and managed. If conflict exists and the team has no awareness and strategy in how to deal with it, it is likely to be viewed as internally subversive, regardless of how it views itself.

Many teams are established only to be broken up or deconstructed because once they are in operation they begin to be seen as a challenge to some important interest group, some cherished set of values, or some important aspect of practice that was overlooked at the time of the team's inception and which was never considered by the team itself.

8. Recognition of the process element: it needs to be understood that reflecting on *how* things are and how they progress and develop is as important as the *what* of planning, introducing changes, changes taking place and such like.

9. Acknowledgement of personal development for members: the more sophisticated the team, the more demanding the task, and the more complex the coordination, the more team members will require opportunities to develop. There is a need to develop:

- a. The role capacities and skills of individuals.
- b. The interpersonal skills and understandings of how the individual's work aligns with others and how they will resolve any differences in rhythm and speed of working, for example.
- c. Their understanding and commitment to the overall goals and contribution of the team as an entity.

If attention is not paid to all three, a team is only going to function in an imbalanced way. Individual development, for example, is often attended to in appraisals, but then not linked to the other two dimensions.

10. Changes in teams: when the task is completed the team ends; when the task changes the membership of the team is reviewed. Once a team is established and consistently allocates time to team building, it will never regress.

Assessing the Work of a Team

Using the following five areas as a guide to progress, you can rate the work of the team.

1. Position: this relates to the position within the organisation. It has to do with authority, lines of reporting, structures and restrictions with regard to decision making. It is about the stated influence you hold. It is through this aspect that your levels of accountability are clarified. Position becomes very important when the rest of the job lacks meaning – status battles can be the result.

2. Function: this relates to what must be fulfilled or performed. It is often in this area that competency-based tools apply. It is essentially the contribution you make to the organisation; your overall purpose. It is what you are there for. It is the overall aim of the job in specific terms. It is what would be missing if your job wasn't being done. It is the least selfish part of the job; the crucial aspect of your contribution – the most objective.

3. Role: this about the process; your way of structuring your contribution. What you feel you ought to do really well in order to perform your job effectively. This is the subjective, personal aspect of your job and shows in behaviours, priorities and time allocation to tasks. This is what is often referred to as *style* – it reflects the most important aspects of the job. The emphasis on different leadership polarities tends to vary according to person and role.

4. Task: the earthy bit. What you are actually doing at any point in time. This has to do with the activities you undertake, such as meetings, writing letters, reports, thinking.

5. Stage: the stage of the work group or team will affect how an individual joins and the kind of contribution they may be able to make. Replacing a long-standing member of a team who made a strong and predictable contribution with a newcomer who is at the outset of their career can mean they have to live down expectations that are transferred to them from the past member.

The team's history is therefore a major influence upon how individuals relate to their role, position and the length of time a team has been together; how frequently people move or leave all helps to indicate something of the level of functionality of the group.

In addition, teams go through stages of development as we have illustrated elsewhere in the manual and these stages have an enormous impact upon what is possible for both the individual and the team as a whole. Without some understanding of the phases of group life a great deal of well-meaning management simply gets lost.

Chapter 14: Evaluating Team Effectiveness

Team Effectiveness

There is a distinct difference between team effectiveness and effective teamworking. A number of people may have a common purpose, promoting the organisation for example, but they do not need to understand each other’s work role in any detail and their collective effort may not rely much on each other i.e. they are not a team. However, they may well develop a teamworking approach: common procedures and practice; ease of communication; a general sense of shared norms and conduct. It is important not to measure their performance against the criteria of an effective team. At the same time, a group that is a team knows that it is a team, works as a team, is working at a higher order of interrelationship and a higher order of common purpose.

Summary: Purposes for Evaluating Team Effectiveness

- Developing the skills of the members
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses
- Improving their performance
- Knowing if they achieved what they set out to do

Evaluation should not only take account of the task, but a much wider variety of activities that together make up the total functioning of the team and with more purposes than simply discerning whether a task has been successfully completed or not.

A team, therefore, needs to be evaluated against the criteria of an effective team, as summarised in the table below.

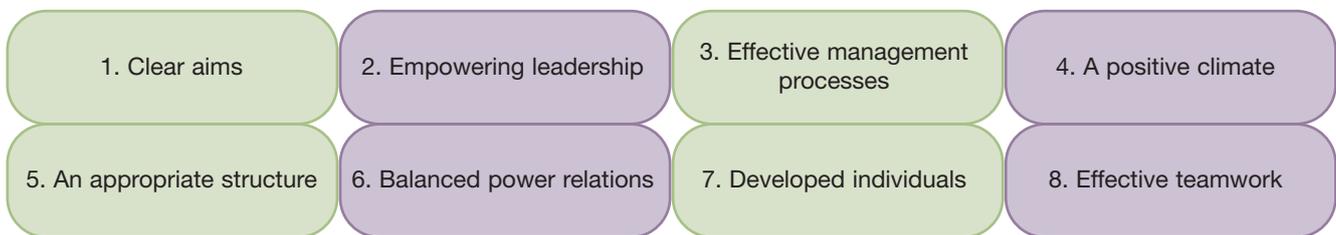


Table 8: Criteria of an Effective Team

- 1. Clear aims:** the organisation has carefully defined its objectives and ensures that these are well-communicated throughout. Individual managers relate their work to corporate goals and people clearly understand the mission of the organisation.
- 2. Empowering leadership:** the spirit of leadership is fostered. Team members are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own management. The team leader develops the leadership qualities of others without feeling threatened; they adopt an entre-preneurial approach which emphasises achievement and problem solving.
- 3. Effective management processes:** systems and procedures are carefully designed to provide control without inhibiting initiative or flexibility.
- 4. A positive climate:** attitudes and relationships are, on balance, friendly, co-operative, open and positive. People make efforts to help each other and assist the organisation to achieve its objectives.
- 5. An appropriate structure:** the hierarchical structure of the organisation is suitable to the tasks being completed and assists the effective completion of work.
- 6. Balanced power relations:** the relationships between management and worker groups have been resolved so that the managerial function retains initiative and decisive-ness and yet operates with fairness and integrity.

7. Developed individuals: people have the skills to perform their current jobs well and their individual potential is developed.

8. Effective teamwork: groups work well together and resources are co-ordinated effectively. Meetings achieve useful results and projects are accomplished by multi-disciplinary groups.

Features of an Effective Team

There are certain defining features of *effective teams* as outlined below.

Features of an Effective Team

1. Shares clear objectives and agreed goals
2. Has a climate of support and trust
3. Has open lines of communication
4. Recognises that conflict is inevitable and can be constructive
5. Has clear procedures
6. Has leadership appropriate to its membership
7. Reviews its progress regularly
8. Is concerned with the personal and career development of its members
9. Relates positively to other groups
10. Achieves its objectives and stays together

Box 8: Features of an Effective Team

1. Shares clear objectives and agreed goals

- a. Clarifies roles.
- b. Agrees on what differences are tolerable.
- c. Discusses values and develops a general consensus on the underlying philosophy of the team.

2. Has a climate of support and trust

- a. People display the relationship building skills of conveying respect, genuineness and empathy.
- b. Feelings are recognised and dealt with.
- c. Strengths are built upon.
- d. Confidence building is promoted realistically.
- e. People can ask for and are given support.
- f. People spend time together.

3. Has open lines of communication

- a. Positive and negative feedback is given.
- b. Each person's contribution is recognised.
- c. People are skilled at sending and receiving messages in face-to-face communication.
- d. People talk to one another about issues as well as the climate in the organisation.
- e. Discussions about work are the same inside and outside the organisation.
- f. People are open to being influenced.

4. Recognises that conflict is inevitable and can be constructive

- a. Issues are dealt with immediately and openly.
- b. People are assertive.
- c. People are encouraged to contribute ideas.
- d. Problems are seen as normal and dealt with constructively.

- e. Unhelpful competition is minimised.
- f. People are not blamed; discussions are problem-centred.
- g. People make 'I' and not 'you' statements – people speak for themselves and not others.

5. Has clear procedures

- a. For making decisions.
- b. For delegating responsibility.
- c. For meetings.

6. Has leadership appropriate to its membership

- a. The leader models the philosophy of the team.
- b. The leader utilises the strengths of all of its members.

7. Reviews its progress regularly

- a. Re-assesses its objectives.
- b. Evaluates the processes the team is using.
- c. Does not spend time dissecting the past.

8. Is concerned with the personal and career development of its members

- a. Regular reviews are carried out with each team member.
- b. The leader looks for opportunities to develop each member.
- c. Members look for opportunities to develop other members.
- d. Members look for opportunities to develop their leader.

9. Relates positively to other groups

10. Achieves its objectives and stays together

Behaviours for Group Maintenance

Group or team maintenance, like car tuning, is designed to help the group members to interact with each other more effectively. The kinds of behaviour which can contribute towards this include:

- 1. Gate-keeping:** seeing that everybody has a fair opportunity to contribute to discussions by creating opportunities to encourage participation of quieter members and limiting the contributions of the noisier ones.
- 2. Integrating:** being willing to yield one's own status or argument, if necessary, so that the group as a whole may achieve progress, rather than stubbornly holding to one's own point of view or privileges.
- 3. Harmonising:** acting as a mediator when differences of opinion obstruct the group; reconciling differing points of view; smoothing ruffled feelings.
- 4. Supporter and encourager:** reinforcing good contributions; giving credit to others; acting in a friendly and encouraging way particularly towards newcomers or shy members.
- 5. Tension reliever:** asking people to say how they are feeling, or publicly stating one's own feelings at other than a superficial level; calling for a break in activity at appropriate times; using humour constructively to draw off negative feelings; changing the physical arrangements so that people can get a different viewpoint on the group.

6. Contributing by listening: following others' contributions non-verbally and weighing up the arguments in one's mind without necessarily finding it necessary to 'stick an oar in'; waiting for the most appropriate timing before 'getting it off one's chest'; respecting silently the contributions of others. (NB This is quite a different form of silence from 'withdrawing' described below.)

The table below summarises the variety of task and maintenance functions which different members of the group supply.

Task	Maintenance
Initiating/task defining	Harmonising
Opinion seeking/giving	Mediating
Information seeking/giving	Integrating
Clarifying/elaborating	Gate-keeping/encouraging
Putting forward alternatives	Encouraging
Summarising/consensus testing	Diagnosing
Standard setting/testing	Reviewing

Table 9: Task and Maintenance Functions

Who Maintains the Team/Group?

Maintenance functions are particularly important for group survival and growth, and members must concern themselves with maintaining good supportive relationships. An effective team is one where all its members share in the benefits and all members make at least some contribution. There may be a formal leader but they cannot introduce effective teamwork on their own – they depend on the responses and initiatives of all the members.

People will always work together better, and obtain correspondingly greater rewards, if they are prepared to share the responsibility for team maintenance. It is therefore everybody's job to be sensitive to the problems, symptoms and needs of every other member and to be prepared to adopt whichever of the maintenance roles, described here, may be necessary for the group's welfare at any particular time.

The leader's job is to ensure that a balance is kept between the three components of effective teamwork:

1. **Task needs:** the interests of the organisation.
2. **Group maintenance needs:** keeping team spirit high.
3. **Individual needs:** giving everybody a satisfying role and dealing with personal difficulties before they become disabling.

Their aim should be to help generate the kind of working climate in which, as far as possible, these three can be simultaneously met by committed teamwork.

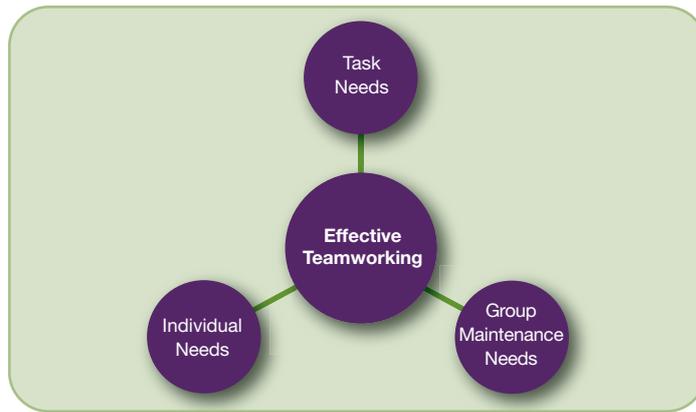


Figure 5: Effective Teamworking

The Healthy Group

A healthy group is a growing and developing one. Schein puts forward six dimensions which can be used for assessing growth and maturity:

1. Does the group have the capacity to deal realistically with its environment and is it independent of its environment to the optimal degree?
2. Is there basic agreement within the group about ultimate goals and values?
3. Is there a capacity for self-knowledge in the group? Does the group understand why it does what it does?
4. Is there optimum use of the resources available within the group?
5. Does the group have the capacity to learn from its experience? Can it assimilate new experience and respond flexibly to it?
6. Is there an integration of the group's internal processes: communication, decision-making, distribution of authority, influence and norms?

Symptoms of 'Breakdown'

A motor car, if it is driven too hard or too long, will inevitably lose its efficiency and, in the end, may break down completely. This is because it consists of a number of delicate individual parts that have to be tuned and properly maintained otherwise they will fail to work effectively together.

In the same way, people are the individual parts of a working group. If they are roughly handled or badly co-ordinated, or if their individual needs for maintenance are not properly met, they will begin to scream out for attention in much the same way as squeaks and rattles develop in a poorly maintained vehicle. They will act in a way which is dysfunctional or disruptive to the task of the group; they will thus lose efficiency and possibly reach 'breakdown' or stagnation point themselves.

An individual whose needs are not being met will seldom say so directly, particularly in a group, team or organisation which is perceived to be run on autocratic lines. Instead, they will behave in ways which provide a more subtle indication that all is not as it should be, so that effort has to be drawn off from the main task in order to cope with their disturbing behaviour. Different individuals find different ways of showing this, but the following are not uncommon:

1. Dominating: trying to take over a meeting; to assert authority, to exercise undue influence over group decisions, or to manipulate the group unfairly to their own way of thinking.

2. Blocking or topic-jumping: stubbornly disagreeing and rejecting others' views; raising petty criticisms or points of order; cutting off other people's contributions; wasting time deliberately by raising unrelated issues; returning to topics already resolved; constantly changing the subject, or pointing out snags. There is, it must be noted, a huge difference between raising heartfelt objections and the persistent 'blocker'.

3. Showing aggression: deflating the status of others in the group; criticising individual members personally; disagreeing aggressively with reasonable arguments put forward by others; spoiling for a fight with the rest of the group; forming anti-authority cliques.

4. Seeking recognition: trying to show their importance by boasting or excessive talking; being unduly conscious of their status; producing a 'bright' solution to every problem; the Devil's Advocate who is more devil than advocate. Individuals constantly challenge the status quo claiming it is only to be helpful yet it stalls the process and stops the flow.

5. Special interest pleading or self-confessing: opting out of group decisions on the grounds of being a 'special case'; using the group's time to draw attention to their own concerns; talking irrelevantly about their own feelings and problems.

6. Playboying: wasting the group's time-in showing off; telling funny stories; making asides to their neighbour, etc.; acting throughout with nonchalance or cynicism.

7. Withdrawing: being present in body but not in mind; 'wool-gathering' or reading papers without looking up; refusing to participate in discussions; passively taking self-appointed notes; carrying on private conversations within the group.

Getting to the root of the person's difficulty, by private discussions, by counselling and finding out their real unmet needs, and then taking steps to meet them, is akin to carrying out repairs to individual parts of a vehicle so as to prevent an impending breakdown.

But a much better way is by undertaking regular preventive maintenance (equivalent to servicing a car) so that morale is kept high, people feel well cared for and the group as a whole looks after its individual members automatically.

Blocks to Problem Solving Effectiveness in Teams

There are eight common blocks to problem solving effectiveness, blocks that can be overcome with a realistic level of attention to the group process – what is going on – and the quality of the working relationships. These difficulties are relevant to all groups but are especially important for teams.

1. Lack of clarity in stating the problem: much of the initial effort of teams and groups in solving a problem is directed toward *orienting* members to what the problem is. This phase is extremely important. As the 'problem' gets defined, the members' involvement grows and commitment increases. Often, groups are doomed to failure because they define the nature of the problems they face inadequately or inaccurately.

2. Not getting the needed information: when information is minimal, the definition of the problem will be inadequate. This means fewer alternative strategies will be generated, and the potential consequences of the alternatives that are suggested will not be properly explored. The result – low grade solutions.

On the other hand, there is nothing easier than someone putting a very strong case forward for a certain course of action early, while everyone is still trying to work out what the problem is. Then the group discovers it is on its way to a solution to the wrong problem. Allocation of time to information-gathering is a mark of a mature team.

Summary: Blocks to Effective Problem Solving

1. Lack of clarity in stating the problem
2. Not getting the needed information
3. Poor communication within the group
4. Premature testing of alternative strategies, or premature choice
5. Overly critical and competitive climate
6. The pressure for conformity
7. Lack of inquiry and problem solving skills
8. Inadequate motivation

3. Poor communication within the group: when inter-group communication is poor it has the same effect as the lack of information – with the added problem that it makes it difficult to implement any action that requires co-ordination among group members. Effective communication among all group members is necessary for effective problem solving.

4. Premature testing of alternative strategies, or premature choice: for most people, their ideas are fragile creations, easily blighted by a chilly or indifferent reception. In problem solving, groups have to learn how to avoid the tendency to evaluate each idea in isolation as it comes along and reject them as they go. Separating the process of generating possible options from evaluating how useful they might be (often termed 'brainstorming') helps create a wider pool of ideas to work from. The rule is: generate ideas; evaluate them; then prioritise them.

5. Overly critical and competitive climate: a supportive, co-operative atmosphere that has sufficient trust in it for people to risk saying the wrong thing, making the poor suggestion and not being made to pay for it, is necessary for solving problems successfully. If group members are afraid of the way in which other members are evaluating their ideas, effective problem solving is destroyed.

6. The pressure for conformity: pressures for conformity and compliance slow down the development of different and diverse ideas. Divergent thinking as well as convergent thinking is necessary for good problem solving.

7. Lack of inquiry and problem solving skills: nothing makes up for a lack of interest. Groups have to be motivated to want to solve the problem and some groups may need special training in how to use inquiry and problem solving methods to advantage. Training may be accomplished through an expert member of the group, or the group may wish to call in an outside consultant.

8. Inadequate motivation: as noted above, any problem solving group must have the motivation to solve its problems. If the group members are not motivated, they must be persuaded into seeing the importance of the problem and the necessity for seeking solution.

Effective Teamwork Requires

1. Openness and trust
2. Owning mistakes and positions
3. Constructive controversy
4. Good relationships within the team, between teams and team to organisation
5. Personal trust and support
6. Stimulating contact and commitment to actions
7. Role relationships good/sound – manager-subordinates
8. Individual growth and development encouraged
9. Clear agreement and understanding of objectives/roles etc
10. Use of outside resources when appropriate
11. Review of progress

Box 9: Effective Teamwork: A Summary

Chapter 15: Working with Teams: Worksheets

Worksheets summarising the main aspects of team development for those involved in diagnosing or developing team performance.

These worksheets are designed to assist anyone in working with teams, whether as manager, team leader or team member. It is inevitable, therefore, that key questions, concepts and areas of exploration will be re-visited in a number of the worksheets in order to examine them from different perspectives.

Team Stages and Characteristics

1. Stages of Team Development

- a. Undeveloped.
- b. Unfinished business.
- c. Lack of clarity and purpose.
- d. Not dealing with feelings
- e. Lack of care/trust/support.

2. Characteristics of Types of Teams

a. The experimenting team

- Willingness to try out new ideas
- More openness to view options/implications
- More personal issues/positions identified
- Increase in concern for members
- Better quality listening
- Inward looking for a period
- Not yet able to make best use of new techniques.

b. The consolidating team

- Development of a systematic approach
- Clarification of task
- Establishment of objectives
- Gathering information
- Planning action strategies
- Reviewing outcomes.

c. The mature team

- Flexibility
- Not defending positions
- Leadership open – not hierarchical
- Joint commitment and energy
- Satisfaction
- Development encouraged.

3. Common Team Problems

- a. Poor initial selection.
- b. Poor monitoring of performance.
- c. Confused organisational structure: the need for innovation versus repetition.
- d. Lack of control/over-control. Stifling ideas/tighter structure.
- e. Poor training.

- f. Low motivation
- g. Low creativity.
- h. Inappropriate organisational philosophy.
- i. Lack of planning and development.

4. Aspects of a Group/Team

- a. What are the characteristics of this group/team?
- b. What kind of group/team is this?
- c. How typical is this group/team of other group/teams in which you are involved?
- d. What advice would you offer to someone joining the group/team for the first time about how to conduct themselves?
- e. What would be regarded as a taboo subject or behaviour?
- f. How effective is this group/team at:
 - Working and sticking to the task?
 - Having a sociable time?
- g. What level of attendance is required to retain membership of the group/team?
- h. How at ease are group/team members with one another:
 - When the group/team is in session?
 - When the group/team is gathering or closing?
- i. If you were to change one thing about the way the group/team operates what would it be?
- j. How are the issues in this group/team reflective of those of the group/teams that you work with?

Developing Teams

1. Questions for Developing Teams

a. Context and Background

- What makes a team?
- How far are we a team?
- What do we already do?
- What do we need to do over what timescale?
- What are the costs and benefits of team membership?
- How do I tend to operate in a team? What contribution do I make? What contribution could I make? What could I do differently?
- What do we want from each other?
- What makes an effective team?
- How do we rate ourselves?

b. Questions about the team

- How are we doing?
- What's the evidence?
- What do we do well?
- What else do we need to pay attention to?
- What would you put over the door?
- What advice would you give to a new team member?
- Who would you go to for:
 - Knowing how to get out of a difficult situation?
 - To know a bargain when they see one?
 - To help work out a 'tricky' situation?
- What's one of the mysteries about the history?
- Who remembers it all?

c. Questions for individual influences

- There are things that are going to happen so we should do... until we know more
- If we try and do too much we will only get started and it won't be taken further
- Unless we are sufficiently bothered we won't follow it up
- If it's not broke don't fix it
- Things are such that I can only put time into 1, 2, 3.

d. Useful reminders

- We don't have to get anywhere
- Where we are may be satisfactory
- Knowing more about how things are and how come they are that way can be useful in and of itself
- Some small changes made now may make a big difference to all of us in the future
- A big problem is only a small problem that has been left a long time
- Everybody needs their attendance to be worth something
- Acknowledge the way things are and make useful adjustments
- Be willing to stand back and question how things are and how we are doing
- Assume there are significant gains to be made if we are willing to work at it, and then make a start.

2. Team Cohesion

a. Conditions to work toward

- Clear objectives and agreed goals
- Openness and confrontation
- Support and trust
- Co-operation and conflict
- Sound procedures
- Appropriate leadership
- Regular review
- Individual development
- Sound inter-group relations.

b. Negative Factors

- Insufficient time to do what is required
- Becoming over-committed to the task; for example doing someone else's job as well as your own
- Inadequate skill and mix; personnel not skilled/briefed, etc
- Conflict between team and organisational culture
- Leader lacks the willingness to undertake task
- Fear of consequences of taking action.

A Team Development Process

1. Initial Preparation

a. Working alone

- What would be the best outcome for you and for the team from this exercise?
- What would be the worst outcome for you and for the team from this exercise?
- Identify the changes you wish to see in concrete terms:
 - What tasks would be introduced?
 - What tasks would be done differently or removed?
 - How would relationships change?
- What will have to be done differently if you are to make it a success?

b. Working alone and then in groups

- What advice would you give a newcomer to the group?
- Identify strengths and three areas the group needs to develop
- Write a message for the front and back door
- When was the best time ever?
- What was the last major decision the group made?
- If the team were an animal, what kind would it be?

2. Context and Background

a. Teams need:

- To become conscious
- To share an image of their intention
- To become visible to others around
- Clear goals
- Understood ways of working
- Means of working with difference/difficulty and conflict
- Awareness of where pressures will come from
- Review and assessment time to stay healthy and effective.

b. Initial work

- Team activities list – prioritise them
- Define the task from the activities list
- What are we best/least able to do/would most like to improve?
- How much do we do each activity as percentage of total time?
 - How well do we do it?
 - How could we improve performance?
 - What could we give up?
 - What new behaviours could we develop?
 - How would we know we had achieved improvement?
 - How would we sabotage ourselves?
- Are we maintaining or developing clientele?

c. Situation assessment

- What is the situation?
- How would we like it to be?
- Specify restraining forces: what could decrease them?
- Identify driving forces: what could increase them?
- What are the most promising steps?

- Develop action plan
- Review progress
- Identify needs
- Formulate a direction
- Assess the networks of interest
- Test out commitment.

d. Effective change

- If a group were to succeed what changes would it effect?
- Who would benefit?
- Who would notice?
- How would it become visible?
- What structure would it require?
- How would it be resourced?

3. Beginning Team Development

a. Issues to address

- Agreeing the roles and relationships of the teams
- Defining a clear communication and consultation structure between the team and regular organisation decisionmaking bodies
- Differences of values that may exist between members
- Positioning problems (uncertainty)
- Issues between key people
- Perceptions team members have of each other and their respective roles
- What people see as a team.

b. Questions for examination

- What do you see is happening at the moment?
- What are your main concerns? Why?
- What is going well? Why?
- What issues should be addressed now and by whom?

c. Stages

- Create individual pictures
- Share these and discuss them with the consultant – if one is available
- Mirror them back
- Come to a common view
- Withdraw for a time if necessary
- Finalise the picture
- Present it back
- Honest feedback focused on: 'What are the consequences?'
- Review and take the observations into account
- Produce a final picture.

This produces the 'leading image'.

4. A Suggested Process

a. First session: gathering issues and assessing group understanding of its task.

- What is our common task as a team?
- How should we perform that task?
- What priority do we give to this task and what shifts in our personal working patterns do each of us have to make?
- Process:
 - 15 minutes of personal thinking time
 - 60 minutes – discussion
 - 15 minutes – recording personal consequences.

b. Second session: from task to looking at the quality of relationships.

- How do we see the personal nature of our relationships?
- What issues need to be confronted (for example, selective or inadequate communication, poor delegation, 'game playing', avoidance of discussing issues)?
- Exploring the issue of trust or the lack of trust. Illustrated, for example, by how well we are able to hear each other
- Process:
 - Draw diagrams individually
 - Share diagrams
 - Identify nature of relationships
 - Identify work that needs to be done and the help needed to make arrangements (for now or later).

c. Third session: identifying personal values and developing shared values.

- What do I see as the principal values of myself (as demonstrated in my behaviour)?
- What do I see as the principal values of other members of the team? (This is about leadership, teamwork, hierarchy, control, openness, etc.)
- Process:
 - 20 minutes – write down own values
 - 1½ hours sharing and taking others' views
 - Give your own picture of yourself and your values
 - Others give feedback on how they see you
 - Respond by saying what the feedback meant to you
- Suggested areas for feedback:
 - The strongest value you named that I can recognise and find helpful
 - A value you expressed that I can recognise, but find difficult to relate to
 - One other value you did not mention, that I am happy with
 - One other value you did not mention, that I find difficult.

d. Fourth session: discussions focusing on the following questions:

- What did these experiences mean to us?
- Are there any consequences for the joint picture we had agreed?
- What further work needs to be done to remove barriers and develop the team?
- What first steps need to be taken?

5. Evaluating a Team Development Session

- a. Have we used the time well?
- b. Has there been any improvement in the way the group functions?
- c. What skills have you developed or improved over the sessions?

- d. What skills have the team developed or improved over the sessions?
- e. Have your perceptions been influenced?
- f. Who has given most to you/the group over the sessions?
- g. What have we avoided over the sessions?
- h. How could the sessions have been improved?
- i. Where do we go from here?
- j. What is the biggest problem ahead of us?

Team Assessment

1. Elements in Assessing Team Contributions

- a. **Goals:** does the team have them/are they agreed?
- b. **Expectations:** external and internal.
- c. **Leadership/organisation.**
- d. **Process and communication:** the operating dynamics.
- e. **Values and norms:** shared or observed by the group.
- f. **Decisions:** style and method.
- g. **Review:** opportunities to reflect upon practice.
- h. **Development:** opportunities to reflect upon practice.
- i. **Environment:** suitability of location to task.
- j. **Relationships:** how clear are they?
- k. **Boundaries:** how does the team fit into the work of the organisation as a whole?
- l. **Workflow:** what system exists for handling work?
- m. **Policy:** how is it decided, introduced and implemented?
- n. **Conflict:** what conflicts exist; how are they handled?

2. A Team Assessment Process

a. First session

- What are the good things about this team?
- What are the poor things about this team? How could we improve?
- What would we have to do?
- What would get in the way?
- How would we know when we've done it?
- How might we sabotage ourselves?
- What was the last major problem we tackled?
 - How was it handled?
 - Who was involved?
 - What happened?
 - What could have been done but wasn't?
 - Did people enjoy coping with the crisis?
- Good ideas:
 - In twos list best good ideas about job for last three to six months
 - Make a flip chart from pairs' contributions
 - In twos select the best idea from total
 - Two minutes to prepare statement of why
 - Presentation to whole group; decide on best two ideas and implement.

b. Second session

- Evaluate activity to date
- Three groups consider how they create new ideas
- What would improve performance?
- Organisational mirroring:
 - Two groups prepare list of 25 adjectives describing the other group
 - Groups join together and share lists
 - Summarise positions
 - Two from each group team discuss how each is seen
 - Each writes up what has been learned from activity
 - Share with group.

Team Review

General aim: identify emotional and task areas, differences and conflicts and goal setting needs.

1. Individual Review

a. Individual team experience

- Identify the teams of which you are a member
- How did you become a member of each team?
- Find some suitable method of classifying them according to:
 - Their expectations
 - Your commitment
- Select a good and a bad team experience and list all the words you can which describe your ideas and feelings about them
- What are we looking for when deciding what makes an effective team?
- Three areas of teamwork:
 - What are the most useful ground rules?
 - What makes an effective team?
 - What are the pitfalls to be attentive of?

b. Individual self-appraisal

- What do I do well?
- What most frustrates me?
- What do I most need to improve (do I want to)?
- Where do I get most of my satisfaction?
- What is most valued by the organisation?
- Where do I obtain most of my rewards?
- What would I like that I do not get?
- How realistic is it to expect to obtain it?
- What do my peers expect?
- What do my subordinates expect?
- What do those I report to expect?
- Identify which tasks are most important to you:
 - What are the skills involved?
 - Which are most in need of improvement?
 - Rate the amount of time you are engaged in using them
 - Rate the importance in relation to the job's success
 - Rate the degree of difficulty experienced
 - Rate the extent they could be realistically improved in the time available
- How far are you influential in the decision-making of the team? Rate yourself on a ten point scale: 0 no influence; 10 totally satisfied with the degree of influence.

2. Team review

- a. How did we get here?
- b. What are the forces acting upon us?
- c. How could we respond?
- d. What would make the most sense to us, given what we know?

- e. Can we commit ourselves to work together?
- f. How might we begin?
- g. What are the strengths of each team member?
- h. Identify the things the team does well that you would wish to see acknowledged.
- i. What issues does the group find most difficult to deal with?
- j. Identify the things you think the team needs to develop immediately.
- k. Identify three things the team could do without.
- l. Identify the team's tasks and rate the team performance – what criteria did you use?
- m. What was the last major decision the team made?
- n. How was the decision arrived at?
- o. How satisfactory a decision do you believe it to be?
- p. If someone were appointed to the team what piece of advice would you offer as a preparation?

Key Questions for New Team Members

Individuals may be flattered, irritated or unimpressed by the announcement that they are going to be a part of a team, but it would help everyone if they gave it a little thought. It would also help enormously if those putting the team together explained to individuals why they had been picked and what is hoped will come out the combination chosen – especially when it is a newly organised team.

1. Selection: How come I'm here?

- a. Do you know what made you suitable?
- b. Do you know what qualities, attributes and skills you bring?

2. What am I to do here?

- a. What is my role?
- b. How was it outlined to me?
- c. Who by?
- d. How do I go about fulfilling it or changing it?

3. Who wants to know what happens – directly?

- a. Who do I report to or not?
- b. How fully or not?
- c. What happens to the information when it leaves me?

4. What does the group do?

- a. What do I understand to be the work of the group I am a member of?
- b. How was I told?
- c. What are the measures we use to gauge our effectiveness?
- d. How were these developed?
- e. Are they as good as they might be?

5. How do people become members?

- a. What is the route and progression to gain membership?
- b. Are there rules for who becomes a member and, if so, do they vary according to where individuals come from?

6. What are the guiding principles?

- a. What do I understand influences the style with which things happen and the balance out of which we work?
- b. How were these introduced to me?
- c. How far did I have a chance to explore their implications?
- d. Are there some that are under discussion or are they all settled?

7. How are decisions made?

- a. What are the overt and covert methods used?
- b. Who has influence and how do I know?

8. Could they be improved?

- a. Are changes needed to move to more transparency?

9. How?

- a. What kind of a process would it take and would it need someone from outside to help us in that work?

10. How are new members introduced?

- a. Do we have a thoughtful process to ensure that new members are integrated into our work effectively and made to feel their contribution is important?

11. How do we develop goals?

- a. How do we go about setting our own developmental agenda?
- b. What is the process we use and is it as effective as it might be?
- c. When do we review the process itself?

12. How do we develop ways of working?

- a. Are we satisfied at the way we work or are we actively reflecting upon ways to improve our functioning?

13. How do we develop stronger working relationships?

- a. What are the mechanisms that we have developed or encouraged to ensure that we keep people with us enough to feel they can contribute what they have to offer?

Team Selection Day

For recruiting members to a voluntary team

1. Introductions

- a. Who we are?
- b. Context setting.
- c. Style of training for the day.
- d. Selecting yourself.

2. Who are we?

- a. Pairs: who I am; how I came here.
- b. Round of names and how I got here.

3. Why are we here?

- a. What is the task of the team?
- b. Overall view.
- c. Content and courses.
- d. What do I bring?
- e. Past experiences.
- f. Information exchange.
- g. Flip charts on the wall.

4. What skills are we looking for?

- a. Skills and qualities of Super-trainer (groups of four).
- b. Essential and desirable: self-assessment.
- c. What I have/what I need/time involved.

5. What do you/we want?

- a. Outline structure of team.
- b. Inner and outer core.
- c. Moving between and the outside.
- d. Where am I in relation to circles?
- e. Where would I want to be?

6. What is involved?

- a. Boundaries to the team.
- b. Getting in/out.
- c. Time.
- d. Commitment.
- e. Organisation.
- f. Training style – target groups.
- g. Training style – method.
- h. Who are the clients?
- i. What are the issues?
- j. Time available for inner/outer core.
- k. Likely difficulties.

7. Does it interest me?

- a. Personal reflection.
- b. Any questions?
- c. How does it fit?
- d. What are the blocks?

8. What next?

Developing Objectives

Know where you are going or you'll arrive somewhere else.

1. Introducing Objectives Setting

- a. Define the problem.
- b. Review priorities.
- c. Progress.
- d. Assess and allocate.
- e. Action plan: resources and developmental needs.
- f. Review objectives.

2. Session One

- a. Pairs list the objectives of the area of work they are assessing.
- b. Flip chart all contributions.
- c. Identify priorities and group them.
- d. The group assesses resources and allocates resources to meet the needs.
- e. Identify what needs to be done to help people involved get on and do it.

3. Session Two

- a. Check validity of priorities.
- b. In twos: plan route to their achievement – in detail.
- c. Share with group.
- d. Introduce setting objectives:
 - Define the problem
 - Review priorities
 - Progress
 - Assess and allocate
 - Action plan: resources and developmental needs
 - Review objectives.
- e. How far was this an effective method?
- f. How can we use what we have learned?

4. Session Three

- a. Individuals assess their contribution.
- b. Individuals assess the group's contribution.
- c. The group discusses the group's contribution based on individual ratings.
- d. How far was this as an effective method?
- e. How can we use what we have learned?

5. Use of sub-groups

- a. The group forms sub-groups of no more than four people.
- b. Each sub-group prioritises the benefits they would like to see in the organisation over for the next two years.
- c. Each sub-group presents their findings to the whole group.
- d. The whole group then devises its priorities.

Meetings

1. Identify the meetings you attend

- a. Purpose.
- b. Task.
- c. Membership.
- d. Roles.
- e. Size.
- f. Frequency.
- g. Importance to:
 - You
 - The organisation.
- h. List the words you associate with meetings.
- i. What is your response to meetings?

2. What do we meet to do?

- a. Administration.
- b. Group maintenance.
- c. Information sharing.
- d. Team development.
- e. Policy review.
- f. Work allocation.
- g. Reporting back.
- h. Supervision.
- i. Clarification of situation.
- j. Individual development opportunity.
- k. Professional support.

Innovation and Consolidation in Senior Teams

1. Overview of Major Organisational Themes

- a. Flatter structures.
- b. Autonomous professionals.
- c. High levels of accountability.
- d. Service-based.
- e. Relationships – relationships – relationships – plus.
- f. Corporate style/approach.
- g. Consistent throughout.

2. Test of Senior Team Effectiveness

- a. How well does the team manage inclusivity?
- b. Selection of issues.
- c. Options appraisal: how well does the team develop good scenarios of its options and have an in-depth appraisal of them?
- d. Competing priorities.
- e. Strategic direction.

Summary

1. Teams Need

- a. Clear goals.
- b. Understood ways of working.
- c. A means of working with difference, difficulty and conflict.
- d. Awareness of where the pressures will come from.
- e. Opportunities and time for review and assessment to stay healthy and effective.

2. Tests of Team Effectiveness

- a. **Inclusivity:** how well does the team manage inclusivity? Are all those in the team actually 'in it' and know they are 'in' it?
- b. **Selection of issues:** are issues faced, organised and worked through rather than fudged?
- c. **Options appraisal:** does the team set aside time for gathering what it has to do from the time it spends doing it separately?
- d. **Competing priorities:** how openly and maturely does the team manage competing priorities?
- e. **Strategic direction:** how far does the team remain committed to staying in touch with the strategic direction it has set and how far does it 'drift'.

3. Summary of Team Conditions

- a. Clarity of organisational purpose.
- b. Clarity of contributions – membership.
- c. Clarity of working arrangements.
- d. Clarity about level of responsibility/accountability.
- e. Arrival/departure progress.

4. Summary of Individual Members' Questions

- a. Why me?
- b. What am I here to do?
- c. Who wants to know?
- d. What does the group do?
- e. Who says? Who told me?
- f. How did others join?
- g. What are the guiding principles?
- h. How are decisions made?