



Working in Teams

How To Get Things Done




What's a team?

- Can you define team?




Definitions

- A small group with a common purpose
- A cooperative unit
- Examples
 - Soccer team
 - To win a game
 - An automobile design team
 - To create a design that will produce a quality car




A Team

- Has a small number of members
- Has complementary skills
- Has a Common Purpose and Performance Goals
- Has a Common Approach
- Has Mutual Accountability



Small Number of Members

- Too small – can't get the work done
- Too many – can't communicate and gets confusing
- Perfect size? Depends...some people say 7 (+-2)



Complementary Skills

- You don't need the same skills (think of a swim team – some divers, some distance swimmers, some sprinters, different strokes, etc.)
- Your skills should HELP each other
 - For a web site, a graphic designer, a coder, a technical writer

Has a Common Purpose and Performance Goals

- You want the same things
 - To win the game
 - to win the prize
 - to get an A on the project

Has a Common Approach

- You'll use the same method to achieve your goals
 - On a soccer team, you will all practice together and train together to achieve your goal. One person won't move to Switzerland and practice with another team
 - On a group project, you'll use the same techniques to achieve your goal
 - For a web site, you'll agree on a design and work together to achieve the design

Mutual Accountability

- Each member of the team is responsible for achieving the entire goal
- The entire team wins or loses – one star “player” can't win while the rest of the team loses
- If I score 6 goals – this could be my best game ever, but the team could still lose

Team Members and Roles

- A soccer team has many members.
- Each member has a specific **role or task**
 - Goalie – protect the goal, prevent the other team from getting the ball in the net
 - Midfielder – links the defense and the offense
 - Forward – plays in front of the rest of the team, responsible for scoring
- What would happen in the goalie moved to the forward's position?

More on Teams

- Teams are INTERDEPENDENT – you need everyone to do their job to get the task done

Characteristics of a Team

- Mission – what are we supposed to do?
 - *Win a game? Bake a cake? Finish a poster?*
- Commitment – to take common responsibility for the group's work
 - *Each person must take responsibility for the entire group's results and actions*
- Norms/Ground Rules – “You have to play by the rules”
 - *Get to practice on time, respect others' opinions*

Code of Cooperation

- Norms and Ground Rules for Meetings
- How will you treat each other?
- What will happen if you don't follow the rules?
- What do you expect from each team member?

Sample Code of Cooperation - Ford Motor Company

1. *Help each other be right, not wrong.*
2. *Look for ways to make new ideas work, not for reasons they won't.*
3. *If in doubt, check it out! Don't make negative assumptions about each other.*
4. *Help each other win, and take pride in each other's victories.*
5. *Speak positively about each other and about your organization at every opportunity.*
6. *Maintain a positive mental attitude no matter what the circumstances*
7. *Act with initiative and courage, as if it all depends on you.*
8. *Do everything with enthusiasm; it's contagious.*
9. *Whatever you want; give it away.*
10. *Don't lose faith.*
11. *Have fun!*

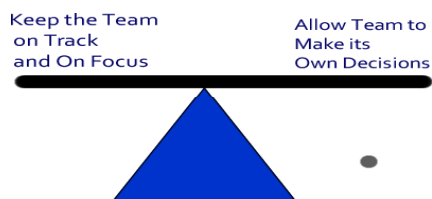
Team Members' Roles

- Leader
- Devil's Advocate
- Recorder
- Timekeeper
- Encourager/Gatekeeper
- Team Member

Team Leader

- Responsible for making sure the team achieves its goal
 - Ex: Soccer coach
- Gets what the team members' need to get the job done
 - Meeting time, materials needed
- Has to **BALANCE between keeping the team on track and on focus and allowing the team to make its own decisions**

Team Leader – a Balance Act



Team Leader – More Responsibilities

The team leader:

- Is the contact point for communication between the team and the teacher
- Coordinates and prepares agenda
- Coordinates time, date and place of meeting
- Make sure all necessary resources are available for the meeting
- Keeper of Code of Cooperation
- Monitor the decision making process
- Coordinates process check

Devil's Advocate

- Brings up the opposite opinion, even if they don't always agree with it
- Overcomes group "no think" – the idea of everyone just doing what seems natural or easy
- The devil's advocate takes a position opposite to that held by the team to ensure that all sides of an issue are considered. This responsibility can be undertaken by all team members.

Recorder

- The recorder is the team member who is responsible for making sure that the process(es) being used by the group is documented. This includes writing down all the important points of a discussion and keeping notes.

Time Keeper

- The time keeper has the responsibility of keeping the team moving so that they finish the task at hand.
- Don't get "stuck" on something – keep moving through the process or job

Encourager/ Gatekeeper

- The encourager/gatekeeper has the task of giving encouragement to all the other team members.
- When a team member makes a contribution, they can comment "good idea" or "nice thought", etc.
- The encourager/gatekeeper also has the responsibility of maintaining a balanced level of participation for all the members.
- They will encourage the silent members and try to hold back the verbose, dominate members.
- A team functions when all members' ideas and thoughts are heard; the encourager/gatekeeper helps ensure this.

Team Members

- **Team members should consider their participation as a priority responsibility, not an intrusion on their "real work".**
- Are responsible for contributing as fully to the classroom activities, sharing their knowledge and expertise, participating in all meetings and discussions, even on topics outside their areas.
- Carry out their assignments between meetings. The tasks will be selected and planned at the meetings.
- Should be open minded about others' ideas, share information, and contribute constructively to the team process.
- Should help each other understand the material.

A Good Team Member

- Works for consensus on decisions
- Shares openly and authentically with others regarding personal feelings, opinions, thoughts, and perceptions about problems and conditions
- Involves others in the decision-making process
- Trusts, supports, and has genuine concern for other team members.
- "Owns" problems rather than blaming them on others
- When listening, attempts to hear and interpret communication from other's points of view
- Influences others by involving them in the issue(s)

Good Team Members – Part 2

- Encourages the development of other team members
- Respects and is tolerant of individual differences
- Acknowledges and works through conflict openly
- Considers and uses new ideas and suggestions from others
- Encourages feedback on own behavior
- Understands and is committed to team objectives.
- Does not engage in win/lose activities with other team members
- Has skills in understanding what's going on in the group

Why Practice Working in Teams?

- Team Skills are valuable in the real world
- Employers want employees to be good team members
- Interpersonal skills are necessary for success in the workplace
- Teamwork – it will help you get a better job!

Sources - For More Information

- New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations – [Online Learning Module](#)
- <http://lowery.tamu.edu/teaming/morgan/>