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Foreword

This will open your eyes to fundamental principles of teamwork. You will learn the secrets behind successful teams and how to have the same successes in your own teams. It closely examines team building since this is one of the ways to get a team working together. You get to learn what this entails and what kind of teams can use these exercises to succeed.

Many leading companies have embraced the act of team building. They have managed to realize just how important teamwork is. These organizations spend a lot of money and team investing in team building. This ebook also looks at why team building is important not just to the organization but also to every member of the team.

Team building normally involves a number of exercises. These may seem like simple fun activities but they play very important roles in helping the team members embrace the concept of team work. This ebook examines a number of exercises that any team can participate in. It also offers some insight on how to select the best exercises for every given team. Apart from taking learning about the exercises, you also learn how to ensure that this isn't futile. The book gives tips on how to ensure that your team building program is effective enough.

Even though the team building exercises may be very successful, that will not be enough. A team has to stay motivated throughout. This ebook gives you tips on how to keep your team motivated even after the team building

exercises. You will learn that, there are other ways to keep people motivated apart from just giving them a salary increment.

This ebook also teaches you a lot more about teamwork. You get to learn the advantages that teamwork has over individualism. You also learn the qualities that good team leaders have. In addition, you learn about the qualities that you as a team player should possess. Finally, you will also learn about the qualities of successful teams. Examine these qualities and then find out what is missing on your team. This will enable you to learn your problem areas and know what you need to work on so as to make your team much stronger.

Teamwork isn't something that just comes naturally when you ask a group of people to work together. This is something that is acquired over time. It takes time and effort. However, once a group learns how to work together, they will be able to achieve a lot of success.

Most of the successful teams in the work whether in business or even in sports, have all learnt the importance of teamwork. This is why they remain successful. This eBook is written in very simple English. It can be useful to team leaders and also team players. It may also be useful for anyone who is interested in starting a team. The examples given are simple and relevant making it useful to apply in individual cases.

Team Builder Bible

Discover The Keys To Building Unbreakable Teamwork And Accomplish
The Impossible

Chapter 1:

Teamwork and Team Building Explained

Synopsis

Teamwork is so important that it is virtually impossible for you to reach the heights of your capabilities or make money that you want without becoming very good at it” - Brian Tracy

To discover the keys to building teamwork, you need to learn about what it means to be a team. You also need to learn about team building. These are the two concepts covered in this chapter.

- Do you really know what teamwork means?
- Exactly what is team building and how does it help in teamwork?
- What kind of teams can use the team building exercises and learn to be a team?

By the time you complete this chapter, you will have found the answers to all this questions.

The Basics

Definition of a Team

A team may simply be defined as a group of people who are working together towards a common goal. These people are entitled with different tasks that make a significant contribution towards the achievement of the said goal. Teamwork normally involves the team working interdependently. This means that one person's task is responsible for the success of the next person's tasks.

Teams are normally formed for a variety of reasons. There are some that are set up for short term goals while others are set for something more long term.

For instance, in an organization, you may find a team formed just to deal with a particular project. However, you may also find other teams in every single department that work together throughout to increase the productivity of their departments.

Team Building Basics

The whole idea behind team building is to forge good working relationships between the team members. This ensures that they learn how to work as a team. The team building exercises help the players to successfully learn

how to do this. These exercises can work for any teams, whether at work or even in sports.

Team building serves many more purposes than just helping the team to work together. These exercises also help the teammates to know each other better. This then builds the rapport between them and encourages them to be supportive of one another.

Team building also helps in developing the skills of each team mate through motivation and support. The exercises also help the members to learn how to communicate with each other. This is a key aspect of any successful team.

Through team building, the goals and objects of the organization becomes clearer. These are defined and each team member is encouraged to participate in helping achieve them. This also helps in sporting activities, a team gets to learn what they want to achieve and how to get there.

Team building also has a number of benefits on individual level. For instance, many people get to grow and develop their skills by being part of a team. When the team entrusts you with a role, you will find yourself trying your best not to disappoint everyone else. This helps in nurturing their abilities and honing the skills.

Team building has also helped individuals discover themselves. For instance, some people may not know that they can be leaders until they are

assigned such roles. Other people find themselves when they got to know others better. For instance, knowing that your colleague is a single mom may make you more tolerant of her absenteeism. You may learn to evoke gentleness and sympathy in yourself.

In most cases, organizations normally hire a team building consultant to help with the exercises. The consultant takes time to know the team and come up with the right strategies for the particular team. This consultant is specifically trained for this. He can look at a team and come up with strategies to improve the performance of the said team.

The consultant normally makes a proposal to the organization, clearly laying out his plan of action. He states the problems with the team and what he recommends for helping solve these problems.

The organization then makes the decision to hire the consultant or not based on the proposal. Sometime, the organization may only agree to some of the strategies but not all. The consultant is then faced with the team building task. After the program, he has to give the necessary feedback to the organization illustrating just how effective the exercise was.

The Types of Teams That Can Participate In Team Building Exercises

Team building can basically work in any given team. It can work at work, school or even when it comes to sports. One of the most popular types of

teams that use these strategies is the departmental teams. These are teams made up of people who do the same kind of work .For instance; you may have a team from the human resources department or even have a team from the I.T department. This type of team is normally found in work environments.

There are also management teams. These teams may comprise of managers from various departments. Even as leaders, these people need to learn how to work together for the overall success of the company. Team building also helps the managers to become better leaders to their teams. The skills acquired can be passed down to the team by the leader.

There can also be team building for mixed or cross-functional groups. These are usually teams that are made up of people from different departments in an organization.

These departments have to have some common ground. For instance, you can have departments that deal with people such as customer care and human resources.eam building will build all the members of the team and enable them to cooperate and be more productive.

Special projects teams can also use team building exercises. These are teams that may be set up for just short term goals. If they successfully complete the team building program, such teams will be more effective. In addition, the team may be able to complete the project in a shorter time

than anticipated. This all comes from learning how to work well with each other.

Self directed teams that comprise of people from different fields also use team building exercises. They take the program to help themselves grow as leaders.

They also use what they have learned to train their individual teams on how to foster the bond that will enable them to work together.

Any team that has a common goal can use team building to help them work together much better.

A good team is one that has learnt how to work together to achieve a common goal. This is the essence of teamwork.



Chapter 2:

The Usefulness of Team Building

Synopsis

Teamwork and team building are essentially co-related. In this chapter, you learn more about how teambuilding is used to encourage teamwork.

- A good team needs to have shared goals. This is what encourages team work. In addition, the only way to people can work together is if they are in agreement.
- How does team building help in fostering team spirit, participation and also sharing of ideas?
- How can team mates learn how to support and motivate one another?
- What benefits does team building have not just for the team but for the organization?

Once you realize the benefits of team building, you will definitely see why this is very important for the success of any team.

What's Good

Shared Goals

One of the most important benefits of team building is coming up with shared goals. If a team manages to establish some common objectives, they are more likely to succeed. This also reflects in the overall performance of the organization as a whole.

Agreement

When people work in agreement, they generally tend to be more focused and productive. This fosters trust among the team members which help them work together much better.

Ideas and Team Participation

When a team start working together, they become more effective. Different people start to share ideas and opinions. Every participating member of the team brings something different to the table. This is what makes team building such a successful strategy in an organization.

Nurturing Team Spirit

Team building helps in nurturing team spirit. There are so many experienced and well educated individuals who can manage to work very

well on their own. Although they do make a good contribution in the organization, they can make a better contribution by working as a team.

Motivation and Support

Team building enables different people to support and motivate each other while working towards the same goals. There are so many employees in different organizations that have so much potential but they lack the motivation to make the best out of it. Team members can help and encourage each other to properly demonstrate their capabilities by working together.

In addition, team building normally creates the right atmosphere for team spirit. This helps in giving a push to people who need it in order to get the job done.

Organizational Benefits

Team building normally helps the organization as a whole. When employees work as a team, they tend to be generally more productive. Such employees also tend to focus on the goals and objectives of the organization rather than their own individual gratification.

Rapport

Team building helps in creating good rapport between the employees. They learn to relate to each other on a personal and professional relationship. This enables them to work with each other better. This ultimately creates a good working environment conducive for high productivity.

Corporate retreats and team building exercises play a vital role in encouraging teamwork. They help team members to learn how to relate to with one another so as to work in unity.



Chapter 3:

Effective Team Building Exercise

Synopsis

Team work entails a lot of activities. There is decision making, problem solving, communication and a number of other activities. In this chapter, we look at the team building exercises that tackle different aspects of teamwork.

- What are the different exercises that a team can participate in?
- What do these exercises entail and how are they important?

Relationships can't be forced; people need to work on different things to make them work. This is the same thing with teamwork.

People will not just automatically learn to communicate and trust each other. They have to practice on these skills.

A Little Work

Communication Exercises

Needless to say, communication is a vital part of any given relationship. Two people can't live and work together unless they can communicate with each other. The same theory applies to team, for a group to work together they must be able to effectively communicate with each other.

Communication goes beyond sharing a common language. Two people may be English speakers but even without the language barrier, they may not be able to communicate with each other. There are so many fundamental principles that go into effective communication. This is why this type of exercises is normally vital in any given team.

There are many types of communication exercises all geared to help team members communicate with each other effectively. One such exercise is the "blind man and guide". In this exercise, two teammates are forced to work with each other. They need to retrieve a certain object within the vicinity. However, one teammate has to do the retrieval while blind folded. The other teammate will then give directions to help them make the retrieval. The only way they can do this is by working together and communicating. If the guide becomes frustrated and starts yelling at the "blind man" this will bring about confusion and hinder their progress. On the other hand," the blind man" will not succeed if he decides not to listen to the "guide".

There are also communication exercises that involve interaction with all team members. You are supposed to mingle and bond with members and get to know them well. After this, you will be asked details about the team members. This normally tests listening skills and memory.

Trust and Interdependence Exercises

According to research, this is one of the most difficult exercises to administer. Naturally, people take time to build trust. Trying to get the team members to trust each other may be a hard task but still achievable. Trusting each other cements the relationship between the team. This helps them to work with each other well. It also makes an individual gain some sense of responsibility.

There are different exercises that can be used to build trust and interdependence. For instance, there is one exercise whereby the team players line up in two rows. The people on the first row normally have their backs to the others on the second row. Now without turning back, they are required to fall back letting their guard down. They should be able to trust that the team member standing behind them will catch them.

Problem Solving Exercises

The whole concept of these exercises is to test the team's problem solving skills. You give them a problem to solve and watch every step that they make towards solving it. You will also get to see how well they will work

together in order to solve it. This is a vital exercise because it can influence the success of any team .A team that can't handle the task may crumble and fall under pressure. On the other hand, a team that can do this well will be able to go through any difficulties and come out victorious at the end.

Some of the problem solving exercises include, putting a big puzzle together. Every team member plays a role in ensuring that this is done. You may also present a problem to the team and just ask them to solve it. This can be anything that has to deal with their work. For instance, a customer care department team may be asked to play out a scene whereby there is an irritable customer threatening one of their staff members with violence. The staff member isn't supposed to handle the situation alone. It is up to the team to come together with strategy to handle the current problem and put measures in place for handling similar issues in the future.

Decision Making Exercises

This is much similar to the problem solving exercises. It tests the team's ability to make decisions together. In these exercises, the whole team is supposed to work together. It will not be upon the leader to come up with the next plan of action. These exercises are very important in any team. When a team makes good strong decisions together, they will be successful. However, a team that doesn't involve all members in decision making may end up fostering resentment from the members who have been left out. It will also affect the quality of the decision since the best ones are the ones that are made by all members sharing ideas. On the other hand, total

inability to make decisions will delay projects and can ultimately contribute to the failure of the whole team.

In such exercises, a team may be presented with a problem and about five different solution alternatives. They have to discuss these alternatives and decide on the best option for the whole team. Each group member should contribute as to why they believe that is the best option. They should also get to a point of either compromise or total agreement.

Planning Exercises

Nothing much can ever be accomplished without the proper planning. This is why this exercise is very important in any given team. This goes hand in hand with the adapting exercises. This is supposed to help the group to realize their strengths and weaknesses. The strengths are them put all together to show exactly what the group is capable of achieving if at all they decide to work together.

Planning exercises are very many. You can have the team faced with a task whereby they are required to complete it effectively and in the shortest time possible. For instance, you can ask them to provide a budget for a certain amount of money. They should imagine that they are stranded at a bus station with just the basic amount of money. The budget should explain how they expect to get home with their limited funds and within the shortest time possible.

Socialization Exercises

These exercises are sometimes referred to as, bonding exercises. They are supposed to help the employees to get to know each other through a social interaction. It is important for the team to learn how to socialize with each other. This will help build their work relationship making them much more effective in their job. It will also help create a good working atmosphere free of hostilities.

Socialization exercises are normally very simple. You can actually have a setting like a speed dating game. The employees will be asked to talk to each other for a few minutes. When these time elapses, they are to move to another team members. This is repeated until all team members have had a chance to talk to each other. This exercise should be fun and simple.

Personal Development Exercises

Sometimes it's hard to be a team player if you have personality traits that are sociable. There are people who are naturally shy; others are anti-social while others may just not be comfortable in the team. This exercise helps each individual to examine themselves and evaluate what exactly they bring to the team. It encourages members to get out of their own shells or individual limitations and become the best that they can be.

Members may be faced with the challenge of individually coming up with their own shortcomings and listing them down. They should do this

anonymously. The lists are then handed down to the leader. The team comes together after this and discusses the solution for each shortcoming. For instance, people who may have listed shyness as a shortcoming maybe offered advice on how to overcome this. Remember, nobody will be addressed directly due to the anonymity. It will just be like a braining storming session. Once a person is comfortable with themselves in the team, they will be more productive.

Awareness And Sensitivity Exercises

This is normally a delicate exercise especially in mixed teams. It isn't uncommon to find organizations refusing this part of team building. However, it is very important. There are so many stereotypes that come with every group of people. This may naturally bring about resentment and also distrust between members of a team. This definitely affects their ability to work together.

However, you can make this exercise fun and educative at the same time. Come up with name tags for everyone. In this name tag, don't put any negative stereotypes .Put positive messages that a group or a person. For instance, if a person is associated with a group of people considered to be sneaky liars but with very brilliant minds, put the later as the tag. Then put the tags at the back of each person. Each person is then supposed to guess what's on their back without taking a look. Teambuilding exercises aren't just about having fun. They help in teaching people the core aspects of teamwork and how to be a team.

Chapter 4:

How to Select the Right Team Building Exercises

Synopsis

Before you decide to take your team through the team building exercises, you should take time and establish what programs will best suit your team's needs.

- What are the problem areas in your team and how can they be dealt with?
- What is currently hindering the team from performing well?
- If this isn't the first time you are taking the team building exercises, review the past exercises in order to establish how effective they were.

There are so many different team building exercises. Evaluation of your team's need will be the best way to help you select the right ones. You should also ensure that you get exercises that everyone in the team will be comfortable with.

How To

Evaluation

This is one of the most effective ways of determining the right exercises for the team. You have to evaluate the past events of the team. Establish what could have contributed to past performance. In case of failures, establish just what could have caused this. Evaluating the past events can help you in determining what needs to be done.

You should also look at the present situation. How well are the team members relating with each other? How well do they work together? Find out what needs to be done to improve on the present situations. If there is a current issue of communication breakdown, this is what needs to be addressed.

You should carry out an evaluation of the goals of the team. Establish what you are all trying to achieve as a team. Then establish just what you need to be able to do this.

A team building consultant can do this evaluation. However, it is best to have an in-house evaluation too. Look at the recommended list from the consultant and establish which ones best meet your needs.

Agreement

The best team building exercises should be agreed upon by the whole team. The manager and the consultant shouldn't be the ones to make all the decisions about this. There are exercises that some members may not be open to. For instance, the sensitivity and stereotype exercises may not be accepted by everyone.

Inclusion

You have to find team building exercises that everyone can participate in. If you leave out some members then the whole exercise loses meanings. For instance, if the exercises require a lot of physical movement and some members can't do it, then leave it out. All members of team should participate in the team building.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is a little similar to evaluation. However, in this case, you only look at the problem areas in the team. Establish what may be hindering the team from performing much better. Once you make a diagnosis, then find out the right remedies for the problems that you have identified.

Checklist Method

Checklist method is also very important in determining the right team building exercises. In this case, you have to look at the qualities of an ideal team. Study other successful teams or carry out research on what a good

team would be like. Then make a checklist. From this list, check all the qualities that your current team has and the ones they lack. The lacking ones can be a focus area on your exercises.

For example, an ideal team should have respect for each other; they should communicate well and should trust one another. If you find out that your team only has respect but no trust or communications skills then you can have exercises focusing on these two areas.

Relevance and Applicability

Your team building exercises should always be relevant. You can't work on issues that don't apply to your particular team. For instance, a technical department may not have the same needs as the accounts department. Look for exercises that actually apply to your present situation.

Risk Minimization

Risk minimization comes in because some exercises may cause embarrassment to some individuals. For instance, give examples using one person may be hurtful and perceived negatively. Making fun of a person may also be negatively perceived. Avoid exercises that may cause resentment, anger or hurt anyone's feelings. This may definitely do more harm than good to the team.

Company's Goals

It is always vital to consider the overall objectives of the company when determining the teambuilding exercises. Ensure that you find exercises that will help the company in the long run.

Review

After the initial team building program, review how effective each exercise was. This will help you in determining the future exercises. You can choose to repeat the ones that worked very well or come up with similar ones. Avoid any exercise that didn't bear good fruits. Don't even try to adjust it, replace it completely.

Establish your team's needs and requirements. Find out what exercises can help them work as a team. Your team can help you with this evaluation process.

Chapter 5:

How to Ensure that the Team Building Exercise is Successful

Synopsis

You may be able to find the most effective team building exercises but still fail to get your team to work together. In this chapter, we look at the tips that can help make the team building successful.

- As a team leader, how are you helping your team in the team building program?
- Is everyone in the team committed to the process?
- Do the team members know why they need the team building program?

You can't just decide to go for team building without considering a number of factors .This isn't something that you embark on blindly.

Make It Successful

Goals and Objectives

Team building exercises will not work if at all the team has not set the goals and objectives that they want to meet. Without a clear vision, the whole exercise will be futile and you will not be able to achieving anything. You have to clearly define the goals of the team.

These goals should not necessarily be the organizational goals only. You can incorporate your own team's organization. For instance, if you are a sales department team, you may decide to have goals for your sales team. Maybe you can set new targets or aim to reach new markets. This is what will keep all members of the team focused.

Analysis of Successes and Failures

A team building consultant will take the time to examine how the team works before suggesting the best team building exercises. However, for the exercises to be very effective, the team has to do their own self examination.

Examine the past successes and failures of the team. Find what needs to be worked on or simply improved and use this as a guideline. You can also have members of the team anonymously writing down issues that they may be having within the team. This will help keep the team building more focused.

Commitment

Before embarking on team building, there should be commitment from the team members. Most teams normally go out of town or to other locations so as to concentrate on the exercises. During this time, they need to be focused only on the task at hand and not on any other issues.

The team members should commit their time and effort. They should be willing to participate in team building. This isn't something that a team leader can push people to do. Commitment is very vital for the success of the exercises.

Communication and Education

To be able to build any successful teams, there should be communication. You should let your team members know exactly

what is planned. This shouldn't be an ambush of some sort. Getting the team involved is very important in making the exercises effective.

You should also take the time and educate the team on the importance of the exercises. This will help them be more serious and committed. Point out the importance of team work and that can be achieved if the team learnt how to work together. Don't assume that everyone knows this. There are so many people who may strongly be pro individualism.

Team Charters

Every team needs to have a charter. This should clearly provide a guideline on the behaviors and code of conduct for every team members. Don't even attempt to embark on team building if you don't have this charter. This is what sets the whole basis for team work and is therefore very important.

Expectations

Everyone should lay out their expectations for the exercise. You can also involve the team members in clearly defining this. It's not

enough to have goals for the team. It is also good that you have short term goals for the team building exercises. This will help you focus. It will also help in evaluating just how effective the whole program is. The expectations can also act as a guideline for selecting the right team building exercises.

Leadership

Leadership is very important for any team building to succeed. This is why it is advisable for the leaders to actively participate in all the exercises. The leader should also take the initiative and the role of setting examples for everyone. An absentee leader can actually make the whole exercises flop. It may be perceived as a lack of interest on their part. In addition, the team can't learn effectively.

The team leader has to be involved in the team especially during the team building exercises.

Chapter 6:

How to Keep a Team Well Motivated and Encourage Teamwork

Synopsis

Team building will help your team learn how to work well with each other. However, if you aren't careful, the team may lose morale and this may affect their performance greatly. In this chapter, we examine things that you can do to maintain the teamwork and motivation of the team members.

- In what ways can you show the team members that their contribution is always appreciated?
- How can you ensure that the team keeps performing well at all times? Fostering good teamwork is an ongoing process; you can't expect to go through team building programs once and rely on that from this point onwards.



Motivation

Stress Management

You should ensure that your team isn't stressed. This can greatly affect their performance and also de-motivate them. You have to give them realistic targets and allow them to get some rest. Pushing your team beyond their limits will just further affect their performance and make them less effective. You can also have stress management seminars to help your team members. Try and strike a fair balance between work, family, rest and socialization to prevent them from being overwhelmed.

Appraisals

Appraisals help in individual and team evaluations. In addition, they help keep the employees motivated to work harder so as to get a good appraisal. Some organizations normally give salary bonuses according to the appraisals so as to challenge every team member to keep working hard. This also acts as a reward system. It shows the team that no contribution goes unnoticed.

Recognition

Recognition is very important in any team. The team should always get recognition from the management or the leader whenever they excel. If an individual excel the team members can also show each other appreciation

and recognition. Small gestures such as, applauding, a pat on the back or simply saying “good work” goes a long way in keeping someone motivated.

Training

Training really helps in helping the team perform better. You can have individual or group training. A team may be working well together but if they lack the necessary competence required for the job, this will still affect their performance in general.

Good Working Environment

People can't work well if at all they don't have a good working environment. They also need all the necessary facilities for their specific jobs. A good working environment isn't just about the physical components but also the psychological. For instance, the team may have good well equipped offices but if they have a leader who constantly yells, they won't be able to work effectively.

Good Leadership

Good leadership is very important for every team to perform well. A leader should be able to motivate and inspire the team. They should also be able to represent the team effectively to the management.

In addition, the leadership role should be passed on after sometime. It's not good to have one team with one leader for lengthy periods of time. You can motivate your team members by assigning them some leadership roles.

Team Spirit

Try and take part in events and exercises that will help in fostering the team spirit. For instance, if you contest in the organization, participate as a team instead of as individuals. You can also have welfare within the team. This will be for helping the team mates in case of anything even outside work. For example, if someone falls sick, organize to visit them as a team.

Respect and Trust

Every team members should be treated with respect. It doesn't matter how small or big their contribution to the team may be. This is what can make or break a team. Trust is also vital to enable the team mates to work together. Without trust, cooperation will be very difficult.

Team Building

Team building exercises should be carried out from time to time. It's not enough to have the program done only once for the team.

Chapter 7:

Individualism Versus Teamwork

Synopsis

There are so many things that can be achieved through teamwork as opposed to through individual work. In this chapter, we look at some of the benefits of teamwork.

- How does teamwork help individual team members?
- How does teamwork help the organization?

Many people may take time before being able to trust a team. These people need time to learn the benefits that they stand to enjoy once they join a team.



Solo or Not

Introduction

As individuals, we all have our strengths and weaknesses. There are also some areas in our lives where we excel more than others. The same way, in any organization, you will find different unique people with their own strengths. People who are strong in any area may tend to work individually.

This is based on the assumption that they don't need others. They may also think that others may slow them down or impact of their ability to work well.

However, when working with a team, you should be able to clearly overcome this and encourage the team member to learn to trust others. You can encourage and motivate people to work as a team by simply pointing out the many advantages of team work as opposed to individualism.

You are likely to achieve much more by working as a team rather than alone.

Time Management

Its basic knowledge that working as a team helps in completing tasks much faster, For instance, if you are baking cookies for sale. It will take you less time to work with a team that to try and do everything. You can have one person buy ingredients, one person do the baking and another person, the

selling. Each individual has their own strengths and so they can work faster if allocated task that can help them utilise the strengths.

Creativity

A team normally constitutes of people with different training and experiences. In addition, everyone has their areas of strengths. Combining these skills can bring about a lot of creativity and therefore improve the performance of the team.

Learning Experience

Working together definitely enable team members to learn a lot and grow. For instance, if you have never been good with calculations, a team member who is good at this can help you out. Apart from gaining new skills, you can also get to learn a lot about yourself as an individual.

Sharing of Ideas and Thoughts

Team work creates room for brainstorming of ideas. This enriches the quality of the team's performance. One individual can't possibly come up with the same ideas that a group of people can.

Support System

Teamwork provides a support system for every member of the team. The constant encouragements help the team player to stay motivated .A good support system is also very vital in dealing with the teams failures.

It helps the team players to get back on their feet much quicker. An individual may not be able to handle failure as well as that.

A person, who is used to doing things alone, may take time before embracing the idea of teamwork. Pointing out the benefits of working together may help change the mindset of such a person.



Chapter 8:

Qualities of a Good Team Player

Synopsis

“Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common vision. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.” - Andrew Carnagie

The successes and failures of a team have a lot to do with the team members themselves. As a team player, you have to possess the right qualities that can make your team successful. These are the qualities that we look at, in this chapter.

- Do you have the ability to work in a team?
- Can you work at gaining the necessary qualities of a team player?



Characteristics

Reliable

As a team player, your teammates should be able to rely on you. You should be consistent so as to give your team members confidence in you. Also, always ensure that you give your best effort in every assignment.

Integrity

The only way any team can be effective, is if all members have a sense of integrity in carrying out their duties. Integrity portrays a sense of commitment to the team and to the organization as a whole.

Effective Communicator

A team player is one who can communicate with the other members of the team. You have to be able to express your opinions and thoughts well. If you disagree with the others, clearly express this directly but also respectfully. This is the only way a team can work well.

Competent

As a team player, you can't afford to be incompetent. You have to learn as much as possible. This is the only way to ensure that you make good contribution in the group. Competence will also make your team mates

more confident in you. In addition, your competence will strongly affect the overall productivity of the team.

Good Listener

A team can only work together if they are in agreement. You have to be able to listen to other members of your team. It doesn't matter whether they are much younger, inexperienced or less educated than you. You should always be in a position to listen to other people's ideas and opinions.

A good listener should also be in a position to take criticism without getting offended. Always adopt the listen first and speak later approach. You also don't have to debate with your teammate on every single issue.

Active and Creative

There are lazy people who like to let people do everything for them. If you are working in a team, you can't be lazy. You have to actively participate in order to make a contribution. In case of discussion or brain storming, you need to share your opinions and ideas too. You should volunteer to take up tasks that you feel that you may manage.

Creativity entails thinking outside the box. Your innovativeness will make the team stronger and more productive. If you have any fresh new ideas, you should always share them with the team.

Every team player has to participate so as to make the team succeed.

Sense of Humor

Although you will be involved in serious issues, you should try and keep things light. You have to be one who can take a joke and not be overly sensitive. A good sense of humor will allow you to work well with everyone else. It will also keep you from being overwhelmed by the stresses of the job.

Having a sense of humor releases tension and work stresses.

Willing to Share With Team Mates

In working as team, you don't have to try and outshine your team members. You should be in a position to share knowledge and experience. You can become a much stronger team through sharing and strengthening each other.

Perseverance

A good team player never has a defeated attitude. There will be times when the team may not excel. At this time, you need to support each other and motivate each other to try again. Perseverance will help you remain goal oriented no matter what circumstances may face you.

Cooperative

You absolutely have to be able to cooperate with your teammates. That's the only way that you will manage to work together. Working together will be very important in helping to achieve the set goals. If your teammates require your assistance, you should be willing to help them.

Cooperation is very important in any given team.

Flexible

A good team player can't afford to remain rigid with changing times. You need to be quick and flexible. For instance, if you always hold your meetings in a conference room, you can't refuse to move outside to the lobby just because the conference room isn't available.

You may also be called upon to switch your roles in the team if need. Flexibility will ensure that you perform in the group no matter what happens. This requires that you learn to compromise if need be.

Committed and Enthusiastic

A player who is committed to the team and the work at hand will put his best foot forward always. They will always ensure that they do everything possible to make the team excel. This team player will also show

enthusiasm for the work at hand. Commitment and enthusiasm are important in achieving the team's goals and objectives.

Good Interpersonal Skills

Working as a team involves different people relating with one another so as to achieve some common goals. A team player must therefore have a relatable personality. They must know how to live and work with others. To do this, one must be respectful and honest. Supportiveness is also vital in team work.

This team player should also be considerate of others. For instance, you can't keep showing up late for meetings and expect everyone to wait for you. You can't also be inconsiderate by making comments or jokes that may offend someone else.

Members have to know how to interact with each other properly. This makes the team much stronger and more effective.

Chapter 9:

Qualities of A Good Team Builder

Synopsis

“If your actions inspire others to dream more ,learn more, do more and become more ,you are a leader ”.John Quincy Adams

A good team is one that has a strong leader. This leader will be able to effectively lead the team in team work and in the pursuit of the set goals and objectives. This chapter looks at some of the qualities that a good leader should possess.

- Is the leader a part of the team?
- What role does the leader play in supporting the team?
- Do you have what it takes to successfully lead a team?

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to know who to elect a leader for your team. You will also get to know whether or not, you can lead the team? You may also learn whether your current team leader has what it takes to lead your team.

Qualities

Supportive

A good team leader should be able to encourage and support his or her team. This is what can help build a strong team. Enabling people to be the best that they can be, also improves the general performance of the team as a whole.

A good team leader also listens to the grievances and requests of the team and presents this to the organization. The leader should be willing to effectively represent his team whenever need arises.

Great Interpersonal Skills and Strong Relatable Character

A good leader should have good character. He should be someone that the team members can easily talk to. A good leader knows where to strike the balance between being friendly and authoritative at the same time.

If a team respects their leader, they will be able to follow and work together effectively. However, a team that fears their leader will not be able to work well together.

Confident

A good leader should always be confident in everything that they do. A team may easily fail to follow a person who seems to be unsure about themselves

or the tasks in hand. The team may also fail to respect such a leader. A confident leader can also easily inspire others to be their best and work hard at attaining their set objectives.

A confident person is more likely to lead a team effectively.

Committed to Excellence

There are different types of teams. There is a team that may just try to complete assignments fast without paying attention to quality. There are others that can't be bothered and normally fail to meet objectives or deadlines. These teams have weak leaders who fail to lead them in the right direction. A good team leader should always have integrity and commitment to excellence. They should seek to have the performance from the team. Such a leader ensures that the team remains productive at all times.

As a leader, you have to set high standards and equally high expectation levels. This will help your team members to aim high each time.

Focused

If a team leader isn't focused then it's very hard for the team to work together to realize their goals. A distracted team is likely to postpone assignments or even fail to work together if at all they don't share common objectives.

A focused leader will be firm at ensuring that every member of the team participates in helping achieve the set goals and objectives. He normally has his mind set of increasing productivity and the output quality of the team.

Grooms

The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it.

Theodore Roosevelt.

A team leader helps in grooming a member of his team to take over the leadership role in future. If the leader notices some potential in a member, he will try and help the member realize their full potential. A true leader helps in creating other leaders without being scared of sharing the spotlight.

Excellent Communication Skills

You can't lead people if at all you can't express yourself effectively. Communication is about just being able to be understood. You need to watch out for small issues that may bring a communication breakdown. Learn to be polite and to talk to your teammates with respect. A leader who

constantly yells doesn't inspire his or her team. You should also not issue orders. Learn to discuss and make requests or assign roles.

You should also learn to be listener. This is a very effective communication skill. You can learn a lot and get to work well with others if only you learn how to listen first.

Innovative

An effective leader should know how to think outside the box. Such a person will be able to make the team develop and progress well.

Motivating

A team will not be able to perform well if they aren't motivated. You need to keep the team in high spirits. You don't have to give incentives but just simple things can keep your team motivated. For instance, if someone does something good, it's good to take note and compliment them.

There are teams that acknowledge "the employee of the month/year". This form of appreciation is also very effective as it motivates the team members to work hard.

Once your team a member excels in a project you should congratulate or show them some appreciation. This will motivate them to work harder.

Good at Conflict Resolution

A team is normally made up of people of different personalities and ideologies. This means that from time to time, there will be conflicts among members.

A team leader should be able to resolve these conflicts without taking sides or making unfair judgments. He should always ensure that the team gets along and can work together at all times.

Ability to Work In A Team

As a team leader, you have to realize that you are also part of the team. You can't make decisions individually, you need your team. You should be able to work with the others.

If you are the kind of person who strongly believes that individualism brings the best results, you will not be able to accomplish much as part of the team.

Ability to Be Objective

As human beings, we tend to be naturally drawn to some people and repelled by others. You may have things in common with someone and this is what draws you to them. However, as a team leader, you can't have favoritism. You have to be impartial and treat everyone equally.

You also need to stop thinking about yourself. If you have an idea that the group doesn't support, try and get their point of view. Don't try to impose your views on everyone. In addition you have to put your emotions aside.

Knowledgeable

As a leader, you have to stay knowledgeable at all times. Try and read wide and consult with others. You have to stay ahead in the industry. This knowledge will be used to empower the team members. It will also be reflected in the overall performance of the team.

Ability to Accept And Take Criticism

When you realize that your team members are doing the wrong things, you have to correct them in the right way. You should give them positive criticism to make them rectify. The same way, you should be able to accept criticism and use it to become a better leader.

Involved or Active

An active leader normally sets the best examples. He or she managed to fully be part of the team. As a leader, participation is important. An absentee leader who delegates tasks and then leaves can never be successful. You are part of the team so you better make a contribution.

A good leader stays involved with his team. He doesn't delegate duties and then go away.

Chapter 10:

Qualities of A Good Team

Synopsis

“Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has” Margaret Meade

If you are in a team, take the time to compare your team with the ideal team. This will help you realize whether or not your current team is functional. This chapter looks at the qualities that you should look out for.

- Does your team have the necessary qualities to enable it to succeed?
- What is it that you are not doing that you ought to be doing?
- What can you learn from other successful teams?

This chapter will also be helpful for teams who are just starting out. Setting standards will give such teams goal to work towards .They may start out with very strong teamwork if they look for these qualities right from the start.

What Makes It Good

There is No “I” in Team

A good team can't exist with individualism. All team players must put their personal goals aside and learn to prioritize the team. You can't try and make a name for yourself in the expense of the team. This is because; your successes and failures will all be evaluated together. If the team succeeds then all of you succeed and vice versa.

Trust, Respect and Unity

You need to learn how to trust your teammates. There are people who believe that they are the only ones who can do something well. They don't trust others to perform equally well. This can't happen in any team. In addition, the team has to learn how to trust their leader so as to be effective. In order to build trust, teammates should avoid going behind each other's backs or making decisions without involving each other.

A good team has respect for one another and for their leader. Respect is illustrated in relating with one another and also in listening to each other. No matter how different the group member's maybe, they must learn to respect each other's view and opinions.

Winning

Success is a measure of how good a team is. A team that is losing or simply not excelling is not a good team. This normally indicates that there is a problem in the group that needs to be rectified first. In addition, winning goes a long way in keeping all the members of the group motivated.

Good Leadership

A good leader plays a very important part in determining just how successful a team will be. There are many different definitions of a good leader. However, the best one is a person who leads by example.

A good leader should also have to be very skillful. This will help the team perform very well. The leader should also be able to hold the group together and encourage each player to participate and work together.

Sportsmanship and Hard Work

Good teammates use their abilities to enhance the performance of the team. They ensure that they work hard and are committed to making the team successful. Apart from relating well with each other, the team should also learn to relate with other teams. Each member of the team has an area of expertise, combined; this makes a very successful team.

Goals and Objectives

A good team should have laid out goals and objectives. This is what keeps them focused. In addition, these goals and objectives should be common.

This will ensure that the team is working together. A clear vision will ensure that the team members perform very well in all their tasks.

The team should also have realistic goals. A team with unrealistic goals ends up being frustrated and inhibits good performance.

Strong Team Members with Complementary Skills

A team needs to have very strong team members with complementary skills. When selecting members of a team, this is a very important factor to consider. You can't select teammates solely based on the fact that you do get along. You have to find out what each member of the team brings to the table.

If you look at every successful team, every single member usually has that single quality that makes them stand out and at the same time, compliment the other team players. A team leader should ensure that each member uses their skills for the good of the team.

Ability to Resolve Problems Amicably

A good team is normally able to get over their problems and move forward together. A team that can't handle conflicts may easily break up at the first sign of trouble. In addition, the team should involve each other in decision making. This minimizes the conflicts and helps the group to learn how to work together.

Celebration of Successes

A functional team takes the time to celebrate their victories. This is one thing that can cement the bond between team players. These celebrations also help in keeping the team motivated throughout.

Unselfishness

If a team has selfish members, it will not be successful.

Equal Distribution of Tasks

A good team is whereby each member accrues their own weight. You can't have a team whereby one person is entailed with the most responsibilities while others don't contribute little or nothing.

Openness, Integrity, Communication and Vision

A team should have some degree of openness so as to work together. Each member should work with integrity to ensure that the team continues to perform well. There should also be communication between members. Vision will ensure that the members remain focused throughout.

Wrapping Up

‘Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championship’ Michael Jordan

There is a lot that can be achieved once people learn to help one another and work together. Good teamwork is what enables a group what is otherwise referred to as the impossible. However, to be part of a team, individuals have to learn how to let go of their individuality and selfish ambitions. There is power in cooperation that can only be tapped into, once people learn how to work interdependently.

Leadership

The team leader plays a very vital role in fostering unbreakable teamwork. A leader should be involved. They should also have the confidence and competence that will inspire others. The team will need a leader who can support them. Good leadership is the glue that holds together any team.

Value

If a team doesn't recognize the value of teamwork, then attaining it is very hard. People aren't going to adapt something that they don't consider beneficial. For any team building program to work, a team has to clearly see the value of the program. Training and seminars can help in identifying these values.

Reward Systems

One way to ensure that teamwork prevails is through reward systems. When a team excels, it's good to sit back and savor the victory. This motivates team members to work harder and maintain the teamwork culture.

Respect and Trust

A team relies heavily on how the team members treat each other. Teamwork can't exist in a team that doesn't respect one another. It also can't exist if people don't trust one another. The key to working together is fostering good working relationships based on trust and respect.

Good luck to you and your team!