

Foundation Blocks to Building an Effective Team

Building an environment of Teamwork requires effort on the part of all members within a team. It also requires other elements such as direction, structure, processes, team community and working environment to create effective teams.

However, the leader is crucial to the success of the team. He/she is the glue that keeps all these elements working synergistically. Team leaders bring people together with very diverse backgrounds, education, values, beliefs, or perceptions for a common purpose. Have you been tapped to lead a team? Consider these four fundamental blocks to building an effective team before you begin.

Build Trust

A confident team leader accepts the differences that exist within a team as a gift. This leader understands that diversity is important to the team's purpose, and so fosters participation and acceptance from fellow team members. This leader instills trust through humility and integrity, creating a safe environment for disagreement. This leader encourages healthy differences, and, when necessary, resolves unhealthy conflicts quickly.

Let go

While a strong leader has courage to face reality, accept the consequences, and make hard decisions, this leader also has the courage to share the control. They can step back from a situation and allow team members to tackle tasks in their own manner. He/she does not expect perfection only learning and growth. In fact, a great leader encourages members to take calculated risks in fulfilling their roles.

Clarify Team Purpose

No matter who you are, you cannot do a good job if you don't understand what your role is. An open and candid leader understands the purpose and goals of a team and can clarify these easily. He/she clearly articulates expectations and opportunities for the team and its members. A team leader is open to suggestions and is not offended when team members are reticent.

Develop Team Member Skills

A strategic leader knows they cannot be all things to all people. To grow the teams effectiveness exponentially, team member skills must be cultivated. This is accomplished by individual coaching, giving encouragement, and seeing that resources are available.

Conclusion

While these behaviors are only a part of the process, they are important in creating team relationship. These behaviors are the glue to a cohesive team. Teams cannot be effective if members don't trust the leader or each other. Team members become discouraged and resistant if they are tied to set procedures rather than given processes. And certainly, no task can be completed efficiently if purpose and goals are ambiguous or confusing. Finally, collaboration, sharing of tasks, guarantees goals can be met in a comfortable and timely manner. Leading a team can be an exciting and satisfying experience. Lay this foundation and your team will exceed all expectations.

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