Teams:

Making Them Effective Achieving Outstanding Results

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Today's Topics

- Teams: Overview
- Team-Related Concepts
- Facilitating Effective Meetings
- Assessing Team Effectiveness

Check-in

What curiosities /questions
about team effectiveness
do you bring to this session?

Teams: Overview

Team

. . . . a collection of people with a common commitment to the team's purpose and each other.

"A group of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable."

(Katzenbach & Smith, 1993)

Teams vs. Groups

Group - a collection of people who interact with one another, influence one another, & primarily perform work as individuals.

- Focus is on individual sub-area goals & performance
- Communication is primarily focused on information sharing & coordination of activities
- Group comes to joint agreements / decisions and delegates follow-up
- The whole *is* the sum of the parts

Ineffective Teams

- Individually think of an ineffective team you have worked with or observed:
  - What characteristics / patterns / behaviors made the team ineffective?

- In pairs/triads:
  - Share the above with each other
  - What characteristics did these teams have in common?

Effective Teams

- Individually think of an effective team you have worked with or observed:
  - What was this team's purpose?
  - What made it effective in achieving its purpose?
    - Write down 3+ characteristics that contributed to this team's success.
- In pairs/triads:
  - Share the above with each other
  - What characteristics did these teams have in common?

Types of Teams

- Natural Work Teams
  - Functional , departmental, or operational (provides particular product / service)
  - Designated supervisor / manager
  - Permanent / ongoing
- Formal Project or Action Teams
  - Specific project, problem, or initiative
  - Designated leader / sponsor
  - Can be cross-functional
  - Temporary
- Leadership Teams
  - Usually cross-functional or cross-departmental
  - Designated manager leader
  - Permanent / ongoing
- Self-managed
  - Often operational and / or informal
  - No designated leader
 - Permanent or temporary

High Functioning Teams

- Do real work together
  - Have shared work products
- Tasks are interdependent
  - Work could not be accomplished by people working independently
- Shared responsibility / leadership
  - For output & team process
- Make and carry out key decisions together
- Solve problems as a group
- Members hold each other accountable
- Members feel ownership for team's success *in addition* to their individual success
- Whole is *more* than the sum of the parts

Team-Related Concepts

- Start with Why
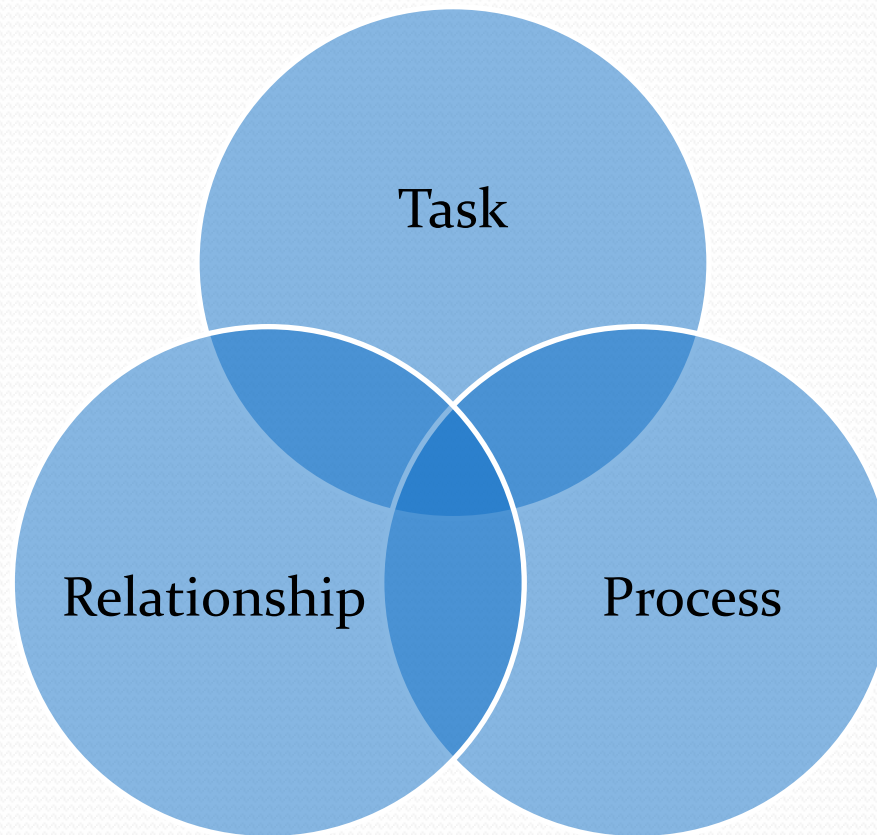- Task, Process, Relationship
- Team Storming

Start with WHY

WHY

WHAT

HOW
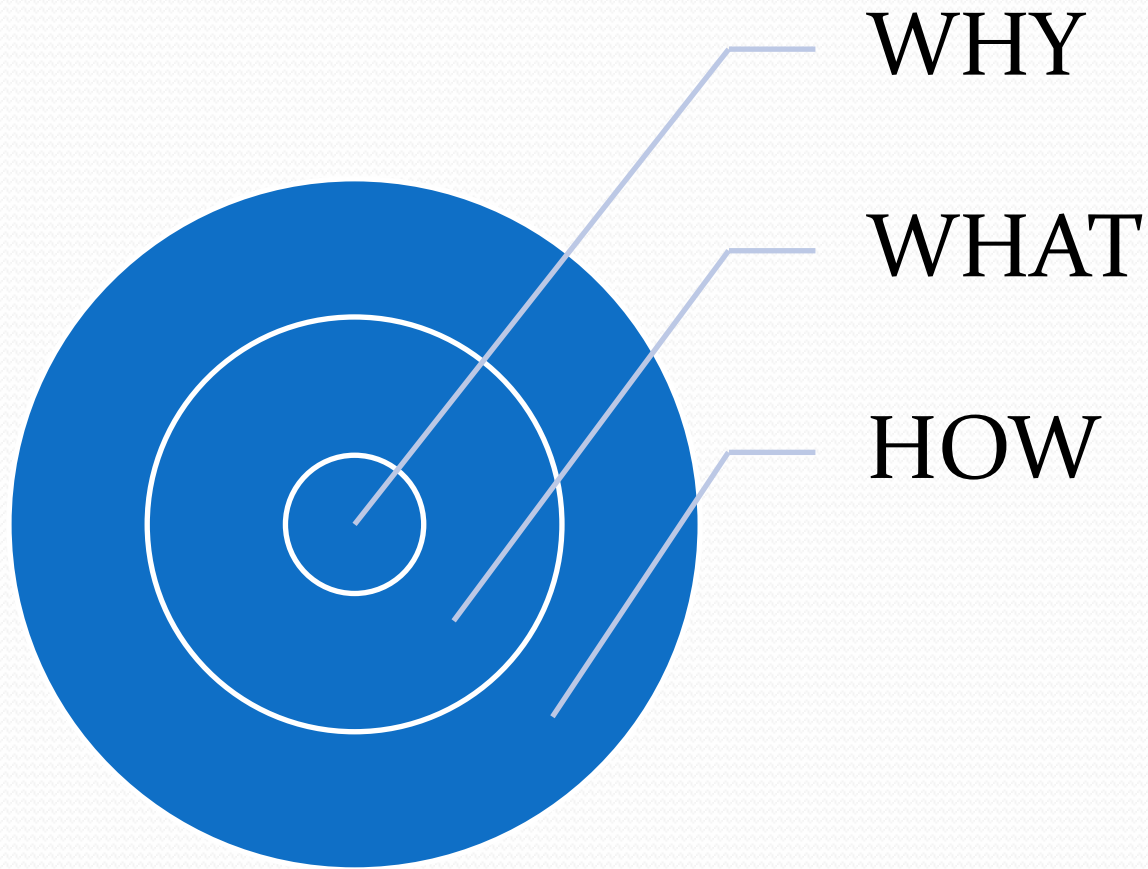
WHY

- What is our Purpose?

- Why do we Exist?

- How does our work link to the Organization's mission, vision, values?

- What Difference are we going to make?

- Why us?

- Should this be a team effort?

The Work of a Team

Task	Process	Relationship
What work we need to accomplish	**How we accomplish our work**	**How we relate to each other**
• Specific outcomes, products, or services	• Roles – task and process	• Shared expectations
• Job to be done for internal / external customer(s)	• How meetings are organized / structured / facilitated	• Ground rules
• Goals and measures	• Decision-making rules, processes	• Understanding each other's styles and preferences
• How we will know we are successful	• How we will organize / accomplish our work	• Ways we give each other feedback
	• How we will communicate	

Team Storming

- Task conflict can be creative
- "Personality conflict" ➔ Often destructive
  - Fundamentally, a *Violation of Expectations*
- Expectations are *always* present
  - Usually implicitly held
  - Unstated
- Successful teams articulate, understand, and agree to *shared* expectations
  - Explicitly stated & understood
  - Specific
  - Behavior-based

"No mind-reading expected"
"Silence is consent"

How Expectations are Violated

By Leader	By Team	Members
Micromanaging	Missing / late to meetings	Talking too much or too little in meetings
Not giving feedback when team members negatively impact team	Not outwardly demonstrating commitment to team's work	Not sharing credit and / or support
Making decisions w/o input	Late or incomplete assignments	Not responding to emails / voicemails in a timely manner
Not praising/rewarding good work	Not dealing directly with other team members about issues / concerns	Talking negatively about team outside of the team
Not valuing input	Not valuing input	Being negatively contagious in meetings

Conflict Thermometer

TENSION

Feel anxious about a relationship
Hold a poor opinion of a person
One more nudge: you may explode, withdraw, or say something you'll regret?

Incident

Something happens that leaves you feeling upset or irritated.

Crisis

Emotions running high
Destructive interaction / outcome
Extremely confusing

Misunderstanding

Feel misunderstood
Misinterpret: question motives or intent
Make inferences

Discomfort

"Gut" feeling: things just aren't right.

Effective Conflict Resolution

- Explicitly state and understand expectations
  - What they look like in action (behavior-based)
- Deal with unmet expectations ("undiscussables") as conflict is brewing (vs. waiting for eruptions or team dysfunction)
- Give individual feedback to team members, as needed
- Discuss disagreements / misunderstandings
  - Use team ground rules for conversation
  - Don't attack / DTIP
  - Focus on concerns, not positions
- Do team effectiveness assessment (more later)

Facilitating Effective Meetings

- Macro – Build the Team
- Micro – Manage Meetings

Build the Team

- **DON'T** just start with:

  "What's the right solution to the project / problem / initiative?"

- **DO** start with:

  "How will we work together?"

Forming

Describe general team purpose / outcome (Charter, if project team) and then ----

Build Relationships

Get to know each other's:

- Expectations for effective teamwork
- Personality / style preferences
- Strengths
- Foibles

Relationship-Building Strategies

- Effective teamwork' norms: "What would this look like in action?"
- Team Effectiveness Contribution assessment
- Team Blockers: Individual habits that get in the way; what they and others can do to minimize
- MBTI: Individual personality preferences assessment
- FIRO – B: Individual interpersonal preferences assessment
- Strengthsfinders: Individual talents / strength assessment
- Others?

Norming

Clarify Team Process

Agree to:

- Expectations
- Ground Rules
- Team Roles
- Team Contract

Team Process Strategies

- Review Schwartz's / CAM's Ground Rules
- Establish team Ground Rules
- Determine team leadership role(s); assign or rotate
- Identify team process roles; assign or rotate
- Create Team Contract
- Discuss RACIS – responsible, accountable, consulted, informed, supports
- Define decision making processes
- 10 Measures of an Effectiveness Team assessment

Managing Meetings

L. *facilis*

- "To make easy or easier"

Facilitation

- "The process of orchestrating group dynamics toward achieving some specific outcome"
(Guila Muir)
- "The process of improving a group's problem solving & decision making effectiveness"
(Roger Schwartz)
- "A set of conscious, practiced skills that can be developed & expanded" (Schwartz)
- The pathway to efficient team meetings & effective team outcomes (McHugh)

Good Facilitation Prevents . . .

. . . meetings lacking clear direction

. . . out-of-control discussions

. . . overly lengthy (or brief) meetings

. . . avoidance of real issues / conflict

. . . meetings where nothing is decided

. . . unnecessary interpersonal & team nightmares!

Good Facilitation Supports . . .

- Increased group productivity
  - Decision & problem-solving quality
  - Time required
- Increased focus
  - Targeted discussions & depth
- Increased participation
  - Everyone engages
- Increased individual accountability
  - Personal awareness & choice
- Enjoyable process & meeting
 - Meetings *can* be fun
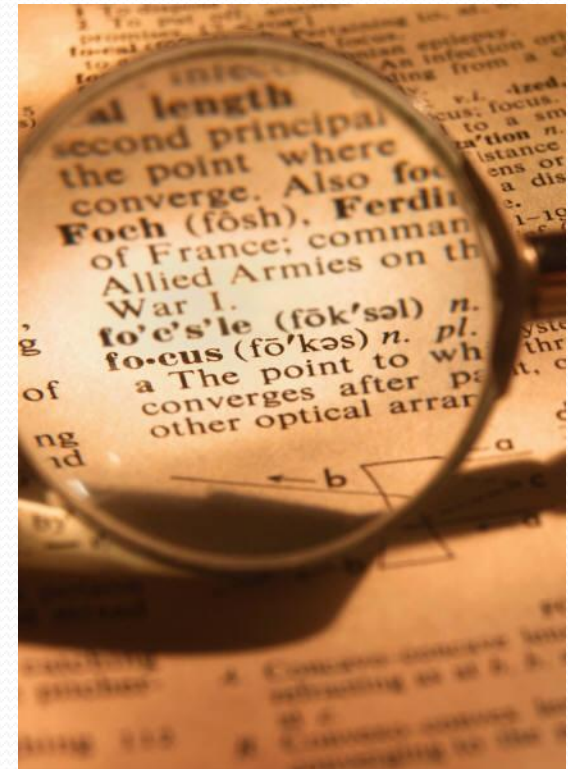
Facilitator Role

- Team *process* expert & advocate
- Content neutral
- Develops & maintains a safe environment for group communication
- Stimulates dialogue & interaction
- Provides clarification when appropriate
- Diagnoses the group's process and intervenes as necessary
- Summarizes discussions & decisions

Participant Role

- Comes prepared
- Starts on time & is fully present
- Fills team meeting roles
- In discussions:
  - Shares all relevant information
  - Uses specific examples & agree on what important words mean
  - Explains reasoning & intent
  - Tests assumptions & inferences
  - Asks meaningful questions
  - Focuses on interests, not positions
  - Combines advocacy & inquiry
  - Discusses un-discussable issues
- Helps improve the meeting process
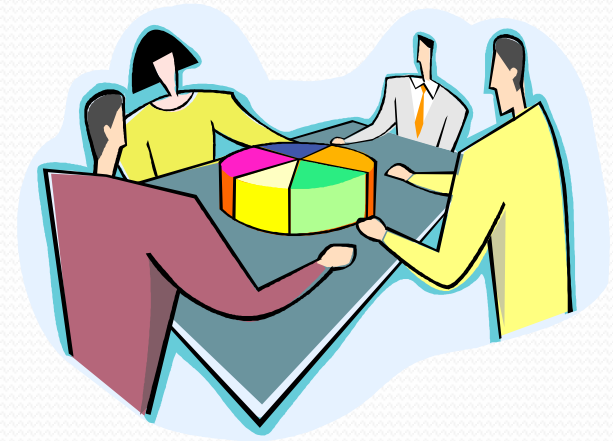
Remember . . .

. . . facilitation is a role & skill

. . . facilitation is *not just something the Team Leader does*

. . . successful teams share leadership, e.g. they *share facilitation* tasks

. . . team members are likely to function as *both 'facilitators' and 'participants'* in
a single meeting

The path of Successful Team Meetings . . .

- An entry point
  - Clear purpose, objectives, agenda
  - Check-in : prepared / present participants
- Core of meeting
  - Full participation
  - Constructive discussion
  - Evaluating alternatives & decision - making
- Exit point
  - Firm action plan, responsibilities, timeline
  - Next meeting objectives / agenda / plan for pre-work
  - Follow-up communication clarified
  - Meeting debrief

Meeting Entry

- Start on time
- Clarify meeting purpose & outcomes
  - Information sharing, brainstorming, decision making
- Review & agree to agenda topics & time slots
- Review meeting ground rules (next)
- Develop & clarify meeting roles (next)
- Set enthusiastic & optimistic climate
  - Emotions & attitudes are contagious
- Help participants "arrive"
  - Check-in activity

Ground Rules Examples

- Start/end on time
- Come to the meeting prepared
- Share openly & constructively
- One voice at a time
- Listen for understanding
- Maintain confidentiality
- No interrupting
- No monopolizing air time
- Electronic sabbatical: no electronic work distractions

Potential Role Assignments

- Time keeper
- Note taker
- Scribe
- Gatekeeper – notes participation levels
- Consensus tester – ensures true consensus is reached
- Devil's advocate – elicits different points of view
- Harmonizer – maintains team harmony
- Mediator - negotiates conflict & disagreement

Core of Meeting

- Cover one idea at a time
- Maintain focus & pace
- Manage phases of discussions (next)
- Utilize discussion tools in order to: (next)
  - Encourage thorough discussion of ideas – including minority views, quieter folks
  - Encourage brainstorming & creative approaches
  - Intervene to ensure group process & interactions remain positive
    - Constructive & amicable conflict resolution
  - Summarize key points & decisions as they occur
  - Remain supportive & enthusiastic
  - If appropriately off-topic, re-negotiate agenda & timeline
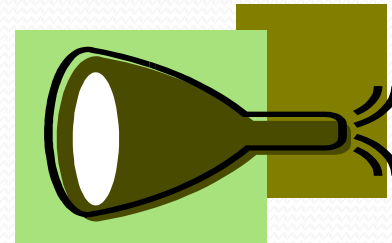
Team Discussion Phases

1. ## Explore Ideas
   - Open exchange
   - Different perspectives
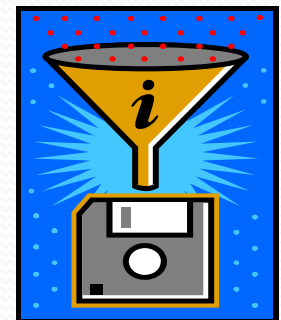   - Brainstorming
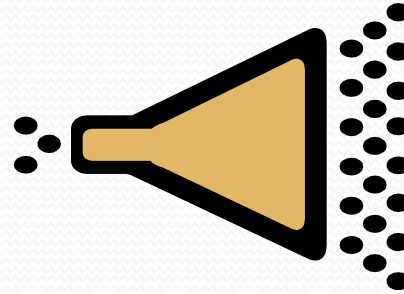
2. ## Narrow Ideas
   - Organize & cluster ideas
   - Compare
   - Winnow down to top options

3. ## Decide Action
   - Choose best option

Discussion Tools

- Capture ideas & discussions on flipcharts or whiteboards
- Use the think time and the "sticky process" to solicit ideas & involve everyone
- Call on people by name or poll the entire group
- Use "parking lot list" to capture relevant but tangential thoughts for future consideration
- Use evaluation criteria to narrow (matrix, top 3, voting, etc.)
- Make sure people are on the same page throughout
- Take a break / move around when the group is stuck
- Celebrate: "We've decided something!"

Meeting Exit

- Ensure decisions & commitments are understood
- Summarize next steps, responsibilities, & timing
- Assign follow-up administrative tasks (publishing notes, transcribing charts, etc.)
- Discuss/schedule the next meeting
  - Agenda topics, topic owners, required preparation, meeting logistics
- Debrief the meeting process (next)

Meeting Debrief Guidelines

- Debrief EVERY meeting
- Evaluate PROCESS & CONTENT
- Use evaluation criteria: round-robin or popcorn
  - Thumbs up, sideways, down & why
  - "One word of phrase" that describes what I feel now
  - Rate the process – How well did we stay on the agenda? Did everyone participate? How well did we follow ground rules and/or norms?
  - Rate the content – Did we achieve our meeting purpose? How relevant was the content?
  - "What I most appreciate about today's meeting . . ."
  - Decide what you'll change next time!

Assessing Team Effectiveness

Team Effectiveness Debriefs

- Less frequent
  - Quarterly, monthly
- Assess the team's process over time
- Invite reflection
- Measured against team's Ground Rules
- A separate agenda item or meeting
- Perhaps get an outside facilitator
- Modify / create new Ground Rules & meeting strategies, if needed

Team Effectiveness Questions

- Is everyone participating fully?
- Are members using active listening skills?
- Does everyone take responsibility for how the team functions (shared leadership)?
- Is the team making decisions together?
- Are meetings on track and productive?
- Is everyone contributing to the team's work & output?
- Are disagreements managed effectively?
- Is everyone comfortable raising difficult issues?
- Does the team make good decisions?
- Are team members supporting one another and helping out?
- Is there a shared sense of direction?
- Do we effectively navigate 'exploring, narrowing, and deciding' phases of discussion?
- Do we have fun?
- What should we Start / Stop / Continue?

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