





Embrace the Power of TEAM

SHARED THOUGHTS FOR TURNING VISION INTO ACTION

Bees might be the ultimate team players. While it's true that a single bee can't create a hive, when hundreds of bees cooperate, they are able to build and protect a structure to nurture the next generation. Bees are considered social animals, innately programmed to cooperate with each other. Humans, too, are social animals, but our societies are much more complex; fine-tuning a group to work together can be a challenge. Finding the right balance is critical, because when a team isn't working effectively, it can damage morale and bring progress to a standstill.

BENEFITS OF INVESTING TO DEVELOP HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAMS INCLUDE:

-  Increased effectiveness and productivity to impact the bottom line
-  Enhanced communication within the team for improved customer service
-  Higher levels of motivation and engagement reduces turnover
-  Leaders gain insight into how best to direct and support their team

IS YOUR TEAM REALLY A TEAM?

Team is a word that gets overused, and using the word does not turn a group of people into a true team.

Consider a bowling team. Each person on the team acts independently, rolling the bowling ball down the lane and earning their score. This type of approach is called a Working Group. Each person has their own results, separate from others in the group.

So what makes a True Team? True teamwork can be seen when all the members of a basketball team are working together, passing the ball, making defensive and offensive moves in order to create an opportunity for a team member to make the basket. Everyone is responsible for the success. This is a True Team.

While both approaches have their merits, a True Team often has stronger, longer-lasting results. Ask yourself, is your team really a team, or a group of people working separately?

“The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime.”

-BABE RUTH

UNDERSTANDING THE STAGES OF TEAMS

When the goal of being a true team is at stake and yet people don't seem to gel together, it can be easy to think that what is broken can't be fixed. Instead of thinking in terms of success and failure, consider your team to be in one of the four stages of teams:

1. Forming

This stage is characterized by low trust, minimum risk-taking and low emotional commitment. Members behave more formally in this stage. Confrontation is avoided and “safe” subjects are discussed. On the surface, there may be high excitement. However, underneath, members may feel judgmental or skeptical.

2. Storming

This stage can be very difficult but there is much to be achieved here. Mutual trust, acceptance, openness, risk-taking and emotional involvement all increase amid the storm. Members open up to one another and discuss personal topics. However, there may be conflict as roles and objectives may become unclear.

3. Norming

A level of acceptance defines the norming stage. The group feels mutual trust and respect, as well as openness and vulnerability. At this stage, the goals previously questioned and the focus lost in the storming phase is regained and solidified.

4. Performing

A team in the performing stage has achieved 100% commitment and cooperates completely. They are able to manage conflicts in a constructive and proactive way. Challenges and problems are seen as opportunities for improvement. There is a sense of belonging and achievement.

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

-HENRY FORD

Progress through these stages is hardly ever linear. Sometimes a leader must step in and determine whether or not the team can be brought back on track, or if membership in the team needs to change. This is sometimes called the Transforming stage.

INDICATORS OF A STRONG TEAM:



Little energy is spent trying to motivate or align people



Results speak for themselves



Consistency is maintained: each generation builds on the work of previous generations

THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS OF TEAMSHIP

Just like anything, learning to be a better team means learning and refining skills. Three of the essential skills are:

1. Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a natural part of working with others. However, the way it is handled needs to be constructive and proactive so that small concerns do not linger or blow up into bigger problems.

2. Motivation

One of the strengths of a true team is the power to motivate its members. Everyone has their moments where internal motivators fail, but getting the right boost from a teammate can be an effective and positive experience for all involved.

3. Developing a Vision

A group of people will struggle to be a team if they don't share a vision that they can work toward. Developing a vision and goals will bond a team and give daily tasks a focus. In times of crisis, these shared goals are essential to bring everyone back on the bus.

At Applied Vision Works, we believe in the power of teams. Our Teamship Challenge is a strategic process that promotes the understanding of the 25 Team Principles. Success is measurable through five levels of certification and can be customized to fit your organizational teams. If you're ready to turn your team into a unified force, give us a call.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

-MARGARET MEAD



APPLIED VISION WORKS

One Vision. One Voice. Unlimited Success.

AVW are guides who partner with leaders and teams with heart for the long term. With our programs, leaders and teams can experience a better quality of life, build stronger organizations, and achieve greater results. Our clients run organizations ranging from \$10 million to \$5 billion in gross revenue.

