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ABSTRACT

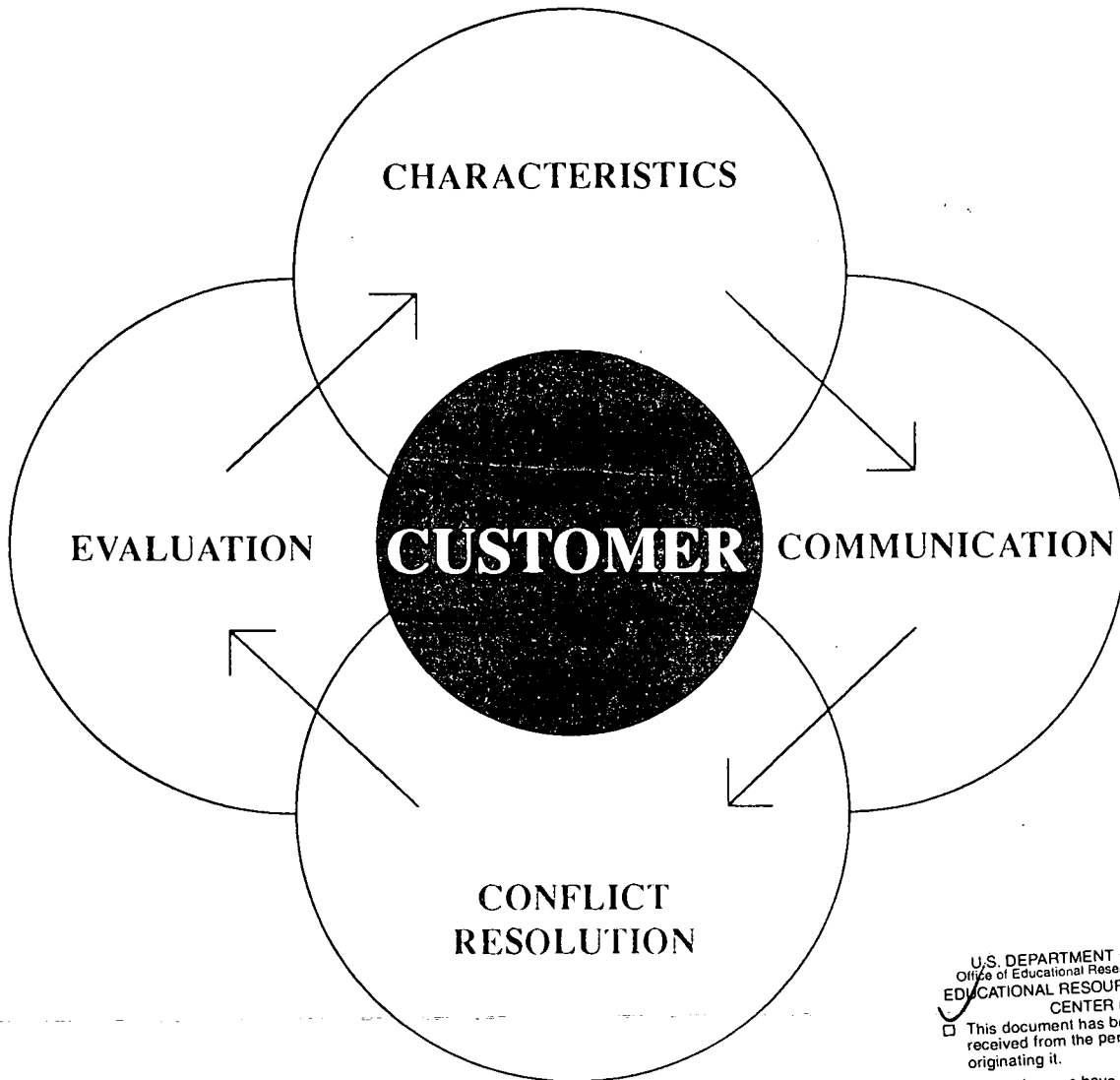
This booklet is one of six texts from a workplace literacy curriculum designed to assist learners in facing the increased demands of the workplace. It briefly explains how team building concepts affect businesses in new ways and how they help create an environment that provides job satisfaction for everyone and high-quality products for the customers. Topics covered include the following: (1) an overview of past and present organizational and management methods; (2) the theory of synergism; (3) characteristics of team building; (4) communication; (5) conflict resolution; and (6) evaluation. (KC)

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TEAM BUILDING CONCEPTS

ED 424 438



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MASSACHUSETTS CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, INC.
140 WILBRAHAM AVENUE
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01109
(413) 781-5640

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Once upon a time there was a work unit with four members named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done, and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

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Team Building is a process that evolved over the last twenty years and greatly affected the structure and operation of business organizations all over the world. To understand how Team Building affects today's businesses, it would be helpful to give a short, general overview on how organizations functioned in the past and compare that to the newer model used today.

In the traditional model, there was a clear chain of command between managers and employees. Decisions and communications were made by managers at the top level and passed down to the employees at the lower level. There was little or no communication among lower-level employees. Managers were the thinkers and workers were the doers. The full potential of the worker was rarely developed.

The boss or supervisor was responsible for production and kept tight controls over workers' behavior. If an employee did good work, the reward was job security and promotion.

Changes were infrequent and slow to implement. Emphasis was concentrated on quantity and production. Employees worried about meeting quotas rather than quality and customer satisfaction. Because production was the main focus, quotas were often fudged to make them look good. This system bred competition, internal conflicts, and fear of not measuring up to imposed standards.

The symbol used to describe this type of operation was the pyramid. Under the pyramidal structure, management was the parent and the employees were the children. Management was fully in charge and responsible for everything. The workers were powerless. Until recently, most companies operated in this fashion.

The Team Building concept changed all this by introducing a new, different, and healthier way for people to work together. Unlike the old, traditional structure, Team Building helps everyone in the organization to work cooperatively toward common goals. Both managers and workers learn new ways to participate in business. The role of the manager is to free, influence, empower, and inspire employees to reach their full potential. The role of the worker is to contribute his or her talents and knowledge to improve the quality of production.

In the new model, responsibility, skills, authority, and control are shared. Accountability is to one another. Everyone in the organization works for the betterment of the entire organization.

Under the new system, the emphasis of business shifts from quantity to quality. Management and employees listen to one another on how to improve methods. Customers are consulted to make sure their needs are being met and satisfied. Without customers, there is no business. Consequently, the symbol for the new structure is a circle with the customer at the center.

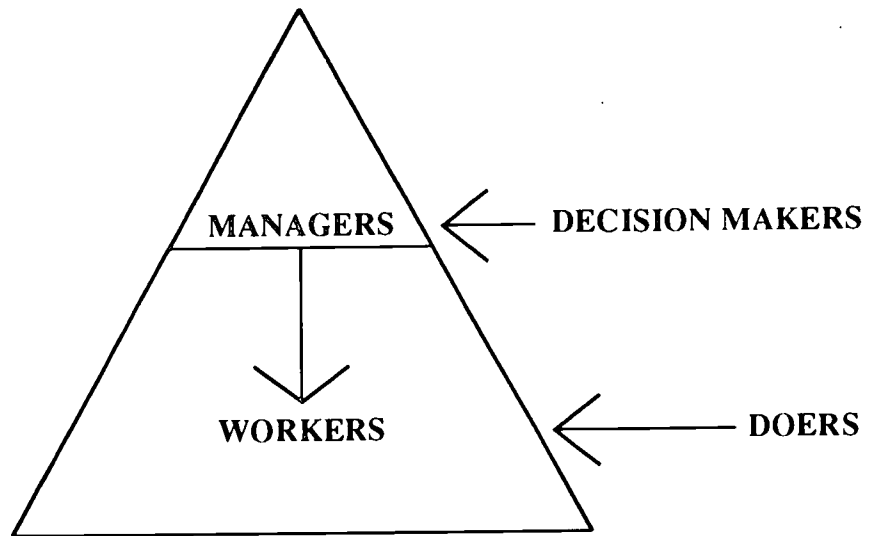
The old ways of "doing business as usual" no longer work in today's marketplace. Change is necessary to stay in the race and keep up with tight competition.

The purpose of this booklet is to briefly explain how Team Building concepts affect businesses in new ways and how they help create an environment that provides job satisfaction for everyone and quality products for the customers.

PYRAMIDAL STRUCTURE CHAIN OF COMMAND

PROFIT

PRODUCTION

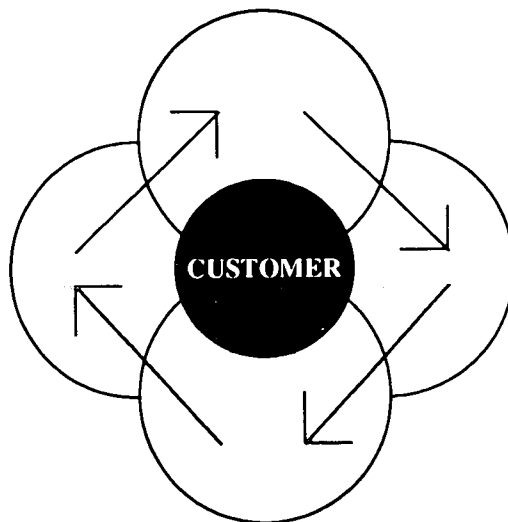


ENVIRONMENT: COMPETITION - CONFLICT - FEAR - POWERLESSNESS

CIRCULAR STRUCTURE COLLABORATION

QUALITY

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



ENVIRONMENT: TRUST - COOPERATION - JOB SATISFACTION

3.

THE THEORY OF SYNERGISM

The most important phenomenon that occurs when a team works well together is a dynamic called synergism. Because synergism is so important in understanding the operation of team building, the next few pages are devoted to explaining its meaning.

Webster's dictionary describes synergism as "the joint actions of agents, when taken together, increase each other's effectiveness." In other words, when everyone's energy is directed toward a common goal, the team accomplishes more than what any one member could accomplish alone.

Synergism is a situation where a group of individuals achieve more than one person could do alone. Team members feel a part of something bigger than they are responsible for singly. The situation is a "we" rather than an "I". Synergism is a joint action of many individuals, who together, have a greater effect than the sum of their individual part. To phrase the meaning in simple, basic terms, synergism means:

**THE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN
THE SUM OF ITS PARTS.**

There is a math symbol used to illustrate this definition.

$$2 + 2 = 5$$

4.

7

Now consider these definitions within an actual event where members depend on each other's performance to reach a common goal. Perhaps the most obvious example is an athletic event.

Athletes not only work out of their individual talents and skills but they also work as a team to produce winning games. In baseball, a pitcher depends on the defensive backup and support of other team members at the plate, on the bases, and in the field. They in turn rely on the pitcher to perform well. Likewise, a football quarterback cannot make touchdowns alone.

A few years ago, a major basketball team had difficulty winning games even though this team had the highest scoring individual player in the entire league. The coach tried a different strategy and told the top scorer to pass the basketball more often to other team members in a better scoring position. The results were fantastic. They won more games and the spirit of the team improved because there was more mutual support to make things work better.

Another example of creating an effect where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts is the sound of a full orchestra. The violins have a unique sound but that sound is enhanced when other instruments are included. When the trumpet, flute, cello, drum, harp, bass, and other instruments are added, the tone is different and greater than the sound of the original violins alone. What is important is how it all sounds together. Coming together as a team is a way to make full use of each members talent. The musicians stimulate each other to high levels of creativity and performance in a way they could never accomplish alone.

5.

- QUALITY** - EXCELLENCE
- QUANTITY** - AN AMOUNT
- TRADITIONAL** - LONG CONTINUED PRACTICE
- CONCEPTS** - AN IDEA, NOTION
- SYNERGISM** - A THEORY WHERE THE WHOLE IS
GREATER THAN THE PARTS
- DYNAMIC** - MOVING FORCE
- MUTUAL** - THE SAME RELATIONSHIP EACH TO
ANOTHER
- PHENOMENON** - SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY OR
EXCEPTIONAL
- SYMBOL** - SIGN TO REPRESENT AN IDEA
- THEORY** - OPINION

6.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TEAM BUILDING

There are many characteristics that form the basic foundation of an effective team. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight a few of the more important principles.

A fundamental characteristic is the attitude or belief that the most important part of any organization is its people. In the business world, people are referred to as human resources. Who knows better about an organization and what it can achieve than its trained employees? Human resource people have a personal stake in the future growth of an organization. If the people aren't successful, the business isn't.

HUMAN RESOURCES ARE THE MOST VITAL PART OF ANY ORGANIZATION'S GROWTH.

Team members are usually selected because they have the expertise or qualifications to get the job done. A team cannot survive without qualified people. Just as a baseball team needs a variety of players; fielders, pitchers, hitters, catchers, etc., so too, membership on a team should consist of individuals whose talents compliment one another. If a team's task is to evaluate the cost of producing cookies, there should be someone on the team who understands finances, marketing, cooking, packaging, etc.

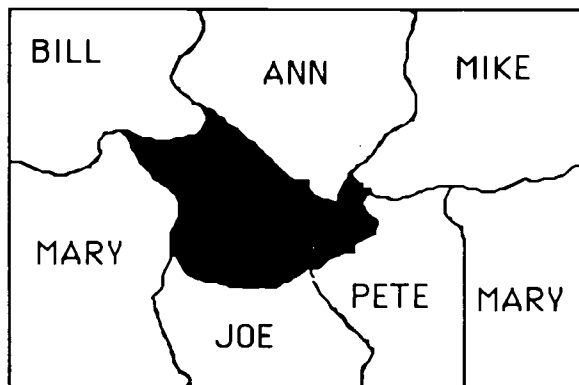
Another characteristic is the conviction that the theory of synergism works and

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is a better way of doing business. Resource people, both managers and employees, recognize team building as a way to receive new ideas and knowledge on how to produce quality goods and services. Problem solving becomes much easier when the expertise of all team members is considered because there is a greater variety of alternative solutions.

Team work fosters interdependence among its members rather than dependence. The prefix "inter" means among or together. Interdependence means cooperation with one another. Team members build a "we" instead of an "I". The team's goals become the individual's goals.

Some people mistakenly feel the individual personality is lost in a team setting. Actually, working together stimulates individuals to achieve better results through their collaborative efforts. Additionally, individuals experience a lot of personal satisfaction, a recognition of each other's gifts, greater productivity, and stronger working relationships. In effective groups, individuals feel they receive far more than they give.



8.

In a spirit of cooperation, people recognize the benefits of helping one another. Cooperation is needed on all levels of an organization if any kind of success is going to be achieved. No one person has all the answers but each person has a piece of the puzzle. Once the pieces are shared, the larger picture and possible solution are easier to see. In this way, members make up for the strengths and weaknesses of one another. Mutual support and trust are the fabrics that bind the team together and give members a sense of belonging.

Under the team concept, the responsibility for achieving (or not achieving) the goal or goals is mutually shared by all members, managers and employees alike. Members are not in competition with one another but are all equally in it together. Because the performance of one member affects the performance of the whole, each member is accountable or answerable to the rest of the team. To share the work is also to share the responsibility, the glory, and the success.

Obviously, for a team to function effectively, there needs to be a strong commitment on the part of each member. A commitment cannot be forced but must self-generate through active participation. People need to feel important and that they have something to contribute in order to commit themselves to the work of the team. Members claim ownership of the team's goals when they have a share in making decisions, carrying out policies, or solving problems. Like members of an athletic team, each member counts on one another's contribution and commitment.

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**A TEAM THAT IS COMMITTED TO THE TASK
AND MAKES FULL USE OF ITS MEMBERS' TALENTS
CAN ACHIEVE HIGH LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE.**

Members must also trust and have confidence in one another. Trust is built when there is an atmosphere of honesty, fairness, sensitivity, and respect. Trust promotes loyalty and acceptance of one another even when there are differences of opinion. A trusting environment empowers and frees people to be themselves. Trust helps members to feel comfortable enough to share their talents and reveal their truths or opinions.

TRUST IS THE PREREQUISITE TO GOOD COMMUNICATION.

VOCABULARY

COLLABORATIVE - WORK WITH ONE ANOTHER

CHARACTERISTIC - FEATURE, QUALITY

10.

- ALTERNATIVES** - **ONE OR A NUMBER OF THINGS FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE**

- INTERDEPENDENCE** - **MUTUALLY DEPENDENT ON SOMEONE, SOMETHING**

- CONVICTION** - **BELIEF**

- RESPONSIBILITY** - **DUTIES OR OBLIGATIONS**

- ACCOUNTABILITY** - **ANSWERABLE**

- MUTUAL** - **SHARED IN COMMON**

- COMMITMENT** - **TO PLEDGE ONESELF**

- OWNERSHIP** - **BELONGS TO ONE**

- RESPECT** - **HIGH ESTEEM, POLITE REGARD**

COMMUNICATION

Teams are formed for the purpose of accomplishing a given task, reaching a common goal, or making a specific decision. To do this effectively, team members need to communicate in an open, honest and truthful manner. Teams that communicate well have a better chance of achieving synergism. Consequently, the single most important characteristic of team building is communication. Communication may be verbal or non-verbal.

Verbal communication is the interchange of words that convey thoughts or ideas. There is an exchange of information from one who sends the message to another who receives it. To communicate well, the receiver hears the message as the sender intends.

Words have the power to energize others and is the cement that binds team relationships. It may be as formal as open dialogue at a team meeting or as informal as exchanging words during a coffee break, phone call, or social activity. Verbal communication can also be written and includes letters, reports, agenda, memos, or team meeting minutes.

Non-verbal communication is getting a message across without words, also called body language. A popular phrase that describes this type is, "actions speak louder than words." Body language needs to convey positive messages.

Remember that communication is a two way street that also requires the act of listening. Make an effort to understand others' point of view, particularly when they differ from your own.

Whether communication is verbal, written, or non-verbal, it must be clear and to the point. At times it may be necessary to explain facts and define terms in order to avoid confusion or misunderstanding.

Good communication just doesn't happen. It needs to be worked at and developed. People want what is right but might need guidance, support, and training.

Initially, the team meets to decide how it will work together. Ground rules need to be established and agreed upon up front so all members have a clear idea about procedures. Agreement on rules and procedures helps provide stability within the group.

The following are some of the issues that would be helpful to decide beforehand so there are fewer surprises along the way.

1. Why does the team exist and what is the function for which it serves?
2. What is expected of each member? (Role Expectation)
3. What are the members to do together? (Team Expectation)
4. How are members going to relate to one another?
5. How will the team achieve its goals?
6. What decision-making process will be used? (Voting, consensus or agreeing on a solution that can be lived with by all.)
7. How will conflicts and disagreements be solved?
8. What is inappropriate behavior and how it will be solved?
9. Will resource people outside the group be consulted if necessary?

13.

10. How will the team evaluate itself to measure progress?
11. What is the time schedule? How will deadlines be met and decisions made in a timely manner?
12. Who prepares the agenda and gets it out in advance to allow preparation time?
13. How will the agenda items be prioritized?
14. Who chairs the meetings? Do members alternate?
15. Who records the minutes and circulates them back to the members within 24 hours?

Ground rules need to be checked often to see if they are working or need changing. Rules are made to be followed. However, if they don't work and need to be altered, change them.

Although every team is different, there are ways to measure its development. Most teams usually pass through three stages.

INDIVIDUAL STAGE People come together as a group of individuals with self-centered goals. Members tend to be cautious, mistrustful of one another and work independently. Conformity is more important than resolving conflicts, disagreements or problems. (Individual Centered)

14.

17

GROUP STAGE

By clarifying roles and ways in which individuals work together, a group identity begins to emerge. The group tends to look for a leader who will give them directions and assign tasks. (Leader Centered)

TEAM STAGE

This stage is more difficult to attain. Members are committed to equally sharing in the responsibility of the common goal. Members use the goal to direct their decisions and actions. Communication is open and honest. Individual gifts are developed and utilized for the good of the whole. Members resolve conflicts or see them as opportunities for new ideas or constructive changes. (Team Centered)

VOCABULARY

COMMUNICATION - INTERCHANGE OF THOUGHT AND IDEAS

EXPERTISE - SKILL OR KNOWLEDGE

STABILITY - ABILITY TO CONTINUE OR LAST

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- PRIORITIZE - HAPPENING IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE**

- AGENDA - LIST OF THINGS TO BE ACTED ON AT A MEETING**

- RESOLVE - ARRIVE AT A FINAL DECISION**

- DIALOGUE - CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO OR MORE PERSONS; AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS**

- PROCEDURES - A PARTICULAR COURSE OF ACTION**

- CONFLICTS - DIRECT DISAGREEMENT**

- INDEPENDENT - NOT INFLUENCED OR CONTROLLED BY OTHERS**

16.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Because teams are made up of individuals, problems and conflicts are inevitable and normal. They can be positive or negative. Conflicts are positive when they generate new ideas, broaden the imagination, and lead to greater understanding. Conflicts are negative and unhealthy when they are avoided or passed over. Conflicts should be handled when they occur and solved to everyone's satisfaction. If problems are not dealt with immediately, they usually build up and cause greater trouble later. Unresolved problems are the greatest barriers to communication, trust and support.

Problems usually arise when there are differences in values, expectations and opinions. That is why it is so important to **MUTUALLY** set goals and expectations right in the beginning.

Try to stay clear of win/lose situations. In these instances, there has to be a winner and a loser. This could lead to taking sides and divide the team. Individualism and competitiveness are two barriers to team building.

Team members have to bend at times. In order to get, one has to give. There are many approaches to a given situation. Sometimes a member may have to compromise a personal opinion to achieve the goal and keep good relationship among the members.

The best way to solve a problem is to talk about it. For a more detailed explanation on how to do this, consult the booklet entitled, Problem Solving Techniques.

For people to work well on a team, it is good to know both desirable and undesirable behaviors and traits. The charts on the following pages briefly explain some of the typical pitfalls that might cause conflict and some of the desirable traits that add to the success of the team's effort.

PROBLEMS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. getting stuck | - determine what needs to be done to move on |
| 2. influential, aggressive person | - seek all team members' knowledge |
| 3. dominating, monopolizing person | - structure meeting so everyone responds; kindly tell person others need to be heard |
| 4. quiet member, non participant | - gently encourage naturally quiet person to contribute; never assume silence is consent |
| 5. stating opinion as fact | - ask where the data is to prove statement/s |
| 6. judger | - avoid giving motive for another's action |
| 7. rusher | - slow down |

18.

- 8. discrediting, discounting - give credit and praise where they are due
- 9. socializer - provide break times for members to talk socially
- 10. tangents/wandering - name a member to keep the group on track; stick to one subject till solved
- 11. accommodator/non asserter - encourage person to challenge members

DESIRABLE GROUP BEHAVIORS

- 1. initiator - helps get things moving
- 2. facilitator/leader - makes sure all members share ideas honestly and openly; keeps things moving
- 3. motivator - encourages participation, gives praise, supports members to reach full potential
- 4. harmonizer - helps relationships when things get tense
- 5. analyzer - evaluates team's actions and keeps members focused

19.

- 6. negotiator - brings settlement or resolve to issues
- 7. organizer/designer - arranges matters, ideas in correct order
- 8. implementor - puts words or project into action
- 9. researcher - gets the facts
- 10. summarizer - makes a brief restatement of what was spoken; checks for agreement
- 11. shaper/designer - develops and gives form to project

INEVITABLE - CANNOT BE AVOIDED

UNRESOLVED - CANNOT FIND AN ANSWER

COMPROMISE - SETTLE DIFFERENCES

INFLUENCIAL - POWERFUL

TANGENT - CHANGING SUDDENLY FROM ONE THOUGHT TO ANOTHER

**DISCREDIT - DESTROY CONFIDENCE;
INJURE REPUTATION**

20.

EVALUATION

No team is perfect or without its problems. Therefore, it is essential to take time periodically to evaluate how things are moving along. The purpose of an evaluation is not to point fingers but to determine how the team might improve. At the end of each meeting, spend time talking about how the process went. Put ideas together for further improvement.

There are some basic questions to ask when evaluating the team's progress.

1. Is the goal clear and commonly understood?
2. Are roles clearly defined?
3. Is communication open and honest?
4. Does everyone attend meetings and arrive on time?
5. Do all team members participate?
6. Are tasks equally shared and completed on time?
7. Are members respectful of one another, particularly in disagreements.
8. Are accurate records kept?
9. Are problems faced and solved immediately?
10. Is every member knowledgeable on how the team process works?
11. Do all members know how decisions are made?
12. Does the team rely on good data and accurate information to make decisions?
13. Once the goal or decision is made, is there an implementation plan?

No matter what problem a team encounters, the process works if there is constructive and honest feedback. Feedback is a way to check that the information is received. This is done by asking questions and watching for non-verbal communication. People tend to believe behavior more than words.

Both negative and positive feedback have value. If there is agreement and commitment to giving honest feedback, it should be no surprise when it is given or received.

Give feedback at the appropriate time and with care. Relate the feedback to a specific event. Don't exaggerate, judge, or use labels. Speak about what you saw and heard. Have your facts straight. Use "I" instead of "you". "You" reflects finger pointing. People become defensive and won't hear what you say. "I" shows the listener how you feel about the other person's action. For example, "I feel a lot of time is wasted when you're late and I would appreciate it if you were here on time."

Here is a formula for giving constructive feedback.

WHEN YOU....	When you are late,
I FEEL...	I feel a lot of time is wasted
BECAUSE....	because we have to repeat ourselves.

(Give the person a chance to respond.)

I'D LIKE...	I'd like you to be on time so we can do more.
IF THAT IS AGREEABLE TO YOU...	What do you think?

22.

25

Sometimes feedback is not always given with the best of care. When this happens, it is helpful to know how to react.

1. Breathe deeply to allow your body time to relax and your mind to become alert.
2. Listen to what is said. Then ask questions for clarification.
3. Phrase the feedback in your own words to be sure you heard it correctly.

(If you need time to think over the situation, set a later time to respond. Don't use this as an excuse to avoid the issue, however.

4. Agree with what is true or possible. This does not mean you'll change your behavior. You can agree, for example, that you are late without agreeing to change the behavior. Maybe there is no way that you can be on time. If the issue becomes a team problem, it will have to be solved by the team. (See Problem Solving Techniques booklet.

Feedback does not always have to be about negative points. Giving a compliment is certainly an excellent example of constructive feedback. There is nothing better to generate good morale and spirit than praising others for their good work.

PRAISE BENEFITS THE GIVER AS WELL AS THE RECEIVER.

A lot more can be said about team building. Additional concepts are discussed in the seminars on quality assurance and total quality management. However, there is one final team concept to include here and that is, to celebrate success with fun and enjoyment.

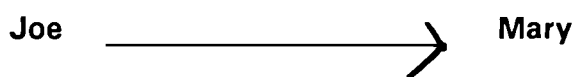
SUCSESSES MUST BE CELEBRATED AND REWARDED.

Letting go of old styles of leadership in business management is not easy. Change at best is difficult and slow. It takes planning, cooperation, time, training and patience. The journey is very rewarding because it leads to improvement within the business and quality service to the customer. Could anyone ask for more?

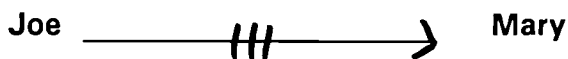
SOCIOGRAM

A sociogram is a device used to analyze team participation. Set up a design similar to the one on top of the next page, corresponding to where people sit at a team meeting. Observe the interaction among team members.

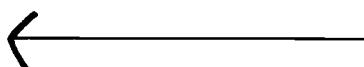
1. Draw an arrow from the speaker to the person addressed.



2. Use a slash mark across the arrow each time Joe speaks to Mary. Do the same for other members.

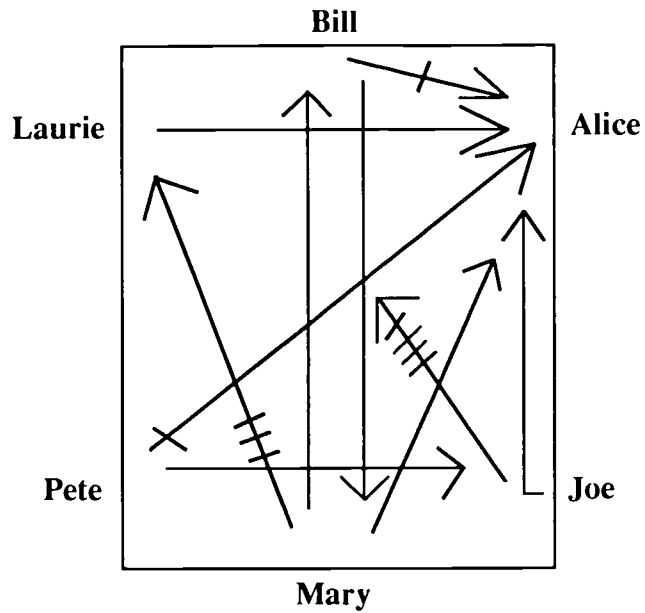


3. If a person spoken to responds, draw a separate arrow.



4. If a remark is made to no particular person but addressed to all, draw the arrow only to the middle of the design.
5. Once the team completes a few minutes of discussion, analyze the results.

25.



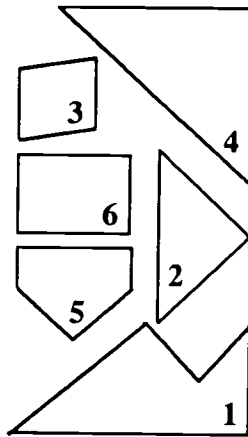
EXAMPLE ANALYSIS

1. Mary and Bill addressed and responded to one another.
2. Everyone addressed Alice who spoke to no one.
3. Joe addressed no one in particular five times.
4. Mary talked mostly to Laurie.

OBSERVE TEAM DISCUSSIONS IN YOUR CLASSROOM. DO YOUR OWN SOCIOGRAM AND ANALYSIS.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION EXERCISE

Form teams of four or five people. Each team receives six pieces of various size papers. The goal of each team is to make ONE square out of all six pieces. The project is to be done in silence. You may give a piece to anyone but you cannot take a piece from another. If a group finishes before the others, people may observe other groups in silence. Once every group completes its square, share your comments and observations about the exercise.



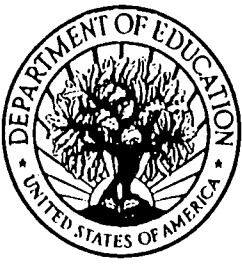
There is also a very clever piece of music by Ravel entitled Bolero that demonstrated synergism in music. It is most entertaining and enjoyable.

There are other various team projects and exercises that your instructor will give you to solve or decide. Among them are the Jungle Survival Situation, the Hostage Rescue or any other submitted by instructor or student.

The purpose of these exercises is to implement some of the team concepts discussed in this booklet.

***TEAMS PROMOTE PARTICIPATION.
PARTICIPATION PROMOTES OWNERSHIP.***

***A TEAM THAT CLAIMS OWNERSHIP
OF A PROCESS WILL FEEL MORE
RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE
FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION.***



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