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AUTHOR          Turk, Randall L.; McFadden, Jorena; Stoss, Penny; Dreiling,
                Eileen
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ABSTRACT
        This study identified and described appropriate training
activities to help educators develop the skills necessary to participate in a
team setting. The qualitative research paradigm allowed researchers to
collect data in the contextual setting. Researchers conducted interviews and
reviewed documents related to team building activities, noting
appropriateness of the activities. Data from interviews and document reviews,
as well as information from different respondents and investigators, were
triangulated to identify pertinent team building activities. The research
resulted in a team-building manual with four sections, each of which focuses
on a component of team building (fundamental teaming skills, communication,
relationships, and leadership and collaboration). Each section of the manual
contains a theoretical base, an expert analysis, and the instructions for
conducting each team building activity. Teaming activities provide
opportunities for skill building and process learning. Collaboration,
reflection for self-improvement and team- building, and dialogue are some of
the skills that can be learned from the activities. A synopsis of the manual
is contained in the appendix. (Contains 23 references.) (SM)

Running Head: Team Building Activities

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Team Building Activities in the Educational Setting: A Manual

Randall L. Turk

Wichita State University

Jorena McFadden

Hutchinson USD 308, Hutchinson KS

Penny Stoss

Nickerson USD 309, Nickerson, KS

Eileen Dreiling

Augusta USD 402, Augusta, KS

Contributing Authors: Scott Friesen, Dale Sprunger, Chris Waterbury, Krista Wolff, and Jon Zumalt

## Abstract

The field research, conducted by eight master's degree students and a faculty member explored team-building activities. Qualitative research methodologies included interviews and documents review. The research culminated in a manual. The manual includes an introduction and the four functional sections of (a) Fundamental Teaming Skills, (b) Communication, (c) Relationships, and (d) Leadership and Collaboration. Teaming activities, contained in the manual, provide opportunities for skill building and process learning. Collaboration, reflection for self-improvement and team building, and dialogue are some of the skills that can be learned from the activities. Process development includes learning to set values and establish norms, and learning strategies for sharing power and control to build leadership capacity. The paper provides knowledge for team building and conducting field research with students and faculty as partners.

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Field Research Team Members

Eileen Dreiling, dean of students and administrative intern, Augusta High School, Augusta USD 402

Jeff Friesen, teacher and administrative intern, Inman High School, Inman USD 448

Jo McFadden, teacher and administrative intern, Hutchinson Middle School 8th Grade Center, Hutchinson USD 308

Dale Sprunger, teacher and administrative intern, Inman High School, Inman USD 448

Penny Stoss, teacher and administrative intern, South Hutchinson Elementary, Nickerson/South Hutchinson USD 309

Randy Turk, professor, Educational Administration and Supervision, Wichita State University

Chris Waterbury, teacher and administrative intern, Payne Elementary School, Wichita USD 259

Krista Wolff, teacher and administrative intern, Payne Elementary School, Wichita USD 259

Jon Zumalt, administrative intern, Southeast High School, Wichita USD 259

Team Building Activities in the Educational Setting: A Manual

Members of the Wichita State University Master's Degree Program in Educational Administration conducted field research to explore team-building activities. This research was conducted in the fall of 2000 and completed in the spring of 2001. The field research team consisted of nine members. Eight of the members were students and one was an Educational Administration faculty member.

Implications from a previous study titled "Team Building Processes in the Educational Setting" conducted by members of this same program in the fall semester of 1999 and completed in the spring semester of 2000 established a purpose to further research team building. This research was presented as a paper, same title, at the annual meeting of MWERA 2000. A need to research activities related to team building was a direct result of the earlier research as well as the perceptions of members of the team.

Research was conducted to identify and describe appropriate training activities that can be used to help educators develop skills necessary to participate in a team setting. The methods for this field research included documents review and interviews. A literature review was accomplished to establish a theoretical base.

The field study answered two research questions:

1. What are effective team-building activities schools can use for training?

2. How do these team-building activities relate to the teaming process?

The research resulted in a team-building manual. The manual consists of four sections, each focusing on a component of team building. Each section of the manual contains a theoretical base, an expert analysis, and the instructions for

conducting each team-building activity. A synopsis of the manual is contained in Appendix A. The synopsis contains abbreviate discussions of the theoretical base and expert analysis, and a description of the activities. A description of the methodology is contained in the next section.

## Research Methodology

Research was conducted to identify and describe appropriate training activities that can be used to help educators develop skills necessary to participate in a team setting. The research was conducted within the qualitative paradigm. The qualitative paradigm allowed the researchers to collect data in the contextual setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data collected using qualitative methods produce a thick description that invites the reader to assume an active role in the development of the meaning (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). The reader actually constructs meaning and determines applicability to his or her context. The research team members interviewed nine team-building experts and reviewed appropriate documents.

Interviews provide an opportunity for a researcher and a respondent to interact for the purpose of furthering knowledge about a specific topic. "Interviews allow the researcher and respondent to move back and forth in time; to reconstruct the past, interpret the present, and predict the future" (Erlandson, et al. 1993, p. 85). Protocol for interviews range from a structured to an unstructured form of data collection (Patton, 1990). The unstructured interview, or conversation with a purpose, describes the format used to collect data from individuals with expertise in team building.

The research team reviewed documents related to team building activities. Team building activities were reviewed to determine appropriateness of the activity.

Documents provide low cost information that accurately depicts the situation
(Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data from interviews and documents review, as well as different respondents
and investigators, were triangulated to identify pertinent team building activities.
Different respondents, methodologies, and investigators provide sources for
triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation allows the researcher to
establish credibility, confirmability, and dependability (Erlandson, et al., 1993). The
research team triangulated data by comparing results from various investigators,
sources, and methodologies.

Analysis of data allowed the researchers to identify appropriate team-
building activities and their applicable use. Qualitative data received from the
interviews and documents review resulted in a team-building activity manual. A
synopsis of the manual is contained in Appendix A that follows.

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Appendix A

Synopsis of the Team Building Manual

Synopsis of the Team Building Manual

This section of the paper presents a synopsis of the *Team Building Manual*. The manual consists of four sections. The four sections are (a) Foundational Teaming Skills, (b) Communication, (c) Relationships, and (d) Leadership and Collaboration. Each section of the manual begins with a theoretical base, is followed by an expert analysis, and concludes with skill-building activities. The synopsis includes a summary of the theoretical base and expert analysis with a description of the team building activities. The first topic presented is foundational team-building skills.

Foundational Teaming Skills

Foundational teaming skills are those that are require for effective participation in a teaming environment.

Theoretical Base

Team building is a key component of organizational effectiveness. Teams are groups that work together under a shared commitment (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). Teams use team-building activities designed purposefully to develop individual skills necessary for participating in a team setting (Deines, 2000). Training and team activities become effective team building functions when individuals reflect on the purpose of the activity to gain a shared meaning.

According to Ethridge, Horgan, Valesky, & Smith (2000), there are definite steps in working as a team. The first step is to build relationships among team members. Next the team should identify all potential stakeholders—people who have an interest in the team's outcomes. Last, the team needs to understand the common purpose. This includes developing an overall picture of goals and

constraints, developing a general plan for the project, assigning specific areas of responsibility to each team member, and agreeing on a basic set of rules to govern the relationships and responsibilities within the team.

Individuals, during the process of teaming, evaluate their working relationship to increase productivity and collaboration. Teaming is used when a task is too great for a single individual to handle in the allotted time. Work can be parceled out to team members who can work concurrently on each part. It is also used when the requirements of a task are too complex for a single individual to handle.

Successful teams allow time for individual and team reflection. Ashbaugh and Kasten (1995) stated that reflective practice should be emphasized during professional development programs. Reflection can best be described as time to think about and process a certain event or situation. Norlander-Case Reagan, and Case (1999) described three major elements of reflection: "Reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-for-action," (p. 30). Ashbaugh and Kasten (1995) further defined these three processes. Reflection-on-action is simply looking back on an event. Reflection-in-action is thinking about an event while the event is occurring. Finally, reflection-for-action is the process of analyzing and drawing conclusions. Team members must partake in all three types of reflection to develop shared meaning.

Analytic reflection and critical reflection are two types of reflection that enable a team to develop shared meaning. Norlander-Case et al. (1999) stated that analytic reflection is the most effective and can only take place when there is a problem to solve. They noted, "critical reflection occurs when a situation arises in which a team member must consider what is taking place and what the options are"

(p. 27). According to Ashbaugh and Kasten (1995), team members should be able to use reflection to "recognize, understand and consider sources of action, and consequences of actions in certain situations" (p. 6).

Reflection should take place both by individual team members and within the team setting. Ashbaugh and Kasten (1995) stated, "Reflective practice is a process of dialogue, either the internal dialogue of individual retrospection or a conversation with others in which knowledge, frameworks, assumptions and conclusions are made explicit," (p. 155). Reflection then moves from one individual thinking about their day to a group of individuals processing these same events and making sense out of them. "Reflective conversation also includes inquiry into the views of others by asking them to state their assumptions and describe the data upon which their assumptions and conclusions are based, and by showing genuine interest in their positions," (Ashbaugh & Kasten, 1995, p. 155). This development of shared meaning through dialogue and inquiry are beneficial to the team as a whole and to individual members of the team. Time for reflection must be included within team building to ensure the team's success.

Expert Analysis

Dr. Ranelle Lang; Assistant Dean for the College of Education, University Colorado, Boulder; stated that one of the greatest benefits of working together is the way in which a team can, "Multiply how good a product is, and diminish how bad it might be." The focus should be on the creation of the product, not the creation of the process. When teams are created and used effectively, they can work to achieve the mission of the organization. One of those beginning activities is setting values and establishing norms.

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Setting values and establishing norms are essential elements of building a team. Randy Turk, associate professor at Wichita State University, stated, "Teams without norms are similar to playing a game without rules. No one knows the expectations. Arguments ensue because there are no common understandings." Team norms provide guides for team members to operate. Turk claimed that teams waste a lot of time because they continually have disagreements concerning their mission, when the differences are really about operating procedures. Norms without values create meaningless procedures. Turk emphatically stated, "It is important for individuals to set personal values as a base for their team values. If you begin with team values, the true values of self are lost."

Jodi Besthorn, a County Extension Agent with the Kansas State Research & Extension Office in Sedgwick County, has used teambuilding activities with a variety of groups. It helps with the flow, consistency and success of each team meeting

Besthorn said that teamwork should be a series of sequenced activities that lead to the ultimate goal of the team. Lang stated that it is important to remember that the goal is not the team, but the mission of the organization. Teaming is a method to reach the goals of the organization. Pat Fultz, an Extension Specialist with 4-H Youth Development, believes in teambuilding for a purpose, "It's not just a game." When teams build teaming activities into their time, they are using the activities to accomplish their tasks.

Dana Hinshaw, Director of Student Activities and Residence Life at Hutchinson Community College, stated a good facilitator would plan activities that lead towards the team's goal. It is very important that the facilitator knows the purpose of the team so that she can ask the appropriate debriefing questions.

Team-building activities should be reflected upon to fully gain the purpose of doing the activities and not treating the activities as just a game. Lang stated that in reflection, teams could ask different questions after each planning session, such as: "Who seemed to have the most control and power during this activity?" "Who was most concerned about success during this project?" Reflection skills are more effective when related to the process used by the team to accomplish a task.

Synopsis of Activities

**Setting Values and Establishing Norms,** developed by Randy Turk, allows teams to determine working guides or norms based on shared values and beliefs. The norms provide procedures for teaming processes. The value setting process begins with each individual identifying his or her values. The individual then translates his or her values that are applicable to a team setting. The team prioritizes its values and establishes norms or guides that emerge from the values.

**Community Juggling**, developed by Beth Hinshaw, is designed for a group of 5 to 15 using a variety of soft, objects. The group passes the objects between group members using a random but established pattern of passing to the same person each time until each person has had the object and it is returned to the beginning. Variations of the game can include wearing gloves, saying team member names, bouncing objects and adding unusual objects to be passed. After establishing a pattern add in a "switch". The switch is to reverse the pattern and send the objects back the other way. Players do not recover dropped objects. The team members see how often they can switch and keep control of the objects.

**Reflective Activity**, developed Ranelle Lang, provides opportunity for members or teams to ask questions and critically analyze their behaviors and

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processes. Each member may pose questions about processes in a professional manner. Members are caused to analyze their behavior and the teaming process.

## Communication

The way in which team members communicate with each other affects team performance. The communication section contains a theoretical base, expert analysis, and five skill-building activities.

### Theoretical Base

The theoretical base contains a discussion of communication and dialogue. The theoretical base concludes with a description of the dialogic process.

The literature suggests that communication skills are a necessary prerequisite to the team building process. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) team stated, "Common understanding and purpose cannot arise without effective communication skills and constructive conflict that, in turn, depends on interpersonal skills" (p.48).

Each team member should be skilled at sharing information. Manz, Manz, Mancuso, and Neck (1997) stated that assertive communication is the most productive style of communication in a team setting. Before becoming involved in a team setting, prospective team members must know how to talk to each other, share ideas, and reflect on their progress toward their purpose. If team members communicate effectively, they are more likely to work in a collaborative manner, which in turn helps the team achieve its purpose. Huszczo (1996) stated that communication skills are the key relationship-building behaviors that individuals must develop and use when interacting with their team members.

Prospective team members need to develop an understanding of the different skills that collectively define communication. In the book Team Talk, Manz et al.

(1997) stated, "communication is the bridge over which team members share ideas, influence action and build healthy working relationships" (p.92). Communication involves all aspects of how individuals share information. Listening, probing, asking questions and reflection are all important to the development of effective team communication. Harris (1994) discussed listening as a key area of communication that needs to be developed and utilized to address the common barriers to effective communication. According to Secretan (1997), "We cannot meet the needs of others if we do not pause to hear what those needs are. To truly listen, we must shutdown our 'mental chatter' and genuinely, non-judgmentally, listen to each other" (p. 47). Good listening skills are an essential element for dialogue.

Dialogue is a form of communication that transforms individuals into team members. Huszczo (1996) stated that individuals who possess dialogue skills are able to act as a catalyst for the development of trust, accountability, shared leadership, and collaborative relationships within the team environment.

Dialogue is a form of communication that causes people to listen with the intention of understanding another's point of view. When team members deeply listen to each other the outcome is trust, and positive relationships are developed (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998). Through dialogue group members open their minds and exchange ideas, adding new meaning to what they already know about the topic. Ellinor and Gerard stated that dialogue occurs when a group of people listens to each other and develops shared meaning. When the group has established shared meaning, the group will develop a shared purpose.

As organizations face difficult problems they can no longer afford to attempt to find their solution through one set of eyes. Huszczo (1996) stated that problems have to be seen and solved through the eyes of others as well. Dialogue is a

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systematic process of interactive discussion that allows the group to develop a shared understanding of the problem (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998).

For teams to be successful, trainers must teach individuals to move from a myopic view of an issue to seeing things from a global standpoint. Ellinor and Gerard (1998) stated that individualistic thinking patterns cause us to rush into action to solve problems before we understand them. This way of thinking causes new problems, creating the "problem/action/new problem cycle.... Groups that practice dialogue over time actually develop a capability for collective thinking that can move them beyond this kind of vicious cycling" (Ellinor & Gerard, p. 16). Ellinor and Gerard stated that our busy and demanding work environment doesn't allow much time for reflective conversations to take place. Dialogue skill practiced during team training helps to slow the pace. Teams need "soak time" (p. 121) scheduled into each team meeting for members to reflect and integrate the information that is being shared (Ellinor & Gerard). Dialogue can only occur when members have an understanding of the differences between dialogue and discussion. Participants should first participate in exercises that familiarize participants with the differences between dialogue and discussion.

Expert Analysis

Dialogue is a process of sharing information that creates an environment where the opinion of each member is valued equally. Sue Castille, director of National Conference for Community and Justice regional office, stated that a requisite for dialogue is equal sharing of power and control by team members. This can be accomplished by allowing each team member to act as the team meeting facilitator. Through this process each team member develops facilitation or

leadership skills. More importantly, each team member is forced to monitor, evaluate, and reflect on how the group is working toward achieving their purpose.

Dialogue creates a discourse that precludes participants from attempting to be right at the expense of establishing meaning. Randy Turk, associate professor at Wichita State University, stated that dialogue is a conversation that places emphasis on developing a shared meaning as averse to selling or persuading a point. Being correct is not the focus of dialogue. Getting one's way is not the focus of dialogue. Turk stated, "Dialogue is about sharing meaning and listening. Listening is the key. If one is busy thinking about what to say 'mental chatter,' then she is missing the meaning of what is being said." He continued, "A response followed within two seconds of another person's comment is either an emotional response or what the responding person was thinking instead of listening." He posed the question, "What does that tell us about listening and our culture?" Dialogue is a powerful communication tool that allows teams to make good decisions.

Synopsis of Activities

**Comparison of Dialogue and Debate** came from Study Circles Center, Pomfret, CT. The activity will allow participants to learn the difference between dialogue and debate as methods of communication. Small groups of approximately five read and interact about their understanding of dialogue and debate using a handout about the dialogic process in teaming.

**Assessing Team Dialogue** was adapted from "Games People Play", Bendaly (1996). Participants in the teaming process learn to recognize assumptions that can block dialogue. The team creates a list of assumptions that may prevent the dialogue process from occurring. The teams select several dialogue blockers from

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the list and discuss how to remove each of the assumptions from blocking team dialogue.

**Probing and Team Dialogue Checklist** was adapted from "Games People Play," (Bendaly, 1996). Probing helps participants increase their knowledge of the topics of discussion through asking questions. The activity allows 30 minutes of asking questions of each team member and practice in probing. The team members are asked to reflect about their dialogue. Are they asking questions that bring clarity to what is being discussed? Are they building on what others have to say or waiting to share their own perspectives on the issue? If the consensus of the group is that the team is not creating dialogue through probing, schedule additional probing exercises during future meetings.

**Team Dialogue Checklist** can determine if probing for information is occurring during team meetings. One pre-determined team member each time the team meets can use a checklist. This ongoing dialogue assessment tool will help the team monitor their commitment to dialogue. The team member shares his or her notes with the group during team reflection time.

**Flower Pot,** adapted by Jodi Besthorn is used to enhance communication through teaching the value of cooperation. In this activity small groups are formed. Each group has a leader and an observer. The group follows a set of written directions read by the leader while the observer answers a set of questions about the group's behavior. The group is asked to break a flowerpot in a sack and then use tape to put the pieces together. The group has 10 minutes to complete the task. At the end of the allotted time the team is asked to reflect. The observer shares what they observe. To add another dimension to the activity, one person in each group could "differently abled" by loss of hands - wear mittens, loss of sight - blindfolded,

loss of mobility - stay seated in chair, loss of hearing - use foam earplugs, loss of speaking - can't talk.

<div align="center">Relationships</div>

The relationship section contains skills that are required for building relationships within the team. Skills such as trust, conflict resolution, and problem solving are discussed as being important in building good working team relationships.

Theoretical Base

Relationships are the association among the people on a team. Opponents of teaming maintain that the crucial factor of teaming is whether or not team members can endure associating with one another (Doll, 1992). Team members have to take the time to learn what to expect from one another, what they prefer, and how they differ. They have to value each other and capitalize on their differences (Robbins & Finley, 1995)

Francis and Young (1979) wrote about relationships that are essential for successful team building. Their work included conditions that would promote positive relationships. The conditions are (a) a high level of interdependence among the team members, (b) a mutual trust for each other, (c) an ability to examine errors without personal attack, (d) an ability to understand that dealing with and managing conflict is seen as a way to improve team performance, and (e) a well-defined purpose and clear goals.

To make teaming work, relationships must be developed. Members of the team have a responsibility to themselves and other. Leigh and Maynard (1999) wrote, "To promote team relationships one should (a) encourage frank, no-holds-barred discussions; (b) not avoid conflict; (c) acknowledge strong feelings; and (d)

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work on tasks jointly" (p. 220). Successful teams use these skills to build strong, positive relationships and learn from their experiences. Positive team relations must occur to accomplish a task, to get the job done, or to rise to a higher level.

Expert Analysis

Beth Hinshaw, extension specialist with Kansas State University, stated, "When trust is present, people function naturally and openly." In order for teams to develop trust the team needs ground rules. Teams should participate in skill building activities that allow them to feel a sense of fairness and equal contribution. Teams that develop shared values develop the basis of a positive relationship.

Dr. Ranelle Lang, assistant superintendent for the Augusta public schools, stated that teaming activities are more effective if done within the context of solving problems and in the context of a product-oriented process.

Synopsis of Activities

**Article Reading** involves staff members being divided into small groups and taking turns reading the same current educational literature out loud and making a connection with their prior knowledge and talking about possible classroom applications. After all group members have shared their rationales, the group will then dialogue about the connections between them. The dialogue develops shared meaning.

**Just a Length of Webbing (Raccoon Circles)**, adapted by Jody Besthorn, is designed to build trust among team members. The team member's use a 15-20' length of webbing that has the ends securely tied together in a flat-water knot to created a circle of webbing. The webbing is used to present various challenges to the team.

Challenge #1: The team members gather around the outside of the webbing circles, facing the middle. The challenge is to pass the knot completely around the circle and back to its starting position within a chosen time.

Challenge #2: The team members stand side-by-side, hands on the rope, facing inward. The team members slowly lower their bodies, pulling back on the webbing, until they are in a squatting position, Then without talking or giving directions, the group slowly returns to the standing position.

Challenge #3: The team members stand in a circle holding hands. The webbing is placed between two people. The challenge is to pass the webbing completely around the circle without letting go of their hands.

**Marble Tubes**, adapted by Jody Besthorn, will assist a team in working through problems together. Participants hold a segment of PVC tubing and try to relocate several marbles from each other's tubes. Different challenges include, standing on a flight of stairs, only holding the tube with one hand, using elbows or Y sections of tube, drilling a few holes in the tubes, and passing items that do not make noise.

**Magic Carpet**, adapted by Pat Fultz, will assist team members to work together to solve a problem. The challenge for the group is to turn the magic carpet over, without touching the ground. In order to limit the risk in this activity, request that all participants maintain contact with the magic carpet at all times. This eliminates the option of carrying participants on shoulders and other balance related concerns. Magic Carpet requires all participants in a group to work within a tightly constrained space.

**Buddy Ropes**, adapted by Pat Fultz, allows the team to experience the "ropes" of building a group as they work together to solve a problem. The team

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forms a circle with each participant holding one end of a 2' – 3' length of rope in his or her right hand. Next they hold up their right hand and take hold of another person's rope with their left hand. They cannot hold the rope belonging to the person on either side of them nor can the participant hold the rope belonging to the same person who is holding their rope. A huge knot or web has been created. The challenge is for the team to analyze the situation, design a strategy to untangle the web and then put that strategy into place without letting go of the ropes.

Each one of these activities requires a time for reflection to discuss what was learned during the activity.

<div align="center">Leadership and Collaboration</div>

The leadership and collaboration section contains a discussion of collaborative leadership, power and control.

Theoretical Base

Collaboration is a concept that allows members of an organization to work together towards a common goal. Each member in a collaborative setting is a "co-equal" who brings unique experiences, perceptions, and values which may or may not match the members of the group (Clift, 1995). Pounder (1998) stated that employees are now asked to share information, work together, and be involved in the decision making process. Keith and Girling (1991) termed this participatory management, the regular and significant involvement of employees in organizational decision-making. Collaboration has emerged as the process that must take place to successfully allow employees to serve as equal participants in an organization. Successful collaboration occurs when individuals are reflective and value the expertise of each team member. Individuals who are participants in a collaborative effort develop leadership capacity.

Shared power is an essential ingredient for team success. In order for a team to be a team in the true sense of the word, one member must not have all or most of the power. Hillman (1995) stated that control limits power. Individuals who hoard power prevent others from sharing ideas and visions. This process actually results in reduced power. "Control governs more by veto than by leadership, more checking and balancing a variety of forces then by charging forward like a point man in front of the pack.... The idea of control controls the controllers; we are not in control of the power of control" (Hillman, pp. 109-110).

Expert Analysis

Administrators who are willing to share decision-making in a collaborative environment promote leadership capacity. Leadership capacity empowers individuals as decision-makers. Dr. Randy Turk, Associate Professor at Wichita State University, stated that power is control. If you limit the amount of power, you limit the amount of control. Conversely, if you share power with your employees, you gain more power as an administrator.

Facilitation skills are also an important aspect of the teaming process. Facilitators ensure that all members of a team have equal power and an opportunity to participate. Sue Castille, director of National Conference for Community and Justice regional office, stated that the ability to facilitate or take a leadership role in a meeting or team setting greatly enhances the effectiveness of the group process.

Leadership in teams must be collaborative and nurture sharing. According to Turk, team members must feel that their comments are welcome and that they, as individuals, are respected and valued. Facilitators or leaders should ensure that

each team member has an opportunity to speak and that others are respectful listeners.

**Candle Power**, developed by Randall L. Turk, is an activity that demonstrates how power can affect the function of a team. Team members are introduced to power through the use of candles and their illumination. The light represents power. The sharing of the light increases the ability of the team to work together collaboratively. Individuals, throughout the activity, experience the frustration of being powerless. Lack of power portrays an environment of limited shared power. The end result allows all of the participants to see how the sharing of power increases the production of the team as a whole.

**Creating "Harmony" Within a Group**, adapted by Pat Fultz, is used to enhance leadership roles. Conduit pipes are used to make music. Pipes are numbered to match music notes. Each person in the group gets a different pipe. Participants, who are given copies of the song with numbers of the pipes listed by the music notes, play their pipe at the appropriate time. Pipes played at the correct times should create a musical masterpiece. Team members take turns being the leader. The leader sets the rhythm, beat, and cadence.

**Bull Ring**, adapted by Pat Fultz, is used to enhance leadership skills. A bull ring is made by tying five strings of different lengths to a 1-inch diameter metal ring. Each participant has a string, which is attached to the ring. The challenge is to carry a small ball using a metal ring and string (Bull Ring) through a series of obstacles to reach a designated site or to place the ball into a "goal" (plastic bucket, tin can, etc.). This activity can be made more difficult by transporting the ball around objects such as trees, tables, chairs, and fences. Gentle slopes, stairways and narrow doorways also provide additional challenges. If you have fewer participants

than strings, just allow participants to hold more than one string. If you have more participants than strings, ask several of them to serve as observers…or blindfold a participant holding the string and assign a sighted person to assist them while moving.

**Black Rope**, adapted by Pat Fultz, is used to enhance leadership roles. This activity requires situational analysis, strategic planning, communication skills, and leadership. Each member will use one hand to hold onto a rope 30-50 inches in length. Each rope, which has 10-12 knots, are affixed about 3-4' apart. The hand has to stay in the same place throughout the activity. Individuals cannot let go of the rope. The challenge is for the group to work together to untie the knots with their hands.

**Nominal Group Technique**, adapted from "The Facilitators Manual," is designed to help participants develop leadership/facilitation skills of brainstorming and prioritizing ideas. The facilitator should identify a question that pertains to a problem that is common to the participants. The participants are allowed to work five minutes silently and independently jot down ideas to respond to the question noted on the sheet of paper they received. The participants are divided into small groups and take turns sharing their ideas. These ideas are recorded and numbered. Participants then select what they believe to be the five best responses and record them on separate index cards in ranking order. These selections are tabulated and discussed in small groups. All the participants are brought back to one large group to discuss the top five responses from each small sub-group. The previous steps are repeated with the entire group and the final vote is discussed.

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Signature:

Organization/Address:
Wichita State Univ. 1845 Fairmount Box 142
Wichita, KS 67260

Printed Name/Position/Title:
RANDALL L. TURK ASSOC. PROF

Telephone: 316 978-6337
FAX: 316-928-6581

E-Mail Address:
RANDY.TURK@
WICHITA.EDU

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