

Teamwork is what makes a team work! Part One



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We cannot stress enough on the importance of teamwork. There is no doubt, whether in the workplace, business, personal life, a football field, or amongst members of any community, the success of any team extremely depends on its members.

If the team members do not communicate effectively, do not cooperate, lack motivation, and are in continuous conflict, the team will not succeed.

A team is a group of people working together on one goal, where each individual brings forth his/her knowledge, skills, effort, and energy in a concentrated manner and coordinates them with these of others in order to produce a desirable result.

According to Parker, Glenn, and Richard, "A team is a group of people with a high degree of interdependence focused on the achievement of some goal or task. The group agrees on the goal and the process of achievement." (*50 Activities for Team Building, Human Resource Development Press, Vol. 1, 1992, pp, 7*)

The word 'teamwork' illuminates itself. Teamwork is the term used to describe the cooperative effective work done by team members. It is the capability to comprehend and recognize the diverse strengths and abilities in a group and then applying them to one final solution.

In today's modern corporate world, and this competitive economy, developing teamwork skills in the workplace has become a necessity in order to survive. Effective teamwork, which comes from possessing the necessary skills, resolving conflicts, and being ardently motivated, can produce incredible results.

In this regard, Andrew Carnegie said, "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. It is the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Vince Lombardi, the legendary football figure, and the American football coach said, "Teamwork is an individual's commitment to a group effort. That is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

Certainly, effective teamwork does not just happen automatically; it takes a great deal of time, patience, commitment, passion, effort, skills, hard work, cooperation, and collaboration. It also requires self-restraint, mutual understanding, acknowledging and admitting mistakes, resolving conflicts, abiding by ethics and rules, listening to others, and refraining from useless and abhorrent disputes.

In addition, there are coherent factors that the team must adopt seriously in order to work smoothly and to achieve its desired goals and objectives. These factors and components are inseparable and must be in place, otherwise, the team will not accomplish acceptable results, and its time, effort, and work will be in vain.

The most important component of a remarkable teamwork is effective leadership. The team's leader should possess the knowledge and the skills that are imperative to create and maintain a positive working environment. He also should be able to create a high level of morale, motivate and inspire the team members to take a positive approach to work and be highly committed, and make them feel supported and valued.

He should also be aware of the competencies of leadership; namely, management of attention, management of meaning, management of trust, and management of self.

An effective team leader should possess, adhere to, and abide by the following traits:

1. Self-knowledge
2. Open to feedback
3. Eager to learn and improve
4. Curious, risk taker
5. Concentrate at work
6. Learn from adversity
7. Teach and train team members
8. Balance tradition and change
9. Open style
10. Work well with systems

11. Serve as a model and mentor

Harold Geneen, the former president and CEO of International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. (ITT), said, "Leadership is the heart and soul of business management.... You cannot manage simply by rearranging the organizational chart, playing with numbers, or tallying the latest business school formula. What you manage in business is people, and mastering that is the most important ingredient in the recipe of business success."