

# David fletcher case essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In order to have the research analysts operate as a team and not just a group of individuals, Fletcher needs to establish a clear team strategy as well as a complementary hiring strategy. His first immediate step should be to define the organizational structure and the composition of the research analyst team. It would be beneficial to ask Kindred for her input during this process - she has strong people skills and has actually worked together with other analysts while Fletcher possesses only a manager's perspective.

To generate the maximum amount of positive synergy, we recommend that Fletcher structures his research analysts as a self-managed work team. We believe this is the most efficient choice for team type because the analysts will need the ability to not only make recommendations but to make decisions on which stocks to buy and sell from their part of Fletcher's portfolio. A self-managed team will also empower the analysts by giving them direct responsibility for their performance.

Fletcher will still have a managerial role (i. e. the analysts will not have complete autonomy) but it will be more in a guiding function, by suggesting which stocks to take a look at, or which lunches and conferences to attend. In addition, all of the analysts and Fletcher should have offices located very close to each other to leverage information sharing and encourage informal conversation. A potential barrier to the self-managed team type is that power struggles and disputes could arise.

However, we believe this risk can be mitigated because Fletcher still has final authority over the group, and his office will be right next to the analysts' so he can see conflicts forming and stop them before they boil over. The

next element Fletcher should consider is team composition. We recommend that he hires a team of analysts with a diversity of personality types, yet some similar underlying Big Five dimensions. Our primary reasoning for this decision is that groups with a diversity of personality types tend to produce higher quality solutions than homogenous groups.

A potential barrier is that different personality types may interpret tasks in different ways, leading to task conflict. While task conflict can initially slow down a team, it eventually can stimulate discussion, promote critical evaluation of problems, and lead to better team decisions. We also recommend that the analysts should be high on conscientiousness and at least moderate in agreeableness so that they can all get along, even though their overall personality types may be different.

Conscientiousness is especially important because it is critical that the analysts are dependable as they are making decisions about other people's equities. People high on this dimension are also skilled at backing up other team members. The analysts will need to have diverse backgrounds so that they can collectively possess all of the information they need to make informed buying & selling decisions. While informational diversity can increase task conflict, it positively influences group performance (Jehn et. al. 1999). Fletcher's next step is to determine a hiring strategy to find talent that will fit well with his overall team strategy.

This hiring strategy will be largely dictated by the team composition guidelines discussed above: diverse personality types and backgrounds with some shared underlying Big Five Dimensions. Since personality is obviously a

main component, we recommend that Fletcher has candidates take a Big Five personality test to look at their levels of conscientiousness and agreeableness. Kindred and any other new team members should also meet with each candidate to assess their personality, interpersonal, and working style compatibility. This will also provide a fail-safe in case a candidate “fakes good” on the personality test.

In addition, we recommend that Fletcher follows the second approach to selecting analysts described on page six, employing “‘seasoned’ analysts who [are] industry specialists given discretion to buy and sell stocks.” This approach will prevent Fletcher from having to add “hand-holding” to his already impossibly busy scheduling. While it is important that Fletcher finds experienced analysts, they should also still have a desire to learn new skills and research new industries. Lastly, during the interview process Fletcher needs to ensure that each candidate can fulfill their team role as well as their individual requirements.

Taking into consideration this new hiring strategy, we recommend that Fletcher immediately hires Mary Robinson. Based on Kindred’s observations, she seems to have a compatible personality and working style, and the two have already established a rapport. However, before making a decision about Donald Fiske, Fletcher and Kindred should spend time with him in both formal and casual settings so they can get a feel for his personality. They also need to ensure that Fiske will be satisfied with the role of a research analyst because he used to manage his own portfolio.