

What are the strengths and challenges of teams at work

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What are the strengths and challenges of teams at work? Team work has been the biggest development in management of human resources for organizations in the past few decades (Norman, Cohen and Norman, 1995). It has been implemented in a wide variety of spheres and the growth of the popularity is still ongoing. It is obvious that these changes have not happened without a reason, there is something to team work that is attracting every manager like kids to an ice-cream car. Before I continue, I want to state some things so there would not be any misunderstanding further on the essay.

First, I do not want any confusion when it comes to defining a team and a group, because I understand that there is not much of a difference (Ouzo, 1996) between these terms. The only thing that I want to state is that team always has an interdependent nature; they perceive themselves as a whole unit. Second, as the topic is about teams in general, the evaluation is quite superficial and it will not be valid for every team. The way team performs depends on the size of the team, the management of it and of course the working environment it is in.

So every team has to be evaluated independently to give an objective report. I will describe aspects that stand out amongst the others and are present for most of the teams. My goal in this essay is to evaluate teams at work environment drawing on theory and research. I am going to point out the strengths of a team-based work from member's point of view and challenges that team members have to face. Eventually, what I am trying to state is that people (managers, leaders etc. who are leaning towards team work as the best way of getting things done have made this assumption <https://assignbuster.com/what-are-the-strengths-and-challenges-of-teams-at-work/>

based on feelings they have towards team-work rather than researching hurry and experiments made on the approach to get the bigger picture of what team-work consists from and what are the actual drawbacks. I am basing my work on the paper about 'romance of teams' (Allen and Yecch, AAA) taking some Ideas from the paper, but putting them Into my own perspective. I am going to start with the most obvious strengths that teams has, because those are the ones that people are most aware of.

Followed by additional strengths, that according to researches lies in our sub consciousness. After that I will describe the biggest challenges teams have to face. Strengths A team consists of several people and each one of them has their own skills, characteristics, gender, age and perception of things in general (Britton et al. , 2010). There are several definitions of a team, but this one serves the best for my purposes - 'A group of people with a full set of complementary skills required to complete a task, Job, or project' (Chicken, 2009).

Indeed each one of us is unique and by coming together and supplementing each other we form a living organism called 'team'. Knowledge, opinion, experience and personal views can be shared in this living mind', in this way implying additional strengths. Maybe these are not the strengths that people will mention the most when speaking about pros of teams, but they exist and they do form our feelings towards teams. I would like to continue by focusing on strengths of teams that people are unaware of or they are aware of them subconsciously.

Every team is a social formation; accordingly it includes interaction with others, whether it is just a chat that started with " how are you doing? " or a discussion about the subjective they are trying to achieve or a social evening to bring the team closer together, it does not matter. The thing that matters is that team gives you a wide range of opportunities to satisfy your social needs; it gives you a feeling of belonging (Godard, 2001 a).

Alongside, comes the feeling that overtakes you, that gives you the idea that you want to be a part of a team, which is natural, because people are creatures that has been living in groups since the beginning of time and social desires has developed naturally and is a part of our lives. The thing is that, not everyone is aware of this phenomenon, so this is where unconscious strengths appear. To continue, I would like to introduce a research made by Diddle and Strobe, 1991.

This research states that individuals perceive working in group activities to be more fun and enjoyable than working alone and that time is perceived as passing more quickly when working in a group (Allen and Yecch, Bibb).

Moreover, some researches shows that working in a team can increase your mental well-being and state of mind in general (Carter, 2000). Teams provide a benefit like reduction of stress (Godard, 2001 b) which mostly comes from the fact that teams reduces uncertainty about particular situations and verifies member's beliefs and ideas (Hog and Mulling, 1999).

As all the facts that are mentioned before comes together, it is only obvious that teams do paint a really nice picture about themselves in our minds.

Additionally, the way how people actually perceive themselves in a group is

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different from the way they do outside of one. Researches have shown that people tend to take less responsibility for failures of the team and in the same time more responsibility for success of the team (Schlesinger, 1975), which is kind of illogical, but in the nature of any human being.

It is much easier to assign blame to others in that way preserving your own feeling of competence, rather than admitting that you are the one to blame, and when being in a team you have the opportunity to do that, because who will possibly forbid you, except yourself. The perception of team as a unit working together plays a big role here, because in your mind you do understand that you are not the only one who is in the team, so if the team fails or succeeds then the whole team does that.

To add to this idea, people tend to evaluate their own reference higher when working in a team rather than working alone, both, their actual expectations and conclusions, of their performance in the team has been recorded to be of a higher value (Phallus et al. , 1993). This all can be very misleading, but as long as we - human beings - will not change our nature and start seeing things as they actually are, these will be some of the most mind impacting benefits towards teamwork.

Challenges The point about the diversity of a team and different people coming together that When people with different ideas and different views on life come together and has to work as one and unbreakable unit, arguments between them are inevitable. That is why certain roles have to be assigned and a specific structure formed, so the team would manage to work productively. Size and composition of a team has an influence on individual

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behavior, on decision making (Kooks-De Bode et al. 2008), if these aspects are not sorted out in a timely manner then one of the biggest strengths of a team can turn into a drawback and then it is just matter of time when the team will collapse. Another challenge for a team is goal setting, which is a really important aspect when it comes to whether the work is going to be smooth and whether it is going to be without misunderstandings. Goals have to be set at the very beginning and they have to be defined very clearly to everyone in the team, so everyone would really understand what the team is trying to achieve.

If this is not done, then there is a possibility that team members start to head in different directions. An equally significant set of challenges comes from too much of dependence on your team's decisions. Researches made by Stanley Amalgam, 1973 shows that when decision has to be made, team members tend to follow the point of view that is presented by others or by most members of the team, that way actually not expressing their own thoughts. Besides that, these researches shows that people tend to follow the leader of a team even if the things that are being done are against their principles and are morally wrong.

Justification to these kinds of decisions comes from the fact that any decision made in a group actually is a group decision and therefore made by several people, accordingly the responsibility is being shared amongst all of the group members. This results in poor decision-making process, which can further result in serious damage made to the work-group itself or to the

possibility of achieving the goal that has been set out. Hence, the challenge for a team is to set certain norms.

Norms about how the work has to be led, to what extent members should follow their leader and what are the social, moral, ethical and physical norms that should not be crossed. To sum up the challenges, team work has to be well balanced and well organized; it has to be like a machine that does not work if one of the parts is broken. To do that you have to take in consideration a lot of aspects, starting with leaders role and importance, ending with team members moral and physical needs. Everything has to be balanced and managed smartly and efficiently (Allen, 1996).

That is the hardest challenge to deal with in team-work and it becomes even harder if the person who is in charge of the team does not know about these elements. Before I draw the conclusion I would like to remind the fact that the judgments being made in this essay is superficial and regards the general population of people included in teams. Therefore, I am not stating that it is true for every person. To summarize, I have stated the strengths that in my mind form the feeling towards team-work inside a person's mind. I hope that others reading these points will be able to relate to them as well.