

Responsibilities of each person climbing mount everest



\n[toc title="Table of Contents"]\n

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1. [Stages of our Expedition](#) \n \t
2. [Stage I](#) \n \t
3. [Stage III](#) \n \t
4. [Appendix- I](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

There is a place above all others, where dreams are realized in the clouds, the place where only the strong and lucky survive, where it is almost impossible for the human body to battle with fierce winds and sub-zero temperatures. Every breath burns the lungs mercilessly like cold fire. Many have died there; only a few have survived to tell their story. Welcome to Mount Everest.

Mount Everest, the World's tallest peak located in city of Kathmandu, Nepal soaring in height of about 8850m (Anon n. d.), has attracted climbers from all over the world with the aim to reach the top, with the recognition they would receive after summiting the mountain being their main source of motivation. The peak is named after Sir George Everest, the British surveyor general of India. The first successful attempt to the summit was done by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay on 20th May in 1953 (Anon n. d.). Since then many climbers have been successful in their ascent to Mount Everest.

The year 1996 is said to be the worst year for the climbers at Everest, being struck with storms for many days which led to the tragic death of 15

climbers near the summit, with few of them yet to reach the summit and some on their way back to descent (Kayes 2008).

The experiences and tragedies of earlier climbers teach us that climbing Everest is all about leadership and teamwork; being part and parcel of a cohesive team and working as indivisible unit if at all possible. With modern technology, the gathering and analyzing of information about Everest is many times better than it was with the early expeditions; climbing equipment and clothing are all state of the art. What has not changed though is teamwork; the lack of which will lead to certain disaster.

Our team was collaboration by chance whereby the team members were chosen at random by the module leader with objective of reaching the peak of Mount Everest safely. Our group consisted of 6 members namely Osama, Hemant, Irfan, Martha, Obi and I. Members of the group exhibited different talents required to work as a team and achieve the stated objective. Because some members of the group already knew each other, there was some degree of pre-existing mutual understanding and cohesiveness. Once the objective was clearly explained with all the facts, the group was set to work

Our first task was to consolidate the team despite a bit of familiarity amongst some members. According to Tuckman's (1965) team development model, groups pass through four stages of development on their way to becoming a high performing unit.

Our stages: picture_tuckman_team_stages. gif

Luckily, most of us have had the experience of working with each other which made it easy for us to interact and get along. It was only the matter of bonding Obi with the group because of his personality traits. After knowing the background of each one in the group it was realised that the group had immense talent and members having expertise in various areas.

Forming

On the first day of group formation, slight unhappiness was seen amongst Hemant and Irfan over other team members, especially Martha and Obi because of some personal differences. Otherwise, Osama and I were being social, interacting with all the group members except Obi who was shy and a bit of an introvert. It took us a while to settle down and gell as a team. Hemant and Irfan, due to the fact that they knew each already, were very close and wanted things their way which was not always accepted by the rest of the team.

Storming

As the group progressed, it was visible Hemant and Martha were the frontrunners as far as brain storming was concerned. A whiff of group politics was emerging amongst the two for control. To avoid any further conflicts, Osama nominated me to be the group leader because of my experience as a team leader in other coursework projects and qualities such as decisiveness, good listening and communication skills to which all the group members agreed. After discussing the roles for the expedition, everyone chose what suited them best because of their experience and understanding for the particular role without any severe disagreements.

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Conflict: When a handout relating to all the roles with the task associated with them were handed to the team members by me, Martha gave her views over changing her responsibilities and task. This would have affected the whole plan and resulted in others raising their voices to change tasks associated with their roles. The way Martha asked me to change aspects of her tasks, was blunt and in a way insulting too. To which I lost my patience and had an argument. I had to dig deep and use my experience in leadership to avoid what could have been a damaging impact on the team. The next day I apologised to all for my rude behaviour I then drew up certain rules regarding Respect, Recognition and Patience so that the same incident never takes place again. This was when I bonded with group really well and made sure the morale of the other group members was kept high.

Norming

After everyone's agreement, Hemant opted to be the reporter and photographer because of his interest in the media, Martha and Osama becoming the lead climbers, Obi who has a certificate in first aid became the "doctor" for our group, Irfan to be the lead Sherpa because he was used to the conditions and culture of Nepal where Mt. Everest is situated. The group agreed for me to be the leader because of my previous experience of leading groups and better understanding of how to make teams work efficiently.

Performing

At the performing stage, all the team members were highly motivated and working well. McGregor's (1960) Theory X and Y says the people who are lazy and not motivated and determined are X and ones who are self

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motivated and willing to work and achieve a goal are Y. We as a team were Y as all were willing to work and were focused towards achievement of the objective. Various debating sessions over the expedition topics such as what is the best time to climb, which route to take for the climb helped to look into various aspects while climbing and supporting the lead climbers. It was at this stage where a few members needed a push because of drop in motivation which was taken care off by an inspiring speech given by me to ensure all the team members were focused on achieving group goal. High levels of productivity were seen amongst group members with everyone being committed and enthusiastic, delivering results such as timely procurement of required materials

Roles and Responsibilities of each Member

Roles were taken up the member themselves as per their expertise and responsibilities and tasks according to the roles were given. Refer to Appendix- I for the same.

Team Roles

Famous author ‘ Meredith Belbin’ (1981) developed the idea about different roles played by members in a team.

Based on the above said roles our team can be categorized as:

The team members chose to perform these roles because of their past experiences and expertise in those areas. Obi had a medical practioner certificate which made him be a doctor for our team. My name was given for the team leader because of the past experiences as well. Before the <https://assignbuster.com/responsibilities-of-each-person-climbing-mount-everest/>

expedition all of us, in order to comply with certain rules and safety measures had to get health checkups done and certain other formalities such as getting visa's, travel documents etc. The flight booking for our trip from London to Nepal via Delhi were done by me. The climbing equipments and shelters such as visors, roles, hammers, ladders, helmets, torches, hand gloves etc were bought by the Osama and Martha as they had the experience of such expeditions before. Medical items and other miscellaneous items relating to health issues were procured by Obi and Irfan. Hemant and I were responsible for communication gadgets such as satellite phones, cameras etc. Irfan, booked our accommodation because he knew the territory better than anyone else.

Stages of our Expedition

Stage I

First stage of our expedition started from the Base Camp, and with the aim of reaching the Camp 2 at a height of approximately 6500m above sea level. Weather predictions were in favor of the start of climb so our target to reach Camp 2 was a day maximum. The team was motivated before our ascent itself after looking at Everest. We set our journey to summit Everest in the early morning, with the first stage to reach camp 2. There were small issues relating to the start of journey with Hemant and Martha which were cleared out with a team meeting.

We were made aware of a belief that the, wind carries prayers of the climbers on the prayer flags at the base camp Gods up in the heaven. We prayed to God for our wellbeing.

We started our climb passing the ice fall, a solid ice rock river, crevasses to reach Camp 2. We were all very tired after a climb of almost a thousand meters in about 24 hours. We fixed our shelters to stay overnight there. We made contact with Base Camp about our position. We then learnt that bad weather was forecast which led to frustration for some. The shelters were quickly installed by the team and preparations were done for the overnight stay. The effect of hours of climbing began to take its toll. Martha experienced pain in her thighs and heels and was given some pain killers and soothing balm by Obi. We took pictures of the Ice fall and team members for the records.

Stage II

Our next stage was to continue ascent from Camp 2 to Camp 4 via Camp 3. The climb proved to be disastrous for our team as Hemant was hit by a boulder and because of low oxygen levels I had breathing problems for which I decided to stay at the rear end the relax for some time. Osama, and Obi were at hand to provide support. Severe weather made it hard for us to achieve the target on time and had to take a stop in between. Irfan, frustrated, blamed us for the delay in achieving the target, led to an inter group conflict. Being the team leader I had to motivate the members to work as a team towards achievement of group objective. Group members were lacking motivation because of weather; their morale had to be raised again to help us achieve the objective. The driving force for all of us was the recognition and responsibility of each other. It took us three days to reach camp 4 against the expected time of 3 days, though we reached Camp 3 as per the targeted time of 36 hrs. We communicated the delay and the <https://assignbuster.com/responsibilities-of-each-person-climbing-mount-everest/>

incident at the Base camp with our radio transmitters. More pictures were taken at Camp 3 and 4.

Stage III

The final stage of our journey, the most difficult one, severe weather and extremely low levels of oxygen were making it almost impossible for us to reach the summit. From Camp 4 we started our expedition further to reach the summit; we passed Lochte Phase, a steep wall of ice and snow. The whole team was committed to reaching the summit and working as one.

Before the start there were some issues that had to be dealt. Osama, one of the lead climbers wanted the team to start the ascent around 0200, but others, as per the weather forecast and to be on the safe side wanted to start ascending around 0000. Talks and discussions led to change in our team's ascending time to around 0030 in the morning. There were certain problems with the climbing equipments as well as health issues such as Frost bites, tiredness, with Obi taking care of health issues to give temporary relief to the members. These issues affected everyone but the thought of reaching the World's tallest peak kept me going. At this time all were extremely motivated with just few hundred meters away from the summit.

Passing through the Death Zone and Hillary Step we finally reached the summit. Immense satisfaction and a wave of joy gripped the whole group with every one forgetting the clashes and problems faced on our way up. The feeling of conquering the World's tallest peak cannot be compared with anything else. On the summit I felt I could see half the world, wondering about my family and parents. I wanted to shout to them that I am safe and

standing on the top of the world. We saw prayer flags that must have been tied by previous climbers and Sherpa's to thank the Gods. We took pictures at the summit with flags of nations we members come from. Though our objective was to reach the summit in about 3 days it took us 5 days because of the severe weathers and health issues. But all these were forgotten when our team reached the top, achieving the objective.

We stayed for a while at the Everest, clicking pictures. A wave of emotions swept me, with my tears frozen to my cheeks. We communicated out success to the Base camp while being at the top.

But the journey was not over yet, it was just half way through. We were careful while descending the Everest telling ourselves not to hurry.

Overview

This team project gave me a lot of insight and even better understanding of how to be a good leader, and further improved my qualities as a leader. Our team, with people having expertise in various fields important for the expedition did help us achieve our objective, it was a collective effort. As stated above, my role was of a leader, me being asked to become a leader by Osama, possibly because of my personality traits such as good communication skills, my empathetic nature and previous experience of being a leader and leading teams through tough times. My previous experience and understanding of such kind of expedition contributed towards me taking many important decisions, such as ones relating to the allocation of tasks, stopovers during the climb etc, even though there were

some factors which resulted in changes in decisions and strategies such as weather and health issues.

My one decision of staying at the rear end after me getting affected by low oxygen levels saw some kind of rift amongst few team members as our team could not reach Camp 4 as per the targeted time. Decision to stay and recover was a sensible one otherwise it could have affected me and Hemant and other team members as well. The delay proved to be beneficial for us in a way that we got weather warnings from the base camp at the right place and time, giving us ample time to fix our tents and prepare ourselves for the rough weather. Even though there were issues relating to group cohesiveness, they were cleared out later, making us work as one efficient and a determined team.

Overall this team project proved to be really beneficial for me, it provided me with experience to work in a team and work a leader helping me polish my skills further. Few of the implications of this project on me were:

Giving me an understanding of how one can prevent failures in a team situation

Need for balancing confidence, commitment and dissent within a team

Need for strong leadership

Need for clear objectives

Effect on group perceptions and beliefs based of leader's words and actions

Even though I have been a part of a group before and have had experience of being a leader before but it is said more you work more you polish yourself. Therefore this project did change my approach towards interacting with the group members, how one can make the members work more efficiently and avoid conflicts and get most out of them.

I would like to thank all my team members for their determination and endurance which helped us to achieve our objective. The driving factors for a team such as focus, responsibility were clearly visible in our team. We demonstrated characteristics of an effective team such as excellent communication, cohesiveness, and participation from each member the absence of which would have made it impossible for us to achieve our goal.

Appendix- I

Leader: Myself (Sahil)

Responsibilities: Maintaining focus and direction; Communicating and keeping the team up to date on the progress

Core tasks: To know how the weather will be and best time to start each stage.

Climber: Martha

Responsibilities: Clothing and Equipment

Core tasks: Knowing what type of clothing and equipment would be required

Climber: Osama

Responsibilities: Eating and Drinking

Tasks: To ensure the team is well stocked up in terms of food, drink and necessary toiletries.

Doctor: Obi

Responsibilities: Keeping the team fit and healthy, providing medical attention when needed.

Core tasks: To provide first aid when required and to ensure all the team's equipment are in good working order.

Reporter: Hemant

Responsibilities: Keeping the Media informed about the team

Core tasks: Interacting with the media during the expedition.

Lead Sherpa: Irfan

Responsibilities: In charge of all the Sherpa porters, contributing to the local knowledge and expertise

Core tasks: To make sure the Sherpa's are properly clothed and equipped. To help other team members adjust to the Nepali culture.