

Developing yourself as an effective team member (m2.34)



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DEVELOPING YOURSELF AS AN EFFECTIVE TEAM MEMBER (M2. 34)

Understanding teams and teamwork The difference between a team and a group is that a team is internally organized, with specific roles for different members of the team. They all have the same aim and goal. A group is just a collection of people with something in common but each individual has a different goal.

The Forming - Storming - Norming - Performing model of group development was first proposed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965, who maintained that these phases are all necessary and inevitable in order for the team to grow, to face up to challenges, to tackle problems, to find solutions, to plan work, and to deliver results. A group will become a team when the members understand the value of being together, personally and professionally, individually and organisationally. Their aims and objectives become one and it becomes well known that their goal will be best achieved through mutual support.

Likewise, these factors also indicate when a group will become a team: * each team member's viewpoint is respected and considered * regular meetings are held between team members and progress is observed * there is the feeling of trust and members are encouraged to apply their individual skills and talents to the task * sense of ownership is inculcated in all members * conflict is viewed as an opportunity for new ideas, creativity and improvement An example of when a group will become a team:

A group of people walk into a lift. They all have different goals and agendas for being on the lift. The group becomes a team when the lift breaks down.

Now they all have the same goal: Get out of the lift! The characteristics of a

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good team are: a clear, elevating goal understood by all, a results-driven structure, competent members who trust the judgement of others, unified commitment, a collaborative climate, and standards of excellence, principled leadership and members willing to take risks.

The advantages of working in a team are a combination of strengths you can get a good range of abilities, fields of expertise and personality types, a range of opinions: a group meeting is often very useful for ironing out flaws in a plan, testing it out, spotting pitfalls, divided responsibility: the team structure allows those who have strengths in a particular area to take more responsibility for that area, team spirit, opportunity to learn from others and to share ideas, motivation and a sense of belonging. Importance of communication within a team

Team communication is significant because it has the ability to either build the team or tear it down. When communication is absent or ineffective in a team, the team unity will suffer. There will be lack of vision, motivation and purpose for existing. Where there is effective group communication, the group operates with one mind, spirit and common goal. Without team communication there is confusion, misunderstandings and unhappy members. Group communication allows members to freely express themselves, and can provide accurate and comprehensive information.

Communication in a team creates an environment of safety and security. Communication barriers: Language Language may act as a barrier to communication even when communicating in the same language. The terminology used in a message may act as a barrier if it is not fully understood by the receiver. For example, a message that includes a lot of

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specialist jargon and abbreviations will not be understood by a receiver who is not familiar with the terminology used. Deafness

In many instances hearing people will not take the time or make the effort to communicate with deaf people effectively. This is possible because they feel embarrassed or have no understanding of deafness. The deaf person feels frustrated and isolated from using vital services and support that have a right to access. Cultural barriers are a result of living in an ever shrinking world. Different cultures, whether they are a societal culture of a race or simply the work culture of a company, can hinder developed communication if two different cultures clash.

Deal with conflict in a team Some examples of behaviour that cause conflict in a team are: * putting the blame on someone else for your mistakes * force your own ideas on people * interrupt people when they are talking One method of reducing the first type of behaviour is admitting when you are in wrong or when you make a mistake and apologise to the rest of the team. Review own performance as a team member Belbin's team roles are used to identify people's behavioural strengths and weaknesses in the work place.

This information can be used to: * Build productive working relationships * Select and develop high-performing teams * Raise self-awareness and personal effectiveness * Build mutual trust and understanding * Aid recruitment processes My team role is a co-ordinator and I feel I do fit my role when working in a team. I think I do perform well because I am confident and can express my ideas and viewpoints clearly. I do not hesitate to challenge or pick out the flaws out of other team member's suggestions.

What I do well is I am able to take control and lay down some discipline and order, I can listen to everyone's opinions and ideas and I can include all team members. What I could do better is to be a little less demanding, less intimidating and control my temper as I get impatient with team members who are not willing to contribute. I could reduce my impatience by adopting a more calm; gentle but firm approach towards those team members who are not contributing as well I would want them to.