

TEAM BUILDING

Participant's Workbook



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Developed for:



1998

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TEAM BUILDING

Preface:

Welcome to one in a series of individualized Optimist International Skills Development Modules. Our goal is to help you, our members, learn and apply practical skills to deal with the opportunities and issues in your life. This series of modules is not designed to deal with "theoretical" issues, but rather to provide a practical "hands on" approach.

Each of these modules is to be used, written in and applied. You can learn skills on your own, or join with others in a collaborative learning venture. Each module contains an instructor's guide in addition to a separate participant's guide which can be duplicated as often as necessary to supply the needs of your Club members.

Future modules will deal with individual as well as group-oriented skills, all of which are designed to help individual Optimists enhance their personal leadership ability in any chosen field of activity, i.e., employment, home, school, and volunteer activities. This is a significant development for our organization in its service to its own members, and we hope that participants will provide feedback about each module to the International Headquarters (c/o Leadership Development). In this way, we can maintain our focus on providing meaningful leadership training to Districts, Clubs and individuals throughout our Optimist organization.

We truly hope you enjoy the journey to self-improvement.

Introduction:

This latest in Optimist International's series of personal development training modules has been created to serve as a design for helping our members develop high-performance teams. Putting this learning material to work will help you become both a better team member yourself and, if placed in such a position, help you become an effective team builder and leader.

It will give you information and tools to successfully arrange and conduct team building training sessions for your fellow Optimist International members or, for that matter, others in your professional or personal life. As explained later, it can also be used as a self-study program,

This program has two other important objectives. **First**, by improving the ability of members to build and serve on high-performance, effective teams, this program will optimize member participation and encourage the fun and festivity provided by group participation. After all, it is "fun" to be a member of an "effective team". Effective teams accomplish worthwhile things. Doing so is very self-satisfying. **Second**, improving the ability of members to build effective teams will help our organization better meet its goals and objectives. High-performance teams will better help our members respond to the special needs of their local communities. Dedicated individuals, working through effective teams, accomplish the things in their communities that define an Optimist Club.

What will be learned:

Following are the learning objectives of this module. Participants will learn...

- the dynamics and skills involved in becoming an effective, high-performance team
- how to effectively communicate with one another.
- how to define roles.
- how to recognize and use helpful behavior.
- how to avoid and overcome destructive behavior.
- the steps involved in team decision making and problem solving.

Using Your Participant's Workbook

Before your **Team Building** workshop begins, take a moment to read this short explanation as to how your workbook is designed and how it is to be used. Your instructor will present information regarding team building from his/her Instructor's Workbook. In the left hand column of your Participant's Workbook there is a synopsis of this information. This will help you avoid having to take extensive notes. In some cases there are additional "reading assignments" in the left hand column. The right hand column includes "key points", information on group activities and exercises, and room for any additional notes you may wish to make.

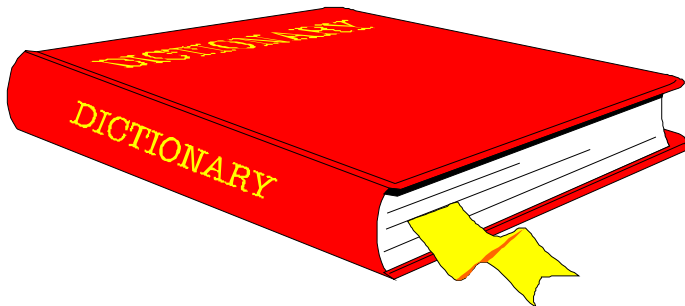
What Are Teams and Why Do They Work?

The term “team” has become a familiar one, but has sometimes taken on a bad meaning. It is **ineffective** teams that are disrespected. In this program **effective** teams are going to be discussed.

Definitions

The dictionary defines “team” as, “A group organized to work together”. That’s not a bad definition. A better definition is, “A team is a group of individuals working together to solve a problem, meet an objective, or tackle an issue.”

The key word is “working together”. Groups that do this are winners.



Reading Assignment

"A short, short history of team building"

The history of teams and team building goes back a long way, at least as far back as the twenties. That's when Elton Mayo, the founder of the human relations movement, conducted research confirming the relationship between human factors, such as self-respect, recognition, and self-direction, and productivity.

In the next two decades, other important research and analysis helped improve team effectiveness. That research documented that productivity increases when workers were organized into teams. In that same period, Abraham Maslow defined his hierarchy of needs, linking motivation and performance.

Notes...

What Are Teams and Why Do They Work? (Continued)

In the 1950s, General Foods experimented with the concept of self-directed teams. While successful, it earned little respect from traditional firms. Research in the sixties confirmed the importance of team relationships on morale and productivity.

As the century progressed, more and more research and real world experiences, conducted by many high profile companies such as General Motors, Saab, Volvo, Honeywell, Xerox, and Pratt & Whitney, demonstrated the effectiveness of teams and refined their structure and use.

Moving into the nineties, more and more firms and other organizations and institutions (including service organizations such as ours) put teams to work on an ongoing basis to solve problems, generate ideas, and accomplish important goals. They have a documented history of success.

Unfortunately, some think that the creation and use of teams is an end in itself. There are those who simply start calling committees "Teams" and think they are now in the mainstream of modern business practice.

Remember, "team" is more than just a term, it is a way of working together to accomplish things. The **way** the individuals who comprise a team interact is what makes a team effective or ineffective.

Why do teams work? That's not an easy question. Once you understand how teams work it's possible to know how to create high-performance teams and be an effective member of such a team.

The old adage, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts" is true for teams. Teams are made up of individuals who bring a range of talents, knowledge, experience, contacts, information and other attributes. When they're put together, it produces a power mix.

A group working together can accomplish much more than individuals working on their own. They can also do it quicker and better.

Notes...

Building an Effective Team

Benefits of High-Performance Teams

There are benefits from high-performance teams for both me, as an individual, and for me, as a member of an Optimist Club.

For team leaders and members there's a sense of accomplishment and self-fulfillment. *Esprit de corps* develops and success begins to build on itself. I'll get to know more people and will have opportunities to participate in more Optimist International activities.

Well-run, effective teams working on Optimist International projects will enhance our organization's reputation for getting things accomplished in our communities.

Learning About One Another

The first thing that members of a new team need to do is to learn about one another. There's more to this than simply introducing ourselves.

Reading Assignment

Before a team can work effectively together, they must build a relationship of trust and respect. The only way such a relationship can be established is through the process of learning about one another.

It is simply vital that you become familiar with all of the other team members as well as the team leader. This includes their personal and business background, their special skills and knowledge, and the type personality they bring to the team.

In other words, are they outgoing, serious minded, have a good sense of humor, and so on. Is there a skill or type of knowledge they have that might prove useful in accomplishing the task that your particular team is assigned? Is there anything about their family or business backgrounds that can help you understand the positions they may take on team issues?

Notes...

Building an Effective Team (Continued)

In turn, it is just as important that your fellow team members and the team leader learn this type of information about you.

Learning about one another will help you and your other team members overcome any fears regarding inclusion. No one wants to feel like an outsider. They want to belong and to fit in. They also want to know if they will be listened to, if they will be able to contribute, and if they will be able to get the recognition they deserve.

Group activities such as this are called "icebreakers". Icebreakers can be an excellent way for a team's members to learn about themselves.

Learning about other members of a team makes everyone more comfortable. It also identifies special talents, knowledge and resources each team member brings to the team. It's very important to get to know one another.

The Team's Purpose

A team needs to agree upon whether it is a short or long term team, what its specific objectives are, and what kind of deadlines it has. Without such an agreement, it can go off on a tangent.

Teams need to identify all of their resources. Those include budgets, special equipment available, how much time everyone can give, other information that might be needed, and what help might be expected from other teams and/or individuals.

Another important step is for the team to establish rules of behavior including the kind that's to be encouraged and the kind that's not acceptable.

Notes...

Group Activity

Write five interesting things about yourself in the following spaces. Four of these things should be true. One of these things should be a falsehood. This falsehood should be something that could be true; perhaps an achievement you would have liked to have accomplished or a hobby or activity you have thought about. (For example, a person might say: I seriously planned on becoming an actor when I was in college. I had the honor of meeting Jimmy Carter. The year I played second base on my college team, we lost every game. I enjoy reading about British history. My main hobby is oil painting.)

Now, you and the other team members should take turns reading your five statements. After each person reads his or her statements, the other team members should try to guess which "fact" is false. Every team member has one opportunity to make his or her guess. The first to discover the falsehood earns a point. The person with the most points is the winner.

Running a High-Performance Team

Once team members have had a chance to learn about one another, objectives have been agreed upon, resources have been identified, and rules of behavior established; how do you insure that the team runs well?

Communications

First, good communications are needed. Communications include: To make known. To have an interchange, as of ideas. To express oneself in such a way that one is readily and clearly understood.



Many of the behaviors on the "helpful" and "harmful" lists affect communications.

Note: Write in the behaviors that first contribute to good communications and then the types of behaviors that harm communications.

Helps:

Harms:

Notes...

Note: Write in your lists of helpful and harmful behavior in the spaces that follow.

Helpful Behavior

Harmful Behavior

Running a High-Performance Team (Continued)

All team members must take the responsibility to communicate well. The team leader needs to set an example by communicating well. The team leader should also strive to insure that all team members are kept informed and that all communications problems are resolved.

Examples:

- If someone's dominating, the team leader should direct questions and comments toward others. Or, the team leader should simply make the dominating team member aware that their behavior is not appropriate.
- If a team member is not participating or doesn't seem to be listening, the team leader **or** other members should direct questions to that person or ask for their comments.
- If a team member isn't presenting his/her ideas clearly, the team leader should try to help by asking for clarification.
- If someone is going off on a tangent, the team leader should bring things quickly back into focus. This can be done by praising the guilty member's ideas or comments, but asking that the team return to the subject at hand.

Gaining Participation

Gaining everyone's participation is important to a team's success. Without an individual's participation, the special skills, talents, experience, and knowledge he/she brings to the team will be wasted.

Responsible team members should make every effort to participate. Not doing so makes their team just that much less effective.

However, it is the team leader's responsibility to insure that all team members fulfill their roles by participating in the team's efforts.

Notes...

Running a High-Performance Team (Continued)

If a member is not taking part in discussions and decision making, the team leader needs to get that member involved.

Handling Team Conflicts

Conflicts are always going to arise even in the best teams. That's just human nature.

Some types of behavior that cause conflicts include personal attacks, constant criticism, anger, and contempt for other members and/or their views. Other conflict causing behaviors include members not being willing to share the workload, not participating, and undermining the team outside of meetings.

Team leaders must watch for and stop the small irritations that can build into major problems. Often, these can be handled quickly by simply reminding the guilty member of the team's rules of behavior.

If this type of action doesn't work, conflict resolution techniques are necessary. One way is to have a team discussion regarding behavior. Members should list types of behavior they feel are leading to conflicts. They should then offer solutions. After a discussion a consensus should be reached as to how the problem should be solved.

If problems persist with an individual team member, the team leader should hold a private formal meeting. The team leader should explain the problem, that it cannot be tolerated, and how it should be changed.

There are sometimes situations where even the best conflict resolution techniques won't work. In that case, while not pleasant, the team member must be removed.

Providing Recognition

Recognition is an important way of keeping a team working effectively. People want to be given credit for their individual efforts.

Notes...

Running a High-Performance Team (Continued)

Team leaders should give continuous recognition for members' contributions. Simply giving verbal thanks is often enough to keep up morale.

More formal recognition should also be part of every team's procedures. This can include presenting plaques or other items for specific individual accomplishments. While cost is not important, timing and manner of presentation are. The presentation should be serious, never casual.

Not giving recognition or, worse, giving it to the wrong person, should always be avoided.

Making Team Meetings Fun

Working on high-performance teams can be very satisfying, but is also hard work. This is especially true for organizations such as Optimist International where much of the work is done by member volunteers.

While every meeting can't be totally "fun", team leaders can make an effort to make meetings a more enjoyable experience.

The first step is to insure that the place where the meetings take place are comfortable and as free of distractions as possible. Necessary equipment such as flip charts and audio/visual aids should be on a checklist.

Remembered to include refreshments. Occasionally, luncheon meetings can be scheduled. Brown bag luncheons can add some fun to a meeting.

"Icebreakers" or "warm-ups" can be useful. Some examples include:

- **Trivia Quiz:** Come up with a list of ten trivia questions. Smaller teams compete to see who can answer most within a certain time limit.

Notes...

Running a High-Performance Team (Continued)

- **Scavenger Hunt:** After breaking up into smaller teams, members must find in their possession common items from a list. First team to do so is winner.
- **Alphabet Search:** Similar to “Scavenger Hunt” except that teams must find objects in their possession that begin with each letter of the alphabet. Team with most letters is winner.

Notes...

Making Team Decisions & Solving Problems

Gathering Information

Gathering all the relevant facts and figures is a first step to making an intelligent decision. That includes: Reports from other teams. Financial information. Memos. Research or surveys. Local laws that might affect a project. Examples of how others have handled similar situations or objectives.

The team should make a list of any information or research that needs to be gathered. Divide up the work among different team members. This spreads out the workload and gives more team members an opportunity to participate.

Various team members should examine the information that has been gathered and present summaries to the team. As with gathering the information, this gives more members a chance to contribute and saves time.

Analyzing Information

Analyzing the information gathered is the next step in the decision making process. First, after deciding which information is relevant to the task at hand, the team must reach a consensus as to how it affects the problem being considered. Does it demonstrate a need for a larger budget? Is there an opportunity for support from local businesses? Is there a need to do more research?

Making Team Decisions & Solving Problems (Continued)

What if the information shows that your goal is not needed or not practical?

An outside expert, such as an accountant, attorney, or community government official, may be required to analyze the information correctly.

Generating & Analyzing Ideas

Generating and analyzing ideas for solving the problem or undertaking the team's project is the next step.

Some ways of generating ideas include:

- **Brainstorming:** With this familiar technique, members take turns submitting ideas about the topic. Record them on a flip chart. Take an "anything goes" attitude. Continue until everyone is finished.
- **Brainwriting:** With this method, members are given a piece of paper with 21 squares. Each member fills three squares with ideas. Sheets are placed in the middle of the table. Members take one of the other sheets and add three more ideas or expand on the ones already on that sheet. This continues until at least most of the 21 squares are filled on every sheet. Members take turns reading the ideas on the last sheet they have. Mark off ones that are repeated.



Notes...

Making Team Decisions & Solving Problems (Continued)

Examining Solution Alternatives

The next step in the decision making process is to examine the potential solution from various perspectives.

The "Solution Matrix" below is one method.

Possible Solutions	Cost High/Low	Ease of Implementation	Support from Other	Creates New Problems

The familiar "Cost/Benefit" analysis is another good tool for teams. Simply identify all costs and benefits relating to each potential solution.

If the team's analysis has been properly undertaken the best solution should be obvious.

Making Decisions & Gaining Consensus

When it's time to make a decision among alternative solutions, the simplest and most common method is to do so by majority vote. Whichever one gets the vote, that's the one the team undertakes. If the team is comfortable with this method, it's the way to go.

However, such a "majority rules" decision making may cause problems especially if the vote is close. The losing team members may not be willing to give their wholehearted support to the decision.

To avoid this potential problem, team members must commit in advance to supporting whichever decision is reached by majority rule.

Team members will most likely agree to such a policy if the team and their leader have practiced the rules outlined for running successful, high-performance teams.

Notes...

For Future Reference

As mentioned at the beginning of this **Team Building Module**, this program, because of its nature, is only an overview of the skills needed for effective, high-performance teams. It only touches on the important points.

Fortunately, there is a wealth of training material including books, videos, self-study programs, magazine articles, and comprehensive seminar programs available. Following are a few reference books and other material you may wish to look into.

Baker, H. K. - "The Hows & Whys of Team Building," *Personnel Journal* 58 (June 1979): pages 367 - 370.

Buchholz, S., and Roth, T. - *Creating the High-Performance Team*. New York: Wiley, 1987.

Dyer, W. G. - *Team Building: Issues and Alternatives*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1987.

Gwynne, S. C. - "The Right Stuff." *Time* (October 29, 1990): pages 74 - 84

Merry, U. and Allerhand, M. E. - *Developing Teams & Organizations*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1977.

Norman, C. A., and Zawacki, R. A. - "Team Appraisals - Team Approach." *Personnel Journal* 70, number 9 (September 1991): pages 101 - 104.

Quick, T. - *Successful Team Building*. AMACOM. 1992

Zenger, J. J., and Miller, D. E. - "Building Effective Teams." *Personnel* 51 (1974): pages 20 - 29.

Training organizations such as the American Management Association and Padgett-Thompson also conduct seminars on team building and other related topics. Books and videos are also available from AMA.

There are numerous books with compilations of icebreakers, energizers and other games that can be used with team meetings. Here are three excellent ones.

Newstrom, John W., and Scannell, Edward E. - *Games Trainers Play, More Games Trainers Play, and Still More Games Trainers Play*, New York, NY McGraw-Hill, Inc.
