

What is a Team?

A team is a group of individuals working together to achieve a common goal or purpose.

Effective Teamwork

Effective teamwork describes the functioning of a group of people who are closely knit around a common purpose, who work easily together, and who have positive work relationships.

The County Team

Who is on your County's team?

What are the biggest challenges your County team faces?

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE COUNTY TEAM

“We Didn’t Start the Fire”

	Take 1 – Your Responses	Take 2 – As a Team
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
Total		



Characteristics of Effectively Functioning Teams

- ❖ Expectations and goals are clear
- ❖ Vision, mission, values are shared and understood
- ❖ Mutual support and genuine concern for each other
- ❖ A high degree of mutual trust and respect
- ❖ Communications are open and honest
- ❖ Conflict is confronted and worked through
- ❖ Supportive respect for individual differences
- ❖ Balanced participation
- ❖ Clearly specified and understood roles and responsibilities
- ❖ A collaborative climate
- ❖ New members are systematically brought on board

QUICK TEAM CHECK

Directions: Please review each factor. Then indicate the extent to which you agree that it is true about your team according to the following scale:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree Somewhat
3. Neither Disagree nor Agree
4. Agree Somewhat
5. Strongly Agree

Place the number of your response in the space to the left of the statement.

- _____ 1. **Goals:** We have clear performance objectives
- _____ 2. **Climate:** The atmosphere is professional, respectful, & relaxed.
- _____ 3. **Roles:** Everyone is clear about what is expected of them on the team.
- _____ 4. **Participation:** Everyone participates in team discussions and decisions.
- _____ 5. **Resources:** The team has sufficient resources to do the work.
- _____ 6. **Communication:** Members feel free to express themselves on all issues.
- _____ 7. **Support:** Organization provides a sufficient degree of support for the team.
- _____ 8. **Meetings:** Team meetings are well planned and effective.
- _____ 9. **Partnerships:** The team has strong relationships with key external partners.
- _____ 10. **Conflict:** Disagreements among team members are resolved and addressed.

Total Score: _____

Interpreting Your Results

37 – 50 = High Performance

The internal dynamics of the team are positive and should be continued. However, the enemies of high performing teams are complacency and stagnation. Therefore, your team should spend some time identifying the factors (e.g., leadership, training, support) that produced these excellent results. Then, plan to invest in these factors.

23 – 36 = Average Performance

The team is doing well, but performance improvements are needed. Analyze the specific results for each of the ten areas. Identify the areas where your scores were low, analyze the causes of the situation and develop a plan to address the issues.

10 – 22 = Poor Performance

The team needs to take a hard look at the results. Develop a plan that includes short-term actions that can produce immediate results and provide incentive to address the long-term issues dealing with the team's fundamentals

Styles of Team Members

Source: Glenn M. Parker *Team Players and Teamwork: New Strategies for Developing Successful Collaboration*, 2nd Ed. (2011)

- ❖ **Contributor** – Task-Oriented
Characteristics - maintains clear priorities, well-organized, works consistently toward goals, an expert in field, task-oriented, a coach/mentor, upholds high quality standards

Potential downsides – too task-oriented, micromanages

- ❖ **Collaborator** – Goal-Oriented
Characteristics - flexible, shares credit and responsibility, a helper, thinks long-term and big picture

Potential downsides – too global, overly ambitious, overlooks details

- ❖ **Communicator** – Process-Oriented
Characteristics - a negotiator, approaches conflict situations directly and helpfully, good at giving and receiving feedback, fosters relationships among team members, enthusiastic, maintains sense of urgency about the team's mission

Potential downsides – believes better communication solves all problems, inhibits questioning of work, loses focus on task

- ❖ **Challenger** – Question-Oriented
Characteristics - a question-asker, especially “why” and “how”, supports high ethical standards, a “whistle-blower”, candid in reporting bad or unpleasant news, never reluctant to express a minority opinion – not squelched by apparent consensus

Potential downsides – offend others by confronting, can cause a tense climate, extreme in positions

TEAM REPORT CARD

1. What one word do you think the constituents of the county believe best describes Council?
2. What one word do you think the employees of the county believe best describes Council?
3. What grade (A-F) do you feel your constituents would assign to Council? Why?
4. What grade (A-F) would you assign to Council in regard to working as a team?
5. What would your constituents say Council needs to do better?
6. What would you say are Council's strengths as a team?
7. What would you say Council needs to do better?

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE COUNTY TEAM

Lost at Sea

Below is a list of fifteen items that are intact and undamaged after a fire destroyed your yacht in the middle of the South Pacific. In addition to these articles, you have a serviceable, rubber life raft with oars large enough to carry yourself, the crew, and all the items listed below. The total contents of all survivors' pockets are a package of cigarettes, several books of matches, and five one-dollar bills.

Your task is to rank the fifteen items below in terms of their importance to your survival. Place the number 1 by the most important item, the number 2 by the second most important, and so on through number 15, the least important. You will do this twice: once alone (10 min.) and once as a group (20 min.).

Item	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
	Your Individual Ranking	Your Group Ranking	Coast Guard Ranking	Difference Step 1 & Step 3	Difference Step 2 & Step 3
Mosquito Netting					
Can of Petrol					
Sextant					
Full Water Container					
Shaving Mirror					
Emergency Rations					
Floating Seat Cushion					
A Rope					
Some Chocolate Bars					
A Waterproof Sheet					
A Fishing Rod					
Shark Repellant					
Bottle of Rum					
VHF Radio					
Total					

Step 5 = Team Score: _____

Average Individual Score: _____
(Sum of Step 4 scores / # of group members)

Highest Individual Score: _____

Scores

00 - 25	Excellent	You demonstrated great survival skills. Rescued!
26 - 32	Good	Above average results. Good survival skills. Rescued!
33 - 45	Average	Seasick, hungry and tired. Rescued!
46 - 55	Fair	Dehydrated and barely alive. It was tough, but rescued!
56 - 70	Poor	Rescued, but only just in time!
71+	Very Poor	Oh dear, your empty raft is washed up on a beach, weeks after the search was called off.

The “Abilene Paradox”

The “Abilene Paradox” refers to the tendency for participants in group decision process to acquiesce (agree, go along) without communicating their reservations to others in the group. Reasons for this behavior include the desire to be seen as a loyal team player, reluctance to disturb the group’s tranquility, insufficient preparation prior to making the decision, and time pressures.

“Groupthink”

“Groupthink” refers to the concept that members of any group tend to evolve informal norms to preserve friendly intra-group relations and these norms become part of the hidden agenda at group meetings. Within groups there are clear-cut pressures toward uniformity which subvert the fundamental purpose of group meetings. Strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action.

Dysfunctions of a Team (Patrick Lencioni)

- 1) Absence of Trust
- 2) Fear of Conflict
- 3) Lack of Commitment
- 4) Avoidance of Accountability
- 5) Inattention to Results

Beneficial Team Member Behaviors

- ❖ Shows enthusiasm, interest, involvement with the group
- ❖ Supports and encourages others
- ❖ Reduces tension where appropriate
- ❖ Expresses tensions where appropriate
- ❖ Surfaces and understands differences in personal values
- ❖ Mediates differences, offers compromises, finds new options
- ❖ Initiates ideas or actions
- ❖ Elaborates or builds on ideas of others
- ❖ Clarifies issues and asks “What next...? Now what...?”
- ❖ Celebrates results and recognizes wins

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE COUNTY TEAM

BEHAVIOR INVENTORY

For the behaviors listed circle the number which you feel describes how much of each behavior you show as a member of the Team.

		Rarely		Sometimes		Often
1.	Initiates ideas or actions	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Elaborates or builds on ideas of others	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Clarifies issues	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Supports and encourages others	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Reduces tensions where appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Expresses tensions where appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Shows interest, enthusiasm, involvement with group	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Mediates differences, offers compromises, finds new options	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Surfaces and understands differences in values	1	2	3	4	5

Techniques for Building an Effective Team

- ❖ Use intentional meetings, work sessions, retreats
- ❖ Encourage and allow each member to actively participate
- ❖ Share expectations, responsibility and rewards
- ❖ Respect individual differences
- ❖ Communicate openly and honestly
- ❖ Get to know each other
- ❖ Collective vision, mission, values, goals

What is one strategy you will try to improve your County team?