



High Performance Teams

Research and Practice

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Characteristics

passionate, deep abiding interest in &
concern for;

- Team mates,
- Stakeholders
- What the team achieves for its constituents

[A phenomenological study of high performing teams in three countries.](#)

By Lundberg, Philip H.

Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences. 68(11-A), 2008, pp. 4772.



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How do we
achieve a high
performing
team?

Team dynamics;
Capitalise on the positives
Avoid the negatives

Positives

Use teams to create;

- a sense of belonging
- improve self esteem
- build commitment
- achieve common purpose
- sense of certainty and stability



Research

teams are not naturally high performing



Groups and teams

- Group – collection of people working independently towards individual goals. Output is sum of individual efforts.
- Team – people working interdependently to reach a common goal. Shared output.



Innovation



- Teams come up with fewer and less innovative ideas in brainstorming.

Why? → Groupthink

tendency to focus on shared information

Productivity



- Productivity gains from teams are typically very small.

Why?

Free riders (social loafing)

Distraction of other members

Lack of co-ordination

Decisions

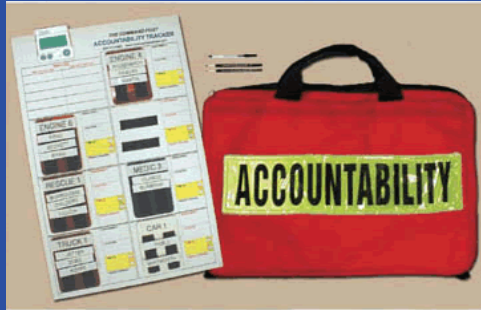
- Teams often make poorer decisions than that of their most expert member.

Why?

Peer pressure, want to belong,
pressure to agree with first or strongly
expressed opinions.



Accountability



- Teams better at accepting accountability for success - but not for failure

Why?

Often lack individual accountability.



Impact on individuals can be negative

- bias/ stereotypes of 'out' groups
- competitiveness
- beliefs become more extreme over time
- herd behaviour
 - members will go along with the group even if they personally disagree.



Team functioning

- Forming
- Norming
- Storming
- Performing



NOTE: The group may regress if there is a new member or a new situation.

High Performing teams need structure



- Clear group norms, codes
- Structured decision making processes
- Formal idea generation processes
- Agreed communication protocols
- Assigned roles and accountability

Communication is the key



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Exercise

Groups of three

**Assign one paragraph to each person
A, B or C.**

Your task is to reduce this message to a simple verbal one – you have 5 minutes.

Then deliver your message verbally to the other 2 members of your group. A, B, C.

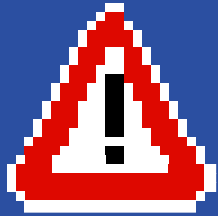




Communication tips

- Few key points (ideally 3 - max of 5)
- Clear, simple language
- Eye contact
 - improves listening and response,
 - check for understanding
- Repetition



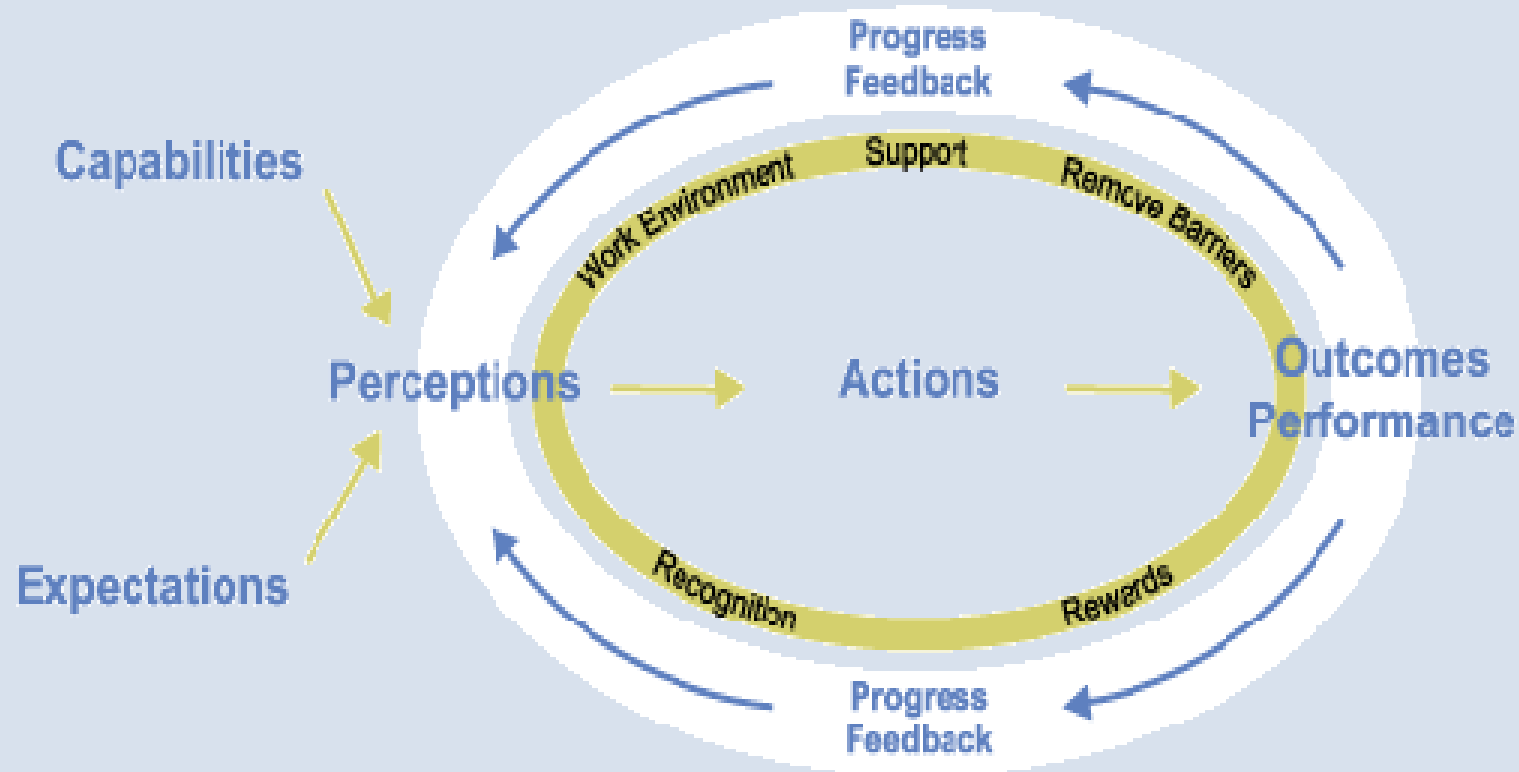


Communication tips

- Avoid bias in language
 - sexism, racism, ageism
- Never talk down to any audience
- Correct grammar, avoid slang and jargon
- Don't mumble, enunciate clearly
- Pace – not too fast or too slow



Leadership, Capability and Performance Development



Achieving top performance

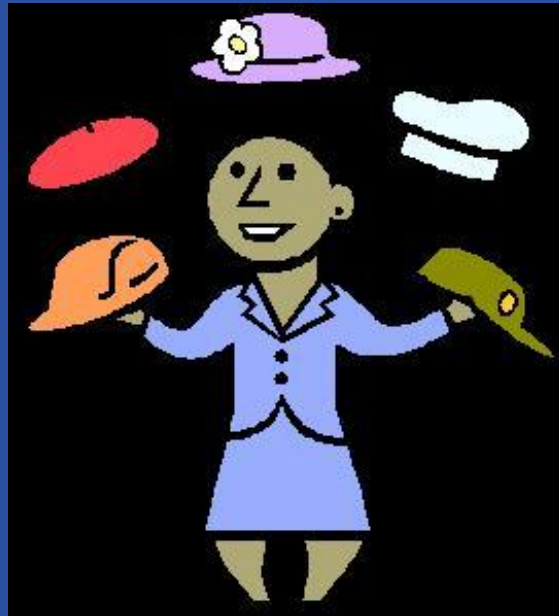
Co-ordination process – ABC model

- **Clear expectations** – the most important factor
 - Define and communicate roles, accountabilities, standards, expected results, timeframes
- **Capability**
 - Match roles to capability, guided projects
 - coach and mentor - buddy system



Exercise

Team roles and communication style



Achieving top performance



- Track and shape progress
 - frequent feedback and adjustment
 - people need to know how they are doing



- Reward system
 - Recognition, praise and thanks

The law of behaviour

$$\frac{B1}{B2} = \frac{R1}{R2}$$

People continue to do those things they are recognised for, and that make them feel good.

They stop doing those things for which they receive no personal positive outcome

They avoid doing things that result in negative feelings.





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