

GE Foundation Workplace Skills Program

Module Five Teamwork

Participant Booklet

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Introduction to Module Five Teamwork

In the modern workplace people will need to be able to work effectively in teams. It is the exception that an employee works in isolation and does not need to collaborate with fellow workers. Knowing about the structures and dynamics of successful teams and developing teamwork skills will be critical to your success in your chosen field.

Obviously, it is important that employees have the technical skills to do the job successfully. But, often it is the lack of people skills, and a person's inability to work effectively on a team, that gets employees in trouble in the workplace.

In this module you will be introduced to varied frameworks to help you understand the characteristics of effective teams. We will review the stages of team development, and the three different roles team members typically play when working in a group. We will explore what it takes to create high performing teams and adaptive teams. In addition, we will examine symptoms of bad teamwork and the five dysfunctions of a team. Participants will be engaged in a number of activities focused on learning skills and strategies that will help them contribute to a team's effectiveness and success.

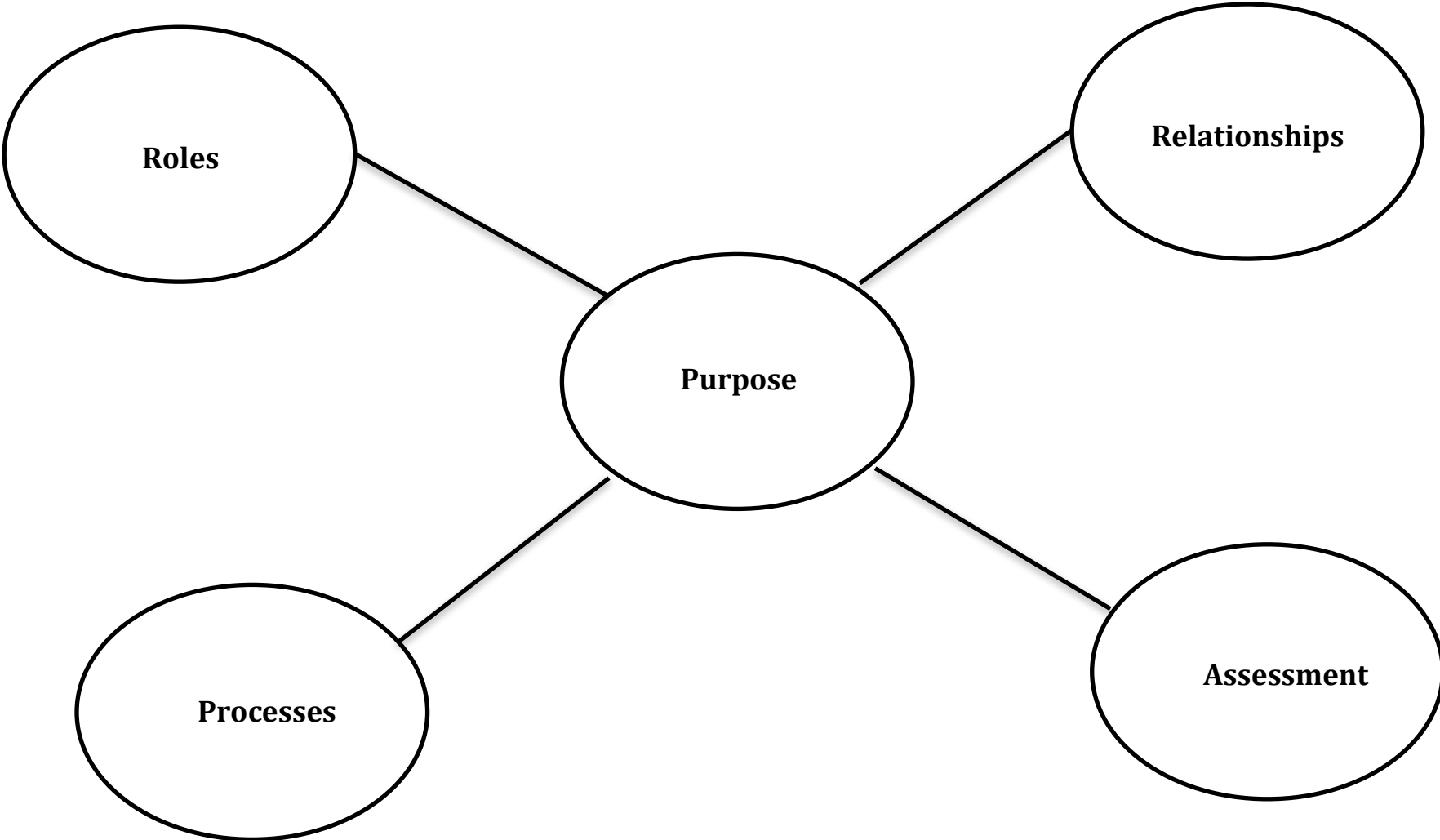
Definition of a TEAM

**A group of individuals who work together
interdependently to achieve
an identified purpose and common goals.**

Effective Teams – Ineffective Teams

A	B
Ineffective Teams	Effective Teams

Effective Teams Framework



Characteristics of Effective Teams

PURPOSE:

- **Vision** An image of the future desired state of the team.
- **Mission** A statement of the team’s purpose and ultimate aims.
- **Goals** Tangible results or growth targets to guide work activities and decision making.
- **Guiding Principles** The beliefs that guide team behavior. Standards that are adopted as a basis for action or conduct.

ROLES:

- **Tasks** The activities or pieces of work that need to be accomplished.
- **Resources** Human and material resources needed to get the work done.
- **Responsibilities** The assignment of tasks to specific team members.

RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Trust building** Finding ways to develop and maintain trust on the team.
- **Recognition** Taking time to recognize individual and group achievements and contributions.
- **Norms and Expectations** The group agreements on how people will treat one another and the “rules” for appropriate behavior.
- **Individual Differences** Understanding individual differences and appreciating diversity as a strength.

Characteristics of Effective Teams

PROCESSES:

- **Problem Solving** A process for working through problems and generating solutions.
- **Communication** Strategies and structures for communicating within the team and with other teams.
- **Decision Making** Agreements about how decisions will be made, who will be involved in decision-making, and how decisions will be communicated.
- **Conflict Management** Guidelines and strategies for managing and resolving differences and conflicts.
- **Meetings** Rules and structures for running effective meetings.
- **Planning** Structured processes for planning and implementing action plans.

ASSESSMENT:

- **Outcomes** Articulating the specific results the team is focused on achieving.
- **Data Collection** The collection of information and data related to the teams desired outcomes or set of goals.
- **Data Analysis** Organizing and analyzing information and data that is collected in relation to outcomes or actions implemented by the team.
- **Reporting** Reporting results of the assessment and using those results for decision-making.

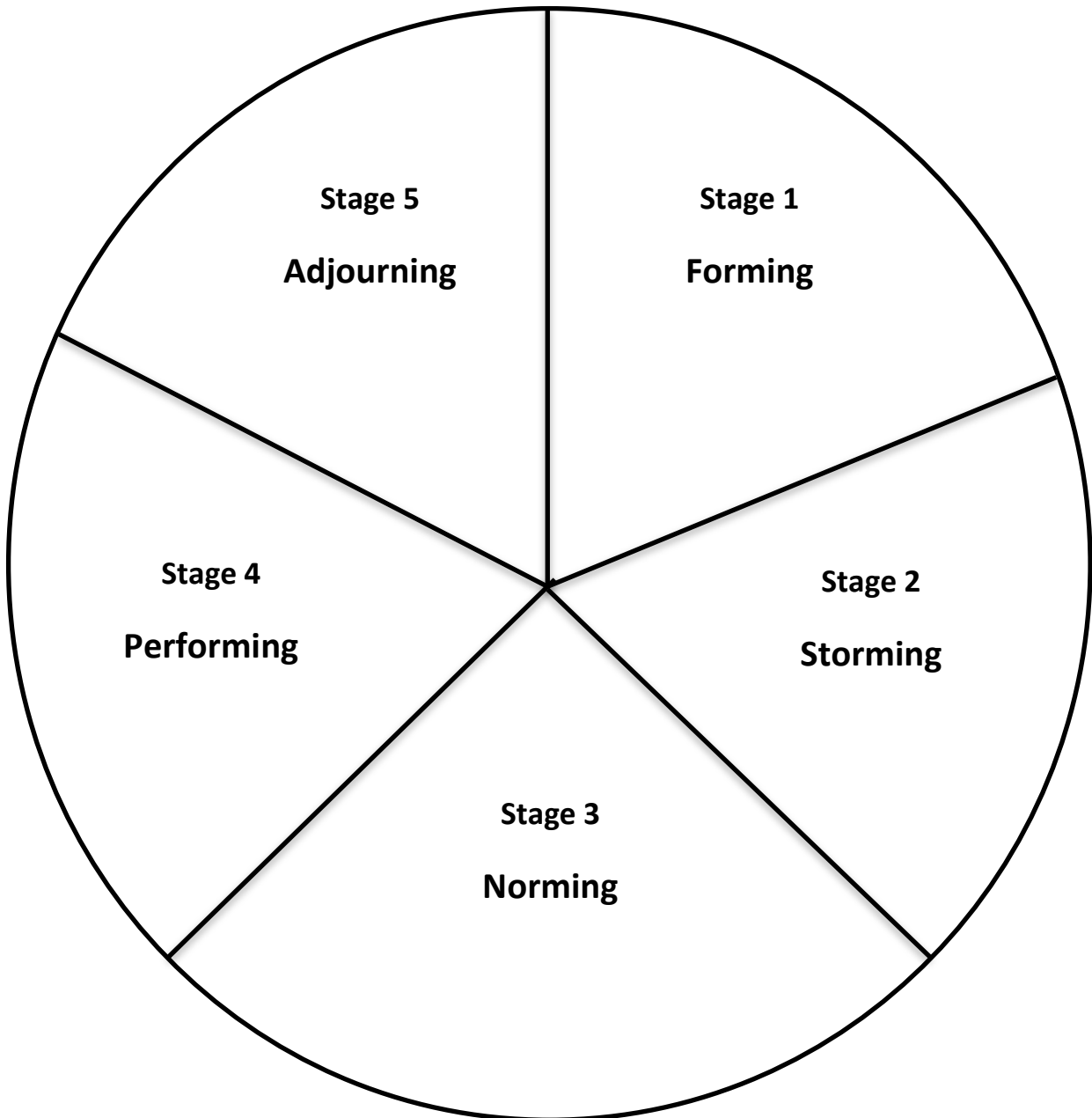
Effective Team Assessment

Team Strengths

Team Weaknesses

Starting Point for Improving Team Effectiveness

Five Stages of Team Development



Five Stages of Team Development

FORMING	STORMING	NORMING	PERFORMING	ADJOURNING
A group is just learning about one another	Stressful negotiations around differences and how the team will operate	Roles are accepted and information is freely shared	High productivity and interdependence	The team is coming to an end.
Minimal work gets accomplished	Work is slow due to interpersonal struggles	The focus becomes clear and energy is directed toward the work	Quality work gets done in a collaborative manner	The work has been completed.
People are polite	Conflicts arise	Weaknesses are acknowledged	People are accepting and supportive	People are feeling sadness.
Doubts and questions are raised	Competing and infighting begins	Relationships are growing and getting stronger	There is genuine commitment to achieving common goals	There is recognition of individual and team accomplishments.
People are watchful and guarded	Distrust and fear begins	Trust increases and a team feeling develops	Loyalty to the team and each other increases	The team evaluates their work.
People begin testing one another	Resistance and blaming begins	People feel more supported	Perseverance is the norm	There is a sense of loss and mourning.
Understanding one another is the task	People start looking for allies	People begin pulling together	High communication	Discussions are held about staying in touch and future work.

Cautious hopefulness	Stress levels increase	Tensions drop	Tensions are resolved	There is some anxiety about separation and ending.
Limited structure	Disagreements about structures and how to proceed	Structures are defined and accepted	Structures are planned but are flexible and open-ended	Lessons learned are summarized.

Stages of Team Development Diagnosis

Briefly describe the team you are thinking about

Where is your team in the development cycle? Why do you think this is the case?

What ideas do you have to help the team move forward?

Team Functions and Roles

TASK FUNCTIONS

Initiator	-	Starts ideas and proposes tasks
Problem Solver	-	Analyzes information and asks for ideas and suggestions
Contributor	-	Offers facts, ideas, and beliefs
Clarifier/Elaborator	-	Clears up confusion
Summarizer	-	Pulls together team dialogue and decisions
Consensus Tester	-	Checks for a group position

MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS

Motivator	-	Creates team spirit and enthusiasm among people
Gate Keeper	-	Facilitates participation of others
Supporter	-	Acts friendly, warm, and helps
Harmonizer	-	Reduces tension and explores differences
Group Monitor	-	Identifies feelings, moods, and relationships in the group

INDIVIDUAL ROLES

Blocking	-	Prevents consensus or movement
Dominating	-	Talks more than his/her fair share
Playing	-	Uses humor or jokes inappropriately
Recognition Seeking	-	Attempts to get attention
Deserting	-	Withdraws, is indifferent

Self-Assessment of Team Roles

Are you a task or a maintenance person when working on a team?

What specific skills do you bring to the team?

Which individual or dysfunctional roles do you play on teams?

What skills do you need to develop in order to become a more effective team member?

Team Roles Simulation

Task – A group of friends are planning a vacation together.

- Where will we go?
- When will we go?
- What kind of a vacation will you take?
- How long will the vacation be?
- How much are people prepared to pay?
- Who will book the accommodations?
- Who will book the tickets?
- What kinds of activities will we engage in at the destination?

Observers – Their task is to identify who is playing what role.

Roles	Behavior	Name
Initiator	Starts ideas and proposes tasks	
Clarifier and Elaborator	Clears up confusion	
Summarizer	Restates and offers a conclusion	
Harmonizer	Reduces tensions and explores differences	
Gate Keeper	Facilitates participation of others	
Blocking	Prevents consensus or movement	
Dominating	Talks more than his/her fair share	
Recognition Seeking	Attempts to get attention	

Establishing Team Norms

Always Do	Never Do

Team Norms

Norms are agreed upon expectations for how team members need to behave.

1. Provide a trusting, caring, and supportive environment.
2. Foster open and honest communication.
3. Respect teammates and their different opinions.
4. Be focused and productive.
5. Encourage participation in team decision-making.
6. Share all the important information for effective decision-making.
7. Support team decisions both privately and publicly.
8. Assume individual responsibility for helping the team succeed.
9. Celebrate our successes.

Team Norms

1. Provide a trusting, caring and supportive environment

We agreed to:

- be honest with every team member, on every issue
- offer assistance to our teammates
- be pleasant in our exchanges
- speak in a positive manner outside the team

2. Foster open and honest communication

We agreed to:

- be a role model for open and honest communication
- maintain confidentiality
- have faith and trust in the expertise of our teammates
- listen carefully to all team members

3. Respect teammates and their different opinions

We agreed to:

- encourage others to voice their opinions
- not accept silence as consent
- listen and accept what people have to say
- accept responsibility for expressing our opinions

4. Be focused and productive

We agreed to:

- stay on task and focus on the most critical issues
- honor our purpose and goals
- establish ground rules for our meetings
- evaluate the effectiveness of our meetings

5. Encourage participation in team decision-making

We agreed to:

- ask questions for clarification
- be flexible in our thinking
- treat each team member as an equal
- identify pros and cons in our decision-making
- be honest in recognizing alternatives to the decision

6. Share all the important information for effective decision-making

We agreed to:

- be prepared and do our homework
- present options when recommending solutions
- present timelines for our decision-making
- share all relevant information

7. Support team decisions both privately and publicly

We agreed to:

- actively support team decisions
- identify positive attributes of the decision
- present the rationale behind the decision
- accept individual responsibility for the decision

8. Assume individual responsibility for helping the team succeed

We agreed to:

- accept responsibility for completing individual tasks or assignments
- focus our efforts on team goals
- take risks and share in the failures
- assume a leadership role on our team

9. Celebrate our successes

We agreed to:

- get to know one another on a personal level
- recognize and celebrate team successes
- offer praise to team members for our collective and individual accomplishments
- keep a balance between our personal and work lives

Adaptive Teams

In a workplace environment where there are ambitious deadlines, continuous pressure to keep up with industry innovations, and high expectations to maintain and improve the quality of the work, teams clearly need to be adaptive. This means teams being proactive, rather than reactive. It also means teams having the agility to adjust to the turbulence of change. Of course, for adaptive teams to function effectively, the organization or company must believe in adaptive teams and give teams the latitude they need to think and act outside the box.

Adaptive teams have many of the same qualities as traditional high performing teams, but they do have certain characteristics and ways of thinking and behaving that set them apart. Some would argue that adaptive teams function at a higher level than more traditional teams.

Adaptive teams:

- develop team members so that anyone can step in and lead at different times
- gather diverse and talented industry experts who bring current knowledge into discussions
- establish ambitious goals that are tightly aligned with the company or organization
- have ways to hold people accountable for doing their individual work and contributing to the teams efforts and performance
- develop mutual trust where people are looking out for one another
- give team members the freedom to express different viewpoints or opinions
- encourage team members to take risks and challenge traditional thinking and one another's thinking
- have autonomy to make decisions
- are constantly reading the environment for early warning signs that change is coming
- see opportunities to innovate and improve and act on these opportunities

- are fluid, where different people can step in to assume one another's responsibilities
- engage in frequent conversations, with one another, about the work

One of the most important expectations on an adaptive team is that you do your individual work before coming to team meetings. At team meetings individuals invite the critique of others to strengthen their ideas and work. Team members don't hide behind the work of the team. Adaptive teamwork is about creating interdependency, not dependency.

Strategies for Building a High-Performance Team

If you were assigned to be new team leaders in your workplace, what three strategies would you start with and why?

Strategy 1 + Rationale

Strategy 2 + Rationale

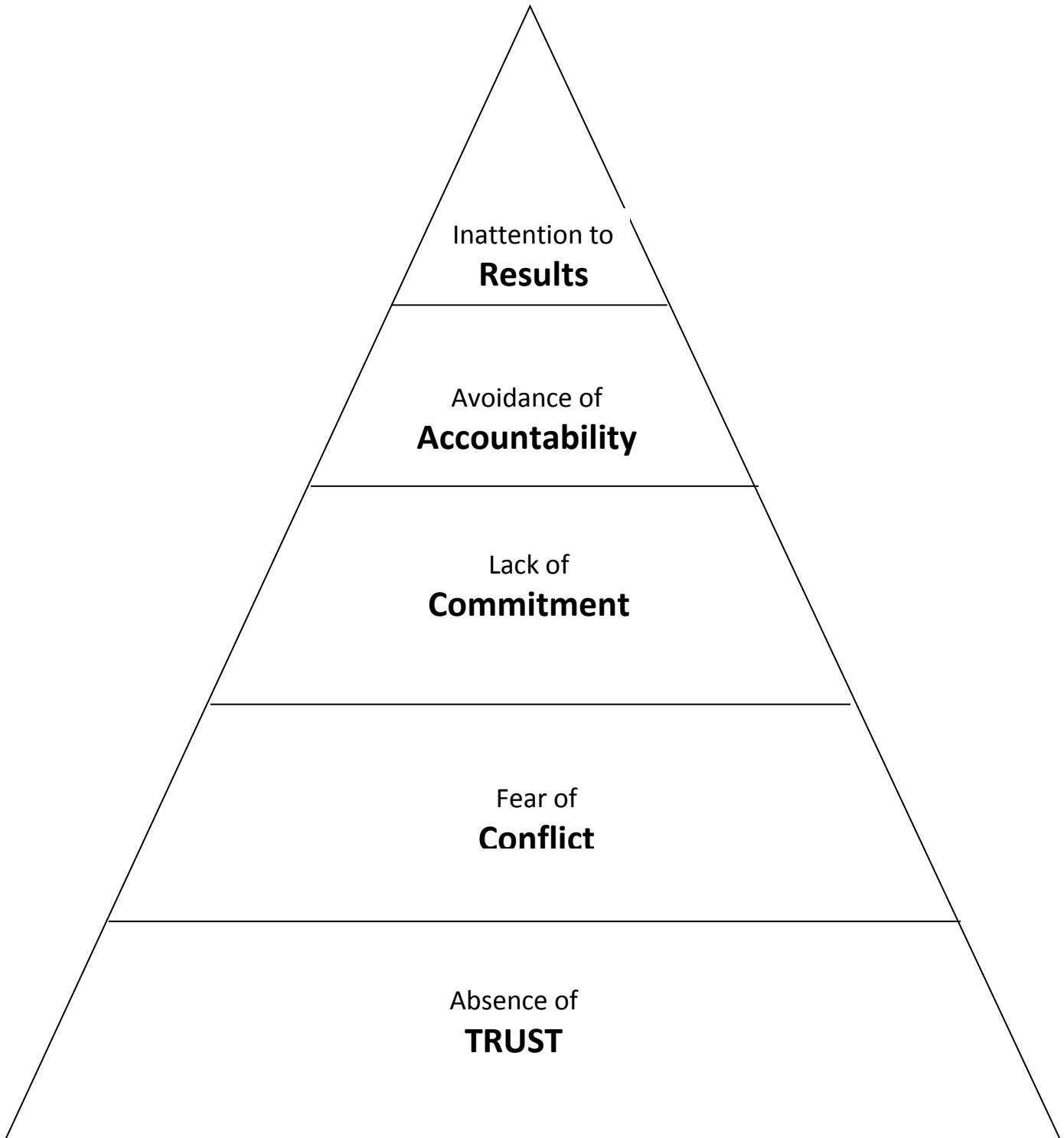
Strategy 3 + Rationale

Strategies for Building a High Performance Team

Team leaders and all team members need to:

1. Push for clear and timely communication.
2. Bring talent to the team.
3. Play your position – do your work.
4. Respect diversity on the team.
5. Support teammates and the team leader.
6. Continue to learn about and improve your technical and team building skills.
7. Be prepared to sacrifice for the team.
8. Help new teammates transition to the team.
9. Spend time with your teammates.
10. Stay focused and disciplined.
11. Always give your best effort.
12. Make suggestions on how to improve teamwork.
13. Help create a climate of trust.
14. Be clear on your purpose.
15. Conduct ongoing team assessments.

The FIVE Dysfunctions of a TEAM



Source: Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

The FIVE Dysfunctions of a TEAM

1. The first dysfunction is an **absence of trust** among team members. Essentially, this stems from their unwillingness to be vulnerable within the group. Team members who are not genuinely open with one another about their mistakes and weaknesses make it impossible to build a foundation for trust.
2. This failure to build trust is damaging because it sets the tone for the second dysfunction: **fear of conflict**. Teams that lack trust are incapable of engaging in unfiltered and passionate debate of ideas. Instead, they resort to vague discussions and guarded comments.
3. A lack of healthy conflict is a problem because it ensures the third dysfunction of a team: **lack of commitment**. Without having aired their opinions in the course of passionate and open debate, team members rarely, if ever, buy in and commit to decisions. They may fake agreements during meetings.
4. Because of this lack of real commitment and buy-in, team members develop an **avoidance of accountability**, the fourth dysfunction. Without committing to a clear plan of action, even the most focused and driven people often hesitate to call their peers on actions and behaviors that seem counterproductive to the good of the team.
5. Failure to hold one another accountable creates an environment where the fifth dysfunction can thrive. **Inattention to results** occurs when team members put their individual needs (such as ego, career development, or recognition) or even the needs of other groups above the collective goals of the team.

And so, like a chain with just one link broken, teamwork deteriorates if even a single dysfunction is allowed to flourish.

Another way to understand this model is to take the opposite approach. Imagine how members of truly cohesive teams behave:

1. They trust one another.
2. They engage in resolving conflicts.
3. They commit to decisions and plans for action.
4. They hold one another accountable for delivering on those plans.
5. They focus on the achievement of collective results.

Symptoms of Bad Teamwork

1. **Wrong Balance in Team Membership:** Essential skills are lacking in team members, and tasks are continually not accomplished efficiently and effectively.
2. **Frustration:** People cannot see a clear way of meeting their own needs and team goals, so they lack motivation and commitment to the team.
3. **Grumbling and Dissatisfaction:** People cannot express their concerns openly, so they do it in the parking lot, restrooms, and hallways. Mistakes are punished rather than viewed as opportunities to learn and grow.
4. **Dominant Participants:** Individuals take more than their share of the “airtime,” and frequently interrupt and shutdown others.
5. **Floundering:** People are unclear or overwhelmed, decisions get postponed, and people don’t know what is coming next. They engage in unfocused conversation and avoid sensitive issues.
6. **Unhealthy Competition:** Team members are feuding and people feel like they are spectators watching people fight with one another.
7. **Ineffective Meetings:** When only one or a few people contribute, or managers continually lay down the rules, meetings tend to be unproductive and discouraging.
8. **Lack of Trust and Openness:** People are reluctant to be open and honest, when there are weak relationships between the team leader and team members, or among team members.

Dysfunctions of a Team

What struck you?

What surprised you?

What was the most important thing you learned about team dysfunctions?

What do you think is most challenging to solve among these dysfunctions?

Team Assessment

Instructions: Indicate on the scales your assessment of your team, and the way it functions, by circling the number on each scale that you feel is most descriptive of your team.

1. Value System

There is no vision, mission, or guiding principles for the team.

There are clearly articulated values on the team (vision, mission, guiding principles).



2. Goals

There is a lack of clear and common goals.

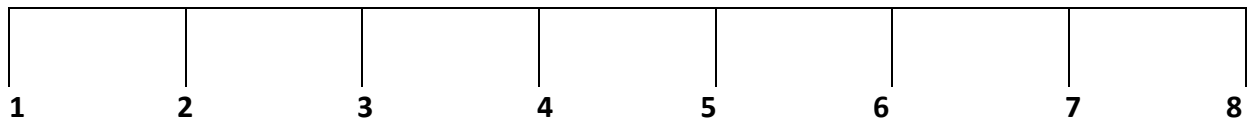
Team members are working toward shared goals.



3. Roles and Responsibilities

Team members are not clear about their roles and responsibilities. There is a lack of coordination.

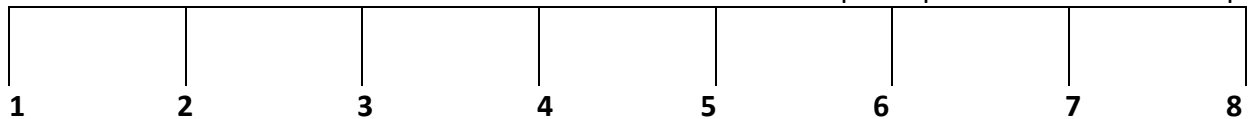
Roles and tasks are clear. Team members share responsibilities.



4. Leadership

One person dominates, and leadership roles are not carried out or shared.

Leadership roles are shared by team members; everyone participates in team leadership.



5. Norms and Expectations

Team members don't follow our norms or do what is expected of them.

All team members follow our norms and do what's expected of them.



6. Trust

There is little trust among team members. People are not open, reliable, caring, and honest.

There is a high degree of trust among members. People are open, reliable, caring, and honest.



7. Recognition

Members are not recognized for their skills and contributions.

Team members are regularly recognized for their skills and contributions.



8. Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

The team has not agreed on approaches to problem solving and decision-making.

There are clear procedures about how problems are solved and decisions are made. Team members are included in most decisions and participate in problem solving.



9. Conflict Management

Tensions and conflict are clearly evident. There are no procedures for dealing with these conflicts.

Conflict is seen as an opportunity to grow. There are strategies for resolving issues and learning about our differences.



10. Meetings

Meetings are unproductive and disorganized. Very little is accomplished at meetings.

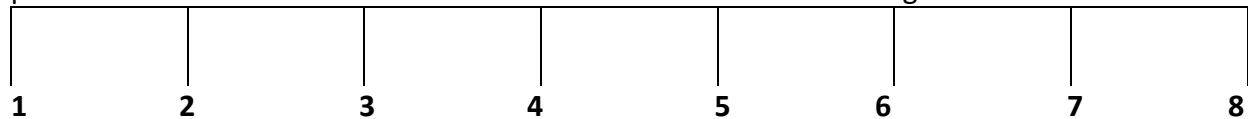
There are clearly outlined procedures for running meetings. Meetings are very productive.



11. Communications

There is no organized system to facilitate communication. People feel uninformed and have poor communication skills.

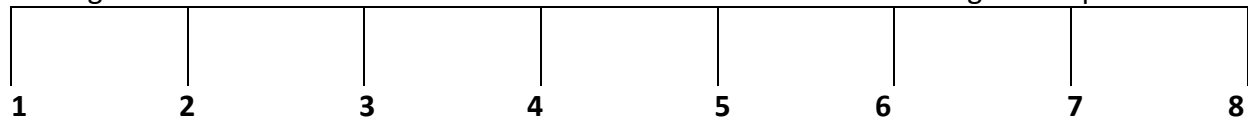
There are structures for ensuring open communication on the team. People work hard at being clear and have good communication skills.



12. Assessment

The team never assesses its strategies or results.

The team often assesses its strategies and performance.



13. Risk Taking

Members are reluctant or do not express different viewpoints or opinions. Dissent is discouraged

Team members are free to express different viewpoints or opinions. Dissent is encouraged.



14. Group Think

Team members do not challenge traditional thinking or one another's thinking.

Team members challenge traditional thinking and each other's thinking.



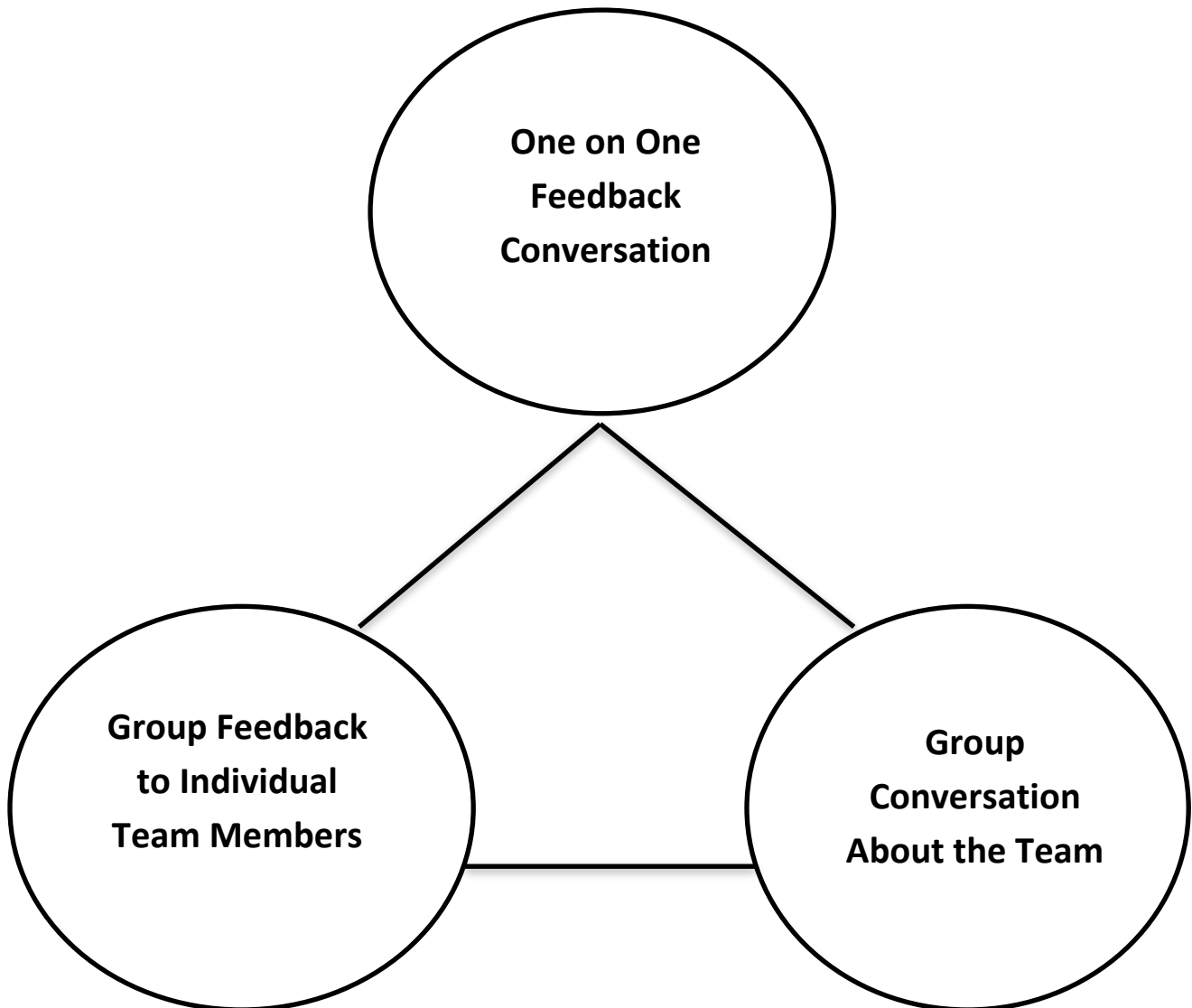
15. Innovation

Team members do not see opportunities to innovate and improve.

Team members see opportunities to innovate and improve. They act on these opportunities.



Three Ways to Give Feedback on a Team



Three Ways of Giving Feedback on the Team

One-on-One Feedback Conversations

This allows a team member to give more personal and confidential feedback to another team member. It is an opportunity for team members to coach one another around making changes that will be beneficial to the teammate and the team. This is a chance for two team members to compare experiences and viewpoints on their individual contributions to the team.

Group Feedback to Individual Team Members

This is an opportunity for each individual to receive a variety of feedback from team members. The feedback experience allows the individual to reflect on a range of viewpoints about their strengths and talents. It is also helpful to the individual because they are getting concrete suggestions about how to be a better teammate.

Group Conversation About the Team

This feedback strategy is focused on looking at how the whole team is functioning. It complements the written assessments that members can complete confidentially. It is an opportunity to have a conversation about team strengths, weaknesses, and obstacles. The discussion with others allows the team to go deeper, and to connect ideas about changes that need to be made to improve teamwork. This group conversation has energy and a flow that a written assessment does not. It is about building off one another's ideas, analysis, and suggestions.

One-on-One Feedback Conversations

1. How are you contributing to getting the work done?
2. How are you helping develop positive relationships on the team?
3. Here's how I see it.
4. Where do we need to make changes?

Group Feedback to Individual Team Members

1. What is the most valuable contribution this person is making on the team?
2. How is this person helping to get the work done?
3. How is this person helping to strengthen relationships on the team?
4. What is something for this person to think about that would help the team be more successful?

Group Conversation About the Team

1. What's on your mind? What do we need to talk about?
2. What are we doing well as a team to help us get the work done?
3. What is getting in the way of us getting the work done?
4. What is helping to strengthen our relationships?
5. What is hurting our relationships?
6. Are we having the right conversation? If not, what do we need to talk about?
7. What changes do we need to make to help us be more successful as a team?

Teambuilding Activities

Examples

1. Getting to Know Your Teammates 1
2. Getting to Know Your Teammates 2
3. Characteristics I Value in a Teammate
4. Books, Movies, Hobbies
5. Concerns and Worry List
6. Motivation and Pet Peeves
7. Strengths, Experiences and Cautions
8. Recognition and Feedback

Getting to Know Your Teammates 1

- On Saturdays I like to _____
- My ideal holiday would be _____
- When I need a break I _____
- The place I most want to travel is _____
- I feel most confident when _____
- My best friend is _____ because _____
- The most hurtful thing that has happened in my life is _____
- What I most want to achieve with my life is _____

Getting to Know Your Teammates 2

1. What I value most is: _____

2. What motivates me is: _____

3. What I like most about my job is: _____

4. What I like least about my job is: _____

5. My dream vacation would be: _____

6. My most memorable moments are:

Childhood _____

Family _____

Personal _____

Work _____

Characteristics I Value in a Teammate

Most Important or Desirable:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Least Important or Desirable:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
-

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. _____ | Communicates effectively and listens carefully |
| 2. _____ | Friendly and sociable |
| 3. _____ | Organized and manages time efficiently |
| 4. _____ | Positive and optimistic |
| 5. _____ | Responsible and reliable |
| 6. _____ | Creative and innovative |
| 7. _____ | Respectful and considerate |
| 8. _____ | Helpful and collaborative; a good team player |
| 9. _____ | Never becomes angry; stays calm and cool |
| 10. _____ | Follows rules and procedures |
| 11. _____ | A good problem solver |
| 12. _____ | Takes initiative and follows through on tasks |
| 13. _____ | Willing to take risks |
| 14. _____ | Independent and self-reliant |
| 15. _____ | Fun to be with |
| 16. _____ | Has high standards and a good work ethic |

Books, Movies, Hobbies

Books

- Two of my favorite books are:

1. _____

2. _____

Movies

- Two of my favorite movies are:

1. _____

2. _____

Hobbies

- In my leisure time I like to:

1. _____

2. _____

Concerns and Worry List

The three things I am most worried or most concerned about at this point:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Ideas/Suggestions about Concerns/Worries:

Motivation and Pet Peeves

The two things that motivate me on a team (what gets me moving, excites me):

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

Two pet peeves (things that drive me crazy on a team):

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

Strengths, Experiences, and Cautions

1. **Strengths** (things I am good at and can contribute to the team):

2. Some **experiences** I have had that might possibly help us as a team:

3. **Cautions** (things I need help with and can learn about from other team members):

Recognition and Feedback

WHAT I like to be recognized for?	HOW I like to be recognized?
WHAT I want feedback on?	HOW/WHEN I want/need feedback?