

The Recipe for Perfect Teams

Five essential ingredients make up a high-performance team • BY JEFFREY LEVENTRY



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While high-performance teams possess many attributes, there are five ingredients that are essential when developing these teams.

Trust: Trust is the foundation of the high-performance team and the basis upon which the team is built. Team members must respect, support and trust each other in every aspect of their work life as they endeavor to build positive relationships. They need to be honest and feel comfortable providing candid and constructive feedback formally or informally.

Exemplary leadership: The high-performance team must have an exemplary leader who provides the vision and goals for the team, which are aligned with organizational goals. This allows for quicker execution of company strategy and proper allocation of resources. The leader must act with integrity and should place team goals before individual goals. He or she inspires the team members and motivates them to accomplish team goals. He or she selects the right people who possess team values and attitudes and then places them in the right roles based on their experience, education and expertise.

The leader then creates an environment where performance can flourish by generating opportunities for success, ensuring team members have an opportunity to lead an initiative and be profiled for their contributions. He or she promotes continuous learning and ensures that rewards are commensurate with performance. Effective leaders also know when

skills, experience and expertise is required for the team to meet its goals.

Team members are also willing to share what they know with each other and are eager to learn new skills that will improve each person's performance while contributing to the team's collective performance. Every team member seeks personal growth opportunities as part of his or her ongoing development. Teams that possess diverse and complementary skills have the advantage of tapping into members' unique abilities to achieve their objectives.

Commitment to a common goal or purpose: High-performance team members must understand the team's goals and be committed to achieving them. They consistently act in ways that support the team's mission and objectives. They also appreciate how their individual contributions support the team's efforts, and they take a collaborative approach in their work. Additionally, they value partnership and are eager to contribute to initiatives being spearheaded by their teammates because they accept mutual accountability and know the team shares the ultimate reward. Teams that are committed to common goals consistently outperform those that are not.

Honest and open communication: The last hallmark of a high-performance team is the commitment to communicate openly and honestly. All communication must be transparent, with no perceived hidden agendas. Team members must be honest about any matter impacting the team's goals or performance. As a result, the team can operate more efficiently, and meetings can be more productive since the focus is on getting things done rather than spending time deciphering the meaning of the communication. Honest communication breeds productivity, and improved productivity leads to achievement of team goals. Teams that adhere to open and honest communication are more productive and efficient.

Once you build a high-performance team, you can start to enjoy the benefits and value generated by the team. These include, but are not limited to, increased productivity and efficiency, improved innovation and quality, and improved morale and increased employee satisfaction. **CLO**

Honest communication breeds productivity, and improved productivity leads to team goal achievement.

to cede power to the team so it can take ownership of issues and create viable solutions. Teams that are led by exemplary leaders will push to achieve the team's goals and are more likely to succeed.

Complementary skill set: The high-performance team must be composed of individuals who possess diverse and complementary skills. Each team member must understand the relevance of his or her skills to the team's goals and be willing to contribute to the team's success based on his or her skill set. He or she comprehends that a blending of