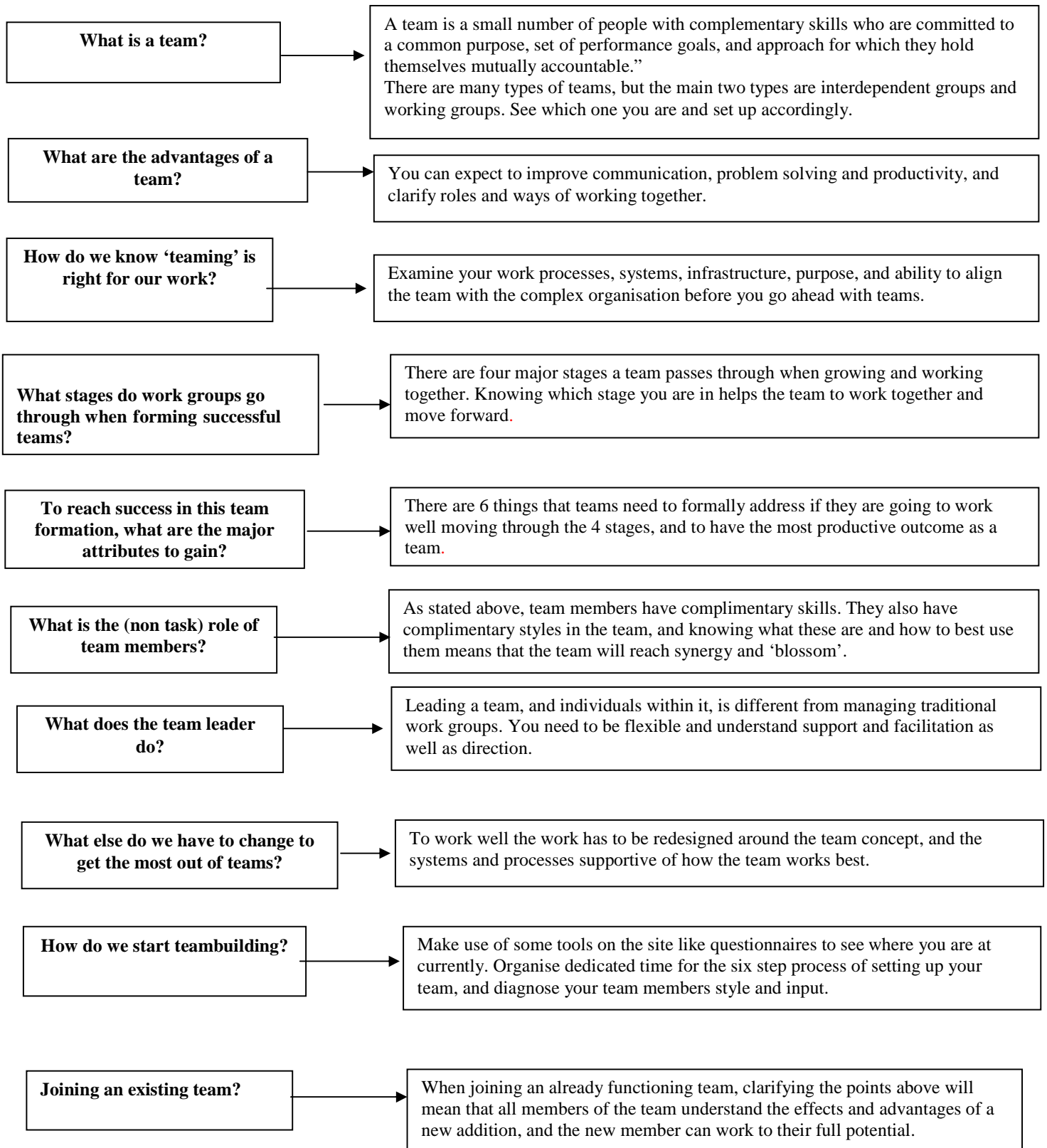


## CREATING AND MAINTAINING TEAMS



## What is a team?

There are many types of teams but two major categories:

### The shared outcome team

- Has an interdependent result
- Produces a collective product
- Quality is dependent on coordinating effort
- Needs complimentary skills

Examples: a medical team in an operation, a football team

The interdependent result is the easiest single factor to use to define this sort of team.

### The working team

- Doesn't have a collective product
- Works at the same location and work time
- May perform similar functions
- Are part of different processes

Examples: GP's in a clinic, an Olympic team.

They perform individual work in a team environment.

- Some teams are **short term** (project teams, working party), and others are **long term** (process teams, research teams, management teams).

Team building is the process of deliberately setting out to create a team that possesses effective working practices, competence and resourcefulness and one that reduces and removes blockages that interfere with their effectiveness. The success of such a team depends not only on individual skills but on the way the individuals support and work with each other.

When going through team building an added advantage is that the work involved in clarifying roles and expectations fits in perfectly with each staff member's individual career development plan.

## What are the advantages of a team?

### What can you expect to gain?

- increased **innovation**
- improved **quality** of the information
- improved **communication** in all directions
- greater **sharing** of ideas and **support** for other team members
- improved **use** of resources
- greater **ownership** of decisions made as staff are part of the decision making process
- return of **discretion**
- **reduction** of organizational guidelines

Often the staff structure will create problems in the areas listed above. While you do not generally have a choice of changing the organizational structure, converting to teams minimizes the negative effects of structure on all of these facets.

### Why do you see these gains?

There are two main arguments for the gains seen in successful teams.

1) Today's workforce is different from that of 20 years ago. Employee's expectations of involvement and motivation today are much higher, and if that is ignored it is often at the expense of capable input and improvements regarding the tasks that staff perform. While teaming does not allow people to do just what they want, it greatly increases the level of empowerment and involvement of team members as they mature in their task knowledge.

2) There are many studies concerning team performance, and a common theme is that "In many processes and decisions the best individuals perform no better than the worst teams"  
What does this mean?

Example: Proctor and Gambol looked at rates of nappy production with a line of individuals and a team, and noted two main findings.

a) When looking at the number of batches produced between individuals and teams, they noted that production for members of the most hastily put together teams was still equal to that of the best rate of individual workers.

		12	
		10	
		8	
individuals	□	6	□
		4	
			team

b) When the structure around work was also changed to best fit teams, the leap in production was marked.

		18	
		16	
		13	
			□
			team and structure

## How do we know 'teaming' is right for our work?

*Petronius Arbiter - 66 AD*

We trained hard – but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams, we would be reorganized.

I was to learn later in life we tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing, and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization

From : *Satyricon*

Comments on Petronius

1. Teams have been around for a long time
2. It takes a long time to form up into teams
3. It is not hard for managers to do things that inadvertently mess up teamwork
4. Behind the messing up is often the need to maintain the appearance of progress

(Scholtes)

**To try and decide if teams are right for you:**

- Look at the big picture elements of your systems and the interdependence between purpose, systems and teamwork.
- Look at your **purpose** for creating the system(s)
- Look at **why** you want to create a team in that system?
- Systems and teams **require** each other. Teams with a purpose and no method will fail. Methods and systems are no use if there is no working relationship between those pursuing the purpose.
- No team acts in **isolation** – it needs alignment within itself, between teams and between the team and the organization
- As a manager you are dealing with **complex** organizations with conflicting dynamics. Teams won't succeed unless systems are in place, which align them to a common purpose.
- The starting point of teams therefore is what is their **purpose**? If this is inconsistent or unclear there is no point in having a team.
- How flexible can you be?
- How much are you willing to change your methods of managing, rewarding, appraising, remunerating, your infrastructure and physical locations to create an environment in which teams will work?

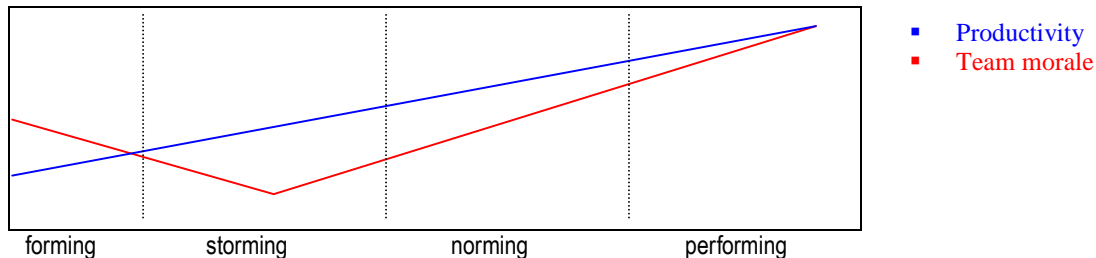
## WHAT TO DO FIRST

### Questions to answer if you want teams:

- Do you have **work processes** compatible with teamwork?
- Do the people **share** technology, territory and time?
- Are they ready, willing and **able** (attitude, culture, literacy, numeracy, and training)?
- Can managers apply **different** leadership?
- Is the organization willing to change its **infrastructure**?
- Is a team the **best** way to fulfil the purpose of the work to be done?
- Is the **work** single function or multifunction
- What is the **timeline**
- Is the issue **controversial**

## What stages do work groups go through when forming successful teams?

### THE FOUR STAGES OF TEAM FORMATION



- Productivity
- Team morale

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4
<b>Forming (undeveloped)</b>	<b>Storming (dissatisfaction)</b>	<b>Norming (consolidating)</b>	<b>Performing (mature)</b>
Feelings of individuals rarely dealt with	Not working in unified or methodical way	Operating methods examined	Openness. Concern and improved relationships
Members conform to the established line	Dormant people start to contribute	Review of procedures and agreement	Effective work methods
No "rocking the boat"	Operating methods start to be reviewed	Problem solving skills developed	Informality and respect
The boss takes most decisions. Group dependent on authority	Activities to improve performance undertaken	Goals, objectives clearer	Outside help welcome
Little listening as need to adapt	Willingness to experiment	Team pride improves	Open relationships with other groups
Not yet centred on care for others	Values and assumptions debated	Less dissatisfaction	flexibility
Personal weaknesses covered up	Values and assumptions debated	Less animosity towards members, leader	Leadership decided by situation
Objectives unclear and poorly communicated	Risky issues opened up	Mutual respect, harmony trust develops	Individual needs recognised and met
Mistakes used in evidence against members	Leadership and manager discussed, evaluated	Group cohesion	Continual review
Some anxiety about why they are there, what they will get, what the stated purpose of the group means to them, what they will do, where they fit, and about other members (who they and what they are like)	Cliques formed Personal strengths and weaknesses known Differences expressed more openly Can be uncomfortable	Pleasure in task accomplishment	Trust, openness, cooperation, confrontation  Development a priority  Energy focused on task accomplishment rather than on dissatisfaction
The length of this stage will depend on how clearly the task is identified and how easy it is to achieve	The dip in morale is due to the degree of discrepancy between the initial expectations and the reality and the situation. To be resolved, refining of goals and task is required	Length of this stage depends on the ease of resolving feelings of dissatisfaction, ease of learning new skills, quality of interpersonal relationships and ability to work together and to value differences	"performance with satisfaction"
Low development level	Low to moderate	Moderate to high	High development level

**To reach success in this team formation, what are the major attributes to gain?**

## **THE SIX STEP PROCESS TO IMPROVE TEAM DEVELOPMENT**

Highly effective teams often start with a solid foundation on which they have progressively built. Teams differ in many ways yet there are several “must do’s” or anchors that need to be in place initially. These six anchors are:

### **STEP 1 PURPOSE / MISSION**

- ***Why do we exist as a team?***

***Involves:***

A well defined, clearly stated, understood and agreed purpose for being, a mission. The purpose of the team will marry in with the strategic purpose for the area or department, it will clarify why you exist at the local level, thus helping each team member to ratify their KRA’s for career development (see step 3).

### **STEP 2 VISION**

- ***What do we want the future to look like?***
- ***What will we see if we are operating at our best?***

***Involves:***

A shared view of what the future can be, a vision of a desired future the team has created and wishes to move towards – ie “begin with an end in mind”. It is the continued communication and modelling of this vision that makes the leader provide clarity on purpose and direction.

Answering these questions with everyone in the team involved will allow them to own and action the vision.

### **STEP 3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- ***What do we have to accomplish / achieve?***
- ***What are the organizations’ expectations?***
- ***How will we measure our success? (KPI’s)***

***Involves:***

An agreement as to what we have to achieve to move towards vision attainment, and hence what do we have to measure in the way of goals, objectives or indicators to provide focus and feedback in this journey.

Deming said “what we can’t manage we can’t measure”, which leads to the need for clear goals and objectives in place in order to know how well we are doing against them. (this links back to individual career development KRA’s)

### **STEP 4 STRATEGIES AND TACTICS**

- ***How will we accomplish these goals?***
- ***How will we go about solving problems and making decisions?***
- ***How will we interact with “others”? (customers, staff, students, suppliers)***

***Involves:***

An agreement as to **how** the team is going to achieve its goals, objectives or indicators. What plans and strategies are to be put in place to bridge the gap between its vision and current functioning? How will you go about gaining success? Then you can decide on priorities, accountabilities and resource requirements to put identified strategies in place over the next twelve months

## **STEP 5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- ***Who is accountable for what?***
- ***Who does what tasks?***
- ***What do we need to share?***

### ***Involves:***

The need for all team members to know each others roles, where all accountabilities are clearly spelt out, agreed upon and updated as circumstances change. As you form teams most roles will change to some degree. Go back to the KRA's you have written as part of the performance development activity of your area.

This lets you document all key tasks, and then you can draw up an A-C-I chart which allows the whole team to understand each others roles and responsibilities, and which allocates accountabilities for major tasks.

## **STEP 6 STANDARDS / NORMS / EXPECTATIONS / GROUND RULES**

- ***What are the values of this team?***
- ***What are the ground rules we will function by?***

### ***Involves:***

Writing up a team 'operating agreement' (set of ground rules or guidelines) that identifies the behaviours and practices which the team feel, will make working together as a team a success. These are commonly called 'values' today. This is often done early on in team formation by effective teams, as it improves communication, conflict resolution, effective problem solving and decision-making.

## **What is the (non task) role of team members?**

The approach to work varies with each person, and this is true in a team environment as well. What makes a team work well is not only the acceptance that each person in it will be different, but the knowledge of how they are different in outlook and work style, and the value these differences bring to the team overall.

An invaluable team activity regarding work style is to have a specific session together to “publicly recognize” and acknowledge the ‘style’ each team member adopts, and to reach a shared understanding of the value which these different style’s bring as well as how best to work together to get the most synergistic outcome for the team as a whole.

## **WHAT ARE WORK STYLES?**

There are a number of ways in which work styles are defined depending on which criteria or psychological test is being used. Generally they look at the way in which people approach aspects of completing tasks and working with others, and try to explain the motivation behind individual differences.

For example, the Belbin test divides people into one of 6 categories regarding their approach to work in a team – you can be someone who likes to organize others; someone who likes to finish the small detail on a task so that it is correct; someone who takes a helicopter view of the process or who brings in lots of information from outside as opposed to someone who is ‘task oriented’ or who thinks of completely original approaches to the job.

Understanding these things about your workmates can be the difference between thinking someone is bossy, or dull and boring, and using the value each approach can bring to the completion of a task by the whole team. Importantly, people’s strengths can be exploited and their weaknesses complemented by other’s capability. It also creates a forum to address behaviour which is destructive to teamwork in a focused and positive way.

## **WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF GAINING THIS UNDERSTANDING?**

There are three main reasons why it is essential to high performing teams to understand and acknowledge each member’s working style.

### **1) *Valuing individual team members for their different work styles has a very positive effect on them and how they see their worth in the team.***

As individuals we tend to identify with those who have a similar style to our own, and this leads to underestimating the value of other approaches to such things as task completion, problem solving and decision- making.

By understanding that there are profound differences in how people approach these things, and that EACH has an intrinsic value relating to how robust the outcome is, people are less likely to judge a different approach as wrong, and more likely to see that it ‘rounds out’ the approach of the group as a whole and will therefore listen to the different view.

### **2) *Understanding and leveraging the different styles greatly improves the quality outcome of the team when working on tasks and delivering a robust result.***

The lack of variety of work styles can lead to a phenomenon called “Group think” where the group tends to cull people who do not have the same approach as the strongest team member (often the leader).

While this leads to agreement and a low level of conflict within the group, it is at the expense of the whole process of questioning and lateral thought applied to the decisions the group makes. The end result is biased and of low quality, and can lead to disastrous outcomes.

### **3) *Knowing what the ‘gaps’ are in a teams makeup means this can be managed around and the group will still have a high quality outcome***

Most teams will lack one style or another. Identifying which style is missing means that the value which would be brought to the team by this style can be formally ‘built in’, thus ensuring a better outcome for the group.

## **HOW DO WE TELL WHAT THE WORK STYLES ARE?**

How do you diagnose the style of team members and the best way for the group to leverage the different approaches to tasks and problems?

There are three **formal** tools pertinent to the university environment that can give you a clear idea of the styles present in your burgeoning team.

1. The Team Management System
2. The **Belbin Team Roles Questionnaire** outlines six major styles adopted by team members and shows how they bring quality to the team. HR can facilitate a Belbin analysis session for you as you set up your team.
3. The **Research Team Effectiveness Questionnaire** outlines the major attributes of successful research teams (CSIRO based) and scores the team members on each. This will give you a good idea of your strengths and weaknesses and can aid you in planning activities for maximizing team effectiveness.

While the use of the Belbin analysis will benefit all team members, the additional use of the research team effectiveness questionnaire where appropriate will give you useful additional information, and the combination of the two tools also minimizes single test bias.

Though it is strongly recommended that the team undertake one of these activities, if that is not possible it should still dedicate a specific block of time and effort to go through with each team member;

- how they best think they can add value to the team,
- how they work best on tasks,
- how they like to communicate and receive information,
- what they like about how the team works now, and
- how the team may work even better on tasks.

**The formal tools often have the added advantage of getting feedback from other team members on each individual's work style. While this is valuable to us as individuals in maximizing our capability to work as a team member, it can require a trained facilitator when there is feedback an individual does not like, and so this aspect of exploring teamwork is best left to such a formal session.**

## What does the team leader do?

### LEADING A TEAM

Many working groups function poorly and fail to use the competence and ability of their individual members. Any group takes time to become a well-integrated, resourceful and effective team but few managers recognize that they need to facilitate this process of team development. It is possible for managers to accelerate development towards a productive, mature team and positively to confront difficulties that would otherwise remain unsolved.

### SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership style theories abound, but most are based on the ability to understand how capable your staff members are and managing them accordingly. The basis of many of the theories is **SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP**, developed by Hirskey & Blanchard which outlines in practical terms how to influence individuals and the team by giving them the direction and support they need, when they need it.

The three skills involved are flexibility, diagnosis and goal setting.

#### **Flexibility**

When managers try to influence others they engage in two types of behaviour.

**Directive behaviour** - the extent to which the leader engages in spelling out team member roles and clearly tells the team member what to do, where to do it, how to do it, when to do it and closely supervises performance. It is about structure, control and supervision

Examples of this behaviour:

- Setting objectives
- Organizing resources
- Planning work in advance to be accomplished by the others
- Setting timetables for future work
- Determines methods of evaluation for follower performance

**Supportive behaviour** - the extent to which a leader engages in two-way communication, listens, provides support and encouragement, facilitates interaction and involved the team member in decision making. It involves listening, praise and facilitation.

Examples of this behaviour:

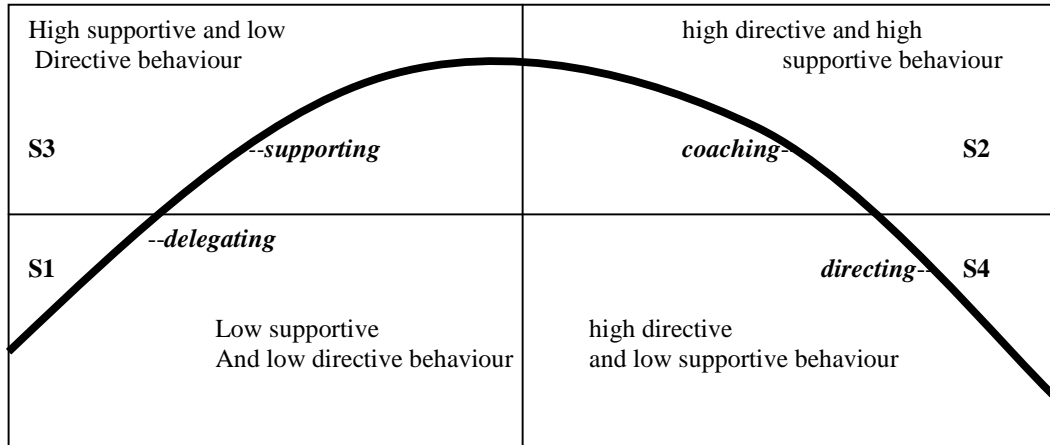
- Asking for suggestions or input on task accomplishment
- Facilitates subordinate problem-solving task accomplishment
- Communicating information about the total university's strategy
- Praises the subordinate or team for task accomplishment
- Encourages or reassures a subordinate that they can do the task

#### **Leadership style**

Leadership style can generally be put into one of four categories (see below). Each style suits certain situations, and when matched the result is good for both parties. When there is a mismatch there is frustration and a lack of clarity that often ends up in lower productivity, job satisfaction and morale. Situational leadership is a tool to help you to match the style to the situation.

Visually, the model looks like this.

### LEADING A TEAM – SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP



### THE FOUR BASIC LEADERSHIP STYLES

#### Style 1: Directing

High directive – low supportive behaviour. The leader provides specific instructions to team members and closely supervises the accomplishment of tasks

#### Style 2: Coaching

High directive – high supportive behaviour. The leader explains decisions and solicits suggestions from team members but continues to direct task accomplishment

#### Style 3: Supporting

High supportive – low directive behaviour

The leader makes decisions together with team members and supports effort towards task accomplishment

#### Style 4: Delegating

Low supportive – low directive behaviour. The leader turns over decisions and responsibility for implementation to the team member.

These four styles which you as a leader can use vary in three ways:

- The amount of **direction** you provide
- The amount of **support** you provide
- The amount of **team member involvement** in decision making

#### How do you choose the appropriate style?

Contrary to present 'trendy' management style, style 4 (delegation) is not always the best type of style. You will be a most effective leader when matching leadership style to the team members and the situations' needs, and this is done by diagnosing the **development level** of the team member for **each task** they are set.

## How does leading a team differ from managing a 'traditional' workgroup

Traditional work group	A more participative workplace	In a team environment
Direct people	Involve people	Build trust and inspire teamwork through vision and goals
Explain decisions	Get input for decisions	Facilitate and support team decisions
Train individuals	Develop individual performance	Expand team capabilities through training, coaching
Manage one-to one	Coordinate group effort	Create a team identity
Contain conflict	Resolve conflict	Make the most of team differences
React to change	Implement change	Foresee and create change

Development level is comprised of two components

- Competence
- Commitment

Competence = task knowledge + skill level to do the task  
(developed through experience and training)

Commitment = motivation to do the task + confidence to do the task.

It is helpful to plot the development level below the situational leadership graph to give you an idea of what style to use. As you can see, not only the team but also a single staff member can require different leadership depending on the task set. **Matching the need to the style correctly is the difference between inconsistent leadership and situational leadership**

High competence + high commitment	High competence + variable commitment	Some competence + low commitment	Low competence + high commitment
D4	D3	D2	D1

DEVELOPED ←————→ DEVELOPING

## **PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING**

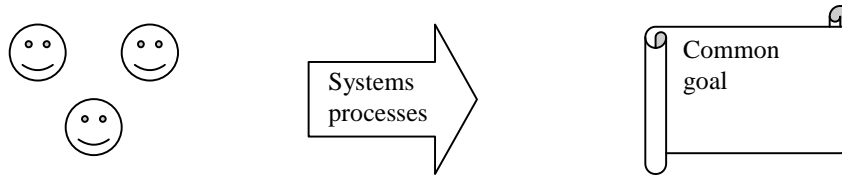
We have spoken of direction and support. The third variable in leadership style concerns who makes decisions and solves problems. Use the chart below to match problem solving/decision making to the four styles on the situational leadership grid.

<p>S3            Leader involves subordinate(s) in problem identification and goal setting            Subordinate takes the lead in defining how the task is to be done or the problem is to be solved            Leader and subordinate share responsibility for problem-solving and decision-making on the part of the subordinate            Leader and subordinate both evaluate the subordinate's work</p>	<p>S2            Leader identifies the problem(s)            Leader sets goals and develops an action plan to solve problem(s) and then consults with the subordinate            Leader explains decisions to subordinate and solicits his/her ideas; two way communication is increased            Leader makes the final decision about procedures and solutions after hearing subordinate's ideas, opinions and feelings            Leader continues to direct subordinate's work            Leader evaluates the subordinate's work</p>
<p>S4            Leader jointly defines the problem(s) with the subordinate            Goals are set collaboratively            Subordinate develops an action plan and controls decision-making about how, when, and with whom the problem should be solved or the task done            Leader accepts subordinate's decision and only periodically monitors subordinate's performance            Subordinate evaluates own work            Subordinate takes responsibility and credit</p>	<p>S1            Leader identifies the problem(s)            Leader sets goals and defines roles and develops an action plan to solve problem(s)            Leader controls decision-making about what, how, when and with whom the problem should be solved or the task completed            Leader provides specific directions and engages largely in one-way communication            Solutions and decisions are announced            Leader closely supervised and evaluates the work of subordinates</p>

## What else do we have to change to get the most out of teams?

### Redesign

- A basic organization is a group of people pursuing a common goal using systems, processes and methods.



- Conventional management focuses on the people part, saying if you motivate them, empower them, reorganize them, form teams, reward them, etc. then productivity will improve.
- Others like Deming say the best-motivated people cannot overcome dysfunctional systems.
- For real change you need to alter the systems and processes for the teams.

The **purpose** of setting up a team determines many of the choices which best facilitate its success. Depending on why the team is together, what they are supposed to produce, and whether they are short, medium or long term, scope and empowerment are set differently:

### Scope

- What will be retained **outside** by the organisation? This includes the authority over decisions, which service tasks will be done by the central infrastructure, etc.

### Empowerment

- What will the team be able to decide on? This includes such things as discipline, departmental spending limits, staffing, resources, and salary structure.

### Redesigning work for teams.

- Many companies set up a steering committee and design team to look at all of the interactions which occur in the work processes of staff who are to be 'teamed', and decide how each will affect each other when a team structure is in place.
- If you have a **shared outcome** team, **restructuring work processes** will be the most important thing.

Look at how the tasks in your unit have been carried out before changing to a team environment. What were the boundaries around them? How were they handed over from one person to the next? How were expectations communicated and agreed on? How was responsibility allocated for outcomes? What were the blocks to efficiency? How can you improve on these things once the group acts as an interdependent team?

- If you have a **working** team then **group process skills and group dynamics** are very important to get right.

Because the group works on different individual outcomes but works together, expectations of how to benefit from interaction need to be agreed on. Such things as common goals, communication, decision making and problem solving become vital to the smooth running of a team which assists each other with their own individual outcomes in order to reach optimum performance at team level.

## How do we start teambuilding?

Where you start depends on whether you are still trying to decide:

1. if you can become a team;
2. if you have decided you want to;
3. if you already are a team.

## TEAM READINESS QUESTIONNAIRE

For the first two choices there is benefit in having the team members fill out a 'team readiness' questionnaire.

For those already in teams, this still has value in diagnosing your present strengths, and highlighting those areas that it would be good to work on to improve your team performance.

## ORGANISE DEVOTED TIME FOR THE SIX STEP PROCESS

The process outlined in link 5 concerning the six anchors which successful teams work by should be used as a six step process for getting the team underway.

If you are already in a team, it is strongly recommended that you take time out to address these six steps anyway as all teams will hit bumps along the way and this process can be used to great benefit to head problems off at the pass, or give you a structured and formal way to get through present issues.

## GET TEAM STYLE DIAGNOSED

Organize with Organisation and Staff Development to facilitate a Team Management System, Belbin and / or Research team effectiveness questionnaire which will give you valuable insight into the spread of styles present in your team, and also the 'gaps' which may be present and what to do to manage around them in order to get a high quality result.

## LAST WORD

Be healthily sceptical about teams, as with any other working system. They need to be part of a coordinated effort, and demonstrate their contribution direct to the group and your end-users.

Once you have set them up, they need to maintain their usefulness and necessity. Not all teams will do this and so should not continue. They require support and nurturing, but will grow in use.

Having said that, teams can be one of the most fulfilling ways for people to work, and one of the most profitable ways for an organization to structure and harness their staff's ability and energy and gain high quality outcomes from fulfilled staff.

## Joining an existing team

### *Introducing a new team member as a team leader / supervisor*

It is easy to assume a greater level of understanding of how the team works together than the new team member really has. It is important to fully explain all of the basic workings of the team and what that means for the new addition.

- Go through the six anchors outlined in the six steps to improve team development, elaborating on the answers to the questions in each step. This may be a lot of information to begin with for which the new staff member has little context, but it will begin to make sense as they get into a pattern of working with the team. Importantly, it sets the right habits early on rather than having the new team member import bad habits from their previous work environment.
- Hold a briefing on the work styles of the individual team members, and in turn explore the style of the new addition. There are organizations that put applicants through a full set of 'teamwork' psychological tests as a criterion for choosing the applicant which best fits the work style needs of the team. While this is uncommon, learning about work styles early on enables you to maximize your use of the new person in the briefest possible time.
- Ensure that your supervisory style fits the capability and maturity of the new team member. For example, even though they may have a high level of technical capability and thus need little direction with specific tasks, they will still need guidance on how the team processes work. This means you use a "supportive" style. On the other hand you may need to be more coaching or directive style if there is also a need to come up to speed with 'technical' knowledge and/or skills.

### *Joining a new team*

When joining an existing team, if the team leader does not do the above, then **ask them to!**

If this is not possible for whatever the reason, (ie the team leader is absent from the scene, there are specific time constraints), then gain agreement on how these things will be covered, and then do as much homework as possible yourself to bring yourself up to speed.

At the very least, and even if the team has not worked out the above points in a formal sense, do the following:

- Have a discussion with each individual team member on what they think your role is, and how they see it supporting what they do.
- If the position was pre-existing, find out how the person thinks it could be done even better than before. This may require tact as you don't want to appear to be putting down the previous incumbent. Instead phrase the question as "if this role was carried out to be of maximum use to you, what would be doing?" or "what would be three things which would be of the most help to your role?"
- Explain your concept of what you are to do, and discuss any differences. (this may be done during the same conversation if there is little difference, but if there is it may be better to think it over and have another discussion in the near future)
- Ensure that you understand the six-step process (link 5) and you will be off to a good start.