Managing Teams and Groups

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Back in time

- "He makes tools (and does so within more than one technical tradition),
  builds shelters, takes over natural refuges by exploiting fire,
  and sallies out of them to hunt and gather his food.
  He does this in groups with a discipline that can
  sustain complicated operations;
  he therefore has some ability to exchange ideas by speech...
  ...There may even be some complexity of social organization in so far
  as fire-bearers and gatherers or old creatures whose memories made
  them the data banks of their 'societies'...
  ...This social organization permits the sharing of cooperatively
  obtained food..."
  J.M. Roberts, *The History of the World*
- In other words, human beings have always lived in teams

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What is a team?

- 'A group of people working together in an organisation
  who are recognised as a team; who are committed
  to achieving clear team level objectives upon which
  they agree; who have to work closely and interdependently
  in order to achieve these objectives; whose members
  are clear about their roles within the team and have
  the necessary autonomy to decide how to carry out team
  tasks; and who communicate regularly as a team in order
  to reflect upon the team's effectiveness and how it could
  be improved'

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Some relevant books

effective teamwork
Practical Lessons from Organizational Research
Michael A. West

The secrets of SUCCESSFUL TEAM MANAGEMENT

BUILDING TEAM-BASED WORKING

The Essentials of Teamworking International Perspectives

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Why work in teams?
Evidence of effectiveness

- Interventions with the largest effects on financial performance are team development interventions (131 studies)
- Empowerment really happens in teams
- Organisational change is most effective where teamworking exists or is a component
- Increases in levels of organisational innovation are related to team work
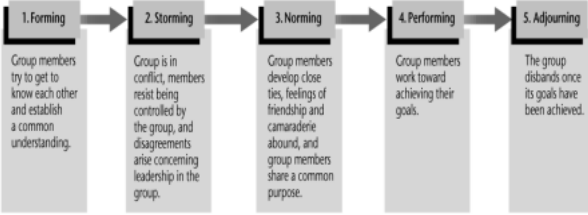- Well being of staff related to effective team work

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Tuckman's five-stage model
of group development

1. Forming	2. Storming	3. Norming	4. Performing	5. Adjourning
Group members try to get to know each other and establish a common understanding.	Group is in conflict, members resist being controlled by the group, and disagreements arise concerning leadership in the group.	Group members develop close ties, feelings of friendship and camaraderie abound, and group members share a common purpose.	Group members work toward achieving their goals.	The group disbands once its goals have been achieved.

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Process gains
Increases in potential performance that result from new ways of motivating and coordinating group members

According to new research

Cause potential performance to increase over time

Steiner (1972)

Actual group performance		Potential performance		Process losses
The performance level attained by a group	=	The highest level of performance a group is capable of achieving at a given point in time	−	Performance difficulties that result from coordination and motivation problems

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Process loss and gain

- Motivation Loss – Social Loafing & Sucker Effect
- Motivation Gain - Köhler Effect

Social loafing

Process gain

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Ways to reduce social loafing

- Clear team objectives and roles
- Ensure the team task is perceived to be important and meaningful
- Ensure individual contributions are identifiable and publicly valued
- Ensure individuals feel that they are making valuable contributions to their team
- Keep the team as small as possible

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Basic concepts: norms, conformity, status, roles

- **Group norms** - informal rules of conduct for behaviours considered important by most team members
- **Conformity** - to show behaviour in accord with the normative expectations within a team

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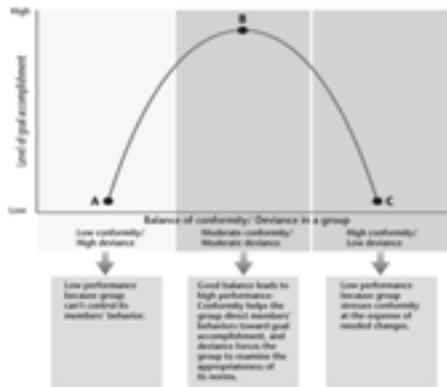**Conformity/deviance and goal accomplishment**

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Status and roles

- **Status** - the position of an individual relative to others in the group (high - low, central - peripheral)
- **Role** - the set of expectations associated with a particular function or position within a group

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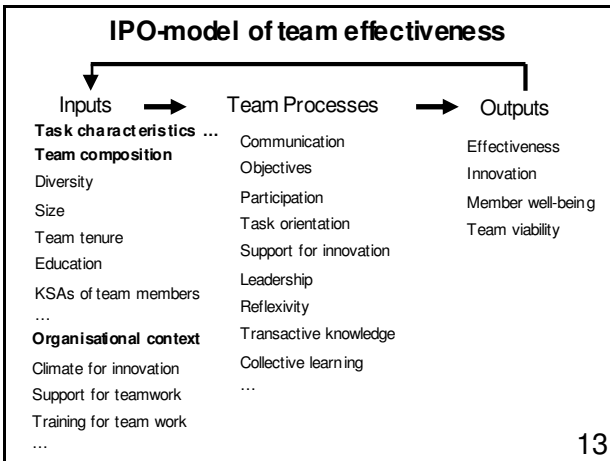## IPO-model of team effectiveness

Inputs → **Team Processes** → **Outputs**

Inputs

Task characteristics ...

Team composition

Diversity

Size

Team tenure

Education

KSAs of team members
...

Organisational context

Climate for innovation

Support for teamwork

Training for team work
...

Team Processes

Communication

Objectives

Participation

Task orientation

Support for innovation

Leadership

Reflexivity

Transactive knowledge

Collective learning
...

Outputs

Effectiveness

Innovation

Member well-being

Team viability

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Developing an effective team: positively valuing diversity

- When team attitudes to diversity are positive – exploring and relishing difference –

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Developing an effective team: create a shared vision

- Start with the task
- Identify the right people
- Take time to understand individual visions
- Effective team visions are:
  - Evolving
  - Clear and concise
  - Motivational
  - Attainable – whilst challenging

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**Developing an effective team:
clear, relevant objectives**

- Specific
- Limited in number (7 + or – 2)
- Challenging
- Negotiated
- Regularly reviewed
- Understood and clear to all
- Inter-team

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**Developing an effective team:
role and cultural understanding**

- Role
  - Aims
  - Content
  - Approach
- Culture – differences and similarities
  - Rules and regulations
  - Structures
  - Education
  - World view

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**Developing an effective team:
ensure effective communication**

- Regular contact
  - Formal
  - Informal
- Inclusive language
- Reflective listening
- Giving feedback
- Regular review

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**Developing an effective team:
extend decision making**

- Challenge the norm
- Review effectiveness of decision making
  - Implementation
  - Outcome
- Appropriate involvement

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**Developing an effective team:
focus on quality and innovation**

- Effective processes
  - Problem diagnosis
  - Divergent exploration
  - Constructive controversy
  - Implementation and evaluation
- Effective behaviour
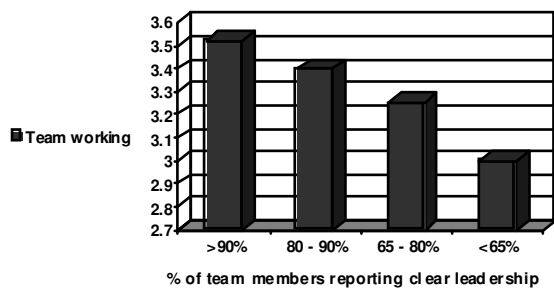 - Inter-professional respect
  - Climate of trust, safety and support
- Regular review

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**Developing an effective team:
ensure clear leadership**

Team working

% of team members reporting clear leadership

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Building an effective team

- Teams should have motivating tasks
- Teams should have five or six clear, challenging objectives
- Individuals should have motivating tasks and clear roles
- Individuals tasks should be important for team goals
- Individual work should be evaluated and feedback given
- There should be clear performance feedback
  for the whole team
- Regular reviews of performance and how it can be improved
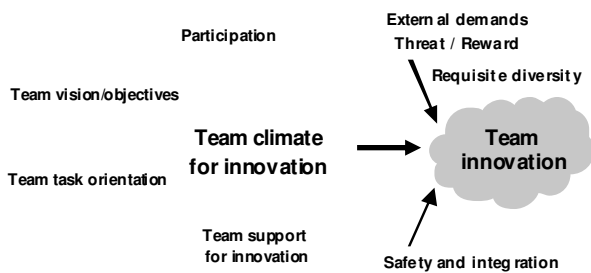- Clear and effective leadership

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Team climate for innovation

Participation

External demands
Threat / Reward

Requisite diversity

Team vision/objectives

Team climate
for innovation

Team
innovation

Team task orientation

Team support
for innovation

Safety and integration

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Team vision/objectives

- Clear
- Commitment
- Negotiated
- Evolving

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Participation in teams

- Influence over decision-making
- Information sharing
- Interaction
- Safety

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Team task orientation

- Focus on task performance
- Constructive controversy
- Tolerance of minority views

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Team support for innovation
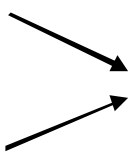
- Espoused support
  – Verbal support

Team innovation

- Enacted support
  – Co-operation
  – Time
  – Resources

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Reflexivity

- **Teams are more effective and innovative to the extent that they routinely reflect upon their objectives, strategies, processes and environments and make changes accordingly**

Reflexivity

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Reflexivity upon…

- **Team objectives/vision**
  – Appropriateness, value, clarity
- **Team strategies**
  – Detail, alternatives, time span, effectiveness
- **Team processes**
  – Decision-making, communication, interaction, meetings, feedback, support for innovation, conflict management

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Aston team performance inventory

Inputs →	Processes →	Outputs
• Team task design	Team processes	• Individual satisfaction
• Effort and skills	• Objectives	• Attachment
• Organisational support	• Reflexivity	• Team effectiveness
• Resources	• Participation	• Inter-team relationships
	• Task focus	• Team innovation
	• Team conflict	
	• Creativity and innovation	
	Leadership	
	• Leading	
	• Managing	
	• Coaching	

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Knowledge, skills and abilities for teamwork

KSAs for teamwork:

- Communication
- Goal setting / performance management
- Planning and co-ordination
- Collaborative problem-solving
- Conflict resolution

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KSAs for teamwork:

Communication

- Understand and use communication networks - sufficient contact
- Communicate openly and supportively
- Listen actively and non evaluatively
- Consistency between verbal and non-verbal
- Value ritual greetings and small talk

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KSAs for teamwork (2):

Goal setting and performance management

- Help establish **smart** and challenging team goals
- Monitor, evaluate, support and give feedback on team and individual performance

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KSAs for teamwork (3):

Planning and co-ordination
- Co-ordinate activities, information and task interdependence between members
- Clarify tasks and roles of team members and ensure balance of workloads

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KSAs for teamwork (4):

Collaborative problem-solving
- Identify problems requiring participation and use appropriate participation strategies
- Support and explore proposals for innovation

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KSAs for teamwork (5):

Conflict resolution
- Discourage undesirable conflict
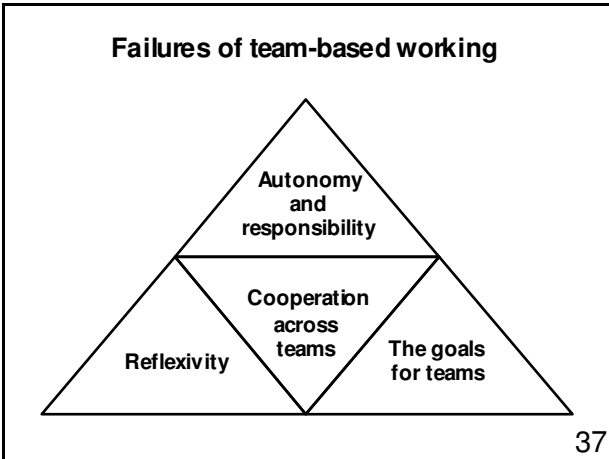- Employ win-win rather than win-lose negotiation strategies

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Failures of team-based working

- Autonomy and responsibility
- Cooperation across teams
- Reflexivity
- The goals for teams

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Traditional *vs.* team based

- Manager controls
- Managers direct

- Vertical hierarchy
- Stability & uniformity
- One best way to organise

- Team self-monitors
- Managers lead and coach

- Horizontal integration
- Change & flexibility
- Context-specific ways of working

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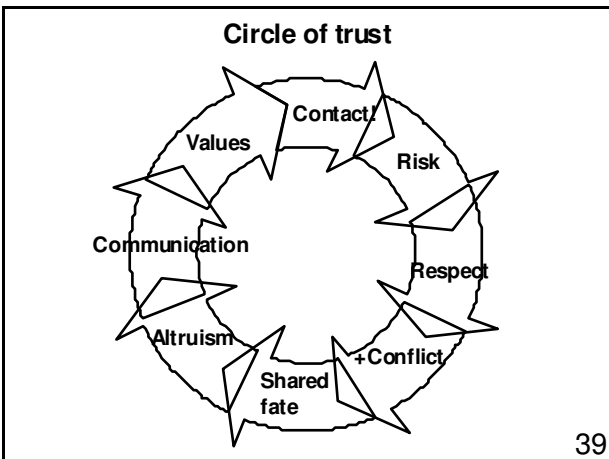### Circle of trust

- Contact
- Values
- Risk
- Communication
- Respect
- Altruism
- +Conflict
- Shared fate

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Summary and implications

- Teams mean business – but only real teams
- Clear objectives, clear roles, clear leadership make them real
- Reflexivity ensures dynamic team development and effectiveness
- Inter team effectiveness is key in modern organisations
- Teams can be fountains of innovation – diversity, integration, support plus a climate for innovation
- Team members need team knowledge, skills and abilities
- Team based organising is a strategy for organisations of the future
- You must work at sculpting create team based organisations

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