
Effective Team Working and Communication

BMSW 4002

Component 1

Student Name: Nedyalko Radev

Student Number: 2128093

Lecturer Name: Dr. Hafiz Rahmani

Executive Summary

This report holds a discussion about the concept of a team, models of teamwork, and roles in the effective team and its impact from the context of Amazon which is currently facing difficulties due to poor team management. While talking about the team development model, Tuckman's team development model has been followed as it seemed appropriate. The team roles model developed by Belbin sets three categories of roles - action-based, people-based and thinking-based - in an organisation which has been applied to Amazon. The impact of teamwork on organisations can be manifold since it helps to create a motivated workforce which has also been highlighted with advantages and barrier. The conclusion and recommendation part has placed suggestions that can be implemented by Amazon.

Table of contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Definition of Team and Teamwork	4
1.2 Characteristics of Teamwork	4
2. Model of Teamwork	4
2.1 Tuckman's Team Development Model	5
2.2 Gersick's Punctuated Equilibrium Model.....	6
3. Role of Creating Effective Teams	7
3.1 Identification of Roles in Terms of the Theory	7
3.2 Details of the Roles	9
3.3 Importance of Roles in Team.....	9
4. Impact of Effective Team on Success	9
4.1 Advantages of an Effective Team	10
4.2 Barriers to Teamwork.....	10
5. Conclusion and Recommendation	12
6. References	13

1. Introduction

Modern organisations emphasize more on teamwork more because of its manifold advantages. Accomplishing a task in a team can bring new ideas and accelerate the pace of work. Therefore, managers, these days tend to create teams and prioritise people having better team working skills to facilitate the achievement of organizational goals. However, the management of a team needs to be done effectively to get the desired outcome.

1.1 Definition of Team and Teamwork

A team can be defined as a number of people who work or perform together to achieve a certain goal as they have been committed. Therefore, teamwork will indicate the performance executed by a number of people who will be working to attain a target (Humphrey and Aime, 2014). Here in the case of Amazon, the designated is working with a view to ensuring fast and reliable delivery service. The combined effort of the team members will be regarded as teamwork which is aimed at achieving superior performance.

1.2 Characteristics of Teamwork

Teamwork has some unique features which differentiate a team from a group. First of all, there should be a sense of clear leadership where one or multiple members can lead the team towards the goal. For example, in Amazon's current project Tom Jackson is executing the role of a leader since he has decided on the division of work among other members. Secondly, the team needs to specify the roles of the members which in the case of Amazon will lead to deciding who is going to lead the team or who will be handling the external issues. Thirdly and most importantly, the team members should have a defined goal the accomplishment of which will lead to success (Driskell, Salas and Driskell, 2018). Though the roles of the members can be different everyone should cooperate and work together to achieve the team goal, unlike Mihaela and Spencer who emphasized individual performance.

2. Model of Teamwork

While teams are important for organisations, it is necessary to follow a certain team formation and management model to get the desired outcome. Again the chosen model should vary

depending on the nature and goal of the organisation. Tuckman's team development model is the one which is mostly followed by modern managers and is expected to be appropriate for Amazon as well.

2.1 Tuckman's Team Development Model

The model consisting of five stages can show the direction of Amazon's team which is assigned to fast and reliable delivery. In the forming stage, the members will be introduced to each other and will not be certain about the purpose or structure of the team (Chou and Garcia, 2011). Tom Jackson as the leader of the team should attempt to break the ice and ease the communication so the members can comfortably express their feelings. However, while deciding on the team members he should assess their capabilities to execute their job. The storming stage is an important one since it is expected to reduce the existing conflict. There might be conflict related to the control of the team as multiple members might want the leadership. Resolving conflicts should be the prime focus of the stage to ensure that everyone has the mindset to grow. If this stage was completed successfully, Amazon did not have to face disagreements due to the differences and there will be a clear hierarchy of supervisors and subordinates. Again the leader needs to assign roles in this stage after assessing the strength and weaknesses of each member of the team. For example, to record the delivery issues, one with expertise in the database should be appointed.

The norming stage urges the leader of the Amazon team to develop trust and support among the members. It will spread a sense of mutual relationship and common vision which might restrict Mihaela and Spencer to thinking about personal achievement only. Each member thus can be assured about his or her identity in the team and clearly observe their contribution to meet the organizational goal. As the members are expected to exchange crucial information, the leader needs to monitor them and ensure smooth communication among them. For example, some members of Amazon's team can be appointed to gather external information and the leader must supervise whether this information is being communicated properly. The main theme of this stage is to encourage mutual relationships and strengthen the bond.

The performing stage is a busier one in which the leader will encourage members to exhibit their best effort and fulfil the delivery target (Robb, 2022). The structure consisting of the members and the tasks will be designed in a way that ensures productivity. Tom Jackson will need to hold regular meetings and communicate about their updates. The team will identify every possible problem related to the delivery and try to find the solution together in the meetings. The channel

of clear communication is also significant in this stage as it helps to advance towards achieving the goal. The adjourning phase can be marked as the stage where the target will be achieved and the members will be recognized for their activities. The reflection on individual task is an important aspect of this stage as it facilitates them to learn what they actually have contributed and how they have been able to improve themselves by it. Amazon's team should not end the journey here rather they should sustain the relationship built here and use it for other projects.

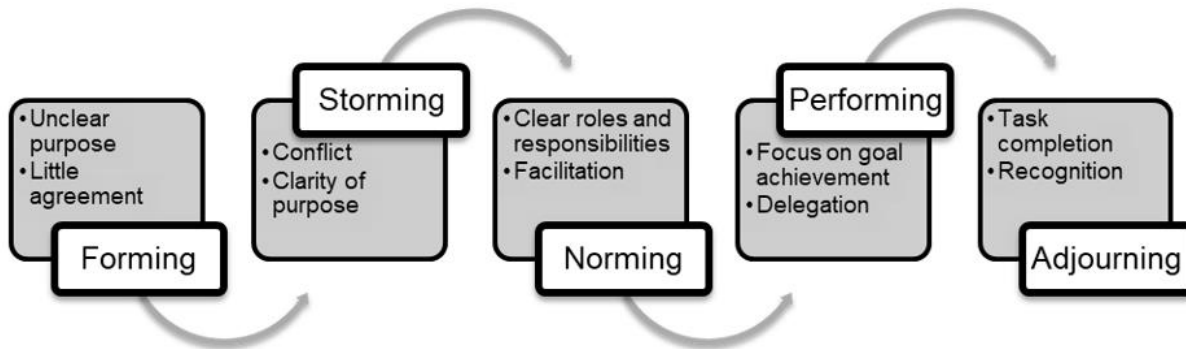


Figure 1: Tuckman's team development model

Source: Natvig and Stark (2016)

2.2 Gersick's Punctuated Equilibrium Model

This model consisting of three stages indicates that Amazon's team should spend around half of the time in phase one where only a little progress will be made (Baumgartner, Jones and Mortensen, 2018). After remaining inertia through half of the journey, the members will proceed to the transition phase where they will bring changes in the present form of work. This change will be implemented and sustained in phase two which is also marked as inertia. This theory should not be followed by Amazon since it lacks the trust and relationship aspect among the team members. To get over the conflict and disagreement among the members of Amazon, Tuckman's model will be appropriate since it is more structured than the punctuated equilibrium model.

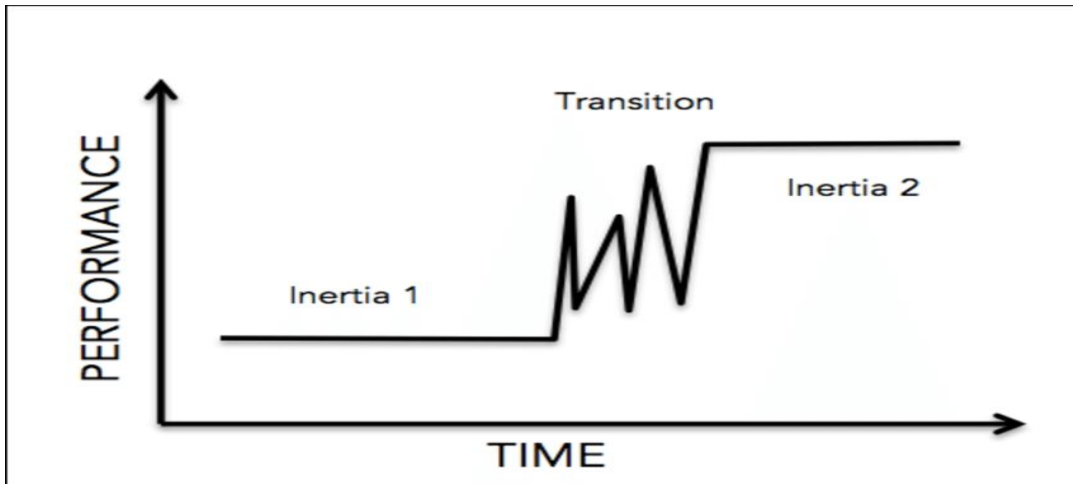


Figure 2: The punctuated equilibrium model (Mudambi and Swift (2011))

3. Role of Creating Effective Teams

An effective must have the role of each member clarified to remove any uncertainty or ambiguity. The model to be used here for defining the roles of Amazon's team members is Belbin's team roles.

3.1 Identification of Roles in Terms of the Theory

Since the personal attributes and capabilities of the team members are important for its formation, Belbin has developed this model to ensure a balance of personalities and roles. The roles can be identified into three categories (action-based, people-based and thinking-based) in which nine roles can be identified and each member of Amazon's team can be assigned more than one role.

Belbin Team Roles

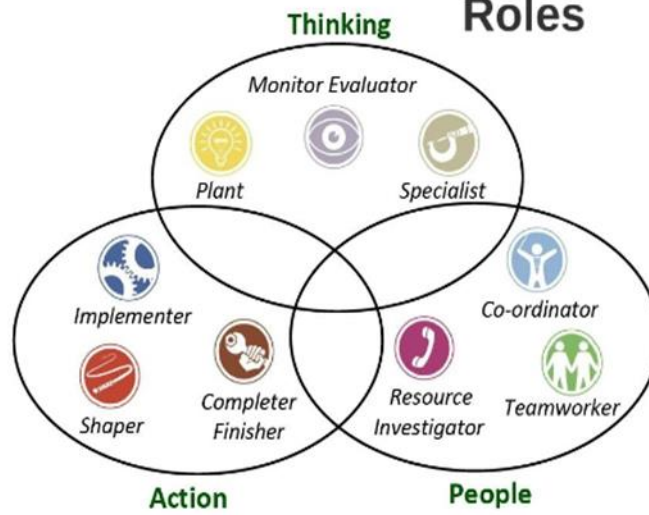


Figure 3: Belbin's team roles

Source: Prezi (2021)

3.2 Details of the Roles

The shaper in Amazon's team will coordinate among members located in different regions or departments. He will also take ideas about developing the delivery system of Amazon and make the decision considering the best possible solution. The person assigned as implementer will take actions based on the decisions and guide the members to deliver products to the warehouse accordingly (Belbin, 2012). The completer will look for flaws that might hamper the delivery system and assign a deadline for each member to finish their tasks.

Tom Jackson as the natural leader can play the role of coordinator and will combine the tasks performed by each member to achieve the target. Teamwork is an important one that can resolve existing conflict. This person will communicate with each member and take care of the individual needs and emotional aspects (Omar et al, 2016). While doing all these tasks, the broader scenario of business must be considered and hence the resource investigator can help the team with information about Amazon's competitors or macroeconomic environment.

The most innovative persons in the team should play the role of a plant (Mostert, 2015). They are expected to come up with ideas about designing an effective delivery system. The monitor evaluator will act as the critic of ideas or strategies to be implemented by the team to restrict from committing any mistake.

3.3 Importance of Roles in Team

When roles are defined the team members can be certain about what task should be performed on them. They can be committed to their role and think of themselves as an important part of the team as well as the organisation. If the roles are not specified, tasks may overlap which will hamper productivity of Amazon.

4. Impact of Effective Team on Success

All the activities in an organisation are centred to ensure profitability which in the long run decides the firm's sustainability. Teamwork is not an exception to that and the goals to be attained by the team ultimately contribute to the organizational goal. Researchers have revealed that working as a team or in partnership helps to boost the motivation of individuals. Teamwork helps to strengthen the bond between employees and create an environment of mutual understanding. Also, a motivated workforce is expected to be committed to its job and ensure a higher level of productivity. Amazon can be benefited in the same way if the cultural and other

differences are handled effectively. To implement this, the leader needs to promote the message of love and respect for all members frequently.

Another important criterion for a firm's success is the innovation which comes along the diversity. New ideas and insights caused by the diversity in age, gender, ethnicity and so on can be crucial to make a change in the organisational activities. Innovation is also necessary for the sustainability of the organisation since the world is changing very fast. For developing the delivery system across Europe, Amazon can implement new ideas which can be brought by its diversified workforce.

4.1 Advantages of an Effective Team

Working as a team facilitates better problem-solving than performing as an individual. For example, the current problem of Amazon can be solved efficiently if all the members discuss it in a meeting and propose viable ideas about solving it. Again the decisions made in a team are more effective because the knowledge of an individual is limited (Parker, 2014). Having more participants in the decision-making ensures a mix of knowledge from different backgrounds. Again the team enables to criticise the ideas placed by one member and it refrains the management from taking wrong decisions.

Another important benefit of teamwork can be described from the perspective of the team members. An individual gets the opportunity to work closely with others and learn from them. For example, a junior employee in a team of Amazon can learn decision-making and leadership techniques from experienced ones and enrich his or her knowledge and skill.

Many experts believe that working as a team can significantly help to reduce the workload and pressure of individuals. For example, the task of gathering external information in Amazon's team can be shared among multiple members. They can use different sources to extract valid, reliable and relevant sources. Doing the same task individually could be a burden and the work quality could deteriorate.

4.2 Barriers to Teamwork

The first barrier can be firm opposition from potential team members. Some people prefer individual tasks and refuse to cooperate with others which has been proven to be a barrier for

Amazon. Secondly, there can be a communication gap as faced by Amazon. To get over this problem, the leader should decide on a smooth channel of communication which will be accepted by all (Askari et al, 2020). For example, the leader can arrange a virtual meeting on a daily basis to know the update on each member's work and to respond to their queries. Thirdly and most importantly, ineffective leadership can be detrimental to team well-being. It can be one of the reasons for which the performance of the Amazon team is deteriorating. If the leader fails to effectively manage the internal issues, the team members will not be motivated to work together and problems such as lack of commitment and trust, communication gaps and others will be common phenomena.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

There is plenty of research that reveals how important teams are for organisational profitability. However, the understanding and analysis throughout the report can lead to the decision that effective formation and management of teams is also very significant to meet organisational goals. The problems Amazon is facing right now regarding its teams for new delivery throughout Europe can be efficiently handled from this very stage. Firstly the formation of the team should be adjusted by dividing the task according to individuals' capabilities. Secondly, promoting respect for each member will not only reduce the differences in opinion but also strengthen the bond. And thirdly, the leader needs to take a firm position in handling the problems and establish roles for each member.

6. References

- 1) Askari, G., Asghri, N., Gordji, M.E. and others (2020) The impact of teamwork on an organization's performance: A cooperative game's approach. *Mathematics*, 8(10), p.1804.
- 2) Baumgartner, F.R., Jones, B.D. and Mortensen, P.B. (2018) Punctuated equilibrium theory: Explaining stability and change in public policymaking. *Theories of the policy process*, pp.55-101.
- 3) Belbin, R.M. (2012) *Team roles at work*. Routledge.
- 4) Chou, S.Y. and Garcia, D.C. (2011) Group organizational citizenship behavior in the stages of group development. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(10), p.3.
- 5) Driskell, J.E., Salas, E. and Driskell, T. (2018) Foundations of teamwork and collaboration. *American Psychologist*, 73(4), p.334.
- 6) Humphrey, S.E. and Aime, F. (2014) Team microdynamics: Toward an organizing approach to teamwork. *Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), pp.443-503.
- 7) Mostert, N.M. (2015) Belbin—the way forward for innovation teams. *Journal of Creativity and Business Innovation*, 1.
- 8) Mudambi, R. and Swift, T. (2011) Proactive R&D management and firm growth: A punctuated equilibrium model. *Research Policy*, 40(3), pp.429-440.
- 9) Natvig, D. and Stark, N.L. (2016) A project team analysis using Tuckman's model of small-group development. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 55(12), pp.675-681.
- 10) Omar, M., Hasan, B., Ahmad, M. and others (2016) August. Towards a balanced software team formation based on Belbin team role using fuzzy technique. In *AIP Conference Proceedings* (Vol. 1761, No. 1, p. 020082). AIP Publishing LLC.
- 11) Parker, C. (2014) Stanford research shows that working together boosts motivation. *Stanford*, Stanford research shows that working together boosts motivation. Available at: <<https://news.stanford.edu/pr/2014/pr-motivation-walton-carr-091514.html>> [Accessed 7 October 2022].
- 12) Prezi (2021) *Belbin Team Roles*. [online] Available at: <<https://prezi.com/ujcx8ay-hqth/belbin-team-roles/>> [Accessed 8 October 2022].
- 13) Robb, M.A. (2022) Stages of Group Development and Group Preparation. *Group Art Therapy*, pp.107-115.