Effective Team Working and Communication

What have we learnt about effective teams?

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Overview

Key Topics:

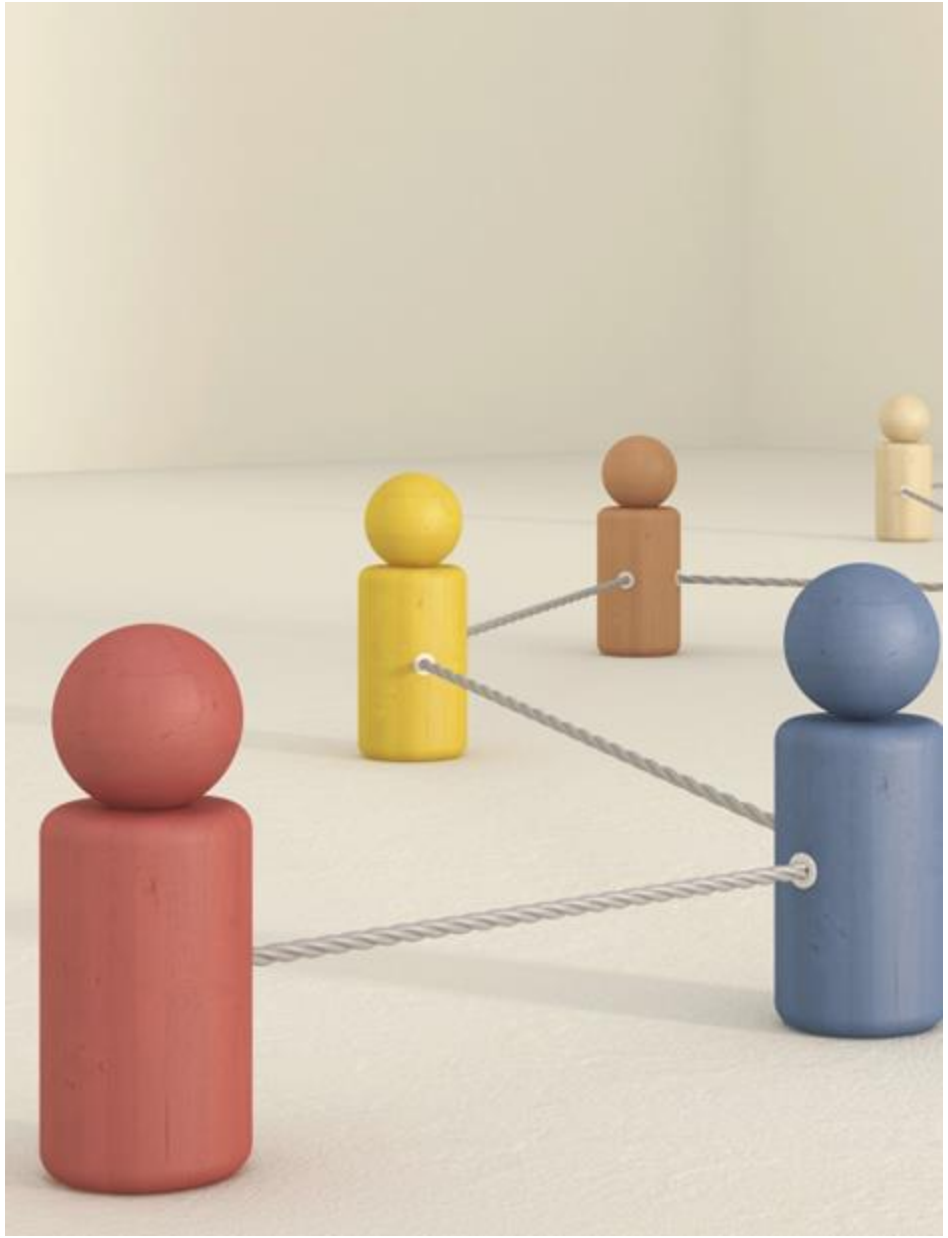
- Relationships: How to Build and Maintain Them;
- The Know-Like-Trust Framework;
- Benefits of Collaboration.

Objective:

- Explore evidence-based practices for team effectiveness, supported by research and expert insights.

Relationships – How to Build and Maintain Them:

Building	Maintaining
Building Relationships: • Active Listening: Create a safe environment for dialogue and understanding; • "The quality of our thinking depends on the quality of our attention." – Kline (2002); • Empathy: Recognize and validate the perspectives of others; • Open Communication: Share ideas and feedback regularly.	**Maintaining Relationships:** • Consistent interaction and appreciation; • Resolve conflicts quickly and constructively; • Mutual respect and shared goals.



The Know-Like-Trust Framework

Definition:

Know: Familiarity through consistent communication.

Like: Building rapport and finding commonalities.

Trust: Reliability, competence, and integrity.

Importance in Teams:

Strengthens cohesion and loyalty;

Drives collaboration and productivity;

Fosters psychological safety within the team.

- **Quote**: "Trust is the foundation of successful teams." – Sinek (2023)

Benefits of Collaboration

Key Advantages:

- **Diverse Perspectives**: Enhances innovation and decision-making.
- **Shared Accountability**: Reduces individual pressure and promotes mutual ownership.
- **Improved Communication**: Encourages transparency and alignment.
- **Emotional Support**: Builds camaraderie and a sense of belonging.

Real-World Insight:

- High-performing teams balance task focus with relational focus (Belbin, 2010).

Example: Effective teams use complementary roles to maximize strengths and minimize weaknesses.

Building Effective Teams – Research-Backed Strategies

Tannenbaum & Salas (2021): Seven determinants of team efficacy**:**

- Clear objectives;
- Strong communication;
- Trust and respect;
- Defined roles and responsibilities.
- Mutual accountability;
- Commitment to growth;
- Adaptive leadership.

Actionable Takeaway: Combine strategic alignment with interpersonal skill-building.

Applied Positive Psychology in Teams

Psychological Safety: Teams thrive when members feel safe to express themselves.

Encourages creativity and risk-taking without fear of judgment.

Strengths-Based Development: Leveraging individual strengths to enhance overall team performance.

Quote: "Focusing on what works well creates a ripple effect of positivity." – Academi Wales (2018)

Challenges and Solutions

Challenges in Team Effectiveness:

- Miscommunication or lack of trust;
- Resistance to collaboration;
- Role ambiguity and accountability issues.

Solutions:

- Invest in team-building activities (Adair, 2015);
- Foster a culture of mutual respect and support;
- Provide clear guidelines for collaboration.

Conclusion

Key Takeaways:

- Relationships and trust are the foundation of effective teams;
- The Know-Like-Trust framework enhances team dynamics;
- Collaboration is a powerful tool when aligned with trust and mutual goals;
- Research-backed strategies provide a roadmap for creating high-performing teams.

Reflections on Relationships and Conflict

Key Concepts:

- **The Role of Relationships:** Effective teams are built on trust, mutual respect, and positive relationships. Listening and independent thinking foster better connections (Kline, 2002; Kline, 2010).
- **Managing Conflict:** Constructive conflict can strengthen teams by uncovering diverse perspectives. Avoidance or mismanagement of conflict, however, can undermine trust (Heffernan, 2019).
- **Psychological Safety:** Teams excel when members feel safe to express opinions without fear of judgment (Academi Wales, 2018).

- **Quote:**
"The quality of our thinking depends on the quality of our attention." – Kline (2002)

Communication Skills – The Foundation of Teams

Importance of Communication:

- **Clarity and Listening:** Effective communication start with clear messaging and active listening (Quintanilla & Wahl, 2020).
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Regular, constructive feedback fosters improvement and trust.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Awareness of communication styles across diverse teams reduces misunderstandings (Stadler, 2019).

Strategies:

- Prioritize transparency and open dialogue;
- Use structured frameworks for feedback and idea-sharing;
- Encourage active listening during team discussions.

Belbin's Team Roles

Overview:

Teams thrive when roles align with individual strengths and personalities (Belbin, 2010).

Belbin's framework identifies nine key roles divided into three categories:

- **Action-Oriented Roles:** Implementer, Shaper, Completer/Finisher.
- **People-Oriented Roles:** Coordinator, Teamworker, Resource Investigator.
- **Thinking Roles:** Plant, Monitor Evaluator, Specialist.

Application:

Complementary roles reduce weaknesses and maximize strengths within teams.

A balanced team enhances collaboration, innovation, and task efficiency.

Research-Backed Drivers of Team Effectiveness

Seven Drivers Identified by Tannenbaum & Salas (2021):

- **Clear Objectives:** Shared understanding of team goals.
- **Strong Communication:** Consistent and effective information sharing.
- **Trust and Respect:** Building reliability and psychological safety.
- **Defined Roles and Responsibilities:** Clarity on contributions.
- **Mutual Accountability:** Shared ownership of outcomes.
- **Commitment to Growth:** Emphasizing learning and development.
- **Adaptive Leadership:** Flexibility to navigate challenges.
- **Takeaway:** Strategic alignment paired with interpersonal skill-building drives team success.

The Impact of Trust and Collaboration

Insights:

Trust as a Foundation: Trust strengthens cohesion, loyalty, and collaboration within teams (Academi Wales, 2018; Sinek, 2023).

Collaboration Benefits:

- Diverse perspectives drive creativity;
- Shared accountability reduces pressure on individuals;
- Emotional support fosters a sense of belonging.

Case Example:

High-performing teams effectively balance task focus with relationship-building to achieve goals (Belbin, 2010).

Quote:

"Trust is the foundation of successful teams." – Sinek (2023)

Introduction

- **Teamwork** is crucial for success in both professional and academic settings, involving collaboration, communication, and shared accountability.
- **Definition of teamwork**: Functional interdependence of workers following agreed-upon processes, where each member's contributions are vital for organizational success (Egboka & Anisiofor, 2024).
- **Tuckman's Stages of Group Development**: The five stages through which teams pass—forming, storming, norming, performing, adjourning.
- **My role in teams**: Coordinator and implementer (Van Horne & Rakedzon, 2024)—organizing work, coordinating duties, and motivating team members by recognizing strengths and assigning appropriate tasks.

Findings

Affiliation and interpersonal trust: Communication and trust are essential for successful team dynamics.

Tuckman's stages: The "storming" phase, where conflicts or differing ideas arise, can be managed through communication.

Belbin's Team Roles: I often take the "coordinator" role, helping organize and assign tasks, while also working with "plants" (idea generators) and "completer-finishers" (detail-oriented members).

Johari Window model: Self-awareness and feedback are key—e.g., I learned that my enthusiasm could sometimes be perceived as dominance, affecting team dynamics (Jony & Hamim, 2024).

Real-life example: During a group presentation, confusion about roles and responsibilities led to delays, illustrating the need for clear communication (Zeltwanger, 2024).

Emotional Intelligence (EI): Goleman's (1995) work on EI helped in addressing team conflicts—e.g., empathizing with a member's workload concerns and redistributing tasks (Sparling & Cooper, 2024).

Cultural awareness: Hofstede (1980) emphasizes that communication and decision-making styles vary across cultures, and this became evident when working with a multicultural team.

Conclusion

1

Lessons learned:

The importance of self-organization, team management, and effective communication.

2

Application of theory:

Use of Emotional Intelligence and cultural sensitivity has helped refine my teamwork approach.

3

Balancing roles:

I learned the importance of stepping back at times and allowing others to lead, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment within the team.

4

Future strategies:

- Seeking regular feedback from team members to refine my approach.
- Integrating theoretical models (Johari Window) to improve self-awareness and team communication.
- Ensuring a more inclusive and collaborative environment to achieve shared goals.

Action Steps for Future Teamwork

- **Feedback and self-improvement**: Actively seek and incorporate feedback to refine my teamwork approach.
- **Practical application of theories**: Use the Johari Window and other models to improve self-awareness, team communication, and collaboration.
- **Empowerment and leadership balance**: Ensure I give others the opportunity to lead while maintaining effective coordination to achieve team goals.

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Thank you
very much for
your attention!