



ROLE OF TEACHER & TEACHER EDUCATOR IN DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS

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Introduction

Team building is a philosophy of job design in which employees are viewed as members of interdependent teams instead of as individual workers. Team building with two words refers to a wide range of activities, presented to businesses, schools, sports teams, religious or nonprofit organizations designed for improving team performance. Team building is pursued via a variety of practices, and can range from simple bonding exercises to complex simulations and multi-day team building retreats designed to develop a team usually falling somewhere in between. It generally sits within the theory and practice of organizational development, but can also be applied to sports teams, school groups, and other contexts. Team building is not to be confused with "team recreation" that consists of activities for teams that are strictly recreational. Team building can also be seen in day-to-day operations of an organization and team dynamic can be improved through successful leadership. Team building is said to have benefits of self development, positive communication, leadership skills and the ability to work closely together as a team to solve problems. Work environments tend to focus on individuals and personal goals, with reward & recognition singling out the achievements of individual employees. Team building can also refer to the process of selecting or creating a team from scratch.

Team dynamic

When assembling a team it is very important to consider the overall dynamic of the team. According to Frank LaFasto, when building a team, five dynamics are fundamental to team success.

1. **The team member:** Successful teams are made up of a collection of effective individuals. These are people who are experienced, have problem solving ability, are open to addressing the problem, and are action oriented.
2. **Team relationships:** For a team to be successful the members of the team must be able to give and receive feedback.

3. **Team problem solving:** An effective team depends on how focused and clear the goal of the team is. A relaxed, comfortable and accepting environment and finally, open and honest communication are required.
4. **Team leadership:** Effective team leadership depends on leadership competencies. A competent leader is: focused on the goal, ensures a collaborative climate, builds confidence of team members, sets priorities, demonstrates sufficient “know-how” and manages performance through feedback.
5. **Organizational environment:** The climate and culture of the organization must be conducive to team behavior. Competitiveness should be discouraged and uniformity should be encouraged - this will eliminate conflict and discord among team members.

Most team training courses focus on the mechanics of effective teams – problem solving, meetingskills, and decision-making. Although these skills are critical to team success, they ignore a majorissue for all teams – how to interact with each other.To work together, team members must develop their interactive, communication, and interpersonal skills.In order for a team to accomplish its goal, it is important for theteam members to understand that they may play a number of different roles within agiven team. Furthermore, individuals within a team need to appreciate the roles assumedby or assigned to the other team members. To gain this understanding and appreciation ofteam roles, a team needs the opportunity tobuild a sense of being a team. These team-building activities involve cooperation,teamwork, and communication.

Learning Objectives

Identify and practice new methods of dealing with others that promotes team spirit, cooperation, andopen communication.Develop simple techniques for creating cohesive work groups by recognizing and praising each other.Practice and perfectactive listening skills.Learn to take feedback from others without becoming defensive or angry.Gain skills that allow positive action to be taken on group performance problems without causingconflicts or tension.Learn to give criticism in a way that helps the individual and the work group to develop as a team

Goals

The overall goals of team building are to increase the teams understanding of team dynamics and improve how the team works together. Unlike working as a group, working as a team incorporates group accountability rather than individual accountability and results in a

collective work product. Team building encourages the team approach to working on a project. Advantages to this approach include:

- Increased flexibility in skills and abilities
- More productive than work groups with individual mindset
- More beneficial in times of organizational change
- Encourage both individual and team development and improvement
- Focuses on group goals to accomplish more beneficial tasks
- Improved range of team building objectives such as collaboration, communication and increased creative or flexible thinking.

Leadership roles

Successful team leaders frequently contain six of the same leadership abilities:

1. A team leader is usually goal-oriented to keep the team on track.
2. They must promote a safe environment where members can openly discuss issues.
3. A leader must build confidence amongst members by building and maintaining trust and offering the members responsibilities.
4. A leader should be technically competent in matters relating to team tasks and goals.
5. It is important for a team leader to set a manageable list of priorities for the team to keep members focused.
6. Finally, leaders should offer clear performance expectations by recognizing and rewarding excellent performance, and provide feedback to others.

Carl Larson and Frank LaFasto conducted a three year study of over 75 diverse teams. By interviewing key members of each team, Larson & LaFasto identified eight effective strategies a leader should employ to enhance team building:

1. Establish clear and inspiring team goals
2. Maintain a results-oriented team structure
3. Assemble competent team members
4. Strive for unified commitment
5. Provide a collaborative climate
6. Encourage standards of excellence
7. Furnish external support and recognition
8. Apply principled leadership

Role of teacher:

Kenneth D. Benne and Paul Sheats, two theorists on group behaviour, wrote an influential article titled “Functional Roles of Group Members” in 1948. In this article, the authors defined various roles based on behaviours that can be played by one or more people within a group or team. Benne and Sheats defined three categories of roles: task roles, personal/social roles, and dysfunctional or individualistic roles. In this lesson, the following three categories are used as the framework for understanding and strengthening a given team:

- **Task roles/actions** move a team toward accomplishing their objectives. These actions include setting goals, identifying tasks, gathering facts, providing information, clarifying and summarizing ideas, and building consensus. The possible roles within this category are those that may be needed to advance a team from the *Forming* to the *Performing* stage of team development.
- **Interactive roles/actions** are directed at the operation of a team or how the team is working together. These actions include encouraging participation, expressing feelings, reconciling disagreements, keeping communication open, setting and applying standards for group performance, and building on each other’s ideas. It is through these actions that teams function positively and effectively.
- **Self-oriented roles/actions** put the needs of the individual ahead of the needs of the team. They include dominating the discussion, interrupting, wasting time, not listening, withdrawing from the conversation, and holding side conversations. A team that has individuals demonstrating these behaviours is in jeopardy of not realizing its goals/objectives. Well-established teams will be able to manage these behaviours. Newly formed teams may require leader intervention. Knowing the behaviours that can move a team forward or hinder its progress can be helpful to all team members.
- **Contributing ideas and solutions:** Sharing suggestions, ideas, solutions, and proposals with team members is another important communication skill. The ability and willingness to share increase when levels of trust are high. Reporting on individual and team progress is another way to contribute to team success.
- **Respecting and valuing:** All forms of communication are enhanced within a team

when the members respect and value each other, regardless of their strengths and/or weaknesses. Team communication is strengthened when members encourage and support the ideas and efforts of others.

□ **Questioning and clarifying:** If there is uncertainty about something being said, it is important to ask for more information to clear up any confusion before moving on. Asking probing questions and paraphrasing points that have been made are also effective ways to ensure deeper understanding and clear and accurate communication.

□ **Persuading and defending:** The power of positive communication is evident when members exchange, defend, and rethink ideas. Presenting points of view and the reasons for them improves the decision-making process. At times, compromising may be necessary to avoid blocking team progress.

□ **Helping and caring:** Seeking and giving assistance strengthens team cohesiveness. Asking for help should be viewed as a valuable skill necessary for the advancement of a team goal. Successful teams have members that freely seek help and willingly offer help to others. Helping and caring contribute to building positive, cooperative, and collaborative relationships.

Participating and committing: Each team member demonstrates dedication to the goals of the team by participating in and committing to completing assigned tasks to a high standard. These skills are often forms of non-verbal communication indicating to others the willingness to be an active participant in finding the solution to a problem. Team building exercises consist of a variety of tasks designed to develop group members and their ability to work together effectively. There are many types of team building activities that range from games for kids to games and challenges that involve novel and complex tasks that are designed for improving group performance by addressing specific needs. Team building can range from simple social activities - to encourage team members to spend time together - to team development activities - designed to help individuals discover how they approach a problem, how the team works together, and discover better methods of communication. Team interaction involves "soft" interpersonal skills including communication, negotiation, leadership, and motivation - in contrast to technical skills directly involved with the job at hand. Depending on the type of team building, the novel tasks can encourage or specifically teach interpersonal team skills to increase team performance. Whether indoor or outdoor, the purpose of team building exercises is to assist teams in becoming cohesive units of

individuals that can effectively work together to complete tasks. Some corporate team building companies theme their events around ideas from popular culture such as TV game shows to add a fun element to the event. *Communication exercise:* This type of team building exercise is exactly what it sounds like. Communications exercises are problem solving activities that are geared towards improving communication skills. The issues teams encounter in these exercises are solved by communicating effectively with each other.

Problem-solving/decision-making exercise: Problem-solving/decision-making exercises focus specifically on groups working together to solve difficult problems or make complex decisions. These exercises are some of the most common as they appear to have the most direct link to what employers want their teams to be able to do.

Planning/adaptability exercise: These exercises focus on aspects of planning and being adaptable to change. These are important things for teams to be able to do when they are assigned complex tasks or decisions.

Trust exercise: A trust exercise involves engaging team members in a way that will induce trust between them. They are sometimes difficult exercises to implement as there are varying degrees of trust between individuals and varying degrees of individual comfort trusting others in general.

Conclusion:

In the organizational development context, a team may embark on a process of self-assessment to gauge its effectiveness and improve its performance. To assess itself, a team seeks feedback from group members to find out both its current strengths and weakness. To improve its current performance, feedback from the team assessment can be used to identify gaps between the desired state and the current state, and to design a gap-closure strategy. Team development can be the greater term containing this assessment and improvement actions, or as a component of organizational development. Another way is to allow for personality assessment amongst the team members, so that they will have a better understanding of their working style, as well as their team mates. A structured team building plan is a good tool to implement team bonding and thus, team awareness. These may be introduced by companies that specialize in executing team building sessions, or done internally by the human resource department.

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