

A Team Effectiveness Inventory which Guarantees to Improve your Team's Performance

**A Team Leader's Guide To Understanding And Improving Their
Team's Performance, Behaviours And Culture**



Prepared by Jo Gibney

The team building guru from OrganiseNow.com

DISCLAIMER:

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is distributed with the understanding that although the author is qualified and experienced to educate on the topics enclosed within, this document should not be relied upon as legal or professional advice. The author disclaims any responsibility for liability, loss or risk, financial or otherwise, that is incurred as a consequence of using material contained in this report.

COPYRIGHT

This document is protected by international copyright laws. It is illegal to reproduce the document in part or in full without the specific written permission of the author(s).

SOME BACKGROUND FIRST

About Teams and Team Dynamics

In order to be effective – to work as a cohesive unit and achieve more together than is possible as individuals, teams need a number of crucial elements to be present in their workplace. These elements are not difficult to achieve but they do take a certain amount of effort on the part of the team leader or business owner.

Research has shown, over and over again, that these elements are vital for effective teams. They are not “new age”, nor “touchy feely” nor “useless frills”. They are the basics of team work, and businesses which recognise their importance and work at maintaining them, are rewarded with teams that out-perform their more average cousins by miles.

What you can do to help your team

So if you want a winning team, you need to put a little effort into building the right environment for it. Check out the five Team Effectiveness elements below, then go onto the questionnaire and use it in your workplace. It will soon tell you how well your team is functioning *as a team*. The questionnaire will also point to those areas that need the most work – either the low scoring points, or the points where there is the biggest discrepancy between the answers of the team leader and that of the team itself.

The second point above (discrepancy between team leader and team perceptions) is a big problem. It points to poor communication in your workplace, and a lack of understanding between management and team members. This can lead to a downward spiral of poor performance, which sooner or later impacts on your bottom line.

Perception is Reality

Remember, when the team leader completes his/her questionnaire, they answer based on their perception of what the team has, knows or does. For example, the team leader's perception of how well everyone on the team knows why the team does what it does (question 1). You can then compare that perception with the actual answer from the team.

So if you want to improve the performance of your team, it's not all about “whipping them into shape”. It's about creating the right environment so they can do their very best. Like the best sporting coaches in the world know, when the team is not performing, it's the coach's job that's on the line!

About The Five Effectiveness Areas

There are five key team effectiveness areas which must be present and well managed in order for a work team to be happy, healthy, and well balanced. This in turn leads to high performance and maximum output. In other words, as a team leader, you need to ensure that your team has the correct environment within which they can function properly. It doesn't just happen magically. It needs constant attention, by both you and your team. But ultimately, it's you the rest will look to when things are going wrong, and it's you they will be expecting to fix the problem. So have a look at each of these five team effectiveness areas, and then photocopy enough pages so that each of your team members can complete the questionnaire.

Team Mission

Everyone on the team needs to know exactly why the team does what it does. What is the business trying to achieve and how does and how does the team help to achieve these things. Everyone must understand the team priorities, especially when they change, and how working to the wrong priorities affects the whole team's ability to accomplish its mission.

Goal Achievement

The team leader must help the team understand their goals (both team and individual) and provide feedback on how they are progressing towards achievement of these goals. This must be both consistent and honest as well as non-blaming. The team also needs input into setting these goals, both as a team and as individuals. Most importantly, the team leader must help the team achieve its goals by providing support and resources.

Empowerment

The team must work towards achieving business goals and within business guidelines, but outside of this, the team and each of its members needs a certain amount of autonomy in decision making and activity. This doesn't mean anything goes, but it does mean that we all need some say in our daily lives, including our working lives. Try to build a team's skill level through guidance rather than control. This will encourage ownership and independence and allow the team leader to concentrate on more important management tasks.

Open, honest communication

Communication needs to be “open” “honest” “timely” and “two way”. This is not a master-slave relationship, but rather an adult to adult interaction between equals (regardless of status). When treated with dignity and respect the vast majority of workers respond with higher levels of effort and results. Conflict is minimised and more easily resolved and individuals manage their own behaviours better. When everyone feels able to voice their thoughts in a respectful way, the whole team works better, and the customer notices!

Positive roles and norms

People learn best by observing, analysing and practicing. What are they seeing when they observe the Team Leader’s behaviour in your business? Are the Team Leader and the other managers modelling the type of behaviour they want to see from their team members? Or is it more a case of “do as I say not as I do”? Team members must have good role models, and time and effort must be spent on training and developing their skills in order to get the most from each person on the team.

Finally

If you have any trouble using the Team Effectiveness Inventory or would like some more information about team building, please contact Jo Gibney today. Effective teams are just a click away.

Team Effectiveness Inventory

Using the scale below, circle the number that corresponds with your assessment of the extent to which each statement is true about your team.

| | 5=strongly agree | 4=agree | 3=neutral | 2=disagree | 1=strongly disagree |
|--|------------------|---------|-----------|------------|---------------------|
| 1. Everyone on my team knows exactly why the team does what it does. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. The team leader consistently lets the team members know how we're doing on meeting our customer's expectations. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Everyone on my team has a significant amount of say or influence on decisions that affect his or her job. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. If outsiders were to describe the way we communicate within our team, they would use such words as "open" "honest" "timely" and "two way". | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Team members have the skills they need to accomplish their roles within the team. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Everyone on the team knows and understands the team's priorities. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. As a team, we work together to set clear, achievable and appropriate goals. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. I would rather have the team decide how to do something rather than have the team leader give step-by-step instructions. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. As a team, we are able to work together to solve destructive conflicts rather than ignoring conflicts. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. The role each member of the team is expected to play makes sense to the whole team. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. The team understands how it fits into the organisation. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. If my team doesn't reach a goal, I'm more interested in finding out why than I am in reprimanding the team members. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. The team has so much ownership of the work that if necessary we would offer to stay late to finish the job. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. The team leader encourages every person on the team to be open and honest, even if people have to share information that goes against what the team leader would like to hear. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. There is a good match between the capabilities and responsibilities of each person on the team. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. Everyone on the team is working toward accomplishing the same thing. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 17. The team has the support and resources it needs to meet customer expectations. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18. The team knows as much about what's going on in the organisation as the team leader does, because the team leader always keeps everyone up to date. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 19. The team leader believes that everyone on the team has something to contribute (knowledge, skills, abilities, information) that is of value to all. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 20. Team members clearly understand the team's unwritten rules of how to behave with the group. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Team Effectiveness Scoring Sheet

After each team member (including the team leader) completes the Team Effectiveness Inventory individually, average the **team members'** scores to each question. **Do not** include the Team Leaders scores in this average. They will be recorded separately and used to compare the perceptions of the Team Leader and the team members.

Transfer the average score for each questions to the appropriate boxes below, then work out the team rating for each of the five key team effectiveness areas. Enter the Team Leader's score in the grey column. The team will then need to discuss any differences between the team ratings and the team leader's scores and why these exist. A consensus may be negotiated if the team feels this is important.

This Team Effectiveness Inventory may be used on a regular basis to track team issues throughout the life of the team.

| The Five Effectiveness Areas | Ratings on Numbered Inventory Items | | | | Ave Team Rating | Ave Team Leader Rating | Consensus Rating (optional) |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Team Mission | 1 | 6 | 11 | 16 | | | |
| Ave of team members ratings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Team Leaders Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Goal Achievement | 2 | 7 | 12 | 17 | | | |
| Ave of team members ratings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Team Leaders Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Empowerment | 3 | 8 | 13 | 18 | | | |
| Ave of team members ratings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Team Leaders Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Open, honest communication | 4 | 9 | 14 | 19 | | | |
| Ave of team members ratings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Team Leaders Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Positive roles and norms | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | | | |
| Ave of team members ratings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Team Leaders Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Total Team Effectiveness Rating (out of 25) | | | | | | | |

