



Winning teams at work

There are not many jobs that one can successfully accomplish without working with others, so it makes sense that teamwork is a highly valued skill in the workplace. The word "team" means "a set of persons working together" and "teamwork" means "combined effort, organised cooperation" Working together to reach a shared goal is the foundation upon which all teams are based.

What are the benefits of effective teams?

Apart from improved performance, increases in cooperation and morale, and better interpersonal relationships, teams can also produce more creative, successful results because different people view situations from varying perspectives. Teams provide its members with a sense of shared responsibility to see a project to completion. When a member is tired or discouraged, the others on the team can and should encourage that person to continue. Teams also provide a broader base of talents and skills meaning a larger amount of work can be completed in a shorter amount of time. Teambuilding also improves support and trust levels in the workplace, increases efficiency and reduces employee stress.

Research indicates that team building can generate more ideas than any one individual and that the ultimate quality of the decision is likely to be better than an individual's decision. In addition to this the accuracy of decisions is also better through team building. Teambuilding can also create the confidence to take on greater, but measured, risks and seize opportunities.

What makes a team successful?

Effective teamwork does not just happen. The "essential ingredients" for a team to be successful are:

- Sharing a common goal and agreeing on a path to accomplish it
- Effective communication skills of all members
- Having a strong leader
- Knowing what your role is and the roles of others
- Integrity of all members
- Valuing the individual talents and skills of members
- Everyone contributing

- Understanding any limitations of members
- Knowing what resources are available

Teams produce best results when everyone knows what goal they are aiming towards, details such as deadlines, and receive regular communication. It is also important to have a leader who ensures everyone is aware of their role in the team and what is expected of them. Communication between team members should be open and informal and everyone should have a genuine interest in their own and others' performances.

Outdoor Insights is a leading training provider that has since 1990 specialised in designing and delivering customised and highly effective team building, team skills training and leadership development programs. Outdoor Insights programs use a combination of indoor and/or outdoor 'experiential' activities to create a powerful and fun learning environment.

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