

LEADERSHIP AND TEAM BUILDING

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Article 7: Factors That Can Help Unite A Team

The Factors That Can Help Unite A Team.

i). Communicate Goals Clearly:

Employees look to management for basic organisational goals. When those are not clear, disagreements will erupt as employees try to define the goals themselves. By clearly laying out goals, everyone begins in the same place and understands where the organisation is going.

ii). Define Responsibility:

Provide each employee with a distinct definition of his or her own responsibilities, both individually and as it relates to group projects.

This eliminates confusion over who is accountable for what, and allows employees to relate without struggling over responsibilities.

iii). Provide Equal Training:

Make sure that each member of your staff is trained and equipped to complete the tasks at hand; divisions surface when one member is unable to perform necessary duties. Provide ongoing training if additional time is needed, pair two employees to learn from each other. Make sure, though, that it's an equal training relationship, where both employees are gaining new skills.

iv). Encourage Relationships:

Most offices are busy places with many demanding deadlines. But allowing employees an occasional extended lunch to go out together and relax outside of the work environment can build understanding that will transfer back into the



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office and improve working relationships.

v). Empower:

Give decision-making power to the people working on the project. Give them the authority necessary to get their jobs done, but observe the process to make sure they are rising to the challenge. Trusted employees can make decisions without fearing consequences and good employees will value that trust and seek to make the best decisions.

vi). Reward:

Provide rewards to the office as a group. Whether it's an award, a luncheon, or some other treat, providing the whole office with an encouraging reward for hard work will build team spirit and bring your employees back in with renewed enthusiasm for their jobs.

vii). Set Reasonable Deadlines:

You can build a spirit of teamwork by dividing assignment equally, providing compensation to employees who are working additional hours and reworking less important deadlines to allow for a little more time.

viii). Meet Regularly:

The best way to understand your employees and to let them know they are not alone is to meet regularly with them. Whether it's

a monthly lunch meeting or an organized meeting with specific agenda items, it's critical to keep the lines of communication open. This allows you to gauge not only their needs and productivity, but will also help you assess any teambuilding concerns that need to be addressed.

ix). Discourage "Backdoor" Reports:

There will be at least one employee who will attempt to report to you after every meeting. Don't encourage this behavior, and resist the temptation to use this employee. Backdoor tactics can severely undermine an otherwise positive office environment.

Factors To Remember When Building A Winning Team?

Lay The Foundation Before You Begin Construction.

The most successful teams invest time in laying the foundation to create a common framework for everyone. The building blocks are in the team infrastructure and team dynamics. You may get started by addressing the following: what is the purpose of the team; their function in relation to the organisation's goals; the actual team goal? Don't assume everyone is on the same page until you have the discussion.

Make The Team Aware Of The Five Stages Of Team Development.

These stages are: forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. Ask the team which stage of development they see themselves and what needs to occur to move to a higher level.

Take A Team "Pulse".

This can happen in a couple of different ways. One way is through an initial team survey

that generates data on how members perceive team functioning and interactions. A survey will include topic such as commitment, trust, communication, and conflict resolution. Administer the survey at least quarterly to determine progress and team development priorities. Another way is to take a team "pulse" is to have periodic frank discussions about what is working and what is not. Practice regular, informal conversation that keep communication channels open.

Assess.

Identify a tool to assess behavior work style of each team member. This exercise invariably illuminates each member's style preferences, their team contributions, and gives everyone information to adapt and work together more effectively. For most people this creates an "ah ha" experience that is pivotal in fostering understanding and communication.

Push Proactivity.

Don't wait until there is conflict to establish a team charter. A charter, generated by team members, should specify guidelines and behavioral boundaries. This will set expectations and clarify what is acceptable and intolerant behavior. Make it clear that the charter can always be amended. Be sure everyone has a copy. Review it on a regular basis and go through it carefully with a new team member.

Form Common Skills.

Be sure everyone has a common skill base for communication, conflict resolution, problem solving, giving and receiving peer feedback. I find that teams who have these common skill sets are much more productive than teams that don't. Technical expertise is only half of the success quotient.

Examine Expectations.

Are the expectations of team members and the leader clearly communicated? This goes beyond job descriptions. For example, what do people expect to get out of working together as a team, i.e., expression, creativity; what can be expected of their contributions?

Acknowledge Unique Talents and Contributions.

Each team member brings value to the team. Point out or showcase

various abilities. Take time in a meeting to recognize one or two members. Be sure everyone receives equal recognition.

Build Dialogue, Extinguish Monologue.

Aim toward two-way interaction, exchange of ideas, and developing new insights in regular communication. Invite members to ask about others reasoning or thinking and explain how they think of or see a situation.

Do Some Teambuilding.

Initially you may consider a series of team session that incorporate the suggestion above with

team building activities. Once the team is grounded, you may benefit by having quarterly or bi-annual team building sessions. The type of team building you choose, from classroom experiential to rope climbing, needs to match the culture and challenges of the team. There are hundreds of activities that are metaphors for what goes on or doesn't go on, in the team experience. Whatever you choose to do, be certain there will be valuable learning and fun.

Laugh Together Cry Together.

Create times for people to laugh together and loosen up. This will also stimulate creativity.

Celebrate.

It is better to Celebrate for no special reason than to say thank you to the team. Don't expect employees to gather after work hours. Most people have family obligations and personal commitments.

Remember! John Maxwell stated it very clearly:

"The pessimist complains about the wind. The optimist expects it to change. The leader adjusts the sails".

What Is Success?

What does it mean to you? $S = F(H \times L \times P)$ Success is a function of Hope, Love and Peace. If one of the elements is 0, then there is no success.

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Democracy

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stake in the development process not merely as providers of labour but as economically empowered citizens and people in charge of their own resources, including land and mineral wealth.

That would ultimately give meaning to democratic governance it, therefore, goes without saying that poverty and the unequal control of resources in our countries militates against democratic governance.

Our priority as a continent and of our partners should, therefore, be focused on attaining development and economic freedom, so that governments will be in a better position to guarantee the economic and social rights of their citizens.

Finally, Mr Co-Chairperson, democratic governance and human rights must never be used as tools to influence processes in our countries.

The EU side needs to demonstrate sincerity and transparency in their political dealings with the continent.

What we have witnessed over the past years is the tendency to dictate

policy on African countries and to attach unrealistic conditions on development assistance.

For true and successful dialogue to occur in areas of governance and democracy, the EU should do away with double standards and selective application of these principles.

It is generally accepted that Africans do not observe elections in Europe and do not make pronouncements on the conduct of such polls, and yet it is assumed that Europeans have the inalienable right to observe and endorse the outcome of elections on the African continent.

The right to determine our own governance systems and the sovereign right to shape our own futures free from outside interference are sacred to us.

The EU's pre-occupation with human rights should, therefore, translate into concrete action through assistance in the development processes in Africa in order to change the material conditions of African people.

SPYL congrats voters

By Dr. Elijah Ngurare

The SWAPO Party Youth League (SPYL) is generally happy with the outcome of the 2010 Regional Councils and Local Authority Elections wherein the SWAPO Party has scored a landslide victory whereas opposition parties have democratically been consigned to the dustbin of political defeat. In the just ended elections, once again the enthusiasm of the Namibian youth has been aroused in supporting the SWAPO Party. Once again, the Namibian youth through music or facebook have been campaigning for the SWAPO Party and its candidates. The youth have an expectation in this victory moreso because there have been majority



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youth candidates who will become councilors. From the various regional and local authority councillors, we expect genuine implementation of youth empowerment, rural development and economic development. We expect the poor who have voted overwhelm-

ingly for the SWAPO Party to benefit from the services of government en masse: water and sanitation, electricity, rural feeder roads etc. For the informal settlements of our towns especially of Windhoek, Swakopmund, Ludertiz, Walvisbay etc, the new councilors must deliver the services without fail.

Unfortunately, we have received reports in certain local authorities where attempts have been made to purge the youth from serious positions of decision making instead some old councilors who have failed to deliver in the past are seemingly being wheel-barrowed into such positions in the name of gender balance. In our view, any gender balance argument must include young women. Thus, we wish to put it on

record that we are unhappy about the manner in which the Party leadership has chosen to disregard the democratic expressions of the regional and district structures of the party countrywide. Rightly so, many youth league cadres countrywide feel let down by the Party leadership in some instances. In the same vein, we appreciate the fact that in most local authorities an effort has been made to include some youth in the management of such local authorities. Towards this end, the youth league must not and should not be ignored in arriving at such compromises as has happened in this current case. The above notwithstanding, our message is for the youth to remain firm and steadfast in their loyalty and commitment to the SWAPO Party.