

Organizations/Departments shape their own future

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“If you had to identify, in one word, the reason the human race has not achieved, and never will achieve, its full potential, that word would be “meetings”
(Anonymous quote on the internet).

Compare to the next quote:

“Given the choice, very few people would not elect to be part of a team where there is excitement, commitment, perseverance, willingness to experiment, genuine appreciation of one another’s gifts (and limitations), and the ability to effectively tackle complex issues” (Senge, Peter (1999) The Dance of Change, p.46)

The way we see Our team is our future.

The future we anticipate is the future we create.

What have we done well? What have we accomplished?

What can we do differently? Where can we improve?

How do Teams Learn?

Learning does not happen in individuals; it happens in teams or in small groups of people who are committed to each other, working on the same or similar goal, even more beneficial, sharing the same vision.

People need each other.

Learning is a choice. One *wills* to learn. Learning cannot be forced.

Learning is contrasted to finding answers.

Learning happens when we make a deliberate time to reflect on what we have **done**.

Learning happens when we Do, then Reflect.

Then, we Do and Reflect again.

Learning is a process of “Doing” or taking Action, then Reflecting on our actions and the consequences, planning for our next step, then Doing it.

Do. Reflect. Do. Reflect. Do. Reflect. Do.

Without Action and without Reflecting, there is no learning.

All people learn—how slow or fast, how ineffective or effective is the question. How fast or slow are we learning?

We *deliberately* learn. We commit to a group where we share this cycle of doing, and reflecting on what we have done, we do again, reflect, and we learn.

We can learn how to learn. If we are fortunate, we have a partner, a family, a workplace, a Team, a group, where we can take the time and the effort to learn *together*!

Learning promotes change. Change is about the way people think (values and aspirations).

When people change the way they *think*, “Profound Change” has occurred—*not just changing strategies or structures* (p.15).

When people are learning, profound change can happen.

Without learning, profound change cannot happen.

Without learning, profound change cannot *continue*.

With learning, profound change does continue, and the Team reaches its potential: **what might Our team be doing in this next year that it is not doing now?**

Teams are the core *performance units* in organizations (Teams).
Learning occurs in the fundamental unit of organizations, the team, not individuals.

Learning happens in *effective* teams. Effective teams who are learning together increase the Team’s skills, capabilities, and **capacity for learning.** *When people are learning, new knowledge is even generated.* That’s why we need teams!

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“A team is

a group of people with complimentary skills,
who come together to achieve a common goal,
place the goal before individual interests,
integrate their skills,
and hold each other accountable to the goal.

The difference between teams and committees is

Teams are chosen by someone who wants passionately to achieve a goal;
committees are nominated by an impartial or biased committee and elected by a group that may or may not have an interest in the goal.

Teams consist only of people who have gathered for a common purpose;
committees may have people on them who do not believe in the goal or want to be on the committee.

Teams come and go as they are needed and finished;
committees have an annual or pre-determined time frame.

Teams are based on a person's desire to be on the team and the skills they bring to the team;
committees are usually based on availability, willingness to serve, or a response to guilt.

Teams function autonomously within the Mission statement and have authority to act;
committees do not have authority to act but must return to the central clearing committee.

Teams are self-generating, self-governing, and self-destructing"

Team Essentials

1. A strong leader and committed members.
 2. Each person has the same goal to achieve—the team focuses on a single issue.
 3. No one says, "We've never done it that way before."
 4. Are chosen by the team leader.
 5. Produces multiple leaders because the team leader facilitates instead of directs.
 6. Focuses on the various gifts and talents of individuals; individuals contribute best to the team by doing what they do best as an individual."
- (Bill Easum, 1998).

One Warning: The more effective a team, the greater the resistance to the team's goals will be present in the Team.

The importance of Leadership

Leadership is the capacity of a Team to shape its future, and sustain its ability to do so.

Leadership grows from “creative tension”: when people articulate a vision and tell the truth about the current situation. Proverbs 29:18 “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

The organization/department has many leaders. Many people play critical roles in generating and sustaining creative tension. Leaders (each person) both enable and hinder the capacity for leadership, the momentum of creative tension.

Three Types of Leaders

1. Local line leaders: people with authority to make changes in the way work is done at the local level. Within the Team, who would that be?
2. “Network leaders” or community builders: these people are the natural “seed carriers” of new ideas and new ways of doing things. The informal networks that exist in the Team. Within the Team, who would that be?
3. Executive leaders: they need to give up having the answers and ask questions that have no easy answers. They need to give freedom to others. Within the Team, who would that be?

We are *all* leaders. Leaders need each other. We can only be effective as leaders if others are effective as leaders. Leaders both enable or hinder the “growth” of an organization /

department.

Discipline is about learning. Disciple = student Students learn.

Discipline is learning the rules, the procedures, and discipline is being dedicated to learning, as a student from others.

A Model of Discipline/Learning is

the way any Team helps others begin or deepen a relationship with each other: inviting and helping them to commit themselves to learn from each others.

Do you know your Team's Model of Discipline/Learning?

When people change the way they *think*, “Profound Change” has occurred.

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Without learning, profound change cannot happen.

Without learning, profound change cannot *continue*.

With learning, profound change does continue, and the Team reaches its potential: what might your Team be doing in this next year that it is not doing now?

One Warning: most change initiatives fail—at a rate of about 70%.

Growth Factors and Restraining Factors (Senge, Peter, 1999, The Dance of Change)

Three Growth Factors that Reinforce Change or Develop Learning

1. People must see the benefit for themselves personally; they must see the practical consequences;
2. The Team is committed to developing networks of committed people (informal networks)
3. New practices are seen—the results are the fruit of our work.

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Ten Restraining Factors to Growth or Continued Change

The challenges of initiating change develop as soon as any “pilot group” conducts its work in unfamiliar ways:

1. We don’t have time for this stuff!

People need time to reflect and practice.

2. We have no help!

Seek the help of others who can coach you for building learning capacity.

3. This stuff isn’t relevant!

Developing learning capabilities is relevant; it allows our potential to be reached, and we can more fully enjoy our ministries.

4. They’re not walking the talk!

Leaders have to be examples.

The challenges of sustaining momentum take place within the team as it achieves early success and between the organizational culture:

5. This stuff is _____! (Fear and anxiety caused from new levels of openness and vulnerability)

Real conversation prevents the “real” conversation from taking place after the meeting.

6. This stuff isn’t working!

It is difficult to measure the progress of learning capabilities.

7. We have the right way! They don’t understand us!

The “skeptics” and the “true believers” misunderstand each other.

The challenges of redesigning and rethinking appear when

change initiatives gain credibility and confront the established practices and structures:

8. Who's in charge of this stuff?

Teams with (too much) autonomy cause anxiety that autonomy will lead to chaos and a break down of the current structure.

9. We keep reinventing the wheel!

The need to bridge information (learning) across organizational boundaries. It is hard to build upon each other's successes.

10. Where are we going? What are we here for?

Be ready for the inevitable "gap" between early success and the lag of new ideas and the deflating enthusiasm.

Some Basics on Team Process (chapter 5, Team Development, How teamwork works)

Teams reach their potential when team members maximize the *process* of teamwork.

The process of teamwork includes:

1. Team members **observe** the work they do together as a team;
2. Team members see themselves and each other as they work together as a team and can describe **the patterns of their work to each other: describing how well or how poorly they work together.**
3. **Describing** how well or poorly team members work together, what is or is not working, enables a team to regulate themselves, reaching the level of potential they desire; taking time to reflect and discuss what is working and what is not working is “descriptive feedback.”

Benefit:

Maximizing the *process* of teamwork enables teams to reach their potential—teams that are fun, enjoyable, and worthwhile to be a member!

Some Basics of Team Development

Each member of a team both contributes and hinders the team.
Do you know how?

Each member either contributes to *promoting change* or *resisting change* within the team and within the Team. Do you know how?

Three steps to team development:

1. Team members **increase awareness** of themselves, of each other, and their differences—and appreciating these differences.

“Joining a team that is committed to effective teamwork gives an unparalleled opportunity to “wake up” (Syer and Connolly, p. 81).

Self-awareness is heightened most easily by other team members offering neutral feedback about what we are doing well and what we can do differently. We may think we are helping, but discover others find us overly exacting; we may think we are insightful, but discover others find us controlling; we may think we have nothing to offer, but discover others want our insights (p. 80). The more we become aware of ourselves, each other, and our differences—valuing and appreciating our differences, the more we can really make contact with each other and communicate with respect and trust.

Benefit: A group of individuals can only grasp the *possibility* of becoming a team *as they become aware* of each other (p. 87). “I want to be appreciated for who I am, not for who you imagine me to be or want me to be.”

2. Team Development includes

Team members really make *contact* and communicate with each other.

Contact cannot happen until team members are aware of their differences. When only similarities are seen (or allowed), the relationships become blurred; without appreciating differences, there is no opportunity to make *contact* and to grow as a team (89). We *can* choose to respond to differences with respect, excitement, and genuine interest, rather feeling threatened and turning away.

Contact is the *crux of team development* and central to quality teamwork (p. 91).

Do we make the effort to find out who our team members really are; are we fully present to each other? Without contact, we never discover who we are and what our potential can be.

Benefit: Contact allows team meetings to be warm, pleasurable, and enjoyable!

3. Team Development includes

Respect, trust, and *team spirit* grows.

Being able to appreciate each others differences with respect for the other person, “being able to treat coming close to another as though it is a significant event, it is a great and civil virtue, the essence of community (Miller, 1993).

Respect grows out of contact (p. 102), and trust follows from genuine interest in each other’s opinions, ideas, and values.

Benefit: Team spirit is present with awareness of each other, with appreciating individual differences, and when a mutual appreciation is present: “you belong and you are important here.”

Synergy is present when a team begins to focus on team performance, rather than personal performance. The closer the team gets, the faster the team’s purpose is accomplished (p. 108).

Bonus Benefit: Synergy happens when each team member says, “This is where I belong right now.”

Are you part of a team at your work, where you are saying, “This is where I belong right now?”

Use the basics of Team Development to make it happen!
Team Development (a three step process) is improving the quality of relationships of team members.

One Warning: The more effective a team, the greater the resistance to the team’s goals will be present in the Team;

however, it can be lessened if there is shared commitment to this process of learning and we are prepared for lessening the restraining factors to growth or continued change.

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End.