



Building Teams – A Systems Approach

Creating and maintaining effective teams has become more important, and more challenging, in our VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex & Ambiguous) world. The challenges range from being engaged members of teams, to leading productive teams, to inspiring the organization to support those teams. The need for increased agility, coupled with the lack of predictability and the confusion about cause and effect, has left many teams and their leaders feeling adrift.

The following programs will provide a common set of skills and behaviors that will allow teams to flex as necessary – coming together for a project, or working together long-term – while being able to re-center more quickly and more easily in the midst of almost constant change. The programs are designed to be taken in sequence. Ideally, each level of management first builds its horizontal peer team while learning the skills to lead its intact teams. Then, each team leader puts those skills into action as their intact team practices being effective together. Participants learn and practice essential management and teamwork skills, including how to identify and correct teamwork challenges, all while maintaining an eye on the VUCA context.

#1 – Leading an Effective Team

This team leader training program is designed for anyone who leads or manages a team, including supervisors. Peer participants are exposed to a variety of concepts which include: how teams form – project-based, matrix-based, or long-term; observing group dynamics; giving and receiving effective feedback; managing performance; handling conflict; developing and communicating the team's goals; and what to do when all else fails. The process is experiential and uses physical and mental exercises to illustrate the different concepts, relating them all to real-world situations.

#2 – Being an Effective Team

This program is designed for leaders and their intact, direct-report teams. The focus is on working together most effectively – starting with clarifying the team's purpose and the results it is responsible for achieving (what it owes to whom and why), and then practicing the skills essential to good teamwork: collaboration, feedback, decision making, etc., all with an eye on delivering actual results. Each session is customized to reflect the individual team's goals and simulate their work environment. Working as teams, and under time pressures, participants solve complex mental and physical problems that represent the challenges or dynamics faced on the job. The team leader will facilitate the process, give feedback as appropriate and handle differences as they occur. Each activity will be debriefed by an experienced facilitator who will give both the team and team leader information on how to be even more effective. By the end of the process, the team should be functioning well as a whole, and the team leader able to continue the process back on the job. The process can be highly experiential and may be conducted outdoors if desired.