



Labornet No. 1504

Lack of Commitment and Cooperation on a Team

Dear All,

In his book "**The Five Dysfunctions of a Team**", and how to **build a cohesive and effective team**, Patrick Lencioni(*) explains how difficult it is to **fully grasp the complexity of human relationships and how collective decisions are made**.

Building a team is difficult, complicated and crucial. A team can only be more efficient and improve by overcoming members' individualities and finding true value as a whole!

In our experience we have found that those organizations that work in a genuine spirit of cooperation have some things in common. And as employment and human resources advisors this attitude allows us to interact with the team, analyze and help them get through difficult situations, knowing how to address issues and find legal solutions, which are not always decisions but actions, processes of deep transformation.

And we can quickly spot any lack of cooperation or commitment or accountability. Finding rough diamonds that can overcome all obstacles is crucial. A crossroads, a challenge, the true measure of a team that achieves genuine and quality work and where everyone cooperates spontaneously, when faced with a common interest.

In his book "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team" Patrick Lencioni builds a model that can be the starting point:

1. Dysfunction No. 1: **Absence of Trust**. Trust is the foundation of real teamwork.
2. Dysfunction No. 2: **Fear of Conflict**. Problems are not openly discussed.
3. Dysfunction No. 3: **Lack of Commitment**.
4. Dysfunction No. 4: **Avoidance of Accountability**
5. Dysfunction No. 5: **Inattention to Results**. It occurs when team members put their individual needs (such as ego, career development, or recognition) above the collective goals of the team.

"And so, like a chain with just one link broken, teamwork deteriorates if even a single dysfunction is allowed to flourish", says Patrick Lencioni.

Someone else is held accountable for the fulfillment of tasks; no one is made personally responsible; projects are not completed; and there are many excuses, team members are no longer committed to their mission.

The key question here is whether they focus on achieving collective results or they are only interested in fulfilling their individual purpose, unwilling to go the extra mile.

In practice, however, it is extremely difficult because it requires levels of discipline and persistence that few teams can muster.

Dysfunction No. 1: Absence of Trust

In the context of building a team, trust is the confidence among team members that their peers are committed, that they can trust each other knowing they will do their job, even remotely, from anywhere, from home, with high levels of autonomy, discipline, responsibility and in particular self-management. It is seen through actions, day in day out, when the job is done and customers express their satisfaction.

You can "trust" that your teammate will do their best because they have always done so in the past or that they will use their best efforts to produce effective, high-quality work. Trust means you can **predict a person's behavior based on past experience.**

As a result, they can focus their energy and attention completely on the job at hand. **The costs of failing to do this are great and impact business performance and productivity.**

Trust is built with simple day-to-day interactions, multiple instances of follow-through and credibility, and an in-depth understanding of the unique attributes of team members.

By taking a focused approach, a team can dramatically accelerate the process.

Some of the most effective and lasting tools for building trust on a team are profiles of team members' behavioral preferences and personality styles. These help break down barriers by allowing people to better understand and empathize with one another, feel engaged, and be made accountable.

One of the best profiling tools is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

The purpose of most of these tools is to provide practical and scientifically valid behavioral descriptions of various team members according to the diverse ways that they think, speak, and act.

The role of the leader. The most important action is that of the leader.

Connection to Dysfunction 2. How does all of this relate to the next dysfunction, the fear of conflict? By building trust, the leader makes conflict possible because team members do not hesitate to engage in passionate and sometimes emotional debate.

Dysfunction No. 2: Fear of Conflict

All great relationships, the ones that last over time, require productive conflict in order to grow. This is true in marriage, parenthood, friendship, and certainly business.

But teams that engage in productive conflict know that the only purpose is to produce the best possible solution in the shortest period of time.

Another tool that specifically relates to conflict is the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, commonly referred to as the TKI. It allows team members to understand natural inclinations around conflict so they can make more strategic choices about which approaches are most appropriate in different situations.

The role of the leader. One of the most difficult challenges that a leader faces is promoting healthy conflict.

How can a team commit?

When team members feel close and care for one another, they build a valuable personal relationship, and everyone does their best.

Members of great teams improve their relationships by holding one another accountable, thus demonstrating that they respect each other and have high expectations for one another's performance.

Connection to Dysfunction 5. How does all of this relate to the inattention to results? If teammates are not being held accountable for their contributions, they will be more likely to turn their attention to their own needs, and to the advancement of themselves.

Dysfunction No. 5: Inattention to Results

Every good organization expects to achieve its goals, financial measures that drive controllable results and objectives.

Conclusion

Success is a matter of embracing common sense with uncommon levels of discipline and persistence. Teams succeed because they are exceedingly human. By acknowledging the imperfections of their humanity, members of functional teams overcome the natural tendencies that make trust, conflict, commitment, accountability, and a focus on results so elusive.

(*) **Patrick Lencioni** is president of The Table Group, a consulting firm specializing in optimizing teamwork. "*The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*".

Please feel free to contact us for further information.

Best regards,

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