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Teambuilding: The Most Rewarding Act Of Leadership

By Eric Garner

The experience of great teamwork is one of life's greatest thrills. Unfortunately, it is also rare and fleeting. If you want to turn your own working group of individuals into a magnificent, all-conquering team, you need to guide them on a journey of 5 steps, from Unshared Certainty to Shared Uncertainty.

1. Unshared Certainty. At the first stage of teambuilding, the team are no more than a disparate group of individuals without any close links. Their main aim is to look after number one and they do this by seeking personal advantage in any situation. As a result, individuals rarely stick their necks out. Doing anything more risks failure and recrimination at the personal level. Unfortunately, in many organizations, we encourage safe working by expecting people to go it alone. In these type of organizations, there are no team rewards, only individual rewards; there are no team rules, only individual rules; and there is no team communication, only one-to-one communication. As a result, there is no risk and no teamwork.

"Pleasure usually takes the form of me and now; joy is us and always." (Marvin J. Ashton)

2. Loose Links. At the second stage of team development, the group start to find reasons for working together. They may do this initially because they see some personal advantage for themselves, for example, by working with others whom they like, or with others who have information they need, or who have skills that complement theirs. However, the minute they have nothing to gain from joint working, they are likely to quickly revert back to lone working, like a stretched elastic band snapping back to its untested state.

Lone working is often unwittingly encouraged by organizations who reward individuals and what they know far more than they reward teams and what they know. As David Yockelson says, "The biggest problem is that most companies have not grown up supporting team efforts or compensating for collecting and sharing. Just about every company has compensated the individual. So most employees have grown up thinking their knowledge is power."

3. Shared Purpose. A breakthrough in teambuilding is achieved when the group start to share a purpose, mission, or goal which can only be realized by working together. This is nearly always a big

goal and one that excites and motivates at an emotional level.

The story is told of an unannounced visit by John F. Kennedy to the space center at Cape Canaveral in the mid 1960's. Kennedy toured the complex and met a man in overalls. "What do you do here?" he asked. The man replied, "I'm earning a living." Kennedy nodded and moved on. He met another man in overalls and asked him the same question. "I clean away all the rubbish," the man said. Kennedy smiled and strode on until he met another man in overalls and put the same question again. This time a big smile came across the face of the man who replied, "Mr President, I'm helping to put a man on the moon."

4. Team First. At the fourth stage of teambuilding, the group now starts to put the team before themselves. This only happens when they see that they have far more to gain from working together than from working on their own. They start to share not just the goal and mission, but everything else:

ideas, thoughts, plans, skills, knowledge, time, and even their feelings. When the group reach this stage, they are prepared to make personal sacrifices if the team wins out.

Writer John Adair quotes Mike Brearley, former England cricket captain, who was regularly called upon to ask his players to put aside personal glory for the sake of the team. "Cricket is a team game but as such it is unusual in being made up of intensely personal duels. Personal interest may conflict with the team. You may feel exhausted and yet have to bowl; you may be required to sacrifice your wicket going for quick runs. It is the captain's job to coax the happy blend of self-interest and team-interest from his players."

5. Shared Uncertainty. Once a team sees themselves as a distinct, cohesive unit with a huge pool of resources to call on and an exciting goal to strive for, they start to realize that they can achieve far more together than apart. That means they can move into areas that they never dared try before. They are prepared to go for the big prizes. In organizational terms, this means a high level of attention on the customer and their needs. The result is a remarkably high level of achievement and success. "When spiders unite, they can tie down a lion." (African proverb)

Teambuilding is one of the most powerful forces of organizational life. It benefits the individual, the organization, and the customer. But it doesn't just happen by itself or overnight. It takes guidance, patience, and commitment. But the results are well worth while.

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Leadership Is Power: Test Your Ethics

By Gerri D Smith

"The payoff for the ethical person is a reputation for honesty. It's a payoff that makes every undertaking easier and attracts unsolicited opportunities. It's also a payoff that results in strong friendships based on trust. And I don't think there's anything more rewarding. –Don Dwyer

How much energy do you invest in developing your natural abilities and skills? Would you rather be a leader or a follower? Leaders like winning and tend to think well of themselves. They influence others by what they do, rather than by what they say. Most of the time, leaders also do the right things. Followers like to look for anyone that will tell them what to do and carry them through life. They are never in a position of power and are not rewarded for their lack of leadership ability.

When you help others discover their abilities, and achieve greater success and happiness, you become better at what you do and add to your emotional prosperity. These qualities are the power of leadership. Others are moved by your behavior and influence; this is ethics in action. Leaders are valuable in any organization. You are looked up to, able to make good decisions, and your strength to build on past successes is valuable.

Leaders must demonstrate a high level of ethics. Acting in a moral light, obeying the laws, and following through on your commitments, is the payoff for doing the right thing. It makes each task that you have to do much easier and many unexpected opportunities will come your way. Now that's rewarding.

Success is based on ethical goals. It carries with it a moral and ethical quality that is based on your value system. When you become successful by unethical, or dishonest means, it is not lasting. Therefore, success built on goals that include good moral values, means more and lasts longer. You feel better and others respond to your good moral character.

10 WAYS TO ACQUIRE LEADERSHIP POWER

1. Set ethical examples for others to imitate: being moral, honest, trustworthy, and reliable.
2. Associate with others who match your values and passion for success.
3. Train others to reach for their goals.
4. Give praise when or where it's due.
5. Show gratitude as often as possible.
6. To be not only in command of others, but of self.
7. To not be afraid to make and admit mistakes.
8. Having a good grasp on managing your time.

9. Knowing how to seek and accept guidance when required.

10. Believing in the power of Faith.

Managing and controlling your thoughts, ideas, and actions; being the best you can be and helping others be their best are signs of good leadership. And demonstrating good moral values is the greatest part of being a leader. When you make every effort to reveal your best self–image you will never feel a lack of confidence, and your most cherished plans and aspirations will materialize. If your image is satisfactory, you will often value your abilities, skills, and actions, and your plans will move you toward success. Are you continuing to be a leader?

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Leadership Is Power: Test Your Ethics

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