Getting the Functional out of Dysfunctional Teams

22 September 2008

Naval Oceanographic Office
Lana Cagle & Mark Femal
Agenda

- Agency
- Introduction
- Team Development
- Role Play Scenarios
- Take Aways
Mission Statement:

We maximize America’s Sea Power by applying relevant oceanographic knowledge across the full spectrum of warfare.
Vision: We will be the Navy’s provider of choice for relevant, quality-engineered METOC IT systems and services.

Mission: We provide relevant, timely environmental information systems and IT services to the METOC professional and warfighter.
Introduction

Sometimes you need specialized knowledge and skills to address the non-technical, interpersonal issues that can arise even on a “TSP Team”.

![Image of a person on a bed with hands in the air, indicating frustration or stress.]
Four Stages and Five Dysfunctions

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing

- Absence of Trust
- Fear of Conflict
- Lack of Commitment
- Avoidance of Accountability
- Inattention to Results
Four Stages and Five Dysfunctions

- Performing
- Norming
- Storming
- Forming

Inattention to Results
Avoidance of Accountability
Lack of Commitment
Fear of Conflict
Absence of Trust
Desired Outcomes

- **Forming**
  - Goal clarity
  - Performance expectations
  - Role/responsibility clarity
  - Creation of norms

- **Storming**
  - Acceptance and practice of group norms
  - Productive confrontation
  - Acceptance of goals, roles, responsibilities

- **Norming**
  - Role/responsibility acceptance
  - Encourage of productive conflict (healthy cohesiveness)
  - Emergence of shared leadership

- **Performing**
  - A clear understanding/acceptance of the team’s reality (its challenges, its strengths/weaknesses, assumptions, etc.)
  - Appreciation and use of diversity
  - Members self-regulate
  - High level of achievement
  - Mutual accountability

- **Reforming**
  - Group revision of goals, roles and responsibilities in response to changes
  - Resembles forming and storming

Stages of Group Development (Tuchman)
## Unproductive Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Resultant Effect</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of participation</td>
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<td>Not meeting commitments with no ill effect</td>
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<td>Non-participative in launches or meetings</td>
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<td>Negative body language</td>
<td>Sitting separately from the team</td>
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<td>Eye-rolling and background whispering</td>
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<td>Bad attitudes</td>
<td>Not properly recording TSP data</td>
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<tr>
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Absence of Trust

- Team members
  - hide their weaknesses and mistakes for fear that their vulnerabilities will be used against them
  - do not ask for help or provide productive feedback
  - do not offer help or share information to people outside their own areas of responsibility
  - jump to conclusions about others’ intentions and abilities without getting clarification
  - are guarded and not genuine with each other
  - avoid spending time together
Fear of Conflict

**Good conflict among team members requires trust.**

- Avoid tackling tough issues and engaging in passionate debate due to a fear of conflict.
- Team members do not challenge one another’s technical approach.
- Team members do not ask for one another’s opinions.
- Unresolved conflict wastes a lot of time and emotional energy.
Lack of Commitment

- There is a lack of clarity around team direction and priorities.
- The team misses opportunities because they hesitate to make decisions.
- The team is not aligned around a common goal.
- The team revisits discussions and decisions over and over again.
Avoidance of Accountability

- Resentments are created among team members who are not held to the same high standard.
- Team members miss deadlines and key deliverables.
- The burden is placed on the team leader to be the disciplinarian.
- Teams do not apply peer pressure to poor performers.

*Team members need to know what’s expected of them and what separates mediocre from excellent performance.*

*We let our peers down when we hold back constructive feedback.*
Inattention to Results

• The team’s reputation to achieve is at stake.

• Team members can get distracted and focus on their own careers and individual agendas rather than the team objectives.

• Teams fail to improve.

Team members need to hold one another accountable for what they need to do to remain focused on collective results.
Scenario 1 - Behavior
Scenario 2 – Conflict
Team Building Work

- Five Dysfunctions Team Assessment
- Established Group Norms
- Read Lencioni’s book
- Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument
- Johari Window
- Personal Histories Exercise
- Escalating Conflict – What Not to Do

- Guidelines for Mutual Gains (Win/Win)
- Inventory of Anger Communication
- Team Effectiveness Questionnaire
- Meeting Evaluation
The Thomas-Kilman Conflict Modes Instrument (TKI)
Team Collaboration Guidelines

• Be clear on the goal you are working to achieve

• ASSERT by . . .
  – declaring what you want *and why* (the rationale)
  – declaring what you want from others *and why*
  – declaring what others can expect from you (if they appear to be unsure of your motives)

• COOPERATE by . . .
  – letting others know what you heard them say
  – encouraging others to share their rationale
  – focusing on what is best for the team
  – crediting others ideas and achievements
  – building on members’ contributions

Source: PH Associates
Johari Window

KNOWN TO SELF

PUBLIC

FEEDBACK

NOT KNOWN TO SELF

BLIND

KNOW TO OTHERS

Personal Disclosure

PRIVATE

NOT KNOWN TO OTHERS

UNKNOWN
What to do…

- Coach one another not to retreat from healthy debate
- Train team on how to handle conflicts constructively
  - Active listening *(this is what I heard you say)*
  - Expand public space - *trust*
  - Distinguish a person’s *interests* from *positions*
- Don’t let poor behavior go unaddressed
- Demonstrate the behavior you ask of others
- Challenge members and make it okay for them to do the same
- Keep feedback open, candid and directed toward attaining the goal
- Look for and respond in authentic ways
- Address things that are out of whack
  - The elephant that is in the room
What to do...

• Talk to the team
  – Importance of providing feedback – leader to team member, member to member, team member to leader
  – Talk to and not about each other
  – Seek valid information
  – Deal with conflict at the source
  – Manage yourself and your reactivity
  – Use language like *what I saw, what I interpreted, how I felt, and what I want* …
  – Invite the team to discuss how to make the conflict situation better
  – If you tend to be highly assertive then work on active listening
  – If you are non-assertive then speak up and be forthcoming with your thoughts

• Self awareness exercises around conflict and anger styles
Planned Exercises

- Team Priority Grid
- The Five Dysfunctions 1 or 2-day Workshop – Facilitator’s Guide
- Personality Type Profiling
- Work with supervisors to provide clarity around performance objectives related to team work and cooperation
- Conflict Management Training
## Performance Measures

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<td>107</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
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References

*The Wisdom of Teams* by Katzenback and Smith

*Good to Great* by Jim Collins

*The Five dysfunctions of a Team and Facilitator’s Guide* by Patrick Lencioni

Inventory of Anger Communication (IAC) by Millard J. Bienvenue, Sr.

Chuck Sampson of PH Associates, Meridian, MS 39393 - *Conflict Management and Team Building Training*

The Johari Window, a Graphic Model of Interpersonal Awareness, J. Luft and H. Ingham, 1955
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