Work with Me: Why Teambuilding Fails and What You can do About It.

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Good news, bad news

- Companies spend millions on teambuilding each year
- Team consultants and coaches could be delivering more value for that money

Our Assertion

Widely-accepted models of team building and effectiveness fail to adequately account for a critical reality of most corporate cultures and their employees.

When you apply this assertion...

- Stages or phases have limited application
- What a “real team” is doesn’t matter
- Vision and mission statements miss the point
- Shared goals don’t drive productive collaboration
- Psychometric instruments often sub-optimized
- Trust building needs to be rethought

We will share...

- Background and research leading to our insights
- An approach to team and group effectiveness that challenges widely accepted models of teambuilding while building upon them

So that...

You can apply these ideas to your work and with your clients leading to stronger, more sustainable team building outcomes.
So, who are we?

Mars, Incorporated

- Family-owned, global corporation
- 78,000 associates
- $33b in annual revenues
- Brands include: M&M’s®, Snickers®, Wrigley’s Gum®, Pedigree® dog food, Iams®, Uncle Ben’s®
- Values driven: The Five Principles are uncommonly well integrated into the culture and operation of our business
  - Quality
  - Responsibility
  - Mutuality
  - Freedom
  - Efficiency

A recent history of teams at Mars, Inc.

- Intense focus since 2002
- Based on Tuckman’s four stages
- Predicated on the evolution of conflict
- Audience primarily senior teams
- High Performance Teamwork a “Signature Practice” for Mars, Inc.
- 2008 Internal practice launched

Research rooted in Mars culture

- Questionnaires, interviews from 30 groups, 250 associates
- Experiential data from 120 team workshops
- N.A., Europe, AMEA and Asia
- Teams of various levels: GM’s & VP’s through to functional and factory teams
- Over a 20 month span from 2009-2010
Roughly 80% of collaborative time spent iterating between lower-value collaborative styles and reactive collaboration (-1 to 3.0), with little or no intentional collaboration.

Dysfunctional interactions relatively rare and generally driven by individual behavior. I.e., there are few truly dysfunctional teams, only dysfunctional team members.

**A typical Mars team**
- A group of skilled, driven individuals
- Appreciate and value one another’s talents

But lacking
- Shared focus
- Effective, intentional collaboration
- Team learning

**So, what’s going on?**
High levels of individual accountability as traits of our culture and our associates behave as a systemically overused strength
Collaboration not getting off the ground

*The Guiding Image* – Gravity. Individual achievement – as a trait of our associates and our culture – acts like gravity, not allowing more value-adding collaboration to get off the ground.

What’s more...

McClelland’s Three Motives
- Achievement
- Affiliation
- Power/influence

Motives
- Tend to persist over years
- Are difficult to change, develop
What if....
We could turn our high need for individual achievement into wings and generate “lift” for teams, by making intentional collaboration a point of accountability for associates?

What works and What Doesn’t

A new definition of a high performing group:
High performing groups consistently add value for
- The organization
- The group
- Each individual group member
by focusing on the Three Imperatives of High Performance Collaboration.

The Imperatives & Associated Practices

- Clarity* – including value-adding purpose and shared work
- Intentionality – Cultivating collaboration via clear contracting and relationship building
- Discipline – Ways of working (team processes) and sustained learning

*Clarify business context, the Special Practice
What we let go of

Phases aren’t helpful

Research lacks relevance
  o Tuckman’s work based on therapy groups
  o See. Dr. Connie Gersick’s critique and alternative (ref. in handout, online)

• Teams aren’t what they used to be
• Team instability is the norm
• Development more circular than linear
• Non-co-location is prevalent

How you define team doesn’t matter

“Real teams can be small or large, can have wide-ranging or restricted authority, can be temporary or long-lived, can have members who are geographically co-located or dispersed and can perform many different kinds of work.”

Richard Hackman

A Deeper Dive into the Five

1. Inspire Purpose

What we focus on
Clarifying team value-add and meaning
  • “Why we exist as a team”
  • The most compelling reasons to operate inter-dependently
  • Meaning beyond business results
  • What’s at risk if members fail to collaborate

Mission/vision statements miss the point
  • Neither is expressly about the role of collaboration
  • Are interpreted numerous ways
  • Vision tend to describe outcomes
  • Missions can be all over the map

2. Crystallize Share Intent

What we focus on
  • “What we must do together to add greatest value?”
  • The specific, shared work of the team
  • The 20% that gets you 80%”.
Shared goals reinforce individual performance
- Shared goals—while still important—tend to reinforce individual performance:
- “The fallacy of Additive Collaboration” — The sum of individual outcomes when totaled up does not equal collaboration or teamwork.

3. **Cultivate Collaboration**

**What we focus on**
Establishing clear collaborative commitments
- “Who works with whom on what?”
- Clarifying expectations for collaboration
  - Between leader and team members
  - Between and among team members
- Use personality instruments in direct connection to contracted collaboration
- Build courage and vulnerability leading to trust

**The use of psychometrics and personality surveys is typically sub-optimized**
- Generalized application of psychometrics like MBTI® and FIRO-B® when used outside the context of specific collaborative agreements aren’t sticky and are harder to apply in practices

**Trust building needs to be reconsidered**
- Trust Building in the traditional sense tends to “other-ize” trust, i.e., “I don’t trust you,” or “She doesn’t trust me.”
- My trust in YOU begins with trust in myself
- What needs building is courage in the context of the work: Trust will grow where courage and vulnerability are sown

4. **Activate Ways-of-working**

**What we focus on**
Simple processes aligned to purpose and shared work
- “How will we work most efficiently as a team?”
- Establish a cadence for team operation
  - Formal protocols, informal “ways of working”
    - Meetings, decision making, conflict
  - All clearly aligned with the team’s purpose and shared intent

THE KEY:
- Cultivate collaboration focuses on specific working relationships — Activate Ways-of-working focuses on total team
- Team processes flounder in the absence of an inspiring purpose and clearly defined shared work
5. **Sustain & Renew**

**What we focus on**

Instilling a climate of continuous learning

- What’s needed now?
  - Formal, informal debriefs
  - After-action-reviews
  - Team assessments
- What do we need to do next?
  - Skills development
  - Deeper dive into team effectiveness

**THEY KEY:** Team learning is *the* essential ingredient to sustainable team performance

**Clarify Context: The Special Practice**

Used during times of significant transition, for instance:

- Leadership changes
- Restructuring
- Major changes in strategy

**The “So What” of our Assertion**

When we tap into the individual achievement drive, embracing “The ‘I’ in Team” we focus on:

- Practices—not phases
- Specific points of collaboration—not “real” teams
- Value-adding purpose—versus vision, mission
- Shared work—and shared goals
- Types and styles in context of real work
- Building courage and letting trust evolve

**Key References**

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