

Team Effectiveness

Effective teams observe and discuss how well they work together to accomplish their tasks; thus work relationships need not be based on “good” feelings, but on commitment to interactions that help individuals contribute fully to achieve company goals. Teams that best achieve their goals have:

- Clarity of objectives – clear mission, purpose, values, **goals**.
- Clarity of **roles** and responsibilities – organization structure, job descriptions, accountabilities, desired competencies/qualifications, resources, tools and equipment.
- Procedures/**rules** for how to effectively solve problems, make decisions, communicate, manage conflict, complete tasks, and manage change.
- Positive **relationships** that promote mutual respect & trust, support, inclusion/involvement, listening, feedback; that value diversity and are okay with disagreement.

Effective teambuilding is not a cheerleading session; it is a scientific process of action research (observe, document, and take action based on what you observe in a continuous cycle; each time around you are more fully informed and thus can act more effectively). An effective team:

- Examines its process continuously for barriers to effective functioning.
- Monitors how to best work together to accomplish tasks and use talents of group members.

Effective examination of the team process includes:

- **Data gathering & diagnosis:**
 - What keeps us from being as effective as we can be? Look at goals, roles, rules, and relationships – are all clear and functioning well?
 - What problems should we work on? Are we effective at planning? Decision-making? Coordination and integration of resources? Sharing information? Dealing with problem situations?
- **Action planning:**
 - What changes do we need to make to be more effective?
 - What training/skill-building/practice do these changes require?
- **Action taking**
- **Continual review of process:**
 - How well have we carried out our action plan?
 - What needs to be changed/modified in order to be more effective?