

September 2009 - Leadership Letter (42)



STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Hello again everyone ...

Client executive David Servis has been looking for ideas to help a sister division of Tetra Tech with their team building and inclusion needs.

I was happy to offer David some ideas, and also recommend one of our books from ASCE Press, **Collective Excellence: Building Effective Teams**, second edition.

In that handbook, we included a chart showing how teams can develop. They often move from ... **Collections**, to **Groups**, to **Developing Teams**. A few may become **High Performing Teams**.

The chart has been helpful in our consulting work with leadership groups of all kinds ... boards, operations teams, planning groups, or task committees, as they tackle their main tasks.

Actually, few groups develop to "7" or higher (on a scale of 12), even though they've been "in business" for years! It's not time or tenure that matters, so much as **focus and attention** on teamwork.

Leaders of successful firms realize that teamwork at all levels is every bit as important as the "right" strategy, the "right" structure, or the "right" people.

Following is a copy of the chart from **Collective Excellence**. To use it, ask your team to identify their current "stage of development."

Then, ask them another question ...

What simple things can we do to become a better, more effective team?

- **Brainstorm** for all their ideas on this, then ...
- **Implement the few** ideas that get the most support.

If you try it, you'll likely find it leads to a very useful and helpful discussion. Best wishes for stronger teamwork!

Mel

Mel Hensey, PE, F.ASCE
Management Consulting Engineer
Hensey Associates
8220 Riversedge Cir., Maineville, OH 45039
MHensey@aol.com

PLEASE NOTE: An important change in our contact information ... we will soon be dropping our office land line in favor of our mobile number ... **513/919-7672**. Please make a note of this change for future reference. Thanks!

Collective Excellence: Building Effective Teams, second edition, is available from ASCE Press and Amazon.com.

Don't forget that all past **Leadership Letters** can be found on our website at www.henseyassociates.com.

FOUR STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Task groups, committees and work groups of all kinds may go through several stages of development. It pays to know what the stages are, what to expect and how to move on if you want to!

Stage I collection (1)	Stage II group (2)	Stage III developing team (3)	Stage IV high-performing team (4)
<p>People are ... cautious guarded wondering</p> <p>Little visible disagreement</p> <p>The collection lacks an identity</p> <p>Little investment in the group function</p> <p>People are watching for the norms here to see what is okay or expected of them</p>	<p>Group is developing ... identity purpose interest</p> <p>People are taking risks and getting to know one another</p> <p>Conflict is in fits and starts, nonproductive</p> <p>High level of frustration and/or confusion</p> <p>People develop pairs and cliques</p>	<p>Team is developing ... goals roles relationships</p> <p>Members are learning to appreciate their differences</p> <p>Conflict is usually on issues, not about egos</p> <p>Communication is open and clear</p> <p>Sense of belonging</p> <p>Sense of progress</p> <p>Enjoying work</p>	<p>Team is acting on common goals with ... synergy high morale high productivity</p> <p>Easy shifting of roles from one to another</p> <p>Differences are valued</p> <p>Looking out for one another's interests</p> <p>Spontaneous, collaborative efforts</p> <p>Sharing of all relevant information</p> <p>Conflict is frequent, often looks like problem solving</p>
(0)	(3)	(6)	(9)
(12)			

Improving Work Groups by Francis and Young provided the most insight into the development of this table, which is based on our consulting experiences.

from *Collective Excellence* by Mel Hensey; available from ASCE Press, 800/548-ASCE.