

Team Dynamics Exercise

Suggested Ground Rules

First, and most important, we suggest that you keep all comments and discussion centered around one central issue: ***how can we improve the effective functioning of our team?*** During your discussion, we encourage you to keep coming back to the question: ***is this going to be relevant and helpful to improving the functioning of our team?*** The point is not to dwell on the past or to point fingers, but to figure out *how to move forward into the future* as a better performing team than you've been, up to this point. The aim is not to accuse or blame; *the aim is to improve*. Conversely, the point is not to simply pat yourself on the back and say, "We're doing great; there's nothing to work on." You can *always* improve the functioning of a team, and the aim here is to figure out how to improve. If your team is already highly functional, that is great. Now figure out *how to make it better*. Second, for the exercise to be most helpful to you, we'd like to ask that you adhere to the structure of the exercise – follow the instructions step by step.

Steps

1. Decide as a team if you accept the ground rules. Also, decide if you want to add any other ground rules for yourselves. As a team, fill out the attached TEAM DYNAMICS ANALYSIS SUMMARY SCORE SHEET.
2. Take a few minutes to note what you do well as a team. Agree as a team on three highly functional aspects of the team – good things about the team's functioning that you want to be sure to preserve. Write these down under the heading "Highly Functional Aspects of the Team."
3. Have each person in the team tell each of the other members in the team at least one aspect of them they see as being helpful to the functioning of the team. Write these down under the heading "Individual Strengths."
4. Based on filling out the TEAM DYNAMICS ANALYSIS SUMMARY SCORE SHEET, agree as a team on the team's three most pressing areas for improvement. We suggest that you use the team average scores as a guide, but not necessarily an absolute criteria, for selecting the three areas.
5. After you've agreed on the team's three most pressing areas for improvement, discuss and determine as a team ***what can be done to improve the functioning of the team***. Concentrate your discussion on the three most pressing areas for improvement.
 - Come up with at least one *systemic* solution the team intends to implement to improve its functioning. Write these down under the heading "Possibilities for Improvement: Systemic."
 - Come up with at least one thing that *each individual* can do to improve the functioning of the team. Write these down under the heading "Possibilities for Improvement: Individual."
6. Take five minutes of quiet time for each individual in the team to come up with at least one specific thing they will personally commit to doing in order to improve the functioning of the team (each person must come up with his or her own specifics; this is to be a self-generated commitment). Now each person should read his or her commitment to the team ("I commit to..."). Write these commitments down under the heading "Personal Commitments."
7. Create a **summary document** (just one per team) containing the items below. Send a copy of the summary document to each member of the team. Please also send an email with the summary document to the teaching team before the beginning of our next class session. No need to include any individual names on personal commitments.
 - "Highly Functional Aspects of the Team"
 - "Individual Strengths"
 - Your team's three selected areas most in need of improvement.
 - "Possibilities for Improvement: Systemic"
 - "Possibilities for Improvement: Individual"
 - "Personal Commitments"

TEAM DYNAMICS ANALYSIS SUMMARY SCORE SHEET

Category #1	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #2	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #3	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #4	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #5	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #6	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #7	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #8	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #9	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #10	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
Category #11	Team High Score: ___ Team Low Score: ___ Team Average Score: ___
	Team Average Score Across All Categories: _____