

Guide to Team Leadership and Communication - *Express Yourself to Success!*

Express Yourself to Success!

Excerpt from

Guide to Team Leadership and Communication

**Lead Your Teams with
Confidence**
Using Effective Communication Skills

www.ExpressYourselfToSuccess.com

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Team Leadership and Communication - Introduction

The number of teams in the workplace has increased dramatically over the past several years. As a result, the necessity for strong team leadership has become crucial to achieving a successful outcome.

Being a team leader means getting the best possible results from your team. It's about how to establish your team, how to organize it and the work of the team. You've got to know how to resolve conflict or better yet, how to make sure it doesn't happen at all so you don't waste valuable time resolving it. You also need to know how to effectively motivate your team using meaningful recognition and rewards.

Leadership is a skill and leading a team is one that has to be taken seriously because it's not just your career on the line. You're responsible for the success of everyone on your team, let alone the organization, and that's what being a team leader is all about.

There's a lot to cover on team leadership so we'll get right into it. You'll notice as you go through the pages that follow that there is little "chit chat" editorial. I've skipped all that page filler to go right to the heart of this Guide: to give you practical, doable skills so you can get your team up and running as soon as possible - and with the best results.

What is a team?

A team is a group of individuals who, by working collaboratively and interdependently, are committed to achieving a common goal or objective together.

Let's take a closer look at the concept of "team." We've often heard this word used in various ways: the "marketing team," the "sales team," the "creative team." These are all groups of individuals who are working in the same area or department.

However, the "members" of these teams are more likely managed individually where the manager delivers a top-down method of communication and direction. Many of the members in these "teams" do not necessarily rely on one another for the success of their work or even to reach their objectives. They're a group of individuals working in the same department, but not really as part of an interdependent team.

A "project team" is a group of individuals whose work and success are interdependent on the other members of the team and every member of the team "owns" the project. Because of this interdependence, the project team requires more group coordination than a departmental team. This has a direct impact on various success elements including an effective flow and sharing of communication and information so all members know and understand what the group is doing, what the project progress is, what has been done and what needs to be done.

Unlike the manager of a department, the team leader actively encourages the interdependence of members and shares some of the decision-making with the team. Typically, the leader is not involved with the group on a day-to-day basis but is on the periphery to assist, coordinate, guide and motivate.

There are many techniques in the following pages that will assist both the team leader and departmental manager work effectively with their respective teams.

What makes a great team?

A team is a group of people working interdependently with a clear purpose and driven to accomplish a shared goal. For a team to be successful, there exist many interconnected factors.

A great team requires a solid foundation that establishes understanding, expectation, accountability and processes of interaction for the group. Unfortunately, these are often overlooked. Individuals are frequently assembled and labelled a team but little up-front work is done to ensure the efficiency and cohesiveness of it. As a result, the team is unable to focus on its tasks because it is constantly sidetracked by unnecessary issues, conflicts, misunderstandings and a lack of order that hinder its success.

A team foundation requires:

- clear goals and how these tie in to the larger goals of the organization
- common understanding of what is to be done
- identified roles and responsibilities
- members to have the appropriate skills
- stated measures for results and success
- defined directions and timelines
- established process for decision making
- collaborative environment where everyone shares information, resources and knowledge
- an effective and agreed-upon way of resolving conflicts, issues and disputes
- that everyone contribute to the evaluation and performance of the team

A team needs:

- open and honest communication
- to listen and respect the point of view of others
- the appropriate resources
- training and development when required
- trust between members and team leader
- to be accountable and responsible to all team members
- to treat all members and the team leader with respect and courtesy

The attitude of the individual member impacts the attitude of the team. Great teams have members who:

- are accountable and responsible
- are willing to learn and collaborate
- are persistent and disciplined
- are determined
- don't blame others for mistakes
- have a willingness to take responsibility
- recognize the importance of team wins (as opposed to individual wins)

The Team Leader

The team leader is responsible to make sure all of the above points are addressed and adhered to. As you can see, it's a lot of work with many areas. It's essential to the team's success that its leader understands his or her role in directing and coordinating the team because without a good, solid leader, the team is at serious risk of not achieving its goals.

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