BSBWOR502
Lead and manage team effectiveness
Release 1

Learner guide

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Aspire Version 1.1

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Contents

Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBWOR502 Lead and manage team effectiveness*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples and case studies	Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. You can use these examples as models to help you complete practice tasks and learning checkpoints. Case studies highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice tasks	Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Video clips	Where QR codes appear, learners can use smartphones and other devices to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: www.aspirelr.com.au/help
Summary	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning checkpoints	There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table outlines specific foundation skills noted for your learning in this learner guide.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading	• Analyses and interprets textual information from the organisation's policies, goals and objectives to establish team goals or to determine corrective action
Writing	• Prepares written reports and workplace documentation that communicate complex information clearly and effectively
Oral communication	• Engages in discussions or provides information using appropriate vocabulary and non-verbal features • Uses listening and questioning techniques to confirm understanding and to engage the audience
Navigate the world of work	• Understands how own role contributes to broader organisational goals • Modifies or develops policies and procedures to achieve organisational goals
Interact with others	• Selects and uses appropriate conventions and protocols when communicating with diverse stakeholders • Uses interpersonal skills to gain trust and confidence of team and provides feedback to others in forms that they can understand and use • Adapts personal communication style to build positive working relationships and to show respect for the opinions, values and particular needs of others • Plays a lead role in situations requiring effective collaboration, demonstrating high level conflict resolution skills and ability to engage and motivate others
Get the work done	• Develops, implements and monitors plans and processes to ensure team effectiveness • Monitors and actively supports processes and development activities to ensure the team is focused on work outcomes • Plans for unexpected outcomes and implements creative responses to overcome challenges

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome		Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1 Establish team performance plan	1A	Establish a common understanding of team purpose, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1B	Develop performance plans for the work team	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1C	Support team members in meeting expected performance outcomes	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 2 Develop and facilitate team cohesion	2A	Develop strategies to ensure team members have input into planning, decision-making and operational aspects of work team	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2B	Develop policies and procedures to ensure team members take responsibility for own work and assist others to undertake required roles and responsibilities	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2C	Provide feedback to team members to encourage, value and reward individual and team efforts and contributions	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2D	Develop processes to ensure that issues, concerns and problems identified by team members are recognised and addressed	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 3 Facilitate teamwork	3A	Encourage team members and individuals to participate in team activities	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3B	Support the team in identifying and resolving work performance problems	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3C	Serve as a role model for the work team and enhance the organisation's image	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 4 Liaise with stakeholders	4A Establish and maintain open communication processes with all stakeholders	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	4B Communicate information from line manager/management to the team	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	4C Communicate unresolved issues, concerns and problems raised by team members and follow up with stakeholders	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	4D Evaluate and take necessary corrective action regarding unresolved issues, concerns and problems	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident

Topic 1
Establish team performance plan

In today's work environment, organisations increasingly rely on teams to drive business improvements and create competitive advantage. The increasing focus on workplace skill and knowledge requirements, as well as the ever-increasing impact of change, put high-performing teams in demand as never before. However, people often find themselves working within a team structure without really understanding the dynamics and functionality of workplace teams. As a team leader, you will have the responsibility of establishing a shared understanding amongst team members regarding the purpose of the team and the roles and responsibilities of its members, and how these align with organisational goals, plans and objectives. You will also have the responsibility of establishing performance goals and plans and providing the necessary support to ensure that outcomes are met according to expectations.

In this topic you will learn how to:

1A   Establish a common understanding of team purpose, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

1B   Develop performance plans for the work team

1C   Support team members in meeting expected performance outcomes

1A Establish a common understanding of team purpose, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

In work teams, having a common purpose and a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities and individual goals within the team dynamic is essential to ensuring a quality outcome. In this case, quality refers to more than just a positive outcome in relation to the prescribed goals; it also means the cohesion of individuals within the team environment and the lasting impressions of the success (or otherwise) of the group project.

As a leader, aligning the focus of the team helps to enable the team members to achieve goals. Important issues to consider include facilitating a shared understanding of:

- the purpose of the organisation, who its customers are and the team's role with the customers
- what the organisations goals are, and how your team will help achieve them.

Skills required to effectively lead teams

In order to get the most out of their teams, managers and team leaders should firstly have an understanding of the skills required to lead teams, and what constitutes a team.

The skills you require to effectively lead teams include:

- planning and organising skills
- training skills
- communication and consultation skills
- conflict resolution skills.

What constitutes a team

It is important to understand that a group of people does not necessarily make a team. There are a number of critical factors that make a group of people a team, such as the size of the team, appropriate knowledge/skill mix, defined purpose and goals, a common approach and joint accountability.

Teams are created for many reasons. The following table is a short list of the various types of teams. Does your team fit one of these categories?

Adapted from: *Leading teams: expert solutions to everyday challenges* 2006, Harvard Business School Press.

Functional team
An organisational group that reports to a single point and may or may not have to work together to meet group goals.

Cross-functional team
Team members from different functions across the organisation whose time is dedicated partially to the team's efforts and partially to other functional duties.

Tiger team
Team members from different functions across the organisation whose time is totally dedicated to the team's efforts, usually to deal with a specific problem or situation.
Ad hoc team/task force
A temporary team put together to solve a particular problem or explore a particular opportunity.
Committee
An ongoing group that develops and monitors a particular philosophy, policy or set of practices.

The team must have a clear purpose

To shape the team in a positive and constructive way, it must have a clear focus or purpose. It is important to ensure that your team's purpose is connected to the organisation's mission, values and strategies. When employees understand how their jobs align with organisational goals, plans and objectives, they are more likely to produce work that is effective and exceptional.

Team purpose can be fostered by establishing goals for individuals and overall group performance. As a team leader, you should invest time and effort into developing, refining, and reaching agreement on purposes that inspire your team members. Ask: 'What is the team here to do?' and 'How do its activities link with the organisation's plans, goals, and objectives?'

To set a clear purpose for your team, you need a shared understanding of:

- who the team's customers are – internal and external – and the team's role with these customers
- measures of success– how you will know when you have succeeded
- how your team's results contribute to other departments and the organisational goals.

Consult with the team to clarify roles and responsibilities

Members of a team bring their own sets of knowledge, skills and abilities that can add to team effectiveness. These skills and abilities should be identified and utilised through a consultative approach by the group leader. But it is not simply a matter of determining what needs to be done and who is most suited to the job. New roles and responsibilities develop out of ongoing communication and negotiation about how the team can achieve its purpose.

The benefits of a consultative team culture include additional insights and ideas, improved satisfaction levels, and improved interest in and commitment to their job. Team members feel their opinions are valued and that they are playing an important role in the context of the team and the organisation.

Feedback and consultation methods

Mechanisms such as scheduled meetings, bulletin boards, text messaging, shared computer network spaces, blogs, and even tweets and other social media can be used to provide feedback to the work team in relation to outcomes of any particular consultation.

The process of consultation can be achieved through the methods detailed here.

Ways of consulting with others and getting feedback in the workplace

Meetings

Formal, scheduled meetings and informal, ad hoc gatherings between team members contribute to a better understanding of tasks, responsibilities and roles

Interviews

Creating a list of questions to establish knowledge, skills and understanding of the task can help you identify individual needs and attributes

Brainstorming sessions

The group as a whole considers a number of possible perspectives. Successful brainstorming requires commitment, contribution and cooperation by all team members

Email/intranet communication

If a team is geographically dispersed, a system of electronic communication can aid understanding and contribution by all team members

Newsletters or other processes and devices

Use widely-distributed mediums to help ensure that all employees have the opportunity to contribute to team and individual performance plans

Mutual accountability

Mutual accountability is a phenomenon that occurs when members of the team see themselves as interdependent; that is, the success or failure of one member of the team has implications for the whole team. All members of a team must feel a sense of personal accountability for the outcome of the team's efforts.

Accountabilities may include responsibilities as defined in position descriptions, codes of conduct or behaviour, duty statements, and statements of conduct outlining responsibilities, actions and performance expectations. These documents include measurable performance indicators that allow the team leader and the member to monitor and adjust performance to meet the agreed expectations.

Agreement should be reached through consultation and it should be formal; that is, a signed document should guide the performance of the member for accountability purposes. Accountability occurs when the team member accepts the responsibility for achieving their performance requirements, and willingly adjusts their performance when required to meet expectations.

Develop processes to achieve team goals

In order to achieve the agreed goals, performance levels and end purpose, consult with your team to develop effective work processes. Team processes must include the administrative, financial and social approaches to work. They must stipulate the procedures that the team members need to follow to instil coherence and a performance focus.

As a starting point, assist your team members to establish:

- who will undertake particular responsibilities
- how time frames will be managed
- what skills require development
- how group membership is to be established
- how decisions will be arrived at and modified
- how and when the team's working approach will be modified
- how often and where the team meets
- how communication and information is managed
- what reports are produced
- how results are measured.

Team charters

A team charter documents the purpose, structure, processes and expectations of the group or organisation. A team charter is usually drawn up in negotiation with a team sponsor, team leader and the relevant team members. Team charters should be established when the team is formed or when a team is in trouble and people need to regain their view of the big picture. There is no specific format to a team charter, as they should be created to suit the specific team environment.

The following components provide guidelines for you to use when creating a charter for your own team.

Context

> The context is the situation and environment in which the team will operate. This can include information about the workplace or specifics about the project environment.

Mission and objectives

> The mission and objectives are statements that help you establish what will be achieved by setting measurable goals and objectives. The mission is an overarching statement covering the project scope; for example; 'to create a new manufacturing process for the widget division'. Following the mission, the objectives should be stated clearly and concisely. Detail of specific goals should be written by ensuring the objectives are numbered and time frames or deadlines are assigned to each.

Composition and roles

> Once your mission and objectives are framed, select team members that can contribute to the achievement of these objectives. Consider:
> - selecting individuals with the knowledge, skills and experience needed to do the job
> - selecting individuals from diverse backgrounds and from different departments within the organisation
> - previous experience working together
> - size and location of the team.

Support framework

> Once the roles have been assigned, develop the support framework to ensure each member has the information, resources and psychological support to begin the work. As part of this process you will ensure the tasks are matched to team member skills and assess any skills and/or knowledge gaps that exist in order to plan for training.

Resources and support

In this charter section you list any resources and materials needed by the team to complete the task. Take the time to consider scheduling, costs, variables and contingencies, availability and location of the necessary equipment and other resources. Then detail any support, such as training, funding, physical assistance and outside support you may need for team members to complete their tasks.

Operations

Operation of the team will depend on the planning and implementing of the processes and procedures you create. This part of the charter details the specific procedures the team members should follow, such as reporting requirements, deadline contingencies, the occurrence of lead and lag times, the variations that can affect the schedule, safety procedures, risk management processes and any necessary explanations of tasks.

Agreement

The agreement is the final essential element of a charter document. It formalises the team's acknowledgement of the project and the individual roles. It usually consists of a list of the team members' names and an area to sign and date. The document is then circulated to all members, and/or stored centrally for easy access by the team leader and members as required.

Example: a team charter

Here is an example of a team charter.

1. **Context**

The team has been formed to investigate the operation of the toy assembly line: specifically, the reasons behind regular breakdowns causing delays in product completion. The investigation will be carried out in the training room at the production facility and on the production line during work hours.

2. **Mission and objectives**

The mission of the team is to present a document to the senior management team detailing the cause of the breakdowns and recommendations for improvement.

Objectives are:

- interview production line staff to gather feedback as to possible causes (due day 1)

- observe the production process (due day 1)

- gather and analyse production machine data from the area of the observed breakdown (due day 2)

- discuss and formulate recommendations for improvement (due day 3)

- create and facilitate presentation for senior management (due day 4).

... continued

3. **Composition and roles**

The team will consist of:

- Jemma Ward: Production team supervisor. Tasked to interview team members and offer insight into the physical requirements of the production process

- Jim Williams: Plant supervisor. Tasked to provide technical information regarding the production machinery and machine operators

- Floyd Stein: Production manager. Tasked to consider financial and corporate implications of the team's recommendations. Assigned as group leader

- Bridget Chivers: Production administrator. Tasked to liaise with production staff and arrange times, materials and other resources for interviews and training room access.

4. **Resources and support**

The team will need access to the production floor and training room for four days. Other resources include:

- laptop, printer, photocopier and project in the training room

- passes and high-visibility safety gear for the production floor

- observation and interview documentation

- stationery supplies.

5. **Operations**

- The team will meet on Monday morning to formally assign roles, and receive their passes and safety equipment for the production floor.

- The interviews and observations will take place immediately using the provided proformas.

- The team will gather together in the training room on day 2 to analyse the data and brainstorm recommendations. Floyd Stein will ensure contingencies are considered. The team must reach agreement on recommendation by the end of day 2. Failure to do so will affect the arrangements to meet with the senior management team.

- Bridget Chivers will create the presentation once agreement has been reached.

- The team will jointly present their recommendations to the senior management team and present themselves for questioning after the presentation.

6. **Agreement**

This charter and its contents have been agreed to by:

Name: _____ Date _____

Practice task 1

1. Describe the methods you would use to consult with your team to establish a clear team purpose, and well-defined roles and responsibilities.

... continued

2. Explain why it is important to have a team charter

3. Provide one example of how your team's activities are linked to the organisation's goals and strategic plan.

1B Develop performance plans for the work team

A performance plan is a method of documenting an agreement between the team member, the team leader and the rest of the team that stipulates the scope of their involvement in the project. Performance plans may refer to individual performance plans linked to team goals or team plans based on work assignments and responsibilities.

Performance planning is an ongoing process where expected outcomes, outputs, goals and objectives are established for the work team and key performance indicators (KPIs) are measured to gauge progress and improvement.

Use a systematic approach to manage team member performance

Managing a team member's performance requires a systematic approach; action must follow decisions or agreements for the planning process to be effective and useful.

Consider the following scenario: You sit down with John to discuss his performance, which has been below standard. Your conversation lasts for some time and involves discussing some workplace adjustments to help him maintain motivation. Before John leaves, you clearly outline your expectations for improvement in his performance. You both leave the meeting feeling positive, and John appears to understand what he needs to do. You feel confident that you will start to see some good results from John. A few weeks go by, and you haven't seen any improvement in John's performance. Nothing has changed, if anything, his performance has dropped. You're frustrated and wonder what you are doing wrong.

In this instance, you should have followed up the meeting by setting clear objectives to be achieved within a defined time frame. You may also have set some KPIs in order to track John's progress more effectively.

Effective management of team and individual performance

One of the most effective ways of improving individual and team performance is by developing performance plans or agreements. Performance plans are typically the first step in the performance management process. The other steps in the process of managing an effective team are outlined in this model.

Planning
Set goals and measures

Monitoring
Measure performance, provide feedback

Developing
Address poor performance, improve good performance

Assessing
Assign a performance rating

Rewarding
Recognise and reward good performance
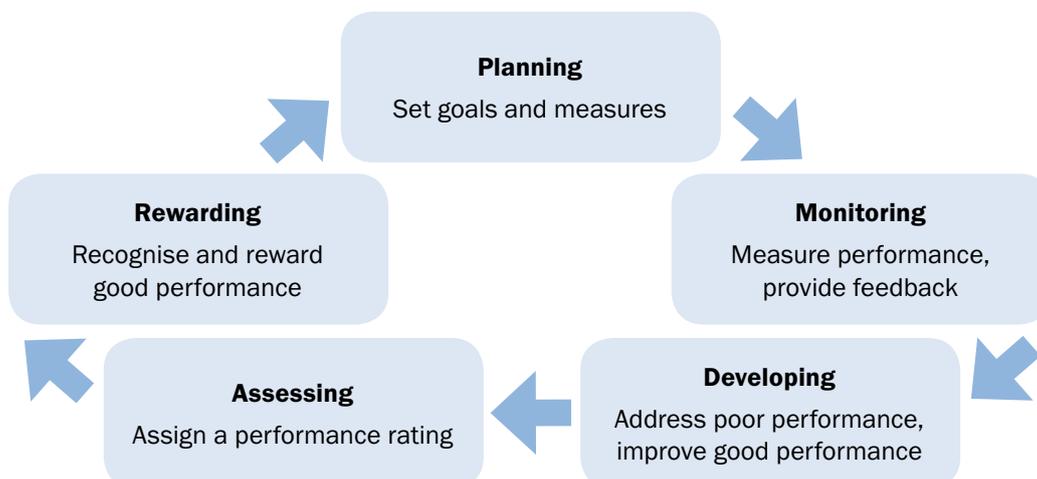
Performance plans

The first stage of managing an effective team is the planning stage. As a team leader you will be required to administer performance plans for your team members.

Performance plans for individuals or teams generally contain:

- performance measures such as KPIs
- specific goals to be achieved by each team member, or the entire group
- the actions required to achieve those goals
- a schedule outlining how long it should take to achieve each goal
- the methods that will be used to monitor, evaluate and reward performance.

Incorporate input from stakeholders

It may seem counter-intuitive to negotiate a KPI, but this process has several benefits. Negotiation can highlight the strengths and weaknesses of individual employees or the team as a whole. As a manager, you can allocate the right work to the right team member based on the outcomes of this process.

The benefits of collaborating in the development of KPIs include an increased level of personal commitment and a better level of understanding of team member perspectives by the manager. It allows for feedback and critical analysis of the role and the performance measures applied to it.

The following steps provide a guideline for developing an effective performance plan using input and agreement with your team.

Developing a performance plan

1 **Define expectations**

Provide and clearly explain the list of expectations regarding conduct, behaviour, and performance of individuals within the team environment. Gather feedback and gain agreement on these expectations before moving on to the next step.

2 **Determine milestones**

Break down the performance goals into smaller milestones to assist you in monitoring progress toward the end goal. You don't want a surprise when it's time to evaluate a person's overall performance, so build in checkpoints to stay on top of performance before it gets too far off track.

3 **Agree on terms**

In a consultative process, create an agreed set of terms that outline the specific performance of each team member. It is generally established that performance improves when the terms are mutually agreed.

4

Regular accountability

Accountability requires some form of benchmark. As a team leader, schedule regular meeting times to keep your team members accountable. Use the time to review goals, discuss issues or difficulties and make adjustments as necessary. Regular milestone meetings also improve your contact with the team and the project, which allows for better leadership.

5

Document required outcomes, results and consequences

An effective performance agreement requires clear documentation of the requirements of the individual, the benefits to the organisation by achieving these requirements, and the results and/or consequences of not achieving these results. This may include any punitive measures for non-performance, or rewards for outstanding performance.

6

Agreement

Ensure that you and your team members sign and date the performance plan. Once the plan is established, you can refer to the agreement as the benchmark for monitoring and controlling performance throughout the project.

Outcomes, outputs and key performance indicators

Outcomes, outputs and key performance indicators generally refer to individual requirements, organisational benefits and consequences of not achieving results. They may also refer to the areas listed here.

Outcomes, outputs and key performance indicators may also refer to agreed:

- changes in work roles and responsibilities
- improvements to individual and team performance and participation
- improvements to systems or operations
- measures for monitoring and evaluating the efficiency or effectiveness of systems or services
- quality standards and expectations
- targets for productivity improvements such as reduced downtime, higher production levels, decreases in absenteeism
- targets for training and development.

Write clear KPIs for the team

Once a performance outcome is agreed to and is in line with organisational needs, it must be worded so the team members and the manager are clear on the objectives to be achieved. To be clear and unambiguous, KPIs need to be written as 'SMART' objectives. That is, they should be Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-framed. For example: 'Attain $1 million in sales of widgets per quarter'. Assuming that $1 million in sales is achievable and supported by production capacity, marketing, competitive pricing and so on, the KPI is realistic and achievable. Keep the KPIs concise: concise KPIs are less likely to be misunderstood.

S	M	A	R	T
Specific	**Measurable**	**Attainable**	**Realistic**	**Time framed**
Target and clearly define a specific area that you want to improve.	Suggest an indicator of progress; quantify if possible. Determine how you will know the goal has been achieved.	Agree what the goals should be and keep them achievable in the time frame.	Identify what results can realistically be achieved given the available resources, knowledge and time.	Specify when the result can be achieved; make sure there is enough time to achieve the goal, but not too much time.

Example: team performance plan for a call centre

Here is an example of a team performance plan for a call centre. Information that would have been negotiated and discussed with the team, such as the goal and action required has been included.

Goal	Increase number of new customers on business phone plans by 15 per cent over six-month period.
KPIs	Call centre operators are to make 50 outbound calls per day, with an average of five new sign-ups per day.
Action required	Team training in: • product features and benefits • overcoming objections • closing techniques. Team training to be followed up with individual support from team leader when making sales calls.
Support	• Team leader • Manager • Training department
Completed by	28/10/16
Evaluation of performance	Team leader to monitor at least four outbound sales calls made by each operator. Results of call monitoring to be compared with monitoring results taken prior to training.

Practice task 2

1. Practise setting performance goals with your team members. Once you have set team goals, devise a series of questions you could use as a checklist to evaluate the effectiveness of these goals.

2. Devise a series of questions you could use as a checklist for developing an effective performance plan.

1C Support team members in meeting expected performance outcomes

Anyone who genuinely believes in the purpose of their team members, as well as the team itself, can succeed as a team leader. Your team members will often look to you for support and direction. You should monitor individual and team progress and approach methods of support on an individual case-by-case basis. You should also consider utilising the skills and knowledge of the team in dealing with some of the issues that arise. You do not need to be an expert on all matters, but you are expected to monitor progress and facilitate the process of finding solutions to problems.

Here are some of the support strategies you can use.

Keep the purpose, goals and approach sharp and fresh

Team leaders need to keep the team's purpose, objectives and approach clear and fresh in the team's mind. Regular team meetings to discuss progress and generate new ideas for goal accomplishment will greatly assist in this regard.

Build commitment and confidence

Team leaders should encourage both individual and mutual accountability amongst team members. Providing constant, relevant and meaningful feedback to team members on their individual and group performance helps to achieve this.

Strengthen the mix and level of skills within the team

Effective team leaders are committed to ensuring the team acquires the skills necessary to achieve its objectives, while simultaneously encouraging team members to take on challenging, interesting and varied work.

Manage relationships with the rest of the organisation

Team leaders require strong communication skills in order to manage the team's relationship with the rest of the organisation. The team leader must ensure that key stakeholders are aware of the team's purpose, goals and plans so that they understand the limitations placed on team members and identify opportunities to contribute or become involved.

Remove obstacles to performance

Team leaders will be required to remove barriers that impact the team's performance. This often involves negotiating better terms with management for increased funding or access to resources. It may involve removing a team member who is stifling the progress of the team.

Do 'real work'

Team leaders should lead from the front. They should do roughly the same amount of 'real' work as other team members. The role of team leader should not be used to just make decisions. Rather, the team leader should volunteer for work that is high-risk or difficult.

Take responsibility for team guidance, monitoring and control

Team leaders must take responsibility for the team's guidance, monitoring and control. Teams often lose sight of the bigger picture, and the team leader needs to demonstrate their willingness to control and guide the team as it works towards its goals. It is the team leader's responsibility to ensure measures and milestones are in place, and to produce reports required by the team and the rest of the organisation.

Positive coaching

If you have established a performance plan, and supported your team in progress towards goals, then you are well on your way to achieving successful results. However, things don't always go smoothly, and at some stage, you are likely to experience decreases in team and individual productivity, team morale and satisfaction. It is important to be aware of issues affecting your team and ensure development of their knowledge, skills and attitudes to keep individuals motivated, interested and productive.

Positive coaching is a method adopted in many successful teams and organisations in Australia and around the world. The following steps provide an outline of positive coaching.

Use praise

Praise rather than punishment

Developing a proactive, high-performance team is best achieved by setting high (but achievable) goals and providing encouragement, rather than by pointing out poor performance and chastising those responsible.

If poor performance becomes an issue with one of your team members, consider handling it in a constructive manner, and in a private setting. Challenge your team member to rise to a set of new goals that are challenging and motivating and work out a plan together of how to achieve those goals.

Reasons for praise

Find reasons to praise them

When a member of your team demonstrates exemplary behaviour, acknowledge them individually and in front of the team. Allow team members the opportunity to acknowledge their teammates' positive contributions. As you help people feel good about themselves, improved performance will follow.

Bond your team

Bond your team

Positive coaching requires that you build the team's unity; the sense of oneness that fosters accountability, cooperation and support, while simultaneously reducing competition, angst and backstabbing. By encouraging team members to work together, you make every task a team-building exercise that has positive results for each participant as well as the project as a whole.

Consider activities that will help your team 'gel'. As your team learns to trust each other, they will support each other to accomplish team goals. All team members should be encouraged and supported to have active input into planning, decision-making and operational aspects of the team activities.

Provide education, training and development opportunities

Learning and development are part of the continuous improvement cycle and team members should be consulted about their needs on a regular basis so that relevant support is provided. Regular monitoring and reviewing of performance helps to identify skill and knowledge gaps that may affect performance. You can then determine education, training and development requirements that enable individuals and teams to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. You should also be familiar with your organisation's business plan, in particular the organisation's goals and objectives, to see where new skills are needed.
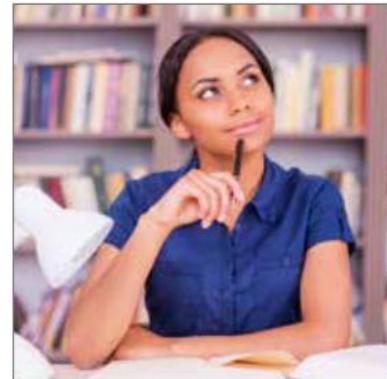
In some situations, you may be required to determine staff needs for a specific task or project. In others, you will need to identify the various skills needed for the team to operate as an effective unit.

Formal and informal learning opportunities

To learn new skills, gain new knowledge or enhance existing skills and knowledge, people can undertake formal or informal education, training and development within their workplace or attend external courses, conferences or information sessions.

Education usually refers to formal, accredited programs such as degrees or certificate courses. Training is the way in which specific job skills and knowledge are taught and ranges from formal, structured courses to coaching, mentoring and informal discussions. Development is about redefining and extending existing skills and knowledge by ensuring the latest practices are followed, work practices are improved or opportunities are given for advancement.

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Respond to performance deficiencies

The key to dealing with problem performance is to act swiftly. Don't let the problem become bigger or affect other areas of teamwork or interpersonal relationships. Having an effective performance plan in place allows you to separate your feelings from the performance issue, and to deal with the problem without allowing emotion to negatively affect you or other team members.

Here are the steps to consider when dealing with performance deficiencies.

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1. Gather information

Gather the information regarding the deficient performance from as many perspectives as required. For example, if there is a customer-related issue, collect information from and about the customer as well as other witnesses, prior to confronting the team member.

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2. Meet with team member

Meet with the relevant team member to discuss the performance issue. Ensure you set aside adequate time to collect the facts and the view of the team member. It is usually worth having a copy of the performance plan or job requirements with you to make notes of specific performance breaches or areas for improvement.

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3. Develop a performance improvement plan

Develop a performance improvement plan in consultation with the team member. Identify and document clear steps to rectify the issue and gain agreement from the team member so all parties know what is required.

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4. Monitor performance

Follow up the consultation with a scheduled meeting to discuss improvements and performance with regard to the agreed improvement plan. Depending on the project, this should be done no later than one week after the improvement plan has been initiated.

Performance improvement plan

An effective performance improvement plan should convey:

- the particular performance area that requires improvement or development
- the actions that are to be taken by the team member and team leader
- identification of any support services such as training, coaching or peer support that have been decided upon
- a schedule for follow-up by the team leader
- a deadline for demonstrable improvement
- how and when the performance improvement will be assessed.

Provide effective support to team members

You can find useful tips on how to provide effective support to team members by reading an article published by the Harvard Business school, entitled 'How team leaders show support—or not' from: http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/4155.html.

Example: team effectiveness in action

Kids United Pty Ltd is a toy manufacturing company that exports toys to overseas markets. In connection with its continuous improvement initiatives, senior management has established a process quality improvement team for the manufacturing division. The team includes members of the sales, marketing, production and logistics teams, and is facilitated by a production floor manager.

The production manager clarifies the purpose, desired outcomes and time lines of the team's project with senior management and develops a plan to discuss with the individual department's team members. The discussions are in the form of face-to-face meetings with each member prior to gathering the whole team together. This approach allows the facilitator time to distinguish individual strengths and weaknesses and to align roles with each team member's abilities.

By the time the group meets, each team member is familiar with the purpose and role of the team and is in a position to discuss their individual roles. At the first meeting, the production manager outlines each role and gives each team member the opportunity to contribute to their performance plan. Doing this in a group environment allows each member to recognise how their roles overlap and integrate with others in the team.

The first tasks are scheduled and milestones are established, including formal reports to be presented at each fortnightly meeting. With specific and measurable goals in place, the team members recognise their individual responsibilities and become accountable for their portion of the project. Members who fall behind, or don't meet their obligations, are influenced by the production manager and their fellow team members. This pressure to remain accountable and remain outcome-focused produces very positive results for the company's production quality.

Practice task 3

Psychology professor J. Richard Hackman of Harvard University says that work teams tend to cluster at opposite ends of the success continuum, meaning that many teams are high performing, and many fail miserably. Few are in between. Two factors make the biggest difference between high- and low-performing teams: how they are led and whether their organisation provides teams with the support they need.

Identify two high-performing teams you are aware of, and describe what makes each team successful.

Summary

1. Effective teams are characterised by having a shared purpose, clearly defined roles and responsibilities and accountability for the team's efforts.

2. Team charters are documents that define the purpose of the team, how it will work, and what the expected outcomes are. A team charter is usually drawn up in negotiation with a team sponsor, team leader and the relevant team members.

3. Team charters should be established when the team is formed or when a team is in trouble and people need to regain their view of the 'big picture'.

4. One of the most effective ways of improving individual and team performance is by developing performance plan agreements.

5. The performance planning process starts with stating expectations, determining milestones, agreeing on terms, having regular accountability, establishing outcomes, results and consequences and then making sure the team member and team leader agree on the plan.

6. Team leaders should ensure that performance plans are followed by supporting team members to progress towards their goals. This can be achieved by adopting a method known as 'positive coaching'.

7. When a performance deficiency occurs, it should be dealt with as quickly as possible by collating information about the poor performance, meeting with the relevant team member to discuss issues, developing performance improvement plans and then following up to evaluate the performance improvements as set out in the plan.

Learning checkpoint 1
Establish team performance plan

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in establishing a team performance plan.

Part A

1. Briefly describe a team you currently work in or a team with which you are familiar. In your description, outline the team's purpose, the roles and responsibilities of team members, the process used by the team to undertake its activities and how the team is kept accountable.

2. List and define six key elements of a performance plan. Briefly describe four ways that you can use a performance plan to build a team's performance.

3. List four strategies you can use to support your work team to meet expected performance outcomes, including individual, task and team support. Identify areas in which you can improve, and then develop a plan to increase your effectiveness as a team leader.
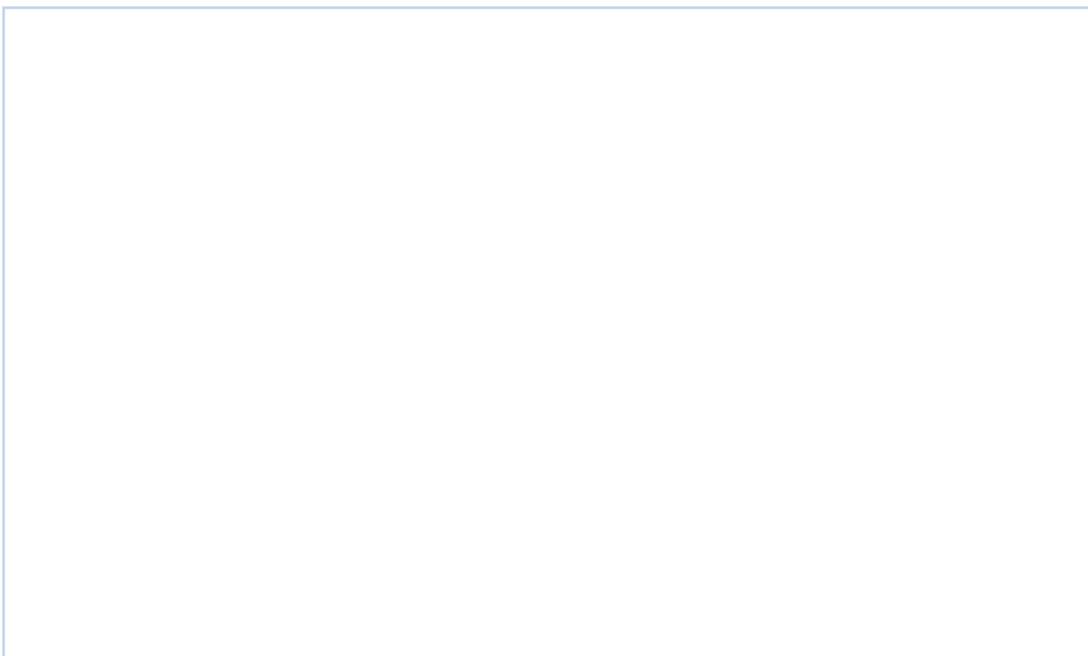
4. Identify two examples of how your team's purpose aligns with your organisation's policies, goals or objectives.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study
Executive Software Company (ESC) develops and distributes accounting software applications. The products have proved to be very popular with small businesses. However, the new marketing director, Ron, recently discovered a downturn in customer satisfaction. It seems that Ron's predecessor focused solely on profitability and sales, while ignoring customer questions and problems. Ron has decided to recruit and train a new sales force in order to try to regain customer loyalty.

1. Provide at least six suggestions on how Ron should recruit and select his team members. Include the ideal size of the team and the knowledge and skills required by individual members.

2. Set six goals Ron might establish with his team to improve customer satisfaction.
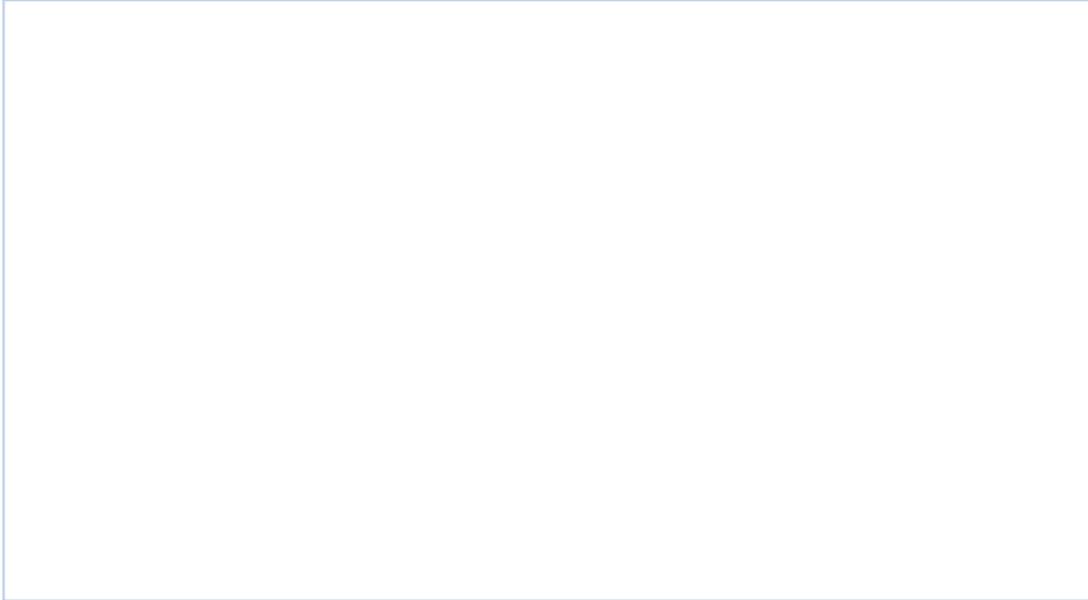
3. Provide at least three suggestions for Ron on how he should go about establishing team and individual performance plans in order to meet the objectives of the team.

4. Identify at least seven strategies that Ron would employ to fulfil his role in supporting team members to achieve their objectives.

Topic 2
Develop and facilitate team cohesion

Effective teamwork requires all members contribute equally in a sustained manner over a period of time. Teamwork requires members to share information and consider different viewpoints to find solutions and make decisions. In some cases, it requires individuals to put aside personal beliefs for the benefit of the entire team. Because the human element is vital to the success of the team, you will need to allocate time to work on team building and team cohesion.

In this topic you will learn how to:

2A   Develop strategies to ensure team members have input into planning, decision-making and operational aspects of work team

2B   Develop policies and procedures to ensure team members take responsibility for own work and assist others to undertake required roles and responsibilities

2C   Provide feedback to team members to encourage, value and reward individual and team efforts and contributions

2D   Develop processes to ensure that issues, concerns and problems identified by team members are recognised and addressed

2A Develop strategies to ensure team members have input into planning, decision-making and operational aspects of work team

Before exploring the strategies of developing team cohesion, it is important to understand the stages of team development. This understanding will serve you well as you consider how to respond to the challenges and responsibilities of leading a team.

In 1965, psychologist Bruce Tuckman developed a concept known as the stages of team development. It has remained the pre-eminent model for understanding team dynamics and development.

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  1  FORMING  →  2  STORMING
                      ↓
  5  ADJOURNING     3  NORMING
         ↑             ↓
         4  PERFORMING ←
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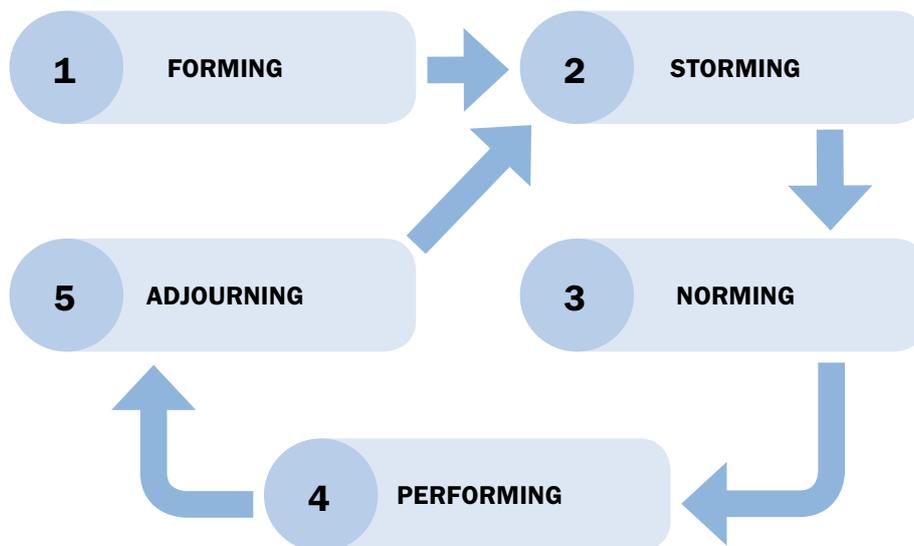
Stages of team development

Tuckman's stages of team development are explained here.

Stage 1: Forming

During this stage, team members rely on safe, familiar behaviour and depend on the team leader for guidance and direction. Individuals have a desire for acceptance by others in the team and to feel that the team is safe—emotionally, physically, politically and socially. Rules of behaviour at this stage are merely a common desire to minimise controversy and conflict; serious topics and feelings are avoided. Individuals familiarise themselves with their new tasks and with each another by talking about the scope and direction of the tasks ahead.

Stage 2: Storming

This stage involves conflict and competition surrounding interpersonal relationships, as team members attempt to organise their roles and responsibilities within the group environment. Individuals should seek compromise between feelings and ideas. This commonly leads to exposing social differences where some members may become more dominant and others more withdrawn from the process. A good facilitator must move the team through this stage by focusing individual attention on the task and team purpose.

Stage 3: Norming

This stage can be identified by the extent of cohesion shown by group members. As roles are allocated and positions are clarified, people naturally become less focused on their personal needs and more focused on the team's purpose. At this stage, the team begins to work in synergy and differences are put aside while tasks are planned and personal work schedules are considered.

Stage 4: Performing

The performance of the task, project or activity occurs when members of the team contribute to the goals and desired outcomes. Measuring, monitoring and controlling (at least to some extent) this performance becomes the focus of the team leader during this stage. Individual differences, conflict and motivation are quickly dealt with to maintain a high performance level. Teams may cycle through the performing, storming and norming stages throughout the implementation of the project or task.

Stage 5: Adjourning

This is the final stage of group dynamics where the task is completed or otherwise terminated and the group disbands. Managing this stage requires good communication skills in order to explain the reasons and effectively facilitate the movement of individuals to other roles. These may include their previous roles or new roles resulting from task completion.

This final stage can also include mourning. This suggests the mental withdrawal that people often display when a group disbands and can include symptoms such as feelings of isolation, sadness, sorrow, and regret. While this is not technically a stage of group dynamics in and of itself, as is occurs after the group has separated, monitoring and support of individuals who may feel these effects after the task is completed is needed.

Plan and make decisions effectively

In order for planning and decision-making to be effective, team members must go beyond simply understanding one another and reaching a decision everyone can live with to learning how to suspend their own views and emerge as a single entity.

The purpose of any decision-making activity should be to:

- provide a number of alternatives for arriving at the desired outcome
- take a more objective approach to decision-making
- include and discuss a variety of perspectives
- arrive at a consensus.

Two ways to make decisions

Primarily, there are two ways to make decisions as teams: consensus or voting. These are explained here.

Consensus

Consensus occurs when a team decision is agreed to by all participants. Consensus results after the team expresses the problem and compromises are made. Consensus does not mean unanimous agreement. Everyone may not agree on every detail, but members do believe the decision to be a sound one that they are willing to support. The main benefits of consensus decision-making are that everyone involved is able to express their viewpoint and that the decision will most likely be the best one. In addition, because the decision was arrived at by consensus, its implementation is more likely to be supported by the entire team.

The challenge of consensus decision-making is that it takes time. If no-one can leave the room until a consensus is reached, some people may be tempted to forego their true opinions for the sake of time rather than for arriving at an optimum solution.

Voting

Voting adopts the classic democratic approach in which the majority rules. The main benefit of voting is that it is quick and decisive. The challenge of using voting is that it leaves 'winners' and 'losers'. The 'losers' of the vote may not support the implementation of the decision and may even resort to adopting a 'sabotage' mentality to prove that the decision was wrong. When a team chooses a voting decision-making method, the team must be clear as to how many votes becomes a majority; for example, is a majority half, two-thirds or three-quarters of the team?

Strategies for gaining consensus

A consensus decision results from full input of all stakeholders. It's important that the process operates with good faith efforts to meet all stakeholders' interests by all involved. Everyone in the group must be given a chance to be heard and must feel comfortable speaking. True consensus is achieved by teams working together to arrive at decisions that everyone believes are feasible. Ensure that you identify all key stakeholders and invite them to participate.

Here are some strategies for consensus decision-making.

Strategies for reaching consensus

1

Clarify the issue

Share relevant information and make sure that everyone fully understands the issue or problem.

2

Explore the issue and discuss alternative solutions

• Gather initial ideas and reactions; identify all the issues and explore all stakeholders' understandings.

• Collect alternative solutions and discuss the pros and cons of each.

• Narrow down the alternatives: eliminate some, short list others.

3

Look for developing ideas and common agreements

Try to identify proposals that consolidate the best elements of the ideas presented and look for a solution that satisfies stakeholders' main concerns.

4

Clarify and amend the chosen proposal

Ensure that all remaining concerns are voiced and considered. Look for possible amendments that make the idea more acceptable.

5

Check for and reach agreement on the outcome

Ask if anyone disagrees. During the final stages it may be difficult to get everyone to agree. Explain that consenting to a plan doesn't always mean it's a person's first choice. If agreement is not reached you may need to return to strategy 3.

6

Implement

Develop an action plan for the tasks: nominate who, when and how they will be achieved. Set deadlines for each task.

Other strategies for ensuring team input

Team leaders can facilitate team input in a variety of ways. Some key strategies are described here.

Develop a team charter

A team charter requires input from all team members to be effective. It clarifies the purpose, goals, roles and responsibilities of its team members. All members sign the charter verifying their commitment to it.

Use electronic communication to facilitate team input

Email and electronic discussion boards are a useful means of gathering ideas and facilitating team input. Newsletters and briefings can also be used to give and receive information and feedback.

Schedule planning meetings

Regular planning meetings provide team members with an opportunity to express ideas and concerns. It also allows for reflective thinking where mistakes from the past are discussed and ideas for improvements are incorporated into future planning.

Establish mentoring and buddy systems

Mentoring and buddying systems improve team member relations and promote one-to-one discussion. In these situations team members are more likely to offer suggestions with little fear of being criticised.

Use training and development activities

By training your team members, you extend their knowledge and capabilities and increase their opportunities to contribute to the team's efforts.

Example: one way of facilitating team input

In a professional practice in outer Melbourne, the firm's partners and senior management meet on a regular basis to facilitate a continuous improvement policy. Subcommittees are formed to ensure all members of the meeting have the opportunity to provide input and are involved in the operational implementation of any decisions made at the meeting. Each member of the team has a responsibility and accountability for certain aspects of the organisations operation. This approach ensures that any decisions involving that particular section of the operation will fall under that partner's (or senior manager's) responsibility.

Decision-making is almost exclusively by consensus unless there is a strong disagreement, at which time the managing partner will call for a vote. While there is potential for political manoeuvring to derail the democratic approach to continuous improvement, the firm's charter strictly forbids alliances from influencing decisions made in the best interests of the firm. It stipulates that decisions must be made to improve the reputation and the financial and sustainable dimension of the business.

Practice task 4

Reflect on a team of which you have been a member.

1. Describe the way team members were encouraged to be involved in planning, making decisions and operational aspects of the team.

2. Describe at least two strategies that would encourage your team members to participate more fully in planning, making decisions and operational aspects.

3. Outline one strategy you could use to improve consensus decision-making in your team.

2B Develop policies and procedures to ensure team members take responsibility for own work and assist others to undertake required roles and responsibilities

How team members relate to each other is critical to the success of a team. Having a supportive, committed team makes a significant difference to the performance of individuals and the team as a whole. This supportive team culture is not always easy to create. If no previous relationships existed, it is harder for cohesion to occur. With this information in hand, we will explore how to provide organisational guidelines and systems of work that will improve team cohesiveness, regardless of how well team members know each other.

Establish team ground rules

Team ground rules are a great way to improve team cohesion and ensure all team members are working toward a common goal. Team ground rules are a set of standards that address how individuals treat each other, communicate, participate, cooperate, support each other, and coordinate joint activities. They can be used to guide team communication, processes, behaviour, levels of interaction, reporting lines and more.

Team leaders should expect a teething period when ground rules are tested and debated by team members. Once fully endorsed by the team members, these rules can be enforced through reminders and team process checks. They should be added to and revised as needed.

Effective ground rules must be:

- achieved through consultation with the team
- agreed to by all team members
- followed by all team members
- monitored for equity and consistency and changed if required by team agreement.

Policies and procedures

All employees and employers are expected to follow the organisation's policies and procedures. Policies create expectations for employee actions and procedures provide the means by which the actions can be carried out. Once roles and responsibilities have been assigned to team members, they must comply with the relevant policies and procedures when carrying out assigned tasks within the system.

The reasons why policies, procedures and systems of work should be followed are explained here.

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Constraints

Every task has constraints surrounding it and policies and procedures provide a framework for team members to operate effectively within these constraints.

Responsibilities

Policies and procedures enable managers and team members to clearly understand their responsibilities and take responsibility for their own work.

Baseline

Policies and procedures set the baseline to which subsequent change can be referred and for team members to evaluate themselves.

Improper action

Policies and procedures enable managers to decide whether an employee's improper action or decision was due to poor judgement or to an infringement of the rules.

Individual freedom

Policies and procedures provide individuals the freedom to make decisions in the execution of their duties within defined boundaries and reduce the need for over-control (micro-management) by managers.

Collaboration

Collaboration improves when team procedures are clearly defined and understood, and when individuals feel they can do a significant portion of their work independently; without such clarity, team members are likely to waste too much energy negotiating roles, rather than focusing on the task.

Standard operating procedures

Most large organisations employ the use of standard operating procedures (SOPs) across many operational facets of the business. These set out the prescribed method that must be followed for specific operations or in particular situations and policies and procedures outlining how individuals can meet their legal requirements in relation to safety at work, privacy and

discrimination and environmental protection. An SOP is a procedural document that can be a contractually binding component of a job role or team activity. Consistency requires discipline and the reliance on contractual obligations is one effective method of achieving discipline.

Consult with specialists within your organisation such as payroll, accounts and human resources advisers regarding any organisational standard operating procedures, legislation or guidelines that need to be followed by team members.

Example: team ground rules

Here is an example of team ground rules.

Culture and behaviour

In the customer support team we:
- listen to the ideas and suggestions of others without prejudice
- respect the personal information of others
- respect the need for others to feel included
- foster diversity of culture, ideas and perspectives.

Communication

In the customer support team we:
- communicate in English through the established lines of authority
- meet each Monday morning at 8 am to discuss issues, results and new ideas
- do not talk over another team member
- allow time for all team members to be heard (within the constraints of operational needs)
- do not gossip or spread rumours regarding team members or team decisions.

Practice task 5

1. Devise and document a set of four ground rules for a team you are familiar with.

2. As the team leader, explain the process you would use to compile such a document in the workplace.
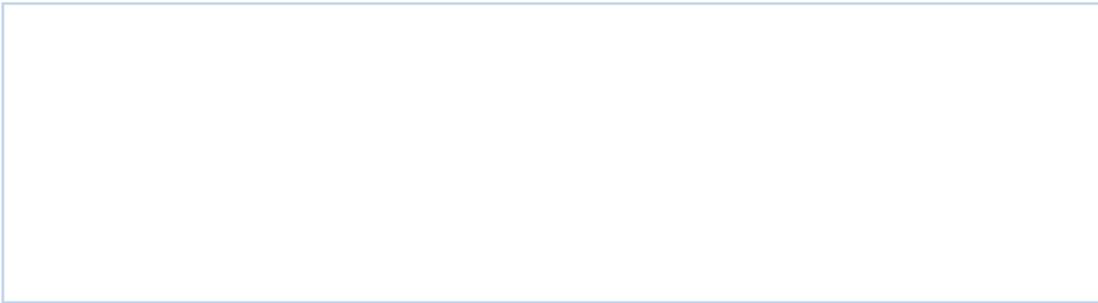
2C Provide feedback to team members to encourage, value and reward individual and team efforts and contributions

Encouragement isn't just about motivation. While the two terms are often interchangeable, encouragement is simply one form of motivation. The efforts and contributions offered by your team need to be supported and rewarded throughout the life of the project to maintain motivation, and a high level of continued performance. Providing quality feedback is an important aspect of encouraging and rewarding contributions.

The web article, 'Rewarding your team', provides information about why rewarding teams is so vital: www. mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_54.htm.
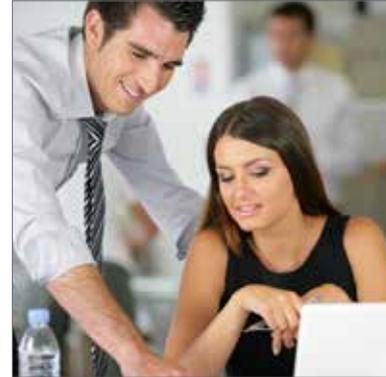
Expectancy theory

If team members expect a positive and desirable outcome or reward, they'll usually work hard to perform at the level expected of them. Team leaders can improve individual and team performance by focusing on the three motivators explained here. When each of these variables is high, motivation will be high but team leaders need to ensure they create and maintain a strong link between high effort and high performance.

Effort

When effort is put in, a higher level of performance will result. You can demonstrate this to your team through examples of previous efforts or by using anecdotes or examples from outside your industry.

Performance

Instil the belief that performance will be rewarded. The reward should be commensurate with the level of performance required and the context in which it takes place. For example, commission bonuses paid for achieving sales targets, or time off granted once a physically tough assignment is completed.

Outcome

Ensure that the end result is desirable. This includes both the task outcome, and the reward you implement. An individual will prefer to work towards an outcome they can identify with and have pride in accomplishing.

Give feedback

Providing ongoing, quality feedback is a key responsibility of managers and team leaders. Ongoing performance, job satisfaction, morale, and employment retention are closely related to the ability of a manager or supervisor to provide effective feedback. Here are some suggestions on how to give feedback.

Attentive

Feedback should be attentive to the needs of the person receiving it. Feedback should be given to help, not to hurt. Do not give feedback that makes you feel better or gives you a psychological advantage.

Timely

Feedback should be given at an appropriate time and place. It should be done as near to the event being assessed as possible. Feedback should also be prepared and considered rather than 'spoken off the cuff'.

Behaviour oriented

Feedback must be based on observable behaviour, rather than your feelings or the conclusions drawn from the behaviour.

Feedback should be directed toward changeable behaviours that the receiver can do something about. When necessary, you should identify ways to improve performance.

Positive and constructive

It is important to give both positive and constructive feedback. An effective method of giving feedback is to 'sandwich' any negative statements or criticisms between positive starting and ending statements.

Specific

Where possible, the feedback should be documented. Clear actions can then be discussed, agreed on and signed off.

Formal and informal feedback

Formal performance reviews with team members is not a substitute for good communication within the workplace or for timely informal feedback. Team members who consistently perform above standards should not have to wait months to know that their work is appreciated. Managers and team leaders should not assume that, because certain behaviours are obvious to them, they are equally obvious to the team. Informal, daily feedback needs to remain consistent with the principles above.

Sometime it is possible that the feedback is so routine or informal that the team member misses the message or doesn't even realise that feedback has taken place. When giving informal feedback (both positive and constructive criticism), it is useful to reinforce this with a personal email or memo.

Provide constructive and positive feedback

Positive reinforcement can dramatically improve the motivation and attentiveness of individuals within a team. It is achieved by acknowledging the aspects of performance that met or exceeded expectations, describing how the performance met or exceeded expectations from your perspective, and asking for additional feedback from the team member to support their perspective of the performance.

These three steps require constructive knowledge of the action/s performed by the team member and therefore require direct observation or some other hands-on method of leadership, such as the use of monitoring tools. Monitoring tools may include weekly reports, milestone charts, key performance indicators (KPIs), co-worker feedback, customer feedback or any other form of information you can directly acknowledge.

Keep feedback positive

Providing additional information to help improve performance should be less directive, and more participative. This means that your approach should involve questions rather than statements, which allow the team member to consider alternatives that may improve their performance. You can then suggest methods that may support or enhance their performance by referring to the suggestions they have come up with. If they do not have any new ideas, suggest researching better approaches before commanding a specific approach. This is not always possible in high-stress or time-pressured situations. But remember that kind words reap greater rewards than any harsh criticism.

The keys to effective positive feedback are:

- avoid generalisations about the work effort
- be specific
- respond to the performance quickly (immediately if possible).

Effective oral communication

When providing your feedback, ensure you utilise the key elements of effective communication that are outlined here.

Word choice

Schedule a time to communicate important messages verbally. Choose your words carefully; practice what you intend to say by writing it down first. Check that your message has been accurately received by asking the person to paraphrase what you've just said.

Tone of voice

Your attitude, perspectives and emotions are partly conveyed by tone of voice. Tone includes pitch, intonation, volume and tempo. When used improperly the listener can become confused, or you send an unintended message.

Body language

Body language is a powerful tool for communicating messages. Body language includes all nonverbal cues such as posture, facial expression, eye contact and gestures.

Active listening

Focus carefully on the words said to you. Make eye contact and nod to indicate you understand, or ask questions once the speaker has finished, if there are things you are not clear about. Don't interrupt, and avoid outside distractions that shift your attention away from the person speaking.

Questioning techniques to confirm understanding

Use open questions, probing questions and closed questions to confirm that both parties share the same understanding. If in doubt, restate what the other person has said using your own words to check that you have understood.

Example: encourage improved performance

A small work team of four young street marketers was tasked with delivering 1000 signed contracts for a service over a one-month period. The team leader assigned marketing areas and targets to each sales person and monitored their efforts during daily meetings prior to the start of each working day. To encourage better performance, the team leader focused on the benefits that their service provided to customers and that the efforts made by each salesperson was improving the lives of each customer they signed up. Additionally, she encouraged each team member to specify a daily target that suited their areas and abilities as long as they met the monthly target by the end of the period. She congratulated those who achieved their daily targets, and encouraged those who didn't to find new ways of approaching potential customers by brainstorming with the group.

She laid down one simple ground rule—no team member could blame anybody else for their results, and achieving their targets meant that they were absolutely responsible for their own success.

Practice task 6

Read this scenario, then answer the question that follows.

Scenario

Joe has been unable to meet targets for the past three months. During your observations of Joe you notice that he has great rapport with customers; however, he is unable to resolve concerns and close the deal.

Explain the principles you should follow when providing feedback to Joe.

2D Develop processes to ensure that issues, concerns and problems identified by team members are recognised and addressed

Effective team leadership requires that you quickly and effectively deal with any problems and concerns before they lead to deeper issues affecting the performance and output of the team.

Techniques for identifying and addressing problems in the team environment may include brainstorming, discussions with individuals and distributing ideas for comment and/or providing training and development sessions to improve negotiation skills.

Skills of a team leader

Team leaders and supervisors must possess a broad knowledge and skill base to be successful in their roles and to assist with addressing issues and problems that arise. These skills are also critical in assisting to prevent problems arising in the first place. The critical skills required are outlined here.

Planning and organisational skills

Planning and organising are two of the most important functions of a team leader. They involve setting goals and organising your team in such a way as to provide the best opportunity to accomplish these goals. They also involve monitoring your team members and rewarding outstanding performance.

Training skills

One of the best decisions you can make as a team leader is to provide training and professional development for your team. Many team members fail to meet individual and team targets, not because they lack effort or commitment, but because they lack the skills necessary to achieve the targets. Your role will involve coaching and mentoring your team. It will also involve facilitating group training sessions or coordinating training with external providers. You will need to be able to identify knowledge and skill gaps in your individual team members and work with them to close these gaps.

Communication skills

As a team leader, you will quickly learn the importance of effective communication with your team. Too often, team leaders and managers view the communication process as a top-down formal process and give little regard to listening and understanding their teams.

Effective team communication requires clear speaking and active listening. It requires the ability to understand nonverbal communication and the ability to sell a message and gain endorsement without coercion or force. Once information is understood correctly and owned by your team, positive change is likely to occur.

> ### Conflict-resolution skills
>
> Conflict situations are common in teams and, if managed effectively, can actually have positive benefits in the form of increased knowledge sharing, idea generation and innovation. However, if conflict is not handled effectively, the results can be damaging. Conflicting goals can quickly turn into personal dislike. Teamwork breaks down and people disengage from their work.
>
> You will need to respond quickly and effectively to conflict situations in order to get the most out of your team. Specifically, you should have the ability to:
>
> - contain and manage strong emotions displayed by individuals
> - facilitate diverse expression of ideas
> - empathise with others
> - assist team members in identifying solutions to problems
> - negotiate win-win outcomes.

Brainstorms

Brainstorming is a useful technique to promote ideas and discussion among team members and to identify solutions to problems. It allows each participant to state their opinions in a non-threatening environment. An effective brainstorming session should be free of conflict and encourage the participation of all team members. This is achieved by maintaining an open communication between participants and the session facilitator. The facilitator can assign a scribe to take down the ideas as they arise and should maintain the flow of new ideas by moving away from old strings of thought once they have reached a conclusion.

Discussions with individuals

There are some issues and problems that are best discussed in private on an individual basis. If you are unsure of the appropriate forum to discuss an issue, consider using the following questions as a guide.

- Does the issue involve one or a number of team members?
- Is the issue relevant to the ability of the team to meet its goals and targets?
- Is the issue of a sensitive or personal nature?

When using this approach to resolve issues, you should:

- keep people and problems separate
- listen first, talk second
- pay attention to body language and other nonverbal cues
- clarify ambiguities or mixed messages
- establish the facts
- explore options together
- develop a set of actions.

Distribute ideas for comment

Once you have gathered information and determined a number of possible solutions to an issue, you may consider distributing the information to the team members for their comments. In many cases, the nature and sensitivity of the issues or problems being addressed will determine the method of communication. For example, if you wish to promote open communication on a sensitive topic, you may seek a communication tool that allows for anonymity. On the other hand, if it is important to know what individual team members think of a proposed solution, you may consider using email or other tools that identify the responder. Here are some guidelines on using these techniques for distributing ideas for comment.

Guidelines for distributing ideas for comment
Clearly explain the purpose of soliciting the team's feedback.
Establish ground rules so that information is shared appropriately.
Explain what will be done with the feedback and how it will be evaluated.
Encourage team members to see you in person if they prefer to discuss their ideas.

Training and development sessions

Team leaders should endeavour to obtain the right people with the right knowledge and skills to complete tasks. Team effectiveness can be ensured by providing training to fill skills gaps, encouraging active participation and applying effective communication strategies and techniques. Training and development sessions may focus on different communication styles, negotiation and assertiveness skills, mentoring and coaching, time management, risk analysis, stress management and writing policies and procedures. These may help team members to recognise and address issues, concerns and problems that arise. If team members have the necessary knowledge and skills to work together, they will feel more confident to voice their concerns and issues and work toward a common goal.

Team leaders should ensure that all team members have the knowledge and skills to:

- communicate effectively with each other
- identify and solve problems
- negotiate with other team members to achieve the best possible outcome.

Resolve team conflict

As discussed earlier, conflict situations are common in teams and can have positive benefits in the form of increased knowledge sharing, idea generation and innovation if managed effectively.

As the team leader, you will need to respond quickly and effectively to conflict situations in order to get the most out of your team and minimise any negative impacts. The web article 'Resolving conflict in work teams' provides information on how to effectively manage team conflict: www.innovativeteambuilding.co.uk/pages/articles/conflicts.htm.

Conflict may arise due to:

- miscommunication
- misunderstanding
- difference in perspectives, ideology, or values
- a heightened sense of pressure
- emotional boil-overs
- physical or psychological issues.

Remove workplace conflict

In all cases, the conflict must be removed as quickly as possible so as not to negatively affect others including clients, customers, workmates or observers. This demonstrates effective leadership, gains the trust and respect of those around you and ensures time and space required to resolve the conflict properly. In the 1970s, Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann identified five main styles of dealing with conflict. They argued that people typically have a preferred conflict resolution style. They also noted that different styles were most useful in different situations. Read each of the conflict resolution styles shown here and consider how you might adjust your current approach.

Competitive style
People who use a competitive style take a firm stand, and know what they want. They usually operate from a position of power, drawn from things like position, rank, expertise, or persuasive ability. If used consistently, it can leave people feeling bruised, unsatisfied and resentful. When to use: • The decision needs to be made fast. • The decision is unpopular. • When defending against someone who is trying to exploit the situation selfishly.
Collaborative style
People tending towards a collaborative style try to meet the needs of all people involved. These people can be highly assertive but unlike the competitor, they cooperate effectively and acknowledge that everyone is important. When to use: • You require a variety of viewpoints to get the best solution. • There have been previous conflicts in the group. • The situation is too important for a simple trade-off.

Compromising style

People who prefer a compromising style try to find a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone. Everyone is expected to give up something and the compromiser also expects to relinquish something.

When to use:

- The cost of conflict is higher than the cost of losing ground.
- Equal strength opponents are at a standstill and a deadline is looming.

Accommodating style

This style indicates a willingness to meet the needs of others at the expense of the person's own needs. The accommodator often knows when to give in to others, but can be persuaded to surrender a position even when it is not warranted.

When to use:

- The issues matter more to the other party.
- Peace is more valuable than winning.
- You want to be in a position to collect on this 'favour' you gave.

Avoiding style

People tending towards this style seek to evade the conflict entirely. This style is typified by delegating controversial decisions, accepting default decisions, and not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings.

When to use:

- The controversy is trivial.
- Someone else is in a better position to solve the problem.

Conflict resolution ladder

The conflict resolution ladder is a tool that managers and team leaders can use to resolve team issues and achieve win-win solutions. The following information identifies six positive actions a manager or team leader can undertake within a conflict situation.

1. Can contain and manage strong emotions
2. Can verbally express own thoughts and feelings
3. Can identify and express own interests
4. Can empathise with others
5. Can generate a number of solutions to the problem
6. Can negotiate a win-win solution

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(Adapted from: Trinder, M & Wertheim, E 2005, *Training teachers in building empathy and compassion in young people*, From the Enhancing Relationships in Schools Communities (ERIS), Latrobe University.)

Group dynamics affect team performance

If you have responsibility for managing the performance of a team or an organisation, you need to be aware of the way in which the individuals within it interact and the effects this has on other team members and the team as a whole. This is often referred to as

group dynamics. Group dynamics are unconscious, psychological forces, or undercurrents, that influence behaviour and performance. Often people in groups adopt distinct roles and behaviours.

Dynamics are created by the nature of the work, personalities within the team, their working relationships with others and the team's work environment. Group dynamics can support team performance through positive behaviours, or hinder it through negative behaviours that result in unproductive conflict, mistrust and demotivation, for example.

Teams or groups with positive dynamics trust one another, make decisions collectively, take responsibility for their individual and team performance and hold one another accountable. People's behaviours in groups with poor dynamics can disrupt work, impede decision-making and lead to poor choices.

Common behaviours that affect group dynamics

Some behaviours that commonly affect group dynamics are listed here.

Negative behaviours	Positive behaviours
Giving too much advice or instruction	Promoting teamwork and shared problem-solving
Belittling or undermining team members	Accepting and welcoming diverse opinions
Attempting to persuade (without listening); the 'hard sell'	Employing and encouraging active listening
Censoring ideas and giving precedence to only one opinion	Conveying empathy and welcoming objective assessment of each idea
Talking too much or dominating discussion	Letting others speak and gently interrupting dominators to call on other individuals to present their views.
Remaining silent and impassive	Contributing whenever possible and encouraging contributions by asking questions, boosting confidence and giving credit
Displaying negativity or disinterest	Taking on more challenging and active tasks such as gathering information, taking notes or making presentations
Continually arguing against others	Encouraging positive attitudes, remaining calm, allowing everyone to contribute to discussion

Common causes of poor group dynamics

Poor group dynamics commonly arise as a result of behaviours such as those listed here.

Poor group dynamics: common causes
Ineffective or weak leadership
Groupthink—when people put more importance on reaching consensus than fully exploring alternative ideas to reach the right decision
Blocking behaviours, such as individuals being outspoken, critical, withdrawn, boastful or dominating
Inappropriate humour
Inequitable input from team members; some individuals leave others to do the work
Individuals not expressing opinions because they want to be seen to agree with those in authority, or because of a perception of a judgmental culture

Strategies for improved group dynamics

Some useful strategies for improving or maintaining good group dynamics are shown here.

Strategies for improving group dynamics
Understand the phases of group development; for example, Tuckman's stages of forming, norming, storming, performing and adjourning. Adjust your leadership style to suit the stage.
Deal with problems quickly and fairly, and provide constructive feedback.
Ensure that team roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
Keep communication channels open and clear.
Watch for signs of poor group dynamics and respond with corrective action.

Practice task 7

1. Using a team you are familiar with, observe the behaviours of team members and create a summary of your observations under two headings: 'Constructive behaviours' and 'Destructive behaviours'.

2. Helen had a strong personality. She often took the role of chairing a meeting or group that she belonged to. One committee noticed she regularly coerced others into agreeing with her. She did this by dismissing others' opinions, reiterating her point of view and using her position as chairperson to ensure her approach was adopted.

   Identify one possible consequence of this dynamic and propose three ways of recognising and addressing the problem.

3. A team of engineers are each preparing drawings for a big project they are working on; one engineer doesn't check the data he has and submits drawings that are wrong.

   Explain the process you would put in place to ensure this problem was recognised and addressed.

Summary

1. The stages of a team's development include: forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. Each stage of the process helps to evolve the team from dependence to interdependence in personal relations and problem-solving.

2. There are two main ways to make decisions as teams: consensus or voting. Consensus occurs when all participants agree to a team decision. Voting adopts the classic democratic approach in which the majority rules.

3. Team ground rules are a great way to improve team cohesion and ensure all team members are working toward a common goal. Team ground rules are a set of standards that address how individuals treat each other, communicate, participate, cooperate, support each other and coordinate joint activity.

4. Managers and team leaders play their most important role when they set the stage for good performance. One way to do this is to establish policies and procedures. Policies create expectations for action and procedures provide the means by which the actions can be carried out. Once responsibilities have been assigned, policies and procedures provide guidance about how to carry out assigned tasks within the system.

5. Motivating people should come down to three things: effort, by encouraging the belief that making more effort will improve performance; performance, by encouraging the belief that a high level of performance will bring a good reward; and outcome, by making sure the reward is attractive.

6. Giving feedback is a key responsibility of managers and team leaders. Research strongly suggests that job satisfaction, morale, and retention are closely related to the ability of a manager or supervisor to provide feedback to team members.

7. Team leaders can use a variety of techniques to identify and resolve issues amongst team members including: brainstorming, discussing matters with individuals, distributing ideas for comment and improving the team's skills and knowledge base.

Learning checkpoint 2
Develop and facilitate team cohesion

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in developing and facilitating team cohesion.

Part A

1. Identify three strategies that would encourage the involvement of your team members in the planning, decision-making and operational aspects of the team. Justify your choice of strategies.

2. Explain four ways that policies and procedures can encourage team members to take responsibility for their own work.

3. Explain three ways that feedback can improve team morale and elevate performance, then outline five characteristics of effective feedback.

4. Describe five conflict resolution styles a team leader could adopt when dealing with conflict situations. Provide one example of when each style is appropriate to use.

5. Briefly explain the two main ways that group or team decisions can be made and the benefits and challenges of each method.
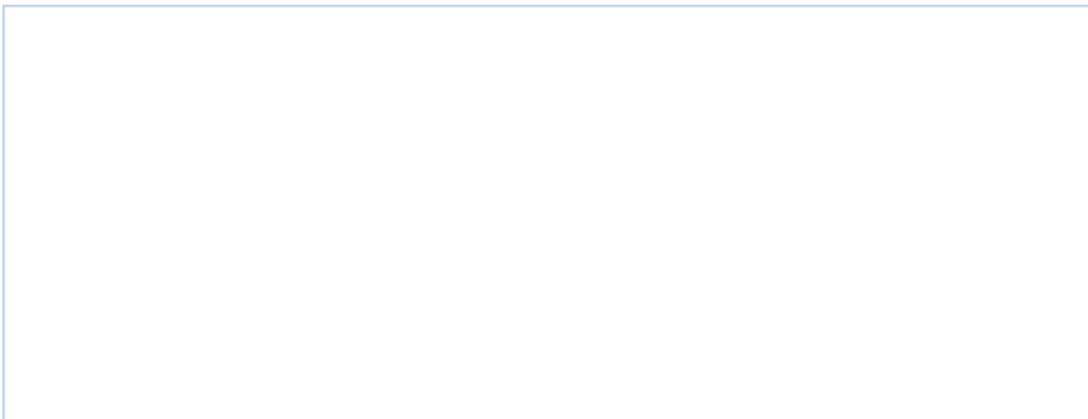
Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study
Icy Breeze is a fridge rental business servicing clients throughout Australia. You have been approached by the managing director of Icy Breeze to improve cohesion between the sales, marketing, finance, warehousing, and servicing department managers. After your first meeting with these managers, you draw the following conclusions: • each manager has their own agenda and they gossip about each other • there is very limited communication between departments outside of management meetings • there are some apparent class distinctions between the warehousing manager and the finance manager, resulting in some heated conflicts • all managers have a passion for what they do and want the organisation to succeed.

1. Identify one positive and one negative group dynamic operating amongst the managers and provide a brief explanation of how each may support or hinder group performance.

2. Outline two strategies would you use to improve cohesion among these managers.

3. Outline four strategies you would employ to hold each manager accountable for the team's efforts.
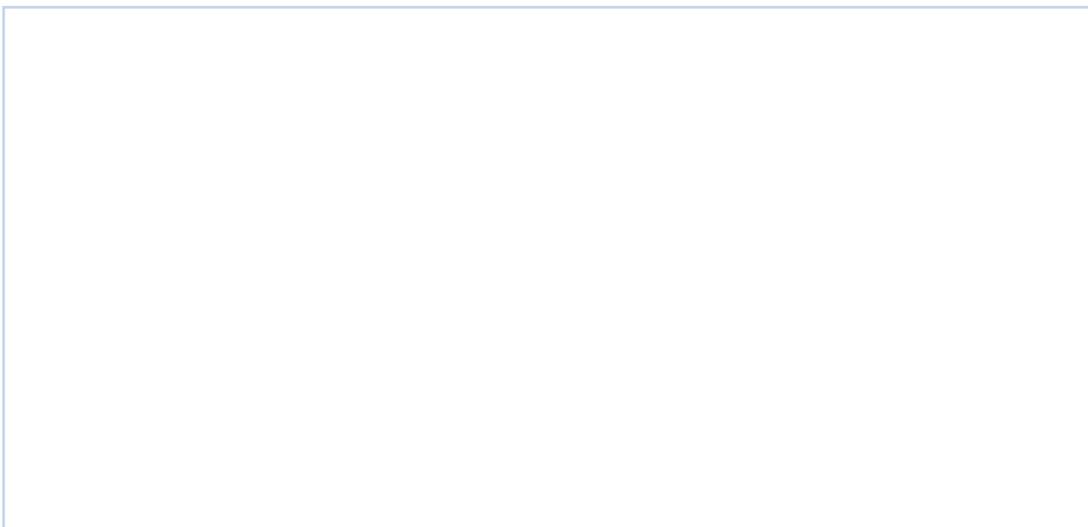
4. Explain two reward systems you could implement to encourage team effort.

5. Explain five techniques you would use to resolve the personal conflict between the warehouse manager and the finance manager.

Topic 3
Facilitate teamwork

Getting your staff to work as a team can be a challenge. When individuals are first introduced and form a team, they bring an assortment of perspectives, experiences, knowledge and ideas to the table. Individuals often clash while working together, whether they are generating ideas, making decisions, formulating plans, influencing colleagues, or charting progress.

It is important that the team can look to the team leader for guidance when problems arise. Team leaders must gain the confidence and respect of their team and develop a broad spectrum of skills if they are to be effective in facilitating teamwork.

In this topic you will learn how to:

3A   Encourage team members and individuals to participate team activities

3B   Support the team in identifying and resolving work performance problems

3C   Serve as a role model for the work team and enhance the organisation's image

3A | Encourage team members and individuals to participate in team activities

Successful teams require the input of all team members to achieve the synergy required for efficient group performance. Gaining commitment from each team member is a process starting with the establishment of agreed responsibilities, monitoring and controlling performance, and adjusting performance based on regular feedback. Effective teams also need good communication processes, including reporting to each other, sharing knowledge and raising issues of concern.

The performance equation

When evaluating your team, you should consider the performance equation; a simple tool that team leaders and managers can use to monitor individual contributions and make necessary adjustments to improve performance. Written as a formula, this concept can be expressed as:

Performance = Capacity x Commitment

What you will notice in this equation is that performance is the product of two factors: capacity and commitment.

If either of these factors is zero, the performance result will be zero. In addition, the relationship of capacity to commitment in this equation is such that adjustments to either factor will affect performance.

Capacity to perform

In a work setting, the capacity to perform means having available the competencies, the resources, and the opportunity to complete the job. If team members are missing these, the work will not get done and the results will not be achieved. In other words:

Capacity = Competencies x Resources x Opportunity

The components in this equation are defined here.

(Adapted from: Ainsworth, M, Smith, N & Millership, A 2002, *Managing Performance, Managing People*, Pearson Education.)

> Breakdown of the components of the equation:
>
> **Capacity = Competencies x Resources x Opportunity**
>
> **Competency**
>
> Team members must have the right competencies in order to complete a task satisfactorily. Team leaders and managers should carefully determine which competencies are important to achieving team results and provide opportunities for team members to acquire those competencies.

Resources

Team members must be given the resources they need to do their jobs effectively. If individuals have all the competencies needed to complete the job, but lack the resources to perform, the job will not get done.

Opportunity

Team members should be given every opportunity to use their knowledge, skills and abilities to contribute to team outcomes. Team leaders should ensure that the team structure will support this.

Promote team accountability

The level of individual commitment is often the key determinant of whether a team meets its targets or not. As team leader or supervisor, your job is to provide regular opportunities for team members to account for their contributions to team outcomes.

To be effective at fostering team accountability and ownership, an organisation's systems must be designed with three basic principles in mind, as outlined here.

Focus

Teams need to share a clear goal that links directly to the organisation's goals. Within the team, each member should be clear of their roles and responsibilities, including agreements on individual expectations and standards of performance. To ensure ongoing focus, consider:

- clearly communicating and continually emphasising the team's goals and purpose
- linking individual performance requirements to the overall purpose
- avoiding unnecessary distractions by assigning work priorities.

Influence

Teams need to be able to influence and control their systems of operation and how they achieve their goals. Similarly, team members need to have influence over those with whom they are interdependent. Holding teams jointly accountable for their combined results will only work if the people within the team can influence each other's behaviour. Consider the following strategies for establishing influence:

- Promote self-management of problem-solving
- Empower team members to select and remove others if necessary
- Foster an environment where regular feedback can be given between team members

Consequences

If a team is to be held accountable, then they must accept the consequences of their own actions together. This means the whole team is held accountable for the performance of each member. In a team-based organisation, coaching and correcting individual performance problems is as much a team responsibility as a management responsibility. Ensure that teams get direct and regular feedback from those involved with the project and link rewards to team output.

Team communication responsibilities

Teams and individuals need to take responsibility for effective communication about work processes, performance and outcomes. Five examples of communication processes that contribute to team effectiveness are outlined here.

Team members report to each other

The team must be accountable for their actions as a whole. Have team members report to each other on what they have achieved. If they have not completed their allocated work or met their responsibilities, ensure there is recourse on a team level.

Use mistakes as a part of learning

Make sure team members know that it's okay to make a mistake. The whole team can learn from mistakes as long as they ask for help and are willing to help others when necessary.

Encourage problem sharing

Encourage team members to share any problems they have with work in meetings. Each team member can raise an issue they have and others can help them solve it.

Avoid developing a blame culture

Do not allow a 'blame culture' to develop, where team members are reproached or attacked if others feel they are not contributing. Provide avenues and forums where the team can talk about responsibilities and related issues in a constructive manner and where the inevitable problems encountered can be dealt with, shared and managed.

Conduct a skills, knowledge and interests audit

Conduct a skills, knowledge and interests audit within your team on areas that are relevant to their allocated tasks. Make the results known within your team and encourage members to share their knowledge and seek help from colleagues.

Task- versus relationship-oriented leadership

There has been debate about the most appropriate style for leading teams. Some people have suggested that relationship-oriented leadership is most appropriate in complex teams, since knowledge is more likely to be shared in an environment of trust and goodwill. Others argued that a task orientation is necessary as it creates a shared awareness of the task dimensions, and provides a structured approach to monitoring and feedback.

Empirical research has revealed that the most productive, innovative teams are typically led by people who were task- and relationship-oriented. What's more, these leaders changed their style during the project.

During the early stages, they exhibited task-oriented leadership. They facilitated the establishment of clear goals, engaged in debates about commitments and clarified responsibilities of individual team members. However, at a certain point in the project development they switched to a relationship orientation. This shift often took place once team members ascertained the goals and their accountabilities and when the initial tensions around sharing knowledge began to emerge. An emphasis throughout a project on one style at the expense of the other inevitably hindered the long-term performance of the team.

Example: how one organisation encouraged ongoing participation from team members

At a national fast-food restaurant chain, shift managers are trained to lead their teams to perform at a high level at all times and to maintain consistency during individual shifts. Each team member is responsible for their area but is also accountable for overall outlet performance and cleanliness.

This is done by prioritising each area of responsibility. This allows team members to move from one task to another when activity within the store varies. For instance, during busy periods, all team members concentrate on their main priorities but during down times, they move to their next area of priority, and lastly onto the cleanliness of their area. The shift manager's responsibility is to manage the transition between tasks to ensure the overall goals of the organisation are achieved.

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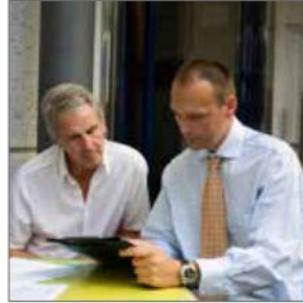
Practice task 8

Using a team with which you are familiar, describe three key actions undertaken by team members that demonstrate responsibility for team activities and communication.

3B | Support the team in identifying and resolving work performance problems

When issues arise, effective teams solve the problems efficiently and as a part of the team's overall processes. Issues should not derail a project or place undue pressure on the cohesion of the team. If risks have been adequately assessed, the team should carry out contingency plans when risks arise.

Problem identification is a process of considering where the project is currently positioned along its time line, looking for gaps in performance, and determining possible causes for delays, underperformance, quality or financial issues. The strategies outlined here provide ways for you to support your team in identifying problems.

Hold regular meetings

Meetings provide an excellent forum for discussing and sharing information. When planning meetings, you should allow time for consideration of past issues, present issues and any risks that members of the team may have identified during their work. Regular reviews allow you to adjust, react or plan for work tasks and issues in advance. This assists in the efficiency of resolving problems in the future.

Feedback and quality-control processes

In most organisations, feedback from customers, colleagues, data systems and managers is commonplace. Where formal feedback processes have been created, you should have access to information sources to enable you and others to identify current or possible future issues.

The purpose of quality control processes is to provide a system of regular feedback for managers and staff, to recognise opportunities for improvement before problems arise. By providing regular feedback, you are also able to identify trends over time. These trends provide important information regarding the success or failure of various aspects of the organisation.

Problem-solving techniques

To support your team to solve problems, you need to provide effective tools and techniques. There are a multitude of techniques available that suit a variety of contexts. You may need to research further to establish techniques useful in your situation.

Effective problem-solving tools

Some problem-solving tools that you may find useful are outlined here.

SWOT analysis

Analysing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats affecting your project in a competitive environment. By thoroughly considering each aspect of the competitive environment, you are able to develop answers to help maintain your advantage.

Cause and effect diagrams

A line diagram linking outcomes to potential causes and vice versa. These diagrams allow you and your team to consider possible causes and effects that represent potential risks to your work. By generating these causes and effects, you are in a better position to rectify any potential risks.

Affinity diagram

Organises your ideas, problems and/or solutions into common themes. This helps you and your team identify common issues that may be the cause of problems or that may lead to future issues.

Risk analysis

Analyses the probability and consequences of risks you and your team have identified. This helps to place a priority on those risks that you determine as high or the most likely to cause an issue.

General appreciation

Uses the experience and observations of you and your team to consider methods of solving problems and identifying potential issues.

Brainstorming techniques

When problems are difficult to solve, consider brainstorming multiple solutions using the input of capable team members and stakeholders. Once a range of ideas is produced, you or your team can then analyse each by applying criteria such as cost versus effect or risk probabilities.

Groupthink and poor decisions

According to psychologist Irving Janis, groupthink occurs when a group makes faulty decisions because of group pressures. When considered from the context of solving work problems, this group pressure can result in group members holding back personal viewpoints and ignoring alternatives.

The problems that can arise from groupthink are summarised here.

Eight symptoms of groupthink and their effects

1   **Illusion of invulnerability**
Creates excessive optimism that encourages taking extreme risks.

2   **Collective rationalisation**
Members discount warnings and do not reconsider their assumptions.

3   **Belief in inherent morality**
Members believe in the rightness of their cause and therefore ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions.

4   **Stereotyped views of out-groups**
Negative views of 'enemy' make effective responses to conflict seem unnecessary.

5   **Direct pressure on dissenters**
Members are under pressure not to express arguments against any of the group's views.

6   **Self-censorship**
Doubts and deviations from the perceived group consensus are not expressed.

7   **Illusion of unanimity**
The majority view and judgments are assumed to be unanimous.

8   **Self-appointed 'mind guards'**
Members protect the group and the leader from information that is problematic or contradictory to the group's cohesiveness, view, and/or decisions.

Practice task 9

1. Explain ways that you would support your team to identify work performance problems.

2. Identify a problem that is currently affecting your team (or a problem that has recently been solved). Explain the problem-solving techniques you think are the most suitable to deal with the problem.

3C Serve as a role model for the work team and enhance the organisation's image

A role model is a person whose behaviours and actions are emulated by others in order to develop those skills and attributes in themselves. A role model can be anyone who positively influences others in the work team and enhances the organisation's image to a wide range of people including board members, business or government contacts, funding bodies, unions and employee representatives.

Not all team leaders or managers are considered role models. When a leader is seen to be doing the things that they have asked of their teams, they are more likely to gain the trust, confidence and cooperation of their team members. By understanding and acting on this one principle, you will go a long way to becoming an effective leader.

There is a website that you can access that provides information and profiles on some of the world's greatest role models. It can be found at: www.rolemodel.net.

What people look for in their leaders

While effective leadership can mean different things to different people, there are some common traits that people look for in their leaders. Use the list of common traits shown here as a personal checklist to assess your own leadership abilities.

Traits displayed during team interactions

- Involves team members in planning, goal-setting and decision-making
- Encourages interactive communication with team members
- Listens to employees, peers, and customers with an open mind
- Helps employees develop the habits they need to be more successful
- Empowers employees to make decisions
- Is skilled in managing group process issues
- Does not micro-manage effective and trusted employees

Traits displayed in the general work environment

- Inspires and motivates people around them to perform above and beyond expectations
- Has a vision for the future and communicates that vision to everyone they encounter
- Uses assertiveness to obtain the necessary resources and support for the team
- Protects the team from undue and counterproductive outside interference

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Personal traits
• Is willing to learn better methods of doing things • Is receptive to both positive and negative feedback • Embraces diversity and is highly receptive to ideas and people who are different • Apologises and admits mistakes • Has a sense of humour • Acts ethically and is trustworthy • Is willing to adapt as conditions change and the needs of the team evolve

Inspire employees

Getting people to accomplish something is much easier if they have the inspiration to do so. Inspire means 'to breathe life into' and there are three main actions, as outlined here, which will aid you when inspiring your employees: be passionate, involve teams in decision-making and know what your team is about.

Be passionate

In organisations where there is a leader with great enthusiasm about a project, their teams adopt higher levels of enthusiasm and motivation. Be committed to the work you are doing. If you do not communicate excitement, how can you expect your team members to get excited?

Involve teams in decision-making

When people are involved in the decision that directly affects their work, they are more inclined to follow the outcomes and directives of the decision. Team meetings and discussions can serve as the medium for group-based decision-making. There are often times when decisions cannot be made jointly. In these instances, ensure you are able to clarify the reasons behind your decisions with those team members affected.

Know what your team is about

Teams are made of people, not numbers, computers or data. Great leadership starts with your ability to interact, understand and communicate with your team. Know what your team thinks and feels by questioning, listening and interacting with them regularly and genuinely.

Example: how a CEO gained respect of the team

Ingram Solutions Management is a management consulting firm. It has clients across all industries in both the private and public sectors. It is of utmost importance that the consultants working at Ingram Solutions Management work closely together in order to resolve the complex organisational problems that they deal with.

A few years ago a new CEO was brought in to change the current 'stale culture' and take the organisation to the next level. The following were amongst the key issues he set out to address:

* too many individuals and not enough 'team'
* structure did not lend itself to serving clients effectively
* lack of innovation.

In order to establish a more unified team of consultants, he facilitated a series of team-building workshops that included the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Belbin's Team Roles. From these workshops, team members gained a new understanding of the people they work with and how they can operate more effectively as a team.

He also involved consultants in a number of problem-solving exercises in order to test their abilities to work together to resolve complex business problems. Through these exercises he was able to prove that the team outcome was much more effective than what they were able to achieve on their own.

As a by-product of these initiatives, the new CEO was respected and admired by all consultants in the organisation, many of whom since sought additional one-on-one mentoring.

Practice task 10

1. Select a person that you would classify as a role model. Develop a list of six characteristics that make them an effective role model.

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2. Reflect on your own characteristics as a leader. Identify two areas that you could develop to improve your performance as a role model and suggest ways to develop these characteristics.

Summary

1. The performance equation is a simple tool that team leaders and managers can use to monitor individual contributions and make necessary adjustments to improve performance. The formula is:

$$\text{Performance} = \text{Capacity} \times \text{Commitment}$$

2. To be effective at fostering team accountability and ownership, an organisation's systems must be designed with three basic principles in mind: focus, influence and consequences.

3. Group problem-solving has three distinct phases: exploring the problem, searching for solutions, and evaluating and carrying out your actions.

4. Groupthink is a phenomenon of highly cohesive groups. It occurs when group members would rather maintain the group's favour than cause friction, state opposite points of view and evaluate the full extent of alternatives.

5. A role model is a person whose behaviours and actions are emulated by others in order to develop those skills and attributes in themselves. When a leader is seen to be doing the things that they have asked of their teams, they are more likely to gain the trust, confidence and cooperation of their team members.

Learning checkpoint 3
Facilitate teamwork

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in facilitating teamwork.

Part A

1. Explain three ways you would encourage team members to participate in and take responsibility for team activities. For each strategy, include one example of how you would apply it.

2. Provide two examples of problem-solving models you might use to support the team in identifying and resolving problems. Briefly explain how a team leader can apply each model; use examples in your explanation.

3. Review the qualities of a role model and prepare a personal development plan outlining how you will attain six of these qualities, including an example of how each quality may be displayed.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Pauligk & Associates is a registered training organisation that provides nationally recognised courses in business, information technology, children's services and aged care. Pauligk & Associates currently has training centres in Bourke, Brisbane, Darwin, Sydney and Melbourne, and will soon open another facility in Port Melbourne.

As the national training manager, you have the responsibility for recruiting, developing and monitoring trainers. Your training team currently consists of eight full-time trainers and 22 contract trainers (see breakdown below).

Bourke: 2 contract trainers

Brisbane: 2 full-time trainers and 6 contract trainers

Darwin: 2 contract trainers

Sydney: 4 full-time trainers and 8 contract trainers

Melbourne: 2 full-time trainers and 4 contract trainers

You work out of the Sydney training centre and you try to visit the other centres at least once a quarter. In your most recent round trip, you overheard complaints from many of the trainers regarding the lack of support they get from head office, and particularly from you as their manager. As you reflect on the challenge to support each of these centres, you realise you cannot do it on your own—you need help.

1. Establish a plan to encourage each centre to take responsibility for their team activities. Your plan should include the following:
    *   Opportunities for each centre to manage their own training teams
    *   The structure of the centre's training team
    *   Opportunities for collaboration between training centres
    *   A mentoring program between senior and junior trainers
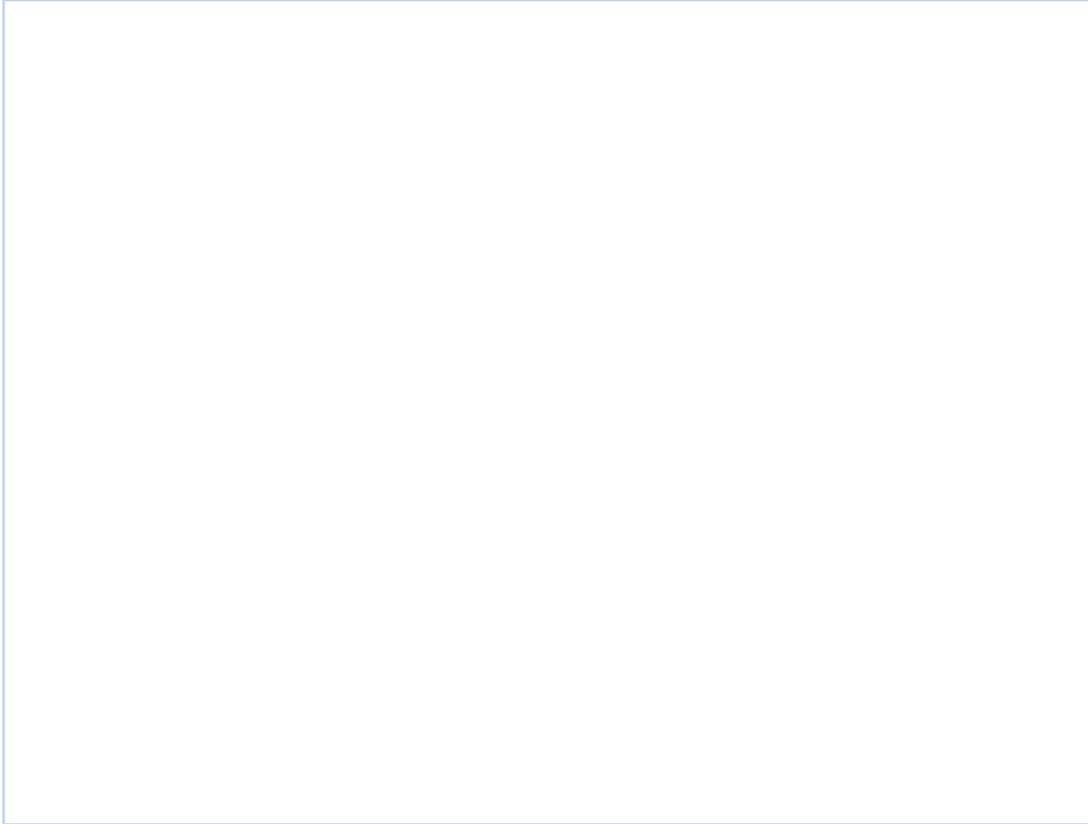
2. Outline the new roles you will take in supporting each training centre.
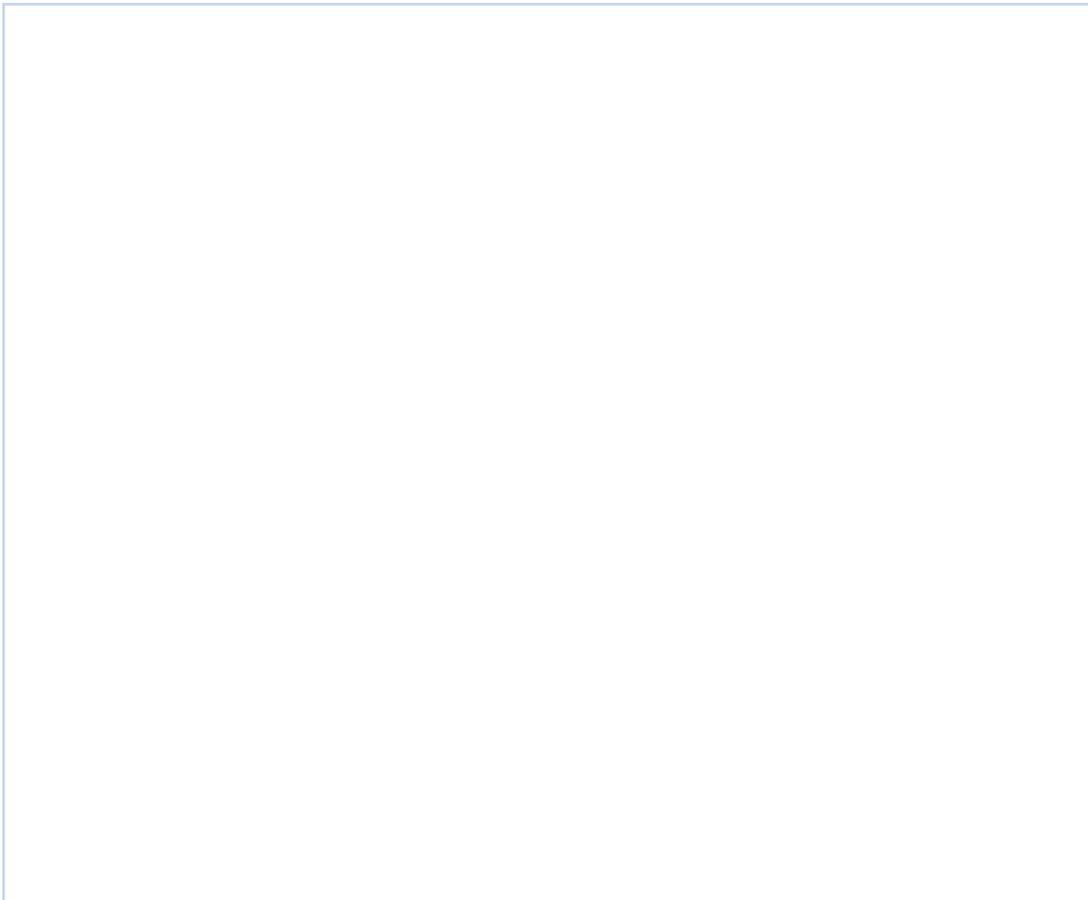
Topic 4
Liaise with stakeholders

A stakeholder is anyone who will be affected by the team's work, including internal and external customers and suppliers, co-workers, managers and anyone else who is affected by what the team does. Before a team can communicate with its stakeholders, it must understand and identify its stakeholders. Once you have identified who your stakeholders are, the next step is to assign them to specific team members whose job it is to stay in touch with them. They should be grouped and assigned with careful consideration. For example, put the sales manager on the team in charge of all contact with sales and marketing stakeholders.

In this topic you will learn how to:

4A Establish and maintain open communication processes with all stakeholders

4B Communicate information from line manager/management to the team

4C Communicate unresolved issues, concerns and problems raised by team members and follow up with stakeholders

4D Evaluate and take necessary corrective action regarding unresolved issues, concerns and problems

4A | Establish and maintain open communication processes with all stakeholders

A communication process is any system that facilitates communication between stakeholders within and external to an organisation. Communication in organisations consists of two types of systems:

- formal channels—the legitimate or official system that involves the formal hierarchy within the organisation
- informal channels—the shadow system that consists of casual, more relaxed conversations and informal procedures for getting things done.

Formal channels of communication

Communication channels that have been set up by the organisation are designed to move information throughout the organisation along specified paths such as email systems, intranets, meetings, conferences and so on.

Formal channels usually adhere to organisational lines of authority. That means the specific paths link individuals with those they supervise and those who supervise them. Additionally, paths can be created to gain access to larger knowledge networks to spread ideas and feedback throughout the organisation. These networks are usually reserved for specialised information and not general communications that may take place at a more localised level.

Informal channels of communication

Informal channels are the paths created by individuals and groups outside of the formal channels that already exist. They usually occur due to common interests, goals or work tasks. These channels are used to spread tacit knowledge or personal insights and information that may or may not be related to work outcomes.

Organisations see the value of informal channels in raising awareness of common issues, spreading tacit information that may enhance work performance, and as a means of maintaining human contact and morale. As such, many organisations facilitate informal channels by allowing time for members to socialise, take part in activities outside work and create external networks with members of other organisations.

Communication tools

The size of the company, the time sensitivity of the issue and importance of the message dictate the best communications tools to use. There is a wide range of communication tools that can be used in a work setting, as outlined here. A mix of communication tools allows for the ongoing flow of information between management and employees. A company is only as strong as its weakest link.

Conference calls, video conferences and podcasts

Some information cannot be shared effectively in print. When time is limited, conference calls, video conferencing and podcasts are great ways to disseminate information to multiple employees and offices at the same time.

Internal e-newsletters

Sending out an e-newsletter on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis is an efficient way to keep employees in the loop. To make the newsletter more interesting, add photos and graphics to each edition.

Intranet

An intranet can host all types of internal information, from policies and procedures and research reports to messages from the CEO. To be most effective, the intranet should be constantly updated. Employees should also be encouraged to use the intranet; this could require training if the system is complex.

Meetings

If the organisation has multiple offices, executives should visit all offices at least once a year to share information and make all employees feel like part of the team.

New product announcements

Make sure everyone in the organisation knows about new products and services before they are released to the general public. If possible, have product samples available for employees to review prior to launch.

Press releases

Distribute releases to employees before or at the same time they are given to the press and the general public. Outsiders should not hear about important company news before employees.

Website

Employees use the website for information just as much as the general public, so it needs to be updated, easy to navigate and interesting.

Example: the development of one organisation's communication process

A well-known IT organisation employing tens of thousands of people in over 60 countries developed its communication processes over time through the use of trial and error, research and feedback from its employees and customers. As an IT organisation, they deployed a division of researchers to create highly user-friendly channels for users across the world to interact and share ideas and information.

The systems became widely adopted, not only by the organisations, but as a tool for other global companies wishing to remove time and distance barriers from their communication systems.

Work teams across the world now have the ability to log in to intranet and extranet services, and other web-based networks, to communicate, share ideas, and add real value to organisational knowledge; a key dimension of competitive advantage in global commerce.

Practice task 11

Conduct research on the internet for various web-based communication tools and select three that you think would enhance your team's internal and external communication processes. Write a summary of your findings with a brief comment about how useful you think they would be in your work environment and their possible pitfalls.

4B Communicate information from line manager/management to the team

Communication is the key to success in any relationship. Once effective communication channels have been established, they need to be constantly monitored and maintained for correct use and relevancy as the organisation grows or changes. This is particularly important when considering the channel between line managers and team members. Line managers may include the chief executive officer, direct superior or other management representatives.

Approaches that strengthen communication between management and teams

Team leaders need effective communication that avoids issues such as misinterpretation and delays. There are several approaches you can use to strengthen communication between management and the team. As a team leader you may need to follow the approaches outlined here.

Open-door policy

Establish an open-door policy

This is another way of saying that you will be open to your team members' efforts to communicate with you. Figuratively speaking, this refers to leaving your office door open so others can walk in any time to talk with you. In reality, it means providing an easy, secure and respectful communications channel with your team when they need to communicate about important matters.

Effective open-door policies include strict ground rules. The level of openness must be commensurate with a functional and performing workplace. For example:

- if you are talking with someone, you should avoid being interrupted
- if someone else is handling a matter, the team member should endeavour to communicate with that person in the first instance
- conflicts between team members should be mediated by those team members before raising the issue with you and so on.

Team environment

Nurture a team environment

When team members feel you are unapproachable, they will keep information from you that can hamper performance and damage your effectiveness as a leader. Consider creating and fostering a team environment. This means focusing efforts on the team's purpose, while ensuring all members of the team feel respected and valued for their contributions. Like any relationships, these require constant work. Holding regular formal and informal meetings with team members and displaying genuine interest in the pursuits of each member (where practicable) will encourage the maintenance of this environment.

Regular meetings

Schedule regular staff meetings

Regular meetings allow for the sharing of information and ideas, as well as offering the chance for people to interact socially and professionally. Successful meetings must be kept as short as necessary, on topic, and must not be viewed as interfering with normal work operations—rather, they should be recognised as a vital part of work operations.

Training and mediation

Arrange third-party training and mediation

Poor communication can lead to disagreements and conflict between managers and team members. Often the causes of the conflict are close to the interests of each party. It can be helpful in these circumstances to seek the input of a third party. This person may be internal, such as an HR representative, or external, such as a negotiation trainer. These people can offer unbiased advice to overcome issues and suggest better forms of communication to suit the specific needs of the team and to avoid issues in the future.

Motivation

Create a motivating environment

A successful leader learns and understands what motivates their team. Ask questions and pay attention to the details of the team members you come in contact with in order to understand their personal motivators. This helps you to manage performance and also improves communication and trust as you develop a genuine interest in those working with you.

Forums

Create forums

Forums are central hubs for ideas, comments, concerns and information sharing. Today, most forums are internet-based; however, scheduled meetings can also provide a forum for discussion on matters involving the team. An important purpose for conducting forums, other than the communication of ideas, is to openly invite the input of every member of the team. This demonstrates your respect for the individuals and improves trust among the team members and management.

Example: an open-door policy

At Leslie Inc. we have adopted an open-door policy for all employees. This means that every manager's door is open to every employee at any time. The purpose of this policy is to encourage open communication, feedback and discussion about any matter of importance to an employee. Our open-door policy means that employees are free to talk with any manager at any time.

Responsibilities

If any area of your work is causing you concern, you have the responsibility to address your concern with a manager. Whether you have a problem, a complaint, a suggestion or an observation, your company managers want to hear from you. By listening to you, the company is able to improve, address complaints, and foster employee understanding of the rationale for practices, processes, and decisions.

Practice task 12

1. In consultation with senior management in your organisation, identify three strategies to improve communication at all levels.

2. Once you have agreed on your approach, develop five key points to be included in a communication policy outlining this approach.

4C Communicate unresolved issues, concerns and problems raised by team members and follow up with stakeholders

There will be times when issues arise that cannot be dealt with within the team context. In these situations, issues are most often forwarded to senior management. The most important part of communication is listening. Unfortunately, this is something that many people struggle with due to their attitude or unwillingness to be patient.

Effective listening

Management scholar Peter F. Drucker explains effective listening this way:

> It is the recipient who communicates. The so-called communicator, the person who emits the communication, does not communicate. He utters. Unless there is someone who hears, there is no communication.

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Hearing and listening are different concepts. In the context of effective communication, listening is a combination of the behaviours outlined here.

Be attentive

Attentiveness can be demonstrated by looking at the person speaking with you, acknowledging their input by nodding and avoiding distracted body language, such as fiddling with a pen or typing on a computer.

Repeat information

Repeat key information by paraphrasing the information that has been passed onto you; clarify what you have heard and demonstrate to the speaker that you are listening to what they are saying and have understood their meaning (this can also be reflected in effective email communication).

Revise and question

If there is anything you are not clear about, make sure you seek understanding during the communication event so you do not waste time following up later; ensure the person you are communicating with understands the key points you have imparted by asking direct, non-ambiguous questions.
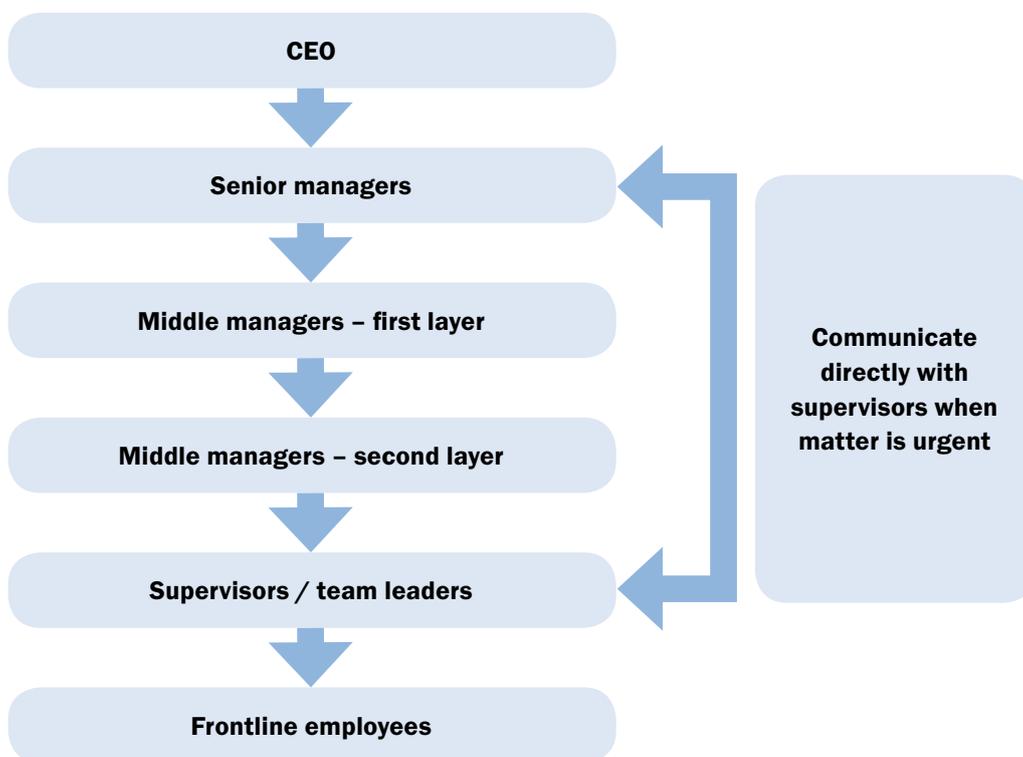
Upward communication

Messages and information initiated by subordinates and provided to superiors is called upward communication. This communication channel is devised to air grievances, solicit suggestions for productivity improvements, raise or escalate concerns and provide feedback responses to management inquiries. As a manager or team leader, you will often rely on upward communication to resolve complex problems, when the issue is beyond the authority of the team leader or manager, and when obtaining approval on new team initiatives.

This web page, entitled *The 7 rules of upward communication*, provides information about clearly communicating when you are reporting up the management hierarchy.

Visit: http://ezinearticles.com/?The-7-Rules-of-Upward-Communication&id=153529.

Outlined here is the hierarchy of a typical management system. Most non-urgent matters should be communicated through the traditional or formal communication channels. However, when an issue is of a more serious or urgent nature, supervisors and team leaders should be able to go directly to a decision-maker.

(Adapted from: Barrett, D 2007, *Leadership communication*, McGraw-Hill Companies Inc., New York, NY.)

Follow-up on the issue

Once issues have been identified and communicated to management, it is crucial that action is taken to resolve the issues. There needs to be accountability for the issues raised. If management fails to follow through, employees can feel like they are being sidelined. Don't let this happen. Once you have sought the approval or assistance of management above you, ensure that you bring the matter to a conclusion and report the outcome to your team.

Example: Respect the chain of command

Convention has it that an employee should report to only one person. This concept known as the chain of command is based on the thinking that having more than one boss or source of authority could create a situation of potential conflict and confusion. This principle flourished in the days of hierarchy and bureaucracy, but is eroding in today's organisations where flexibility and responsiveness to the environment is called for.

For example, project teams often comprise employees from multiple departments who report directly to their project manager. Once the purpose of the project has been achieved, the project members return to their regular roles.

While flexibility is currently a driving force in most organisations, it is still a good idea that when anyone other than your immediate manager gives you a job to do, respect the chain of command by letting your manager know what you have been asked to do and/or have agreed to.

Practice task 13

1. Describe the chain of command used in your organisation.

2. Explain the actions you would undertake to resolve issues within this chain of command.

4D | Evaluate and take necessary corrective action regarding unresolved issues, concerns and problems

When someone inside or outside of the team has raised an issue, you have an obligation to evaluate the issue or problem and take the necessary corrective action. The first thing to remember is not to rush, as few problems require immediate action. Determine the urgency of the situation. If the problem does need immediate resolution, a decisive leader will act promptly. Before acting, however, it is important to gather facts and opinions, analyse, challenge and check assumptions and generate and assess your options before making a decision or referring the problem onto the next level of authority.

The 8D reactive problem-solving process

A corrective action can be classified as a change implemented to address a weakness in the system. The eight disciplines (8D) reactive problem-solving process is a formal, documented step-by-step process which, when implemented appropriately, will cause permanent corrective and preventive action.

This web article, *Process improvement made easy:* the 8d problem solving process explained, describes the 8D reactive problem-solving process and how to use this information in business. Visit: www.mftrou.com/8d-problem-solving.html.

Each step of the process and desired outcome is outlined here.

The 8D problem-solving steps and desired outcomes

1 **Define concern, organise and plan**
- The concern or problem is identified.
- Project plan is in place for eliminating the problem and improving the process including scope, key activities, boundaries, responsibilities, time lines, resources.

2 **Describe the opportunity or problem**
- The problem statement is written in terms of the gap between 'as is' and 'desired state'.
- Define the non-conformance in terms of 'what is wrong' (the defect) with 'what' (the object).
- Determine the quantity, size, volume, magnitude of the non-conformance.

3   **Contain the problem**

- Implement interim actions to shield the customer from the problem.

4   **Identify and verify root causes**

- Selected root causes to work on.
- Revise problem statement if required.
- Produce list of as many ways as possible to solve the problem.

5   **Develop corrective action plan**

- Decide on optimum corrective action/solution and plan its implementation.

6   **Implement and verify corrective action**

- Perform pilot test.
- Evaluate effectiveness of corrective action or solution.
- Document improvements.
- Address open issues.
- Remove the interim actions to ensure the problem does not re-occur.

7   **Prevent recurrence**

- Apply permanent 'fix.'
- Identify what system, practice or procedure allowed the root cause to occur.
- Modify and monitor to prevent recurrence of problem.

8   **Celebrate and communicate success**

- Recognise the contributions of everyone involved.
- Change or improvements are communicated to all individuals who are affected.

Corrective action plans

A corrective action plan is a step-by-step plan of action and schedule for correcting a management system or process, a quality issue or to identify, correct and document employee performance problems. Usually, corrective action plans are implemented in response to a customer complaint or nonconformity to organisational policies and procedures, which disrupts business operations or negatively affects employees.

A corrective action plan should include:

- a list of the actions required
- a schedule for completing the actions
- details of who is responsible for completing each action
- the method of evaluating the success of the corrective action
- a schedule and method for monitoring the ongoing success of the corrective action.

Use clear and direct communication to discipline an employee

Clear and direct communication is vital when using corrective action plans to discipline employees. Communication should include a meeting with the team leader or manager and the employee to discuss the nature of the problem behaviour and its negative impact on the organisation and other employees. The team leader or manager should ensure the employee clearly understands the specific performance expectations and standards that the employee has failed to meet. It should also be clearly communicated that the employee needs to work on correcting the problem behaviour within a specified time frame to avoid more serious action. In these cases, the corrective action plan process usually involves a verbal warning, written warning, suspension and then discharge from employment if necessary.

Example: a corrective action plan (clinical research)

Deficiency noted: case report forms were incomplete in that the information needed to determine eligibility was missing.

Responsible for overall corrective-action plan: _____

Principal investigator: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Step	Action	Due date	Responsible party	Status/ Comments
1	A standard operating procedure (SOP) has been developed and implemented to assist with documentation practices for determining study eligibility. A copy of the procedure is attached.	3 March 2016	John, CRC	Complete See attachment
2	This SOP contains a form that will be completed by each study's primary CRC and confirmed and signed by an investigator prior to any subject enrolled in the study.	3 March 2016	John, CRC	Complete See attached

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Step	Action	Due date	Responsible party	Status/ Comments
3	All study personnel (investigators, CRCs, data coordinators, regulatory coordinators) have been trained on the SOP and it was implemented on 3 March, 2016	3 March 2016	Mary, Project Manager	Complete See attached
4	After three months, the new eligibility documentation practices will be evaluated to determine if this corrective action assists with ensuring all information is documented to determine study eligibility.	3 June 2016	Robin, QA Manager	Evaluation and monitoring plan
5	A follow-up report will be submitted to the IRB and Research Director of our evaluation findings listed in step 4.	15 June 2016	Robin, QA Manager	Evaluation and monitoring plan

Practice task 14

Identify an unresolved issue or problem in your organisation or one you are familiar with. Briefly explain the components you would include in a plan to take corrective-action to obtain solutions to the unresolved issue.

Summary

1. Communication in organisations consists of formal and informal channels. Formal channels operate via the hierarchy within the organisation. Informal channels consist of casual conversations and informal procedures for getting things done.

2. A mix of communication tools allows for the ongoing flow of information between management and employees. These can include brochures, letters, email, telephone, videoconferencing and face-to-face meetings.

3. Communication between management and employees can improve through an open-door policy, by nurturing a team environment, by utilising regular staff meetings and promoting training opportunities.

4. Messages and information initiated by subordinates for use by superiors is called upward communication. This communication channel is used to air grievances, solicit suggestions for productivity improvements and provide feedback responses to management inquiries. As a manager or team leader, you often rely on upward communication to resolve complex problems or when obtaining approval on new team initiatives.

5. Once issues have been identified and communicated to management, it is crucial that action is taken to resolve the issues and there needs to be accountability for the issues raised.

6. When an issue has been raised, the first thing to remember is not to rush, as few problems require immediate action. If the problem does need immediate resolution, a decisive leader will act promptly.

7. The 8D reactive problem-solving process is a formal, documented step-by-step process, which, when implemented appropriately, will cause permanent corrective and preventive action.

8. Corrective action plans are generally used for correcting a management system or process, a quality issue, or to identify, correct and document employee performance problems.

Learning checkpoint 4
Liaise with stakeholders

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in liaising with stakeholders.

Part A

1. Explain the difference between formal and informal communication channels. Include two examples of each communication system and two examples of what each can be used for.

2. Explain two strategies to improve communication between management and team members.

3. Explain what is meant by the term 'upward communication', including two examples of how upward communication is used to resolve issues, concerns and problems within a team. Provide two circumstances when upward communication is necessary.
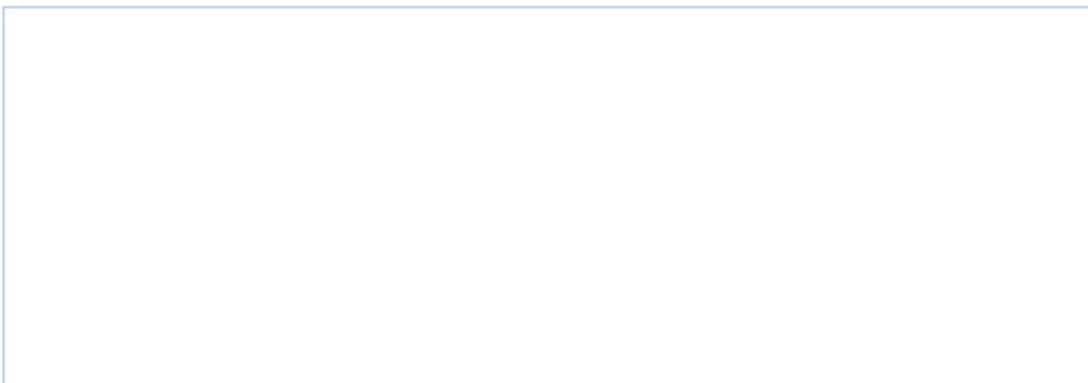
4. Provide two examples of issues that could be raised by an external stakeholder regarding team performance.

5. Outline the steps you would take for corrective action to resolve a problem and list the five key components the corrective action plan should include.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

<table>
<tr><td>**Case study**</td></tr>
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Klikcom is a national telecommunications company employing over 10,000 staff. It utilises a large management team consisting of state managers, regional managers, store managers, team leaders and supervisors in order to manage its day-to-day operations.

As one of the regional managers, it is your responsibility to oversee the operations of 20 retail outlets and you report monthly to the state manager.

One particular outlet continues to have staffing issues and receives more customer complaints than any other outlet. While you have attempted to work with the store manager to resolve these issues, little improvement has occurred.

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1. Briefly explain three strategies you would use to improve communication with the non-performing retail outlet.

2. Give two examples of who you would you speak to for assistance in resolving the issues you have identified, and provide a brief explanation of the focus of the communication.

3. Briefly outline three corrective actions you could take regarding these unresolved issues. Identify how these actions align with organisational policy.