Developing the High Performance Team

OVERVIEW

Creating a high performance team is a primary task for any leader. Not all teams may need to be truly high performance, but the executive leadership team charged with leading an organization absolutely does. Sadly, it is more the rule than the exception, that executive leadership teams are fragmented 'tribes'. Rarely do they have the two essential ingredients of a high performance team: trust and shared objectives. When a team achieves these two things - no easy feat - a multitude of benefits will follow. A team without these two ingredients may crawl, but it will never run.

As above, so below. The executive team is a microcosm for all the dynamics in the organization - indeed it is the prime mover – the 'DNA' of the organization's culture. Optimize the executive team, and you are more than half-way to optimizing the entire organization. The actions of the executive leadership team become the organizational culture. How this team solves problems, takes risks, rewards, collaborates, makes decisions, and communicates will be modeled throughout the organization.

Sapience also works with a variety of other cross-functional leadership teams that are charged with major implementation or execution tasks and must operate at a high-performance level.

- Implementation of enterprise technology enabling
- Large scale process improvement and re-design initiatives
- Strategically-linked special projects such as merger/acquisition or culture transformation.

Common Team Issues:

- Helping a new team gel quickly so it can get to the work of leading.
- Getting the leadership team to take more of a 'shareholder', and less of a 'parochial' and functional, view of their role as 'officers of the company'.
- Optimizing the team's operating environment to ensure high-performance decision-making, communication, and collaboration.
- Resolving a 'toxic' conflict that paralyzes the team's ability to get its' work done

EVERY TEAM IS THE SAME, YET DIFFERENT

All teams are faced with a universal set of challenges which are met more or less successfully – the *GRIP* model is a simple, but useful, framework within which to understand this: **G**oals, **R**oles, **I**nterpersonal dynamics, **P**rocesses:

- What are our shared objectives and how will we measure long-term and short-term success?
- How will we use our formal and informal authority in the surrounding organizational system to accomplish these objectives?
- How clear are roles, responsibilities and related authorities for each team member?
- What kind of operating environment and 'team norms' do we need to function effectively?

APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

The Sapience *High Performance Team* process begins with an assessment of the team so that we are focusing attention on the most urgent issues.   We share that assessment with the team's leader and the team, using it as the basis for a plan of action. Sapience has over 25 proven methods and tools to address focal issues once that initial assessment is complete. In some cases, the team may need a quick 'tune-up' around roles or problem-solving: Sapience has specific tools aimed at these, and many other, typical team challenges.

METHOD

Every team development circumstance is unique, but common elements of the Sapience method include:

❑   Team assessment with our research-based tools

♦   Individual discussions with team members

❑   Contracting milestones in which we clearly delineate focal areas, interventions, timeframes, and outcomes.

❑   Application of proven team effectiveness methods, tools and exercises to quickly move the team to its' goal

♦   Action steps, implementation and measurement of results to baseline

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

We will always demonstrate measurable improvement, linked to a strategic initiative, imperative or capability.   Specific outcomes will vary as a function of the nature of the focal issue and the scope of the engagement.

NEXT STEPS

1.   Consider having Sapience conduct a free-trial *High Performance Team Assessment* to determine at what level your team is currently functioning.

2.   Pose these few questions to your current team: *What kind of team do we need to be? And how far away from being that are we? Are we a 'high-performance' team?*

3.   Call us for a no-charge, no-obligation phone consultation about the conversation that ensues after posing these questions.