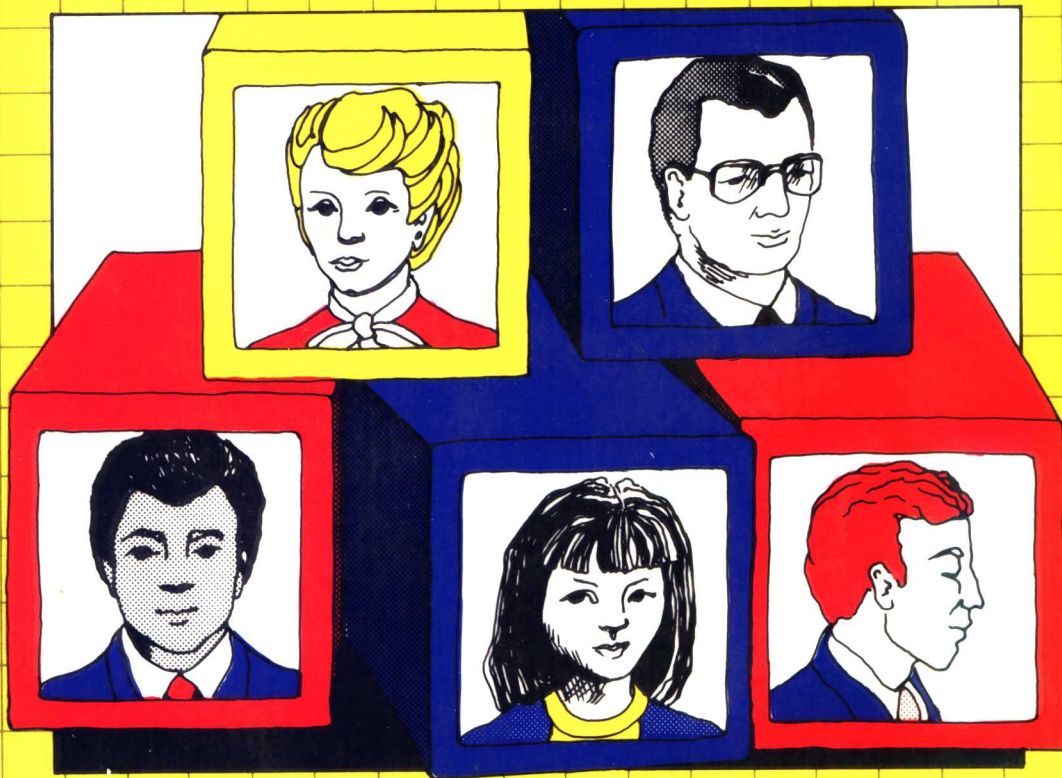


REVISED EDITION

TEAM BUILDING

An Exercise in Leadership

Robert B. Maddux



A proven way to increase
organizational effectiveness

TEAM BUILDING: AN EXERCISE IN LEADERSHIP

REVISED EDITION

Robert B. Maddux 

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PREFACE

In all economic systems, people must produce the goods and services that are essential to life. How well, and how much they produce depends on their knowledge; skill; creativity; commitment; attitude; the technology employed; and finally the quality of those who manage them.

Typically, people work in small groups which have common or related functions. Each person in such a group has an individual aspiration, level of skill, and attitude toward the task. Since people think, feel and respond according to their individuality, they sometimes do not consider the benefits of supporting and cooperating with others to achieve a common goal. This can be seen at the first practice of any junior high school athletic team. Some players have considerable talent, others are less skillful. Ultimately the group will not have much success until they are motivated to work toward a common goal. A skilled coach will be able to pool their talent and train them to play together compensating for individual strengths and weaknesses.

Similarly, in a work environment, the results achieved are seldom the outcome of one individual's talent. Each person is influenced by the attitude and action of coworkers and managers. If the influence of the work environment is positive, a person tends to be productive. The same is true for a group of workers. When the influence is negative, both individuals and groups tend to be less productive.

This book is devoted to teaching concepts which make work positive and productive. It contains principles by which a group can be transformed into a team. The concepts are easily understood but their application takes dedication and effort. Good Luck!

Robert B. Maddux

ABOUT THIS BOOK

TEAM BUILDING: AN EXERCISE IN LEADERSHIP is not like most books. It has a unique "self-paced" format that encourages a reader to become personally involved. Designed to be "read with a pencil", there are an abundance of exercises, activities, assessments and cases that invite participation.

The objective of TEAM BUILDING is to help a person recognize the differences between groups and teams; and then make any required behavioral changes which apply concepts presented in the book to that person's unique management situation.

TEAM BUILDING (and the other self-improvement books listed on page 73) can be used effectively in a number of ways. Here are some possibilities:

— Individual Study. Because the book is self-instructional, all that is needed is a quiet place, some time and a pencil. By completing the activities and exercises, a person should not only receive valuable feedback, but also practical ideas about steps for self-improvement.

— Workshops and Seminars. The book is ideal for pre-assigned reading prior to a workshop or seminar. With the basics in hand, the quality of the participation should improve. More time can be spent on concept extensions and applications during the program. The book can also be effective when a trainer distributes it at the beginning of a session, and leads participants through the contents.

— Remote Location Training. Copies can be sent to those not able to attend "home office" training sessions.

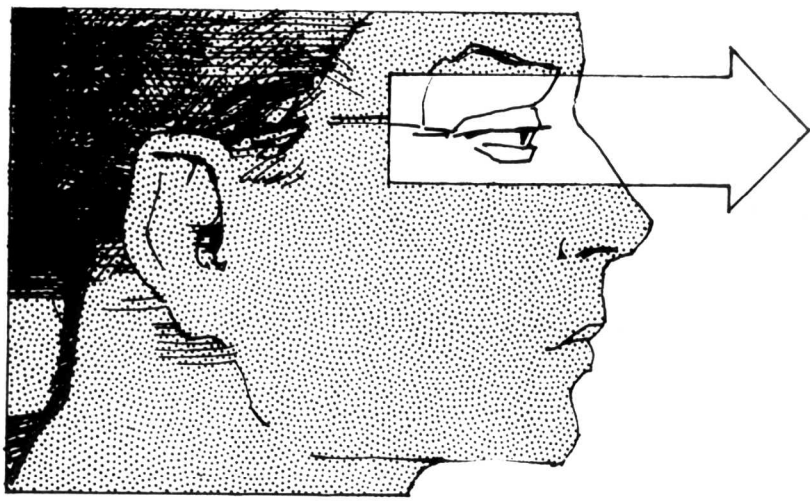
— Informal Study Groups. Thanks to the format, brevity and low cost, this book is ideal for "brown-bag" or other informal group sessions.

There are other possibilities that depend on the objectives, program or ideas or the user. One thing for sure, even after it has been read, this book will serve as excellent reference material which can be easily reviewed.

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SOME IMPORTANT OBJECTIVES
FOR THE READER



WHICH OBJECTIVES DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE

Objectives give us a sense of direction; a definition of what we plan to accomplish; and a sense of fulfillment when they are achieved. Check the objectives that are important to you. This book will help you achieve them.

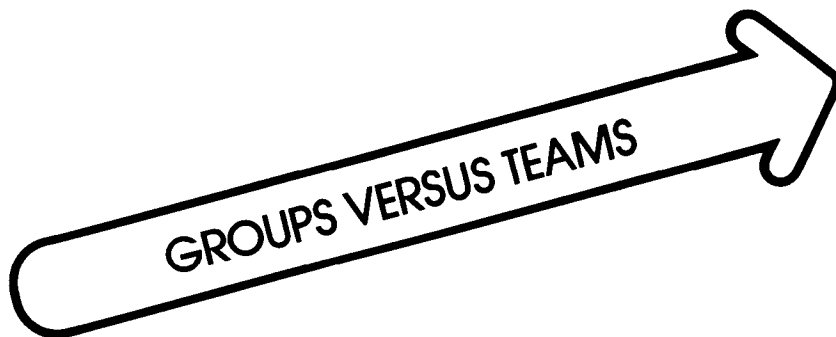
- I HOPE TO:
- Be able to explain the difference between a group and a team.
 - Learn how to recognize situations that call for team rather than group behavior.
 - Learn how to build a team from a group.
 - Be able to understand and apply leadership techniques.
 - Enjoy the personal and organizational rewards of team behavior.

GROUPS ARE FUNDAMENTAL UNITS OF ORGANIZATION

From the beginning of time people have formed groups. Groups provide the basis for family living, protection, waging war, government, recreation and work. Group behavior has ranged from total chaos to dramatic success, but it is increasingly evident that groups enjoy their greatest success when they become more productive units called teams.

Managers in many organizations seem content with group performance. This is often because they have not thought beyond what is being accomplished to what might be achieved under slightly different circumstances. Other leaders using the same number of people, doing similar tasks with the same technology somehow manage to improve productivity dramatically by establishing a climate where people are willing to give their best and work together in teams.

A comparison of teams and groups is shown on the facing page, check the characteristics representative of the unit of which you are currently a part.



GROUPS VERSUS TEAMS

5

| GROUPS | TEAMS |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members think they are grouped together for administrative purposes only. Individuals work independently; sometimes at cross purposes with others. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members recognize their interdependence and understand both personal and team goals are best accomplished with mutual support. Time is not wasted struggling over "turf" or attempting personal gain at the expense of others. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members tend to focus on themselves because they are not sufficiently involved in planning the unit's objectives. They approach their job simply as a hired hand. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members feel a sense of ownership for their jobs and unit because they are committed to goals they helped establish. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members are told what to do rather than being asked what the best approach would be. Suggestions are not encouraged. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members contribute to the organization's success by applying their unique talent and knowledge to team objectives. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members distrust the motives of colleagues because they do not understand the role of other members. Expressions of opinion or disagreement are considered divisive or non-supportive. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members work in a climate of trust and are encouraged to openly express ideas, opinions, disagreements and feelings. Questions are welcomed. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members are so cautious about what they say that real understanding is not possible. Game playing may occur and communications traps be set to catch the unwary. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members practice open and honest communication. They make an effort to understand each other's point of view. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members may receive good training but are limited in applying it to the job by the supervisor or other group members. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members are encouraged to develop skills and apply what they learn on the job. They receive the support of the team. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members find themselves in conflict situations which they do not know how to resolve. Their supervisor may put off intervention until serious damage is done. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members recognize conflict is a normal aspect of human interaction but they view such situations as an opportunity for new ideas and creativity. They work to resolve conflict quickly and constructively. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members may or may not participate in decisions affecting the team. Conformity often appears more important than positive results. | <input type="checkbox"/> Members participate in decisions affecting the team but understand their leader must make a final ruling whenever the team cannot decide, or an emergency exists. Positive results, not conformity are the goal. |

Team leaders exhibit different styles than those who are content managing a group. These styles are shaped by each person's life experience and the values they have adopted over the years.

Given today's rapid rate of organizational change, and the changing needs of people, it is important for those "in charge" to re-evaluate and modify their styles on a regular basis. This is the only way they can make the adaptations necessary to continue to be effective.

See how team centered leadership differs from group centered management on the facing page—then make a commitment to creating and supporting a team effort.

Plan to make any needed changes in your style and evaluate the results carefully. Keep making adjustments until you achieve the results desired. Stay on the alert for additional ways to improve your leadership.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUP-CENTERED MANAGERS AND TEAM-CENTERED MANAGERS

Identify the qualities which best describe you at this time with a .

GROUP CENTERED

- Overriding concern to meet current goals inhibits thought about what might be accomplished through reorganizing to enhance member contributions.
- Reactive to upper management, peers and employees. Find it easier to go along with the crowd.
- Willing to involve people in planning and problem solving to some extent but, within limits.
- Resents or distrusts employees who know their jobs better than the manager.
- Sees group problem solving as a waste of time, or an abdication of managerial responsibility.
- Controls information and communicates only what group members need or want to know.
- Ignores conflict between staff members or with other groups.
- Sometimes slow to recognize individual or group achievements.
- Sometimes modifies group agreements to suit personal convenience.

TEAM CENTERED

- Current goals are taken in stride. Can be a visionary about what the people can achieve as a team. Can share vision and act accordingly.
- Proactive in most relationships. Exhibits personal style. Can stimulate excitement and action. Inspires teamwork and mutual support.
- Can get people involved and committed. Makes it easy for others to see opportunities for teamwork. Allows people to perform.
- Looks for people who want to excel and can work constructively with others. Feels role is to encourage and facilitate this behavior.
- Considers problem solving the responsibility of team members.
- Communicates fully and openly. Welcomes questions. Allows the team to do its' own filtering.
- Mediates conflict before it becomes destructive.
- Makes an effort to see that both individual and team accomplishments are recognized at the right time in an appropriate manner.
- Keeps commitments and expects the same in return.

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY IS THE BY-PRODUCT OF TEAMWORK

When productive teams are compared with less productive groups, there are some important differences involving the application of team concepts. Here is an example:

A study was made of twenty coal mines operating in the same geologic structure, drawing from the same labor pool, and subject to the same governmental regulations. Productivity was measured in tons of coal produced per employee per shift.

The mine with the highest productivity delivered 242 tons per employee contrasted with the lowest which mined 58 tons per employee. The other mines were somewhere in between.

Conclusions from this study were summarized as follows: "The primary difference was the way in which company management worked with the employees. The most productive mine provided employees with significantly more individual responsibility and involvement in goal setting and problem solving."

TEAM BUILDING CONCEPTS CAN BE APPLIED IN ANY ORGANIZATION

A diverse group formed each year to compete in a sport is an excellent example of team building. Groups develop into "teams" when their common purpose is understood by all of the members. Within effective teams each member plays an assigned role using his or her talent to the best advantage. When the members integrate their skills to accentuate strengths and minimize weaknesses team objectives are usually achieved. When on the other hand groups play as individuals, they usually fail. Most wins or losses are the result of "teamwork". In sports, feedback is often immediate. If teamwork is lacking, good managers can identify where the problems are, and initiate corrective action in order to change things until the desired results are achieved.

Like their athletic counterparts, groups organized to perform business, community and governmental functions can achieve far more when they work as "teams". Unfortunately, many leaders fail to recognize and apply the same principles as they would coaching a sport. In a work organization they do not understand how to transform their group into a productive team. One reason may be that feedback in the form of results is not as quick or dramatic as in athletics. Problems can go unnoticed and corrective action if taken can be slow in coming.

Effective teamwork knows no level. It is just as important among top executives, as it is among middle managers, first line supervisors or the rank and file. The absence of teamwork at any level, (or between levels) will limit organizational effectiveness and can eventually kill an organization.

**IT REQUIRES EFFORT TO ESTABLISH
AND MAINTAIN TEAMWORK**

If a leader does not place a high value on teamwork it will not occur. Teamwork takes conscious effort to develop and continuous effort to maintain, but the rewards can be great. Consider the examples on the facing page.



WHAT CAN TEAM BUILDING DO FOR ME?

Leaders sometimes assign a low priority to team building because they have not considered the advantages that can accrue from a well executed team effort.

Following are some results of team performance. Check those you would like to achieve.

- Realistic, achievable goals can be established for the team and individual members because those responsible for doing the work contribute to their construction.
- Employees and leaders commit to support each other to make the team successful.
- Team members understand one another's priorities and help or support when difficulties arise.
- Communication is open. The expression of new ideas, improved work methods, articulation of problems and concerns is encouraged.
- Problem solving is more effective because the expertise of the team is available.
- Performance feedback is more meaningful because team members understand what is expected and can monitor their performance against expectations.
- Conflict is understood as normal and viewed as an opportunity to solve problems. Through open discussion it can be resolved before it becomes destructive.
- Balance is maintained between group productivity and the satisfaction of personal team members needs.
- The team is recognized for outstanding results, as are individuals for their personal contributions.
- Members are encouraged to test their abilities and try out ideas. This becomes infectious and stimulates individuals to become stronger performers.
- Team members recognize the importance of disciplined work habits and conform their behavior to meet team standards.
- Learning to work effectively as a team in one unit, is good preparation for working as a team with other units. It is also good preparation for advancement.

TEAMWORK AND PRODUCTIVITY GO HAND IN HAND

YOUR ATTITUDE WILL MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN TEAM BUILDING

When the concept of team building is understood and applied at all levels in an organization it becomes much easier to transform groups into teams throughout the organization.

It is to any leader's advantage, however, to develop a team whether others are doing so or not. A positive attitude toward team building is essential.

Check your attitude by completing the exercise on the next page.

