



# **Team Building: Blueprints for Productivity and Satisfaction**

**Edited by W. Brendan Reddy, Ph.D.  
with Kaleel Jamison**

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## Dedication

*Kaleel Jamison was excited about coediting a book on team building. We spent many spirited hours discussing—and arguing about—what and who should be included in this project. Despite Kaleel’s illness and the knowledge that it was fatal, she continued to work on the book until her death on August 30, 1985.*

*Kaleel Jamison, a trainer and consultant, was a warm and dedicated professional who loved her work. She is sorely missed by her colleagues, friends, and clients. **Team Building: Blueprints for Productivity and Satisfaction** is dedicated to her memory.*

*W. Brendan Reddy, Ph.D.*

# Introduction

Team building has come of age. While other types of training interventions have become passé, team building—in a variety of forms—has evolved into a frequent “intervention of choice.”

Managers in both profit-making and not-for-profit organizations recognize the importance of quick responses to crises, thoughtful planning, and the full use of human resources in solving complex problems. Moreover, organizational subunits are becoming more interdependent, requiring teams of managers to work closely together. In addition, women and minority group members are gaining membership in these managerial teams. Developing and using the individual, interpersonal, and group skills required to produce a creative, wise, efficient, productive, and satisfying team is at best difficult. Team building is a response to this challenge.

The following 19 chapters address a wide range of team building issues and dynamics. Written for the team builder and the manager considering team building, this book was created in response to a need to feature **what is currently occurring** in the field, and thus is written by experts in the **practice** of team building.

Most of the chapters were written expressly for this book. The first three are classic articles that are reprinted here because they represent the best of the basic literature. A few others, adapted for this book, also appear in the current literature. Although the authors have diverse backgrounds, all but a few of these training professionals are members of NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science.

The book consists of five major sections, which are titled fundamentals, theory and dynamics, applications, clients and consultants, and multiculturalism.

In **Section I: Fundamentals**, the authors explore the basic components of the team building processes. W. Warner Burke focuses on the purpose of team building, setting goals, and analyzing how work is performed according to team members' roles and responsibilities. He examines the ways the team is working—its norms, decision making, and communications—and interteam relations. Each of the purposes is illustrated with examples and descriptions of techniques.

Thomas H. Patten, Jr., using detailed case studies of organizations vastly different in size and scope, tells us how to design the team building intervention as well as how to conduct it. He examines two cases and compares diagnoses, interventions, and results.

**Section II: Theory and dynamics** offers the reader chapters of varying breadth and depth on the theory and dynamics of team building, with both a macro and micro focus.

Marvin R. Weisbord describes team work as the "quintessential contradiction of a society grounded in individual achievement." To fully experience a productive community, he claims we must unlearn the "self-limiting assumptions about individual effort and authority that work against cooperation." Weisbord views team building as a way of learning necessary skills, pointing out that team building succeeds when the conditions of interdependence, leadership, and equal influence are met. He offers a model of team building and instructs us on the components.

Another model, the Team Performance Model, is presented and discussed by Allan B. Drexler, David Sibbet, and Russell H. Forrester. This model integrates the work of Jack R. Gibb with the theories of Arthur Young, and presents seven stages of group development, from orientation to renewal.

Gene Socialetti demonstrates that emotions and emotional experiences are constantly present in organizational life. He contends that because emotions are inevitable, and because they can affect productivity and the quality of work life—for better or for worse—they must be managed. Socialetti describes the impact of suppressing emotions on the work place, and finds the following three components crucial to managing affect in the organization: timing, context, and extent.

Nancy L. Brown discusses four illusions in team building, the "ROCS": rationality, objectivity, consciousness, and separability. She offers ways of dealing with their potential destructiveness, stressing that the consultant must always be aware of the presence of these illusions in the consultant's **own** mind. Brown further adds that once team members discuss the presence or absence of ROCS in their own work, the team can adjust its assumptions and move on to more productive work.

Philip G. Hanson and Bernard Lubin approach team building as group development, discussing the characteristics of a well-functioning team and giving a step-by-step description of the team building process and its various stages. They offer a basic assessment instrument for diagnosing a team's strengths and limitations, and emphasize that team building should not be a "one-shot event," but an ongoing process with continuous diagnosis, the planning and implementing of changes, evaluation of the changes, and modification of the program as indicated by the evaluation.

Jane Moosbrucker contrasts the American approach to groups with that of the Japanese, demonstrating the need for a team leadership model that is practical for our industrial culture. She describes typical member behaviors and concerns that emerge during each phase of the model, and the appropriate leader behavior that must occur to facilitate group movement, and thus effectiveness and productivity.

The role of the creative outlook in team building is explored by John D. Adams. He attributes team disalignment to the ways in which we formulate our views of reality—that is, the beliefs, attitudes, values, and expectations moderating our behavior. Adams describes two “mind-sets”: the operational/reactive, in which the environment is allowed to dominate one’s behavior, and the strategic/creative, in which one shapes events instead. The team building focus must be tied to the predominant outlook of the team, Adams suggests, or else team building must specifically intend to alter the team’s outlook toward the strategic/creative mindset. With training and practice, team members can learn to recognize which outlook is predominant and to switch outlooks as needed.

Kathleen D. Dannemiller describes her work at Ford Motor Company, where she found that traditional team building concepts and practices enforced the separation and fragmentation of functional groups. She and her colleagues developed strategies to connect leaders of separate divisions, using basic team building concepts to benefit both divisions and the company. Dannemiller provides the model of the “arthritic” organization, in which movement at each juncture is blocked and people operate out of “arthritic boxes” isolating them by function. She describes a generic intervention involving organization members who had never before been in the same room at the same time.

**Section III: Applications** begins with Eva Schindler-Rainman’s description of six trends calling for team work: shifting funding sources, the recruiting of teams, the move from “turfdom” to collaboration, the information society, the world of volunteers as a visionary force, and new populations. She notes both the positive and negative aspects of building teams, offering several strategies for composing voluntary system teams.

Robert T. Golembiewski illustrates ways of dealing with major differences when working with teams in both the public and private sectors. His experience leads him to find seven key areas in which typical organizations in business and government settings differ. Golembiewski discusses implications of these differences, providing an orientation for the public-sector consultant.

**Section IV: Clients and consultants** leads off with Judith D. Palmer’s advice for the manager who must build a team: “Don’t panic!” She reassures readers that although the concept of team building may seem intimidating, it is actually quite manageable for the manager. She out-

lines the stages a manager can expect the team to go through and a "basic triangle" of key elements that must be present for the team to do its work: task, team, and tools. Palmer's presentation clearly shows that team building is not only an ongoing process, but one in which the manager **must** play a pivotal role.

How to stay in charge during a team building effort despite hiring a consultant is discussed by Richard E. Byrd. He describes situations in which consultants come between bosses and their teams, thereby contributing more to the problem than to the solution. Byrd illustrates many ways in which consultants take over the process, advising managers of the pitfalls—and ways to avoid them—that can come with getting "help" from a consultant.

Herman Gadon identifies specific issues and a model dealing with the socialization of the newcomer to an ongoing work group. In his discussion, he notes ways to help managers and group members cope more effectively with these issues. Gadon moves us through the predictable process of group development—connecting, competing, collaborating, and caring—and gives advice for integrating new members more effectively at each stage.

**Section V: Multiculturalism** focuses on cultural issues—particularly gender and minority group considerations—in team building. Before a manager hires a team building consultant, Brendan Reddy and Carol Burke recommend that several areas be explored. Now that more women and minority members belong to management teams, the authors emphasize multicultural issues and suggest that managers conduct in-depth interviews with prospective consultants so that they can make well-informed hiring choices.

Susan L. Colantuono and Ava A. Schnidman focus on building multifunctional work teams. They contend that the issues of multifunctional teams differ from those of intact work groups, meaning that team building for these teams must also differ. The authors build their team sessions on six key goals: clarifying the mission, analyzing gaps and overlaps, unveiling specialties, dealing with stereotypes, easing communication, and empowering the group.

In the final chapter, Frederick A. Miller shows that team building is no longer a process of white men for white men. He describes the long-existing norms for teams and states that issues of racism and sexism must be addressed for teams to be effective and productive. Miller also points out the many pitfalls—subtle and obvious—that teams and managers must avoid or work through if they are to succeed.

I consider these works important contributions to the field of team building, and hope that they will prove informative and valuable to the readers.

W. Brendan Reddy, Ph.D.



# Table of Contents

Introduction	ix
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## I. Fundamentals

Team Building	3
<i>W. Warner Burke</i>	
Team Building Part 1. Designing the Intervention	15
<i>Thomas H. Patten, Jr.</i>	
Team Building Part 2. Conducting the Intervention	25
<i>Thomas H. Patten, Jr.</i>	

## II. Theory and Dynamics

Team Work: Building Productive Relationships	35
<i>Marvin R. Weisbord</i>	
The Team Performance Model	45
<i>Allan B. Drexler, David Sibbet, and Russell H. Forrester</i>	
Teams and the Management of Emotion	62
<i>Gene Boccialetti</i>	
Do You Have ROCS in Your Head? The Illusions of Rationality, Objectivity, Consciousness, and Separability in Team Building	72
<i>Nancy L. Brown</i>	
Team Building as Group Development	76
<i>Philip G. Hanson and Bernard Lubin</i>	
Developing a Productivity Team: Making Groups at Work Work	88
<i>Jane Moosbrucker</i>	
The Role of the Creative Outlook in Team Building	98
<i>John D. Adams</i>	
Team Building at a Macro Level, or "Ben Gay" for Arthritic Organizations	107
<i>Kathleen D. Dannemiller</i>	

### III. Applications

Team Building in Voluntary Organizations <i>Eva Schindler-Rainman</i>	119
Working with Teams in the Public and Business Sectors: Ways of Dealing with Major Differences <i>Robert T. Golembiewski</i>	124

### IV. Clients and Consultants

For the Manager Who Must Build a Team <i>Judith D. Palmer</i>	137
How To Stay in Charge—Even with a Consultant <i>Richard E. Byrd</i>	150
The Newcomer and the Ongoing Work Group <i>Herman Gadon</i>	161

### V. Multiculturalism

What To Look for when Selecting a Team Building Consultant: Multicultural and Other Considerations <i>W. Brendan Reddy and Carol Burke</i>	179
E Pluribus Unum: Building Multifunctional Work Teams <i>Susan L. Colantuono and Ava A. Schnidman</i>	187
Moving a Team to Multiculturalism <i>Frederick A. Miller</i>	192
Biographical Sketches of the Contributors	198

# **Section I.**

## **Fundamentals**



# Team Building

## W. Warner Burke

When a work group has at least one goal that is common to all members and when accomplishment of that goal requires cooperative interdependent behavior on the part of all group members, team building may be an appropriate intervention. Dyer's (1977) three check lists are useful criteria for determining more specifically the appropriateness of team building for a work group. Studying his lists will help clarify the purposes and the nature of team building.

Using Beckhard's (1972) succinct statement of the four primary purposes of team building and Plovnick, Fry, and Rubin's (1975) elaboration as a guide, I shall now provide a more thorough explanation of team building. According to Beckhard (1972), there are four purposes of team building:

1. to set goals or priorities,
2. to analyze or allocate the way work is performed according to team members' roles and responsibilities,
3. to examine the way the team is working—that is, its processes, such as norms, decision making, communications, and so forth,
4. to examine relationships among the team members.

Beckhard points out that all these purposes are likely to be operating in a team building effort, "but unless **one** purpose is defined as **the** primary purpose, there tends to be considerable misuse of energy. People then operate from their own hierarchy of purposes and, predictably, these are not always the same for all members" (Beckhard 1972, p. 24). From a combination of responses to Dyer's check lists and individual interviews with group members, a diagnosis can be made that should indicate the primary purpose for an initial team building session. If the team building effort is the first for the group, the OD practitioner should determine if the focus of the first session should be setting goals or

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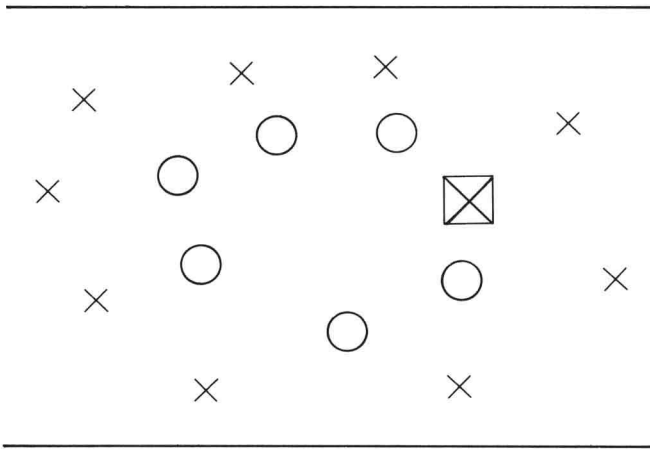
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establishing priorities among team goals. If the goals and their priorities are clear, the OD practitioner should determine if the roles and responsibilities among team members are clear. If so, then the practitioner determines if working procedures and processes are clear. It is important and beneficial for the OD practitioner to use Beckhard's four purposes in the order that they are listed. The reason for this ordering of the purposes is as follows: **interpersonal** problems could be a consequence of group members' lack of clarity regarding team goals, roles, and responsibilities, or procedures and processes; problems with **procedures and processes** could be a consequence of group members' lack of clarity regarding team goals or roles and responsibilities; and problems with **roles and responsibilities** may be a result of group members' lack of clarity about team goals. To begin a team building effort with work on interpersonal relationships may be a misuse of time and energy, as it is possible that problems in this area are a result of misunderstandings in one of the other three domains. Clarifying goals, roles, and responsibilities, or team procedures and processes may eliminate certain interpersonal problems among team members; clarifying roles and responsibilities may in itself eliminate some of the problems with the team's working procedures and processes; and clarifying team goals and their priorities may in itself eliminate certain problems team members may have with their roles and responsibilities.

We shall now consider case examples of team building interventions for each of these four purposes.

## Setting goals and priorities

In the course of an OD effort with a medical school, the school's internal consultant and I, an outside consultant, were asked by one of the clinical department chairs to help with some departmental team building. In our interviews with the department members, my colleague and I diagnosed that there was a pervasive sense of no direction for the department as a whole. In a subsequent meeting with the chairman, the three of us designed an off-site session for one evening and the following day for the 15 members of the department. Briefly, the design of this off-site meeting was as follows. The 15 members, including the chairman, were initially divided into three groups of five people each, heterogeneously grouped. Their common tasks were (1) to determine what they believed the departmental goals should be and (2) to select two of their members to represent them in a later plenary session. Having developed their goal statements, the three groups then assembled in the large room and the two representatives from each group met together in the center while the remaining nine department members were positioned around them as observers. Figure 1 depicts this arrangement of a small group of six



**Figure 1. Configuration of the second phase of an off-site meeting to set departmental goals.**

persons working together in the center, with their colleagues gathered around them and observing.

The task for this six-person temporary executive committee was to communicate what each group had developed and to consolidate their three lists of statements into one, which would then become the statement of objectives for the department. An empty chair was provided within this inner circle of six so that, if any of the observers believed that what her or his group had developed was not being represented or thought that this temporary executive committee was going astray, the person could occupy the empty chair, state her or his position or raise an issue, wait for and possibly deal with the reaction of the executive group, and then return to observer status.

Once the executive group had consolidated the three lists into one, the total group individually ranked the statements (14 in this case) according to priority of importance for the department. Next, the total group individually selected its first and second choices of objectives it wished to develop into action steps for implementation. The 15 people were then regrouped into three groups of five, according to their choices of an objective. These three groups met periodically after the off-site meeting to plan action steps for implementing the three most important objectives.

At the conclusion of the off-site meeting, each person was asked to respond to two questions, with responses arranged according to a five-point Likert scale: (1) How pessimistic or optimistic are you at the moment about the state of the department? (The 1-5 response ranged

from "highly pessimistic" to "highly optimistic.") (2) To what extent do you believe positive change will occur as a result of this meeting? (The 1-5 response ranged from "not at all" to "to a great extent.") I like to ask these two questions toward the end of an off-site meeting because they provide a relatively simple way to consider the process of the meeting—people's feelings—and an opportunity to examine the degree of an individual's motivation to follow through on the steps planned for future implementation. In this case the departmental members' ratings were uniformly optimistic and positive.

The rationale for such a team building design has several elements. For such a short period of time (in this case only slightly more than one day), it is important to have as much member participation as feasible and to use the allotted time as efficiently as possible. The smaller group of six obviously could work more efficiently than the total group of 15, but some degree of total participation was maintained by employing the empty chair. Selecting representatives and then being able to see what they do, and also having a chance to influence their decision making, helps ensure the involvement of all department members and therefore their commitment to implementing the goals they identified. The follow-up groups did indeed meet periodically to plan action steps. A year later, in a brief interview, my colleague and I were pleased to learn that the department chairman continued to be satisfied with the progress of his department. He attributed much of this progress to the success of the off-site meeting.

## **Allocating work according to roles and responsibilities**

Ambiguity regarding one's role and conflict between what is expected of an individual in a particular role and what that individual believes is appropriate can cause considerable confusion within a work group and anxiety for its members (Katz & Kahn, 1978). There are various techniques for gaining greater clarification of roles and responsibilities within a team. These techniques typically involve team members' (1) presenting their perceptions and understandings of their roles to one another, (2) discussing these perceptions and understandings, and (3) modifying roles as a function of increased agreement about mutual expectations. One such technique is the role analysis technique developed by Dayal and Thomas (1968). Another similar one is the job expectation technique, which is particularly useful when there is a need to integrate a new member into a team (Huse, 1980).

A technique that is particularly suitable for situations of role conflict is Harrison's (1972) role negotiation technique. Although it is most suitable for this second purpose of team building, the approach also may be



