



THE EXTRAORDINARY TEAM

PLEASE ROUTE TO _____

Tips and techniques to improve the way your teams work.

Cross-Cultural Teams *By Ted Haenlein*

I recently had the opportunity to co-facilitate the strategic plan of an international group of 65 technicians, academicians, and consultants. The American and Canadian Co-Chairs also wanted to make the group operate less like a loose federation and more like a team.

The participants were all volunteers and had both personal and formal national agendas that they brought to the table, which were at times not

well concealed. Voting with their feet became a very powerful means of dissent - they just left!

In the debrief, we identified several issues and lessons learned that are worth sharing:

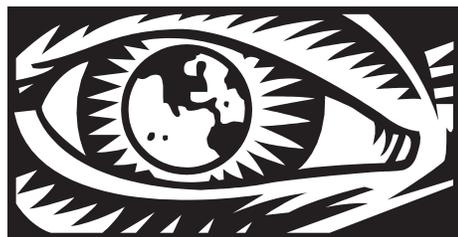
Cultural Issues

The attendees were not familiar with a direct, fairly structured "American" facilitation style.

We did not understand and use the proper formal titles that members were

expecting - especially the oriental and European members. Other nationalities didn't care at all. We were not able to bounce well between "Dr. Kumo from Japan and Joe from Australia."

They did not "trust" us to take them to the desired outcomes. The leading members did not have buy in to the



agenda laid out for them - only the Co-Chairs.

As volunteers, many members felt their value was threatened when their input was not sought.

Ethno-centricity

The Americans were in charge which is an issue with many foreign nationals.

The examples and handouts were all American examples.

Unclear Expectations

We didn't explain the session's expected outcomes or deliverables.

We didn't have a roadmap to refer to, or show them visually the process and

(cont'd on page 2)

where they were compared to where they

In this issue...

*Team Activities:
Coke Can Carry*

*Some Experts, Their
Fence and the Janitor*

*From the Bookshelf:
Developing the Leader
Within You*



Flip Chart Tips

Write in LARGE capital letters, using the thick part of the flipchart marker. Leave a margin on both sides.

Capture the speaker's key words. Abbreviate where possible. If you miss a point or don't understand, ask for the speaker to repeat or clarify what was said. If you aren't sure how to spell a word, ask for help.

Use dark colors, such as black, brown, blue, dark green or purple. Alternate between colors with each new point. Highlight with orange, yellow and pastels.

Emphasize titles with underlines, clouds or pictures. When listing items, bullet them with circles, diamonds, boxes or arrows. If you're not artistic, try tracing pictures from clip art.

Remember to stand to the side when not writing.

Handling Disruptive Team Members

For the most part, people who are being disruptive don't realize the impact they are having on the team; they are just being themselves. The key to handling these situations is to intervene gracefully while maintaining the self-esteem of the disrupter.

When intervening, you want to use the lowest, most non-threatening level possible. Start with:

Eye Contact - Make eye contact with the disrupter. If that doesn't work, escalate to the next level.

Movement - Make some kind of movement toward the disrupter. If sitting, lean forward. If standing, step toward the person.

Combine the Two - Use eye contact and movement at the same time, usually with a small touch of the dramatic.

Redirect - Turn the disrupter's comments into a

(cont'd on page 2)

TEAM

"I look forward to reading your column in the Daily Press every other week. Your timing couldn't be better. I especially liked your article on disruptive team members. Boy, do we have a few! "

Thom
The Dump Furniture Outlet

Disruptions (cont'd)

constructive contribution to the team's discussion.

Limit air time - Direct the discussion away from the disrupter by asking questions or brainstorming around the table.

Reminders- Remind the team of the ground rules and/or the agenda established at the beginning of the meeting.

If the behavior continues, you may choose to escalate your intervention to an even higher level:

Off-line - At the next break, talk to the disrupter one-on-one. Describe the disruptive behavior and the impact on the team. Reach agreement on how to move forward.

Off-line with Horsepower - If time permits, ask the team leader or team sponsor to talk to the disrupter one-on-one.



On-line - In front of the team, discretely point out the behavior, and ask for cooperation.

Direct Confrontation - As a last resort, describe the problem with the team and ask for the team's help in resolving the problem. Avoid further disruptions by confirming agreement on how to move forward.

Keep in mind that you aren't alone. There are probably others on your team who will appreciate - and even assist - your attempts to handle the problem. Call on these people as allies to move the meeting forward.

Finally, when a serious disruption occurs, be patient and remain calm - no matter how emotional you feel about the problem or the disrupter. You will be in a better position to deal with it later.

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TEAM

A newsletter designed to facilitate discussion and share tips and techniques to improve the way your teams work.

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The Extraordinary Team is a quarterly publication distributed to clients, friends and partners of Quality Process Consultants, Inc. Articles are welcome and encouraged. We sincerely would like to know what you are doing.

Quality Process Consultants, Inc. helps you determine the goals and strategies to improve the way you and your teams do business. We specialize in facilitation services, training and unique facilitation products.

*Strategic Planning
Strategic Partnerships
Collaborative Problem Solving
Process Improvement
Process Reengineering
Team Building*

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Cross-Cultural Teams (cont'd)

had been and where they were headed.

Lessons Learned:

- Better cross cultural research in advance work. Answer the questions: "Who are they really? What are they like? What are they used to? How do we get them to buy-in to our approach? How do they expect to be addressed?"
- Read-ahead packages and handouts need to be more inclusive of the process being used - a roadmap of the agenda and process to get there.
- Use more of the non US Co-Chair to secure credibility for new and contentious issues.
- Prior to, review the agenda with key members to achieve wider support of the process.
- Establish and review desired outcomes of each session.
- Clarify the vocabulary early in the process. Use simple diagrams as much as possible.
- The lead facilitators "story-boarded" the entire agenda in great detail which was then used as a discussion instrument with the other off-site facilitators. The story-boarding effort led to facilitator alignment, high sense of trust on the part of the Co-Chairs, and flexible response when on the spot changes had to be made.
- The key is in the planning - two full days of planning for each day of

"Your tower building activity in the last issue was great! I am amazed at how well it demonstrates the team dynamic. It's a terrific energizer and is appropriate for any group that has a high level of intensity."

Steve Holcomb
Case Corporation

THE EXTRAORDINARY

TEAM

What's New at QPC Inc.

Can you believe? — We finally moved to The Arnold Building on 48 West Queens Way in Downtown Hampton. After three months of renovation, builders, plumbers, electricians, etc., we finally opened up our offices on August 1st. Hallelujah!

Our grand ribbon-cutting ceremony will be on August 19th at 5pm. If local, you will be receiving an invitation in the mail and hope that you can come. For those of you living outside the Hampton Roads area - If you would like to come, don't wait for an invitation, just come on down!

We are thrilled with relocating to the Downtown Hampton area. We did a "dry run" this past weekend, checking out the coffee maker,

caterers, and how the traffic flows in the meeting rooms - what an eye-opening experience with lots of improvements as well!

The Arnold Building will also be home to two other firms:

Greg Richardson of Aim Associates, Inc. specializes in corporate outplacement and career transition services, including career coaching. He also offers workplace effectiveness training aimed at personal performance.

George Denninghoff of HR Synergy, Inc. provides consulting and outsourcing services focused on creating high performance workforce solutions for its clients.

We are really excited Greg and

You are cordially invited to
The Grand Opening of

The
Arnold
BUILDING

August 19, 1997 at 5 pm

George are on board. And...we are looking for two other fine, upstanding professionals join us.

My apologies for the confusion with the phone numbers. Bell Atlantic gave our phone numbers to someone else. So please note the new numbers.

Hope your summer is relaxing and not *too* hot Rich and I are taking a much-needed vacation in Cancun, Mexico from August 23 to September 6. I'll see you when I return —

Kristin



Note: New Phone

Practical Team Activities: Coke Can Carry *By Gerry Miller*

Coke Can Carry

An exercise to demonstrate the importance of teamwork

Time - 30 minutes

Nr. of Participants: 4-8 per team
Materials Required (each team):

- 1 full Cola can
- 4 pencils
- 2 thick rubber bands (strong enough to go around can and be lifted)

Introduce this activity as a way to demonstrate the importance of teamwork.

Divide the room into teams of four to eight people. Hand out the materials for each team and give them their tasking: To carry the coke can (or other soda can) from one side of the room to the other

side using the following rules:

Each team that successfully carries the coke can from one side of the room to the other side earns 200 points.

The coke can is contaminated; therefore no one can come within six inches of the can. If they do, then the team will be fined 10 points for each violation.

You cannot upset or turn the can upside down at any time during the exercise. If it is, then the team will be fined 20 points for each violation.

You cannot use any other materials than those provided to complete the task. If you do, then the team will be fined 30 points for each violation.

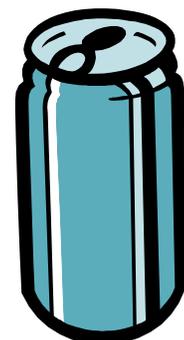
Finally, every member

of the team must be involved in the carry.

If possible, provide a "starting and finish line" by putting tape on the floor or providing visual points of reference.

Ask if there are any questions and clarify if necessary. Let them know this is not a timed task (no extra points for speed), but you will stop the activity in 20 minutes.

After 20 minutes, debrief the activity. What worked? What would you do differently? How did you go about making decisions and priorities?



"Change the leader, change the organization. Everything rises and falls on leadership! However, I have found that it's not easy to change leaders. In fact, I've discovered that leaders resist change as much as followers do. The result? Unchanged leaders equals unchanged organizations. People do what people see."

John C. Maxwell
Developing the Leader Within You



From the Bookshelf *By Larry Mercier*

Want to read a great book about personal leadership? I highly recommend **Developing the Leader Within You** by John C. Maxwell.

I have read this book several times cover to cover, wrote notes in the margins, and worked through several of the exercises to enhance your leadership skills.

He maintains that leadership is the ability to obtain followers and to get people to work for you when they don't have to. Leadership is all about influence - a skill that can be developed.

In the next chapter, he develops

the priority principle - 20% of your priorities give you 80% of your production **if** you spend your time, money and personnel on the top 20% of your priorities.

Maxwell contends that the most important ingredient of leadership is integrity - and that leaders must have higher standards than their followers.

He talks about how to successfully implement change and developing your most important asset: people.

He refers to vision as the indispensable quality of leadership and that people fall into four levels:

- Wanderers: They never see it
- Followers: They see it but never pursue it on their own.

- Achievers: They see it and pursue it.
- Leaders: They see it, pursue it and help others see it.

Finally, he discusses the price tag of leadership is self-discipline and walks you through a "self-discipline plan."

I firmly believe this book has made a significant difference in my leadership style, outlook and ability to lead others.

It is chock full of exercises, tips and anecdotes that not only make it a pleasure to read, but to apply.

Some Experts, Their Fence and a Janitor

Robert Schuller tells an interesting story that occurred years ago in San Diego. The elevator at the El Cortez Hotel could not handle the number of people who were staying at the hotel. The experts--engineers and architects--were called in. They decided to put another elevator in by cutting a hole in each floor and installing the motor for the new elevator in the basement. The plans were drawn up. Everything was in order.

One day the architect and the engineer came into the lobby discussing their plans. A janitor, who was there with his mop, heard them say they were going to chop holes in the floors. The janitor said, "That's going to make a mess." The engineer said, "Of course. But we'll get help for you, don't worry." The janitor observed, "You'll have to close the hotel for a while." "Well, if we have to close the hotel for a while, we'll close the hotel. We must have another elevator."

Holding his mop in his hand, the janitor asked, "Do you know what I would do if I were you?" The architect arrogantly responded, "What?" "I'd build the elevator on the outside," the janitor replied.

The janitor's unique idea astonished the experts.

And so the elevator was built on the outside. This was the first time in the history of architecture that an elevator was built on the outside of a building.

The experts didn't realize it, but they had surrendered leadership of their lives to fences. The fences were not wooden or chain link. Their fences were mental--thoughts that limited their thinking and their actions. The janitor did not have these boundaries, so he could apply his best thinking with unlimited freedom.

Do fences set unnecessary boundaries for your life? Think about it. Have you discarded ideas and dreams that once created excitement when you thought about them? Have you lowered your goals, so that you aim for and achieve far less than your capabilities? Fences may be negative self-perceptions like, "I don't have enough education." Or past discouragement and disappointments may be limiting you. Note that each fence focuses on a problem, not a solution. And each builds a boundary limiting your freedom and happiness.

Peter Drucker, a management consultant, says the most effective people are not problem-minded; they're opportunity-minded. They mentally feed opportunities, and starve problems. The janitor did just that--dissatisfied with the experts' approach, his mind raced freely, and he created a better solution to the problem.

