

We have been assisting you, our clients, with your Team Building (TBu), Team Bonding (TBo) and Team Development (TDe) needs for many years.

Some teams were easy to fuse and coordinate whilst others posed interesting challenges requiring innovative approaches. These challenges have led us to look closely at our analysis methodology and training in TBu, TBo, and TDe. This has also forced us to ask a significant question.

Can 'unselected' (a group of people that were employed without any predefined selection criteria to match each individual team members' personalities) Teams be easily trained and motivated into permanently working together, or, are 'selected' (a group of people that were employed with pre-planned and predefined selection criteria to match each individual team members' personalities that matched the team's achievement goals) Teams more cost effective?

In our experience, we have found that most employers hire their staff based on skills and knowledge factors; few employers consider the individual's personalities and the impact on the existing staff members. In most instances, if the new employee's personality is taken into account, the consideration is usually given to how the new employee's personality matches that of the employer's, even if the employee will not be working directly with the employer.

Before we can consider how effective selected (Pre-Selection) teams are in comparison with unselected (ad-Hoc Appointment) teams, we should examine what criteria makes an effective team, and what a Team actually is.

A successful team is made up of a Team Leader and Team Members.

The Team Leader must have total commitment to the Team Members and the job at hand: the motivation and expertise to lead the Team from the front, and by example if required: to serve and support the Team Members: fervour, vigour, motivation, and sufficient knowledge of the job at hand. An unwavering readiness to carry responsibility rather than shift the blame; and, the ability to coordinate the individuals in the team to work in unison as apposed to a group of individuals.

The Team Members must have complete commitment to the Team above themselves. Provide constructive input to the Team's work and goals. Have passion, energy, motivation, knowledge, and expertise within the Team Member's individual area of work. Finally, the ability to take responsibility for his/her element/s of the Team's work and delivering on the responsibilities.

Many people define "Teams" as groups of people that have been brought together for a specific task. This statement is not essentially incorrect, but also not explicitly correct. Our definition of a Team is **"a group of people working together ... paid or voluntary ... to carry out a task or tasks ... that could include but is not exclusive to running a business."** In our definition, a Team could be made up of smaller Teams, all working together in differing areas of responsibilities towards a common goal.

A company or organisation that employs more than one person is a Team. "Employ" does not necessarily mean direct employment; the employment could be subcontracted to yet another organisation/s. In this context, every organisation is a team of people working towards completing a task or tasks, whether directly or indirectly employed.

Taking OUR definition of a Team into account, every owner, chief executive, chairperson, president, or manager (Team Leader) must have the qualities listed above in the Team Leader's requirements: and, every employee, contractor, sub-contractor, or service provider (Team Member) must have the Team Members' qualities listed above.

Most successful business owners, chief executives, chairpersons, or presidents are born with the Team Leader qualities required: it is this criterion that makes them successful. The others that were not naturally born with these criteria have understood the qualities required and have adapted to the situation via self-help or outside training courses.

There are hundreds of companies and organisations all over the world that teach leadership and team member capabilities. Millions of books are sold every year to people trying to find the answers to successful leadership, team management and building.

One of these successful leadership gurus is American born Dr. John C Maxwell, an internationally recognised leadership expert, speaker, and author with over 13million book sales. Dr. Maxwell made an interesting statement, "one is too small a number to achieve greatness ..." We do not necessarily disagree with his statement, but we have numerous examples that contradict the theory, however, his statement is true in 'team management.'

Most teams are put together according to the skill-set and knowledge required for the task/s without considering the single most important factor that affects every team, the individual personalities of the team members. Normally, a senior member of staff is appointed as the team leader, an accountant to manage the team's budget, personnel that have the required skills, etc.

Owners, organisations, and companies have been ignoring people's individual personalities for centuries during the employment process. This has had some catastrophic consequences, resulting in delays on delivery of work and conflict resolution training or consultancy as the team members conflict, annoy or undermine each other.

"We do not necessarily like or get on with everyone we meet in life"; if this were untrue, we would be friends with everyone we ever met, from childhood to now. We feel comfortable around people that we are compatible with, either because their personalities supplement or complement ours. Not many people that work together actually socialise together: they only come together during their working week. Albeit that it is true that "we do not have to like the people we work with", it makes for the smoother running of a company or team if the individuals like and respect each other and can work together coherently.

Teams are made up of people with differing personalities and personality traits, and this is true of every organisation, company, and or group of people. These personality traits can be split into separate categories depending on what psychoanalytical theory one wishes to use. For this exercise we will examine two of the most popular, the **DISC** and **Enneagram** personality profiling methods.

DISC is based on the theory that people's Primary personality profiles fall into One of Four categories:

- D:** Dominance - Direct and Decisive. *D's are strong-willed, strong-minded people who like accepting challenges, taking action, and getting immediate results*
- I:** Influence - Optimistic and Outgoing. *I's are "people" people who like participating on teams, sharing ideas, and energizing and entertaining others*
- S:** Steadiness - Sympathetic and Cooperative. *S's are helpful people who like working behind the scenes, performing in consistent and predictable ways, and being good listeners*
- C:** Compliance/Conscientiousness - Concerned and Correct. *C's are sticklers for quality and like planning ahead, employing systematic approaches, and checking and re-checking for accuracy*

The **Enneagram** theory expands the Primary personality traits into Nine separate categories:

- Type 1:** The Reformer - *The rational, idealistic type*
- Type 2:** The Helper - *The caring, nurturing type*
- Type 3:** The Motivator - *The adaptable, success-oriented type*
- Type 4:** The Artist - *The intuitive, reserved type*
- Type 5:** The Thinker - *The perceptive, cerebral type*
- Type 6:** The Sceptic - *The committed, security-oriented type*
- Type 7:** The Generalist - *The enthusiastic, productive type*
- Type 8:** The Leader - *The powerful, aggressive type*
- Type 9:** The Peacemaker - *The easygoing, accommodating type*

There are many views and theories of splitting individuals into separate personality traits: there are also varying views of how relevant and accurate these theories are. Some people attempt to invalidate the theories by stating that the categories are very broad, vague and do not take into consideration the individuals' own life experiences that will affect their personalities. Others claim that it is merely placing people in convenient "boxes." When one studies these theories properly, everyone has a Primary personality trait and all of the other traits are present in varying degrees: there is no correct or incorrect profile for anyone, just the individual's profile. Accuracy is stated at some 80%.

We have chosen these two theories as we have utilised them with excellent results over the past two decades, and, if we are to prove our point, we must refer to someone's personality types: therefore in the interest of confidentiality, I have decided to use my own, which I am sure most of you already know or have figured out by the above descriptions.

It is irrelevant as to whether we utilise DISC or Enneagram: Enneagram only provides more diversity of personality traits, we can safely assume that every team, organisation, company and or group will be made up of people with the personality traits listed above.

Let us consider scenario One: a Team of six people are all Ds (DISC) or Type 8s (Enneagram). Total chaos would ensue as an enormous power struggle took place: every one of these people would want to take control in an aggressive and unyielding manner. The Team would fall apart no matter how much training and motivation was thrown at it. "ALL chiefs and NO Workers."

Now let us consider scenario Two: another Team of six people are all Cs (DISC) or Type 5 (Enneagram). Again total chaos as each person spent all of their time trying to analyse and plan the best way forward: no work would take place beyond arguing about what methods would be best. "Too many workers with no direction or leadership."

For a Team to succeed, it has to have ALL of the elements of DISC or Enneagram: the Leader, the planner, the thinker, the sympathetic peoples' person motivating the team members, the producers with that ability for detail, and, the peacemakers for when things get stressful. Whether a mixture of these traits are found in one person is irrelevant; many people are capable of nurturing their secondary traits and can be a "Motivating, Thinking Leader" (Enneagram) or "Dominant, Influential and Steady" (DISC).

For a Team to succeed, the mixture has to be present.

In DISC or Enneagram theories, all people have a dominant (Primary) trait, but they also possess all of the other traits to some degree. For example, in DISC terms I am a D - 1st, C - 2nd, S - 3rd and I - 4th (albeit that the deviation between the D & C is quite large). In Enneagram terms I am a Type 8 - 1st, Type 3 - 2nd, Type 5 - 3rd and Type 2 - 4th. This means that although I am more comfortable being a Leader, in Enneagram terms I am also capable of Motivating, Thinking and Helping, or in DISC terms, I can be Dominant, Steady, Influential and Compliant. It is an interesting fact that when examining my work personality traits utilising either DISC or Enneagram, my trait profile in both theories are similar. Enneagram offers us an immediate wider and more interesting breakdown. Knowing that I have 'motivational' as well as 'steadiness' capabilities as the secondary traits has allowed me to develop these less prominent traits to make me a better manager. In plain English, I can now kick someone's butt and then help them get back up off the floor whilst also being capable of assisting them in planning the finer details of their work.

This is true for everyone: everyone is capable of nurturing the traits lower down their lists, however, the lower down the list the trait appears; the more difficult it will be to nurture it and sustain it comfortably.

In most Unselected Teams, we have found that one or more of the required traits are missing as the Primary trait, and this is where the difficulties arise when trying to bond the team and get it functioning effectively. Team member's personality traits need to be identified and then training provided to team members that have the highest capacity to fill in the missing qualities. This is not always completely effective as most people tend to revert to Primary Type when under pressure, or at times have a "polar change" (complete reversal of the primary trait – e.g. Compliant become Dominant) when placed under extreme stress: again, this factor needs identifying.

This situation is what we call a 'High Maintenance' Team. To provide an example: a 1949s Rolls Royce is a lovely car: style, presence and stature, however, it is not a car that you would take on a Trans-European trip as it will require numerous stops for servicing and maintenance, increasing costs and time: it would be preferable that you take a better suited vehicle.

The above analogy is true when applied to Team Management. As all people are different, in a group of people, you would probably find all of the traits required if all had the same Primary trait, but, it would be a more volatile team to manage and work with than a team made up of people that had the different Primary traits required.

This does not mean that unselected teams cannot function coherently; it just means that they require higher maintenance to keep them functioning smoothly. It costs some \$1000 USD per delegate to buy-in training: therefore, in a team of six people, the training costs will be \$6000 USD per training session. High maintenance teams require continuous training, possibly every quarter. This makes the annual cost of maintaining your team of six people at circa \$24,000 USD.

This training cost could be best utilised in other areas of the business, such as marketing or research and development.

From the outset, Selected Teams are equipped with the correct mixture of traits that are capable of supporting and complementing each team member. No Gaps or Holes to cover and fix. Low Maintenance as each individual team member knows their duties, and more importantly, is perfectly happy doing their particular function within the Team.

This is achieved at the selection stage or the initial employment stage, rather than weeks, months or years down the line.

This is not to be mistaken with the skills and knowledge required, albeit that it is true to say that most skill-sets will likely fall into certain personality trait categories. For instance, most engineers will fall into a (DISC) 'S' or 'C' categorisation: most Sales people will be 'I's and most employers will be either 'I's or 'D's.

This is where careful planning and selection pays off!

We have found that successful teams are formed by initially defining the goals and aims of the team, the reason why the team is being established, the skill-sets required, and *only after these have been established*, classifying the personality traits required. We call this process "Team Profiling."

Once we have a Team Profile, we then look closely at each team member's duties and functions, their job within the Team. We call this "Job Profiling."

Only once we have concluded both Team and Job Profiles, do we start looking for personnel that will form the Team. We carefully match not only the peoples' skills and knowledge, but also their individual personality traits to ensure that they will primarily be happy and comfortable doing the job, and then be able to supplement or complement the other team members' personalities. We therefore ensure compatibility of the Team Members and the ultimate success of the Team.

Yes, it is true that additional costs are incurred, the Team and Job profiles costs money: so does the individual analysis of every short listed candidate. Team Profiling starts at \$3000 USD, Job Profiling starts at \$1000 USD, and, individual candidate analysis starts at \$50 USD. So, for a team of six people, with 12 short listed candidates, the initial costs can start at \$4600 USD.

However, as the team members are compatible, the ongoing motivational training requirements are lessened: we suggest that one training session is provided every six months, and this should be done in the format of fun-filled gratitude sessions. These sessions costs less as packages start at only \$200 USD per candidate per day, and \$1000 USD per candidate for a weekend away trip. The annual costs (in the first year) are \$4600 USD recruitment costs, plus, \$2400 USD for 2 six-monthly motivational gratitude sessions, total annual costs of only \$7000 USD. Even at the higher weekend session rates, where the team is given 1-one-day session and 1-one-weekend session per year, the costs will still only be \$11,800 USD for a highly motivated team.

This represents savings of between \$12,200 USD and \$17,000 USD, 51% to 71% lower costs, in the first year alone!

For every subsequent year, the costs reduce and instead of providing day gratitude sessions, weekend sessions are now affordable therefore motivating your already effective team even more.

We call this investment in Human Capital.

Therefore, to answer our initial question as to whether unselected or selected Teams are better.

We can confidently state that Pre-Selected teams are better and are the preferred path to take!

There is still hope for those that have unselected teams. Depending on the mix of your unselected team staff members, effective methods of analysis are available to train your staff to become effective team members and team leaders.

Fortunately, you do not have to dispose of your existing teams, just identify who needs training and on what. Once identified, you will be able to nurture the required traits and maintain a healthy balance in your team.

It is never too late to take control of your Team's abilities, and, the investment is worth it.

This is why we have always contested that a Team should be "Pre-Selected" from Day One, from the outset of the organisation, from the start of the Project.

Economic Crisis and Managing your Teams:

It is during times of economic stress that teams' abilities are tested. Cracks and chinks in the team's armour will show when placed under stress. This is when knowing your team's strengths and weaknesses will be important. Knowing whom will be able to obtain that important contract, discount, lease, funding, etc.

If you run a courier business, you would not send a 30 ton articulated truck to deliver an A4 envelope that weighed 1kg.

This is resource management, asset management, and your most important and valuable assets are your Human Capital, your Staff Members.

Managing your Human Capital is equally as important as managing your Cashflow, as it has a direct influence on your Cashflow.

Redundancies are sometimes inevitable during times of economic slowdown or downturn as businesses desperately try to manage their profit margins for survival.

It is in times such as these that Human Capital Management is direly important.

If redundancies are unavoidable, be extremely careful that you do not deplete your team of its important members. Ensure that your team is left with the correct balance of skills and personality traits: even in bad economic climates, good staff members are always in demand, especially by your competitors.

It is no use cutting down on 50% of your salary costs, when you have just thrown away the effective 50%.

"Last In, First Out" is not always a good policy even if it means that your redundancy costs are a little higher due to long services rendered payments. The investment will pay off.

If you have unselected teams that require downsizing to balance your Cashflow, carry out our Pre-Selection techniques. They will inadvertently cost you a little more money, but it will ensure that you are left with coherent teams that are capable of working together for the good of the Team, not just themselves.

Protect Your Profit Margin!

Remember: FAILURE TO PLAN IS A PLAN FOR FAILURE!

Thank you for your kind attention.

The Managing Partner on behalf of the Team at Charod & Co.

Post Scriptum:

By your numerous comments and questions derived from our previous bi-monthly discussion papers, we know that you enjoy these discussion papers as much as we enjoy researching and publishing them. Thank you once again for all of your kind comments and the thought provoking questions that you raised.

We look forward to receiving your comments and questions on this subject.

Due to popular demand, our February 2009 Discussion Paper will be on the Global Recession.

Thank you for your continued custom and support.