ELEMENTS OF TEAM WORKING

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ABSTRACT

This article will deal with the elements of team working. This article will critically discuss through analysis and identification of one's own learning that needs team working in a corporate world. Therefore, it will significantly evaluate awareness on the utilization of effective performance to develop capacity and capability in empowering individuals in a corporate team.

INTRODUCTION

This article considers *Belbin's* individual team roles (1981), the five perspectives of a leader's mindset (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003) and *Tuckman's* stages of team development (Tuckman and Jensen, 1977) that leads to the discussion of interprofessional team working (Hall, 2005; Mullins, 2010). A concrete analysis of the mindset of team working balances team development (Tuckman and Jensen, 1977) and team roles (Belbin, 1981). These encapsulate the elements of team working.

Figure 1 is the paradigm used in formulating a mindset that balances team development and individual roles in a team toward the elements of team working.

Figure 1. Elements of team working
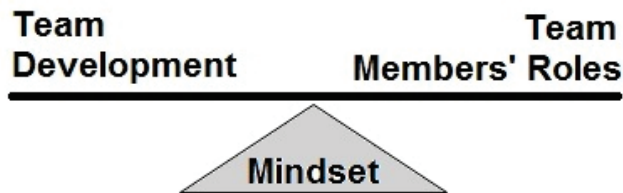
TEAM MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL ROLES

It is advisable that in order for an individual to reflect on the process of his own learning requires, a critical assessment using *Belbin's* (1981) individual team roles. The roles of each individual in a team, anticipated through reflective assessment are enumerated on table 1.

Table 1. Individual roles in a team (Belbin, 1981)

Individual Roles	Description of its weaknesses
Plant	could be unorthodox or forgetful
Resource investigators	might forget to follow up on a lead
Monitor Evaluators	could be overly critical and slow moving
Coordinators	might over delegate leaving themselves little work to do
Implementers	might be slow to relinquish their plans in favour of positive changes
Complete Finishersr	could be accused of taking their perfectionism to the extremes
Team workers	might become indecisive when unpopular decisions need to be made
Shapers	could risk becoming aggressive and bad-humoured in their attempts to get things done
Specialist	may have a tendency to focus narrowly on their own subject of choice

Belbin (1981) formulated the theoretical roles of an individual in a team because each individual was to bring in special contributions to develop colourful ways of collaboration. In addition, *Belbin* (1981) explained that each individual made the elements of teamwork work more effectively.

However, there are drawbacks on this theory. Primarily, the theoretical roles of an individual in a team focus more on the personal points of view of a team player. According to *Belbin's* (1981), team role is for team players performing basic analysis to formulate their own reflection and realisation towards their personal roles in a team.

The characteristic drawbacks and weaknesses of individual team roles need a leader's mindset in order to make the members' of the team work effectively (Grant, 2011). The leaders' mindset uses the five organisational perspectives: the reflective mindset, the analytical mindset, the worldly mindset, the collaborative mindset and the action mindset (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003) to balance the team members' individual roles.

THE REFLECTIVE MINDSET BALANCING THE TEAM MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL ROLES

An individual reflection of the team members' successes and mistakes uses a qualitative analysis of their individual roles through a corporate appraisal system. Action without reflection is thoughtless (Gibbs 1988). On this kind of mindset, the leaders' role is to comment on all the members of the team, regarding their strengths and weaknesses in a creative and detailed manner followed by its proper documentation. In addition, reflections make the entire team be aware of the impending and potential threats anticipated to occur (Gibbs 1988).

The leaders' reflective mindset balances the team members' individual roles by documenting their strengths and weaknesses for future use to analyse the individual team members' improvements and progresses. However, hesitations of documenting these reflections usually occur as a result of an anticipated negative feedback from the individual members of the team. So, the team leader must proceed with an analytical mindset.

THE ANALYTICAL MINDSET BALANCING THE TEAM MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL ROLES

The leaders' role in the analytical mindset is to monitor the team (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003) and to make sure that the documented information is reflective regarding the team member's mindset. The documentation should be done with rigour, transparency, fairness and openness. Leaders on this mindset are to advice, coach, disciple and mentor (Ives, 2008) individual team members to lessen or control the occurrence of an anticipated negative feedback after documenting their strengths and weaknesses. However, the analytical mindset of a leader also is to take caution on becoming forgetful and mixed up with ideas whenever mentoring or coaching is done. For this reason the analytical mindset aspires for a collaborative mindset that emphasises on partnership and to form a support system among team members because a leader cannot work alone.

THE COLLABORATIVE MINDSET BALANCING THE TEAM MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL ROLES

The collaborative mindset is very important in interprofessional team working (Hall, 2005). In order to prevent working in isolation and to lessen or control its drawbacks, the leaders' role is to let the team members to work cooperatively in a supportive manner (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003). The leader is to individually train team members, to mentor or coach by proper communication.

Communication is the key to balance collaboration (Mullins, 2010). However, much communication that is undertaken uses advanced technology as opposed to a face-to-face coaching and mentoring. Technology that advances at great speed contribute to a more confused leader thus affects coaching and mentoring. In a collaborative mindset, the leader must constantly be aware of changing trends particularly in the field of advanced technology and must let other members enjoy this benefit as well by letting them take continuous professional developments. This is why each member, including leaders of the team must adopt and adapt an all encompassing mindset toward an effective collaboration and interprofessional team working, referring towards the worldly mindset.

THE WORLDLY MINDSET BALANCING THE TEAM MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL ROLES

A worldly mindset of a leader balances the team members' individual roles by an emphasis on global and international academic awareness through provisions of trainings, seminars and other continuous professional developments. Academic, global and international awareness is important for each individual in a team in a worldly mindset. After balancing the team members' individual roles by a worldly mindset, it is necessary to devise the driving forces (Lewin, 1935). The action mindset encourages each individual in a team to work actively towards a corporate goal.

THE ACTION MINDSET BALANCING THE TEAM MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL ROLES

The role of the action mindset in a team is to actively make other team members work in a constant diligent state of alertness especially towards the threats and opportunities of change (Jasper, 2006). This mindset makes leaders prompt in making solutions actively or proactively (McGregor, 1960). The leader is also coach and mentor individual members in a team to immediately solve problems so as to work effectively.

All these mindsets make the team to actively participate in the change process (Lewin, 1935; Gosling and Mintzber, 2003). These mindsets help to enhance team development.

ENHANCING TEAM DEVELOPMENT

The Tuckman's team development model (Tuckman and Jensen, 1977) is an effective element of team working. Utilization of this model is important because it guides the team through its forming, storming, norming and performing stages (Hall, 2005) as it relates in the perspectives of working together as a team in a corporate world (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003). Integrating this model with the leaders' mindset is even more effective in making the team work.

THE COLLABORATIVE AND REFLECTIVE MINDSET OF A TEAM ON THE FORMING STAGE

When integrating the collaborative and reflective mindset (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003) with the forming stage it is important to be aware of creativity (Tuckman and Jensen, 1977). For example, exploiting the opportunity will facilitate the team members to meet informally and communicate ideas in a more relaxed and less threatening environment. In this way, tension can be avoided and it will be easier for the leader to delegate the necessary work to the rest of the team members. However, the team must be cautious and beware of the massive implications if errors are committed as result of such informal interaction.

In order to enhance the forming stage, team members must formally bond by conducting seminars or trainings so as to practice team building and safely avoid errors (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008). Hence it provides an atmosphere of sincerity that creates a unity of purpose (Mullins, 2010; Hall, 2005; Jasper, 2006) among team members. However, after safely avoiding errors, the next stage can give a more serious damage compared to the forming stage. The members must be analytical in the storming stage.

THE ANALYTICAL MINDSET OF A TEAM ON THE STORMING STAGE

During the storming stage, the team may try to splinter and reset boundaries (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003). In order to succeed in this stage, each member of a team, including the leader must be given discipleship, mentoring and coaching (Ives, 2008) with rigour, transparency, fairness and openness (Shamir *et al.,* 1993). In addition, a leader must learn that the analytical mindset must look at all allowable weaknesses to be supported by strengths (Bolden, 2004; Shamir *et al.,* 1993) during brain storming and discussions among team members to make the norming stage more successful. The norming stage must include goals, directions, missions and visions that must be discussed analytically during the storming stage. In this manner each members of the team can have a global and international perspective in the worldly mindset.

THE WORLDLY MINDSET OF A TEAM ON THE NORMING STAGE

Integrating the norming stage with the worldly mindset is to set the team's goals and directions in tandem with the mission and the vision of the development (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003). The leader must ensure during the norming stage that all team members are fully updated with progress in the organization. This may be carried out by the provision of various memoranda after meetings or discussions among the team members. This is the usual norm in the corporate world before an action plan is carried out in the performing stage.

THE ACTION MINDSET OF A TEAM ON THE PERFORMING STAGE

Integrating the action mindset (Mullins, 2010) with the performing stage (Tuckman and Jensen, 1977) is important. As a leader, action plans are to motivate members to develop capacity, capability and performance in solving problems actively. This is to prepare the team in managing various changes and developments (Lewin, 1935) that may lead to anxiety and stress on some team members. Unless anxiety and stress are given consideration, there is the possibility that the work of the team may cause some members of the team to revert disengagement.

In order to overcome stress and anxiety, so as to succeed in the performing stage the leader must

appropriately delegate tasks and activities based on individual team members' capacity and capability. A leader also must trust the team members that they will perform these tasks and activities with confidence so as to make the team work effectively (Pedler *et al., 2007*).

CONCLUSION

On Identifying, analysing and reflecting one's own learning procedure makes a team to work more effectively. It starts with each individual team members' understanding of their strengths and allowable weaknesses to identify their capacity and capability to work in a team.

Team development, on the other hand, is necessary to balance the individual team roles using a leader's mindset. This balance promotes team working.

Therefore, team development and individual team roles should be balanced by a leader's mindset to develop capacity and capability in empowering individuals. These criteria attempt to summarize the elements of team working.

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