"How to Build a Top Team",

from Brian Tracy: The Way to Wealth, part 3

How to Build a Top Team

There are certain qualities and characteristics of top performing work teams that have been identified in world-wide research. The more of these principles you include in your business, the more productive and profitable you will be.

1. **Shared goals and objectives**: in a smoothly functioning team, everyone is clear about what the team is expected to accomplish. The goals of the team are shared and discussed by everyone. Each team member gives their ideas and input into how the goals and objectives can best be achieved. Each person feels like a part of the larger organization.

   Socrates once said, "We only learn something by dialoging about it."

   There is a direct relationship between the amount of discussion a person engages in about the team's goals, and the amount of commitment they have to achieving those goals when they go back to work.

   If you tell people what the goals of the team are, and send them back to work, they will have a low level of commitment. When they experience problems or setbacks, they will easily give up, or wait for you to come around and tell them what to do.

   But when you propose goals and objectives for the team, and invite their input and feedback, when they go back to work, they will take "ownership" of the goal or objective. They will

feel a much deeper level of commitment to achieving the goal successfully than if they were not consulted at all.

What are the three most important shared or common goals of your team?

1._____
_____
_____
2._____
_____
_____
3._____
_____
_____

2. **Shared values and principles**: in excellent teams, there is regular discussion about the values, principles and behaviors that guide the decisions of the team. The leader encourages values such as honesty, openness, punctuality, responsibility for completing assignments, quality work, and so on. Everyone discusses and agrees on what they are.

What are the most important values or principles that govern how you and your team work together?

1._____
_____
_____
2._____
_____
_____
3_____
_____
_____
4._____
_____
_____
5._____
_____

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Shared plans of action: in this phase of team building, you go around the table and have each person explain exactly what part of the work they are going to accept responsibility for completing. At the end of this discussion, everyone knows what everyone else is going to be doing. Everyone knows how their individual work fits in with the work of the team.

During this discussion about individual responsibilities, each person has a chance to ask other people about their job, how it will be measured, what results are expected from it, and when completion is due. The conversation is open, honest and free flowing. At the end, every team member knows his or her place on the team. Every team member knows how he or she fits in to the big picture. Everyone feels like a valuable part of the organization.

Make a list of all the people who work with you and then describe the most important things they do to contribute to the success of the company:

Name   Most important responsibilities

1._____

_____

_____

2._____

_____

_____

3._____

_____

_____

4._____

_____

_____

5._____

_____

_____

4. **Lead the action**: there must always be a clear boss or leader in any organization. Democracy is a fine concept, but it only goes

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so far in business. Someone must be in command, and take charge. And that someone is probably you.

In a good team, everyone knows who is in charge. The leader then sets an example for the others. The leader becomes the role model. If the leader expects people to do their assignments well and complete them on time, the leader leads by example, and does his assignments well and has them done on time, if not in advance.

In addition, the leader on a business team has a special function. His job is to act as a "blocker" and remove the obstacles from the paths of other people that may interfere with them doing their jobs. The job of the leader is to make sure each team member has the time, resources, equipment and support necessary to do his or her job in an excellent fashion. The leader not only "leads the charge," but also makes sure that everyone else is free to concentrate on doing the best job they possibly can.

What are your three most important leadership responsibilities?

1._____
2._____
3._____

5. **Continuous review and evaluation**: in this final phase, the team regularly evaluates its progress from two perspectives. First, is the team getting the results that are expected of them by their customers or other parts of the company? In dealing with customers, the team sets up mechanisms to continually ask customers, "How are we doing?"

The best businesses have their hands on the pulse of the customer at all times. They are continually asking their customers, in every way possible, directly and indirectly, for feedback. They are not afraid of criticism or negative responses. Top teams know that they can only grow if their customers are telling them honestly what they are doing, or failing to do.

What three ways to you measure customer satisfaction on an ongoing basis?

1._____
 _____
 _____
2._____
 _____
 _____
3._____
 _____
 _____

The second area for evaluation has to do with the functioning of the team itself. Is everybody happy with the way the group is working together? Are some people overloaded with work and others not busy enough? Are the values that the team has agreed upon working? Is everyone satisfied?

In the best businesses, disagreements are handled openly and honestly. If someone has a problem, they feel free to bring it up. The leader and the team accept responsibility for addressing the concerns of each team member. Everyone feels that they are all in the same boat together.

What are three ways that you can assure that everyone is happy with the way they are working together?

1. _____
 _____
 _____
2. _____
 _____
 _____
3. _____
 _____
 _____