

Creating Effective Teams and Teamwork: The Skills Driving High Performance Organizations

In today’s tumultuous business environment, organizations face critical challenges driven by continuous change, new and advancing technology, fierce competition and the need to develop and provide customer- focused solutions efficiently, quickly and with ever increasing quality. The organizations that manage to succeed, and thrive, in this environment are those that understand and support the key skills and behaviors that allow for rapid change, innovation, customer-focused quality and high levels of employee involvement, participation, and ownership.

The Challenge

Most organizations “talk” of using the collective skill and competence of all employees. They crave employee involvement, participation and ownership. However, they practice, reward and reinforce the learned, more comfortable skills of traditional hierarchical structures. This fundamental “skills gap” can result in a lack of direction and trust, ineffective communication, poor decision-making, on-going conflict, low morale and excessive employee turnover. This result will directly undermine the company’s ability to compete successfully in a fiercely competitive global economy.

Competitive Skills Assessment

Fortunately, there are defined, observable, and measurable skills and behaviors that drive fast-changing, innovative and customer-focused companies. To assess your organization’s strengths and weaknesses in these critical competencies, carefully and with candor, analyze the statements listed below to determine your competitive position.

COMMUNICATION – *the speed and accuracy of the communication process*

Supportive Skills and Behaviors

- Employees (functionally and cross-functionally) openly share information.
- Few questions are required to obtain information.
- Information is volunteered.
- People anticipate communication needs. They pro-actively communicate, solving problems before they become a problem.
- People actively listen before they respond.
- People question to assure understanding and clarity to avoid misunderstanding and miscommunication.
- The communication process (functionally and cross-functionally) is rapid, complete and accurate.

Harmful Skills and Behaviors

- People wait to be asked before they respond.
- Communication requires questioning.
- People (departments) withhold, protect or guard information.
- People respond before communication is complete.
- Side conversations and inattention occur frequently.
- People interrupt or ignore communication.
- The communication process is slow and often ends up in miscommunication or misunderstanding.

DECISION MAKING – *the process used to produce the highest quality decisions with tremendous support*

Supportive Skills and Behaviors

- Employees are allowed to input and make decisions that impact their work environment.
- Data to produce decisions is fact-based rather than opinion-based.
- A factual database is completed before decisions are made.
- People withhold conclusions until all data is known.
- Leadership participates in the process by providing data, resources, objectives and guidance.
- After the decision is made, employees feel responsible and accountable by taking ownership of the outcome.

Harmful Skills and Behaviors

- Opinions, not facts, are used to produce decisions.
- People individually conclude based on their own information, then argue their conclusions.
- Decisions are made before all affected employees are allowed to input – people are excluded from the process. Leadership influences the process and steers the group to the “correct” decision.
- Decisions are made by people who argue the longest or loudest, who use real or perceived power to control the process rather than letting the facts provided by everyone dictate the decision. The process is dominated by a few people.
- Employees do not feel responsible or accountable for the result of the decision.
- When problems with the decision arise – finger pointing prevails.



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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE – *the view of, and response to successes, achievements, mistakes and errors*

Supportive Skills and Behaviors

- Employee (and departmental) successes are recognized and reinforced.
- Mistakes and errors are addressed as a learning opportunity, then ignored.
- Blame, criticism and “finger pointing” are uncommon.
- Reinforcement is specific, immediate, based on a person’s ability to achieve, intangible and unpredictable.
- People do not work for, or expect, tangible rewards for achievements.
- Employees choose to participate and voluntarily become involved in organizational success.
- Employees are willing and comfortable to take reasonable risks and produce innovative solutions.

Harmful Skills and Behaviors

- When employees (and departments) do things well, no one notices – when things are not done well, it is noticed and dwelled upon.
- Positive reinforcement is rarely used or is disproportionate to actual achievements.
- Employee’s mistakes and errors are met with blame, criticism and “fault finding.”
- Problems result in finger pointing – not solutions.
- People are controlled or “kept in line” by various forms of punishment.
- People primarily work for tangible rewards.
- Employees are content to “do their job” and leave – voluntary participation and involvement is low.
- Fear of failure limits innovation, risk taking and creativity.

CONFLICT – *the willingness and ability to have and resolve disagreements*

Supportive Skills and Behaviors

- Leadership realizes that disagreement is to be encouraged and embraced from any and all levels and is the fuel that drives rapid change, new ideas and innovative solutions.
- Employees are comfortable to express disagreement, to all levels, in an assertive manner.
- People understand the process of resolving disagreements that results in the highest quality outcomes with support by all.
- When problems occur, people address them quickly, focusing on the solution not the problem (or person).
- Diverse view points (disagreements) are seen as a method to produce higher quality decisions.



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Harmful Skills and Behaviors

- Leadership views disagreement as a threat; therefore, it is discouraged or not allowed.
- Dominant employees “win” disagreements using real or perceived power.
- Employees disagree silently then undermine or sabotage the outcome (give in then get even).
- Employees avoid disagreements for fear of reprimands resulting in slow change or stagnation.
- Daily errors and mistakes are not reported (or are covered up) resulting in major negative surprises.
- Front line employees are aware of problems and/or customer dissatisfaction, but say nothing.

THE CHANGE PROCESS

If challenges exist in any of the key competencies, it is essential to understand and implement the change process. The key components, listed sequentially, are:

- Gain leadership’s commitment, buy in and support for the need to change.
- Understand the process will be a “Journey” not an “Event” (patience is required).
- Help employees understand and learn the new skills and behaviors (training).
- Implement the process of practicing and measuring the key skills.

By addressing and fulfilling each component of the change process, organizations can expect continuous and sustained improvements in the key competencies. Their reward will be a far greater ability to compete, innovate and thrive in an unpredictable business environment.

Who should attend this workshop:

- All Levels of Senior Leadership, Managers, Supervisors and Team Leads.
- Any Employee Who Would Like to Learn How to become a more effective team member and contributor.



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Registration Information

Time: Workshops scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Pricing: 1-2 attendees \$245 per person, 3+ attendees \$225 per person.

Location: DePaul University, O'Hare Campus, 8770 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60631 ([Click here to download a map and directions](#))

To register or for additional information either email, phone or complete the [online registration form](#). **Email:** Ken Keller at kkeller@c-kg.com or Dean Carroll at dcarrroll@c-kg.com or **Phone:** (630) 495-0505 or (800) 869-7497.

Register online: [Complete form by clicking here](#). If you register online, a confirmation email will be sent to you with next steps and payment details. Please note we accept checks as a form of payment.

[To see a complete list of our current workshops click here.](#)

Customized onsite workshops are also available.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. Email: Ken Keller at kkeller@c-kg.com or Dean Carroll at dcarrroll@c-kg.com or Phone: (630) 495-0505 or (800) 869-7497.