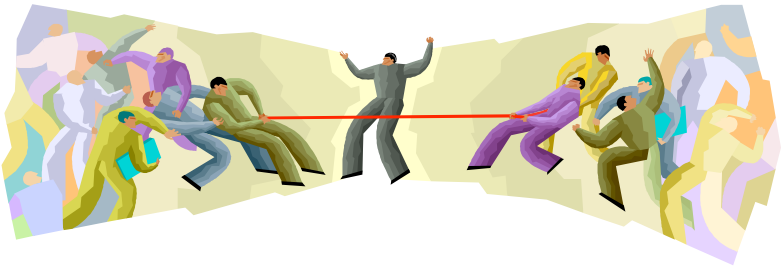


# How to Identify The 4 Dysfunctions of a Team...

## And Resolve Them



Number 3 in the *Problem Solver Series*<sup>™</sup>

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## The Purpose

The purpose of this booklet is to:

1. Provide an understanding of the four aspects of human behavior that undermine the team process
2. Develop insight as to what actions can be taken to repair the damage and return to a normal functioning team.

## The Benefit

This booklet will enable you to:

1. Understand why teams become dysfunctional and
2. How to fix the problem.

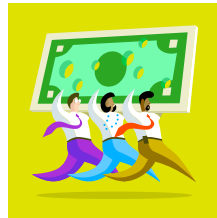


## The Situation

A team is nothing more than a group of people acting together in a coordinated effort.

The fundamental reason teams have value is because they access the power of multiple perspectives; multiple ways of understanding and knowing about an issue or topic.

This team power is normally used to solve problems or develop ideas, and the outcome is focused on the accomplishment of a project. Occasionally, as with self-work groups, the team is used to encourage the application of labor and skills i.e. “help wherever you can to accomplish the job.”



used to  
new  
often

directed  
concept  
flexible

## The Foundation

Only when we give up being in agreement will we achieve Openness and Honesty

Teamwork is a structured effort to improve the way we work together. There are several models for developing and maintaining teams. However, the foundation of a successful team is based on authentic communication. In

an environment where people feel free and safe to express their thoughts, they will be able to learn, grow and help others. Unfortunately, all too often, the team develops a mistaken sense that all members must be in agreement. Agreement eliminates conflict. However, it also eliminates individuality, and individuality is the heart and soul of the power of the team. So only when the team gives up being in agreement will it be able to achieve openness and honesty.

## Exchange of Ideas and Opinions

Openness and honesty is the result of dialogue. It's the result of gathering and analyzing divergent points of view from individual members in order to build a shared understanding and create something NEW. A successful dialogue requires that all members are willing to be influenced by others, that they are willing to adjust their actions, behaviors or opinions based on the views and opinions of others. The difference between discussion and dialogue is that discussion involves advocating your point of view and dialogue requires that you listen unconditionally, with no agenda or filters. Listening is a combination of hearing and interpretation. Interpretation is the "truth" we develop for ourselves based on our background, our beliefs and our values. Since these are individual traits, each person develops their own individual "truth." By listening with no agenda or filters we are able to hear what the other person is saying. With unbiased listening, conversation ("This is what that means to me.") and inquiry ("What does that mean to you?") we can establish a common meaning and arrive at agreement as to the interpretation. This agreement becomes the binding force of the team.





## Time for Introspection

You will get the most value out of this booklet if you take a few moments to internalize the information by answering the following questions:

- ❖ *Are you willing to be influenced by others?*
- ❖ *What must you do to allow yourself to be influenced by others? Be specific. What form does that take? What does that look like?*
- ❖ *What process or tactic could you use to encourage team members to allow themselves to be influenced by others on their team?*

## The Problem



The problem with teams is they are composed of people. And the problem with people is they are subject to the four fundamental aspects of being human. These four fundamental aspects are:

1. The need to be *right*
2. The need to *win*
3. The need to *justify* actions or behaviors
4. The need to *dominate*

These four aspects are the source of all dysfunction within a team.

The success of a team depends on each member's willingness to *align with* rather than *agree with* the team's goals, strategies and tactics. To align with something that, as an individual, you may not necessarily agree with requires humility, compassion and commitment. The four aspects of being human are contrary to humility, compassion and commitment and they invariably cause conflict and undermine the team.



## Time for Introspection

You will get the most value out of this booklet if you take a few moments to internalize the information by answering the following

questions:

When one person needs to be Right, another person has to be wrong.

- ❖ *How does the need to be Right show up in your behavior? List examples.*
- ❖ *How could the need to be Right show up in the behavior of team members? What would be the effect on the team's performance?*

When one person needs to Win, another person has to lose.

- ❖ *How does the need to Win show up in your behavior? List examples.*
- ❖ *How could the need to Win show up in the behavior of team members? What would be the effect on the team's performance?*
- ❖ *What would be the effect on the team if all members gave up their need to win?*

When we Justify, we provide a "satisfactory" reason or excuse that allows us to declare ourselves innocent or blameless. We do this to protect our ego. However, the problem with justification is that it compromises our integrity. Integrity is based on honoring our word, on doing what we say we will do. When we justify not doing what we said or implied we would do ("Sorry I'm late to the meeting but...") we damage our integrity with ourselves and with our team members. Integrity is a fundamental aspect of trust. When integrity is compromised, trust is compromised and the group can no longer work as a team because the members cannot be relied upon.

- ❖ *How does the need to Justify show up in your behavior? List examples.*
- ❖ *How does the need to Justify show up in the behavior of team members? What is the effect on the team's performance?*
- ❖ *What would the effect be if every member accepted ownership of the consequences of their behavior and did not attempt to Justify their actions?*

When one person Dominates, another person is dominated

- ❖ *How does the need to Dominate show up in your behavior? List examples.*
- ❖ *How could the need to Dominate show up in the behavior of team members? What would be the effect on the team's performance?*

## The Solution

The solution to the problem of the four dysfunctions of a team starts with understanding the cause of the problems. The cause is that people make relationship mistakes because they are human and are influenced by the four aspects of being human:



1. The need to be *right*
2. The need to *win*
3. The need to *justify*
4. The need to *dominate*

Understanding the causes of relationship mistakes enables us to dissolve the *effect* of these mistakes. We dissolve the effect through a willingness to forgive. It's as simple, and as hard, as that. People make mistakes. If they are mistakes, and not intentional harms, then forgiveness is the answer to making whole again.

## Easy as 1, 2, 3

So forgiveness becomes an ongoing act. When (not if) I make a relationship mistake it is due to the fact I was driven by the need to be right, or win, or justify, or dominate and I can correct it.

1. Because I understand the cause, I can forgive myself (I'm not bad, I'm human.)
2. Because it was a mistake, I can resolve to do better, realizing that I am striving for progress, not perfection.
3. Because I want to make amends, I can apologize and ask forgiveness from my team members.

When a team member makes a relationship mistake, because the team understands the cause, the team can have a dialogue about the mistake, seek a commitment to improve, forgive the mistake, and move forward as a team.

When management makes a relationship mistake (yep, they're human too,) because the team understands the cause, the affected group can have a dialogue about the mistake, seek a commitment to improve, forgive the mistake, and move forward in the relationship.

## Summary

How do we resolve the Four Dysfunctions of a team and keep the team functioning?

1. Understand the four human causes
2. Maintain an ongoing willingness to give and accept forgiveness.



## Time for Introspection

You will get the most value out of this booklet if you take a few moments to internalize the information by answering the following questions.

### The Four fundamental elements of being human

- ❖ *How do you plan to introduce these concepts into the team environment? Be specific.*
- ❖ *What do you think will be the effect on the team? Why?*

### Forgiveness

- ❖ *How do you plan to introduce the concept of forgiveness into the team environment? Be specific.*
- ❖ *What do you think will be the effect on the team? Why?*
- ❖ *What tactical process can the team use to address relationship mistakes and provide forgiveness?*
- ❖ ***What rewards will employees receive for embracing this change? What's in it for them?***



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**&** ASSOCIATES, LLC



5601 Oak Street  
Kansas City, MO 64113  
Phone (816) 333-1261  
Fax (816) 333-7903  
[tjmccoy@tjmccoy.com](mailto:tjmccoy@tjmccoy.com)  
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