

TEAMWORK PRINCIPLES:

Be Purposeful

Be Respectful

Be Open

Be Collaborative

Be Constructive

THE 12 C'S FOR TEAMBUILDING

No matter what you call your team-based improvement effort (whether it's continuous improvement, total quality, or a self-directed work team), you are striving to improve results for Girls. However, few organizations are totally pleased with the results their team improvement efforts produce.

If your team improvement efforts are not living up to your expectations, this self-diagnosing checklist may tell you why. Successful team building—that creates effective, focused work teams—requires attention to each of the following:

#1. CLEAR EXPECTATIONS:

- Has leadership clearly communicated its expectations for the team's performance and expected outcomes?
- Do team members understand why the team was created?
- Is the group demonstrating constancy of purpose in supporting the team with resources of people, time and money?
- Does the work of the team receive sufficient emphasis as a priority in terms of the time, discussion, attention, and interest directed its way by leaders?

#2. CONTEXT:

- Do team members understand why they are participating on the team?
- Do they understand how the strategy of using teams will help the group attain its communicated goals?
- Can team members define their team's importance to the accomplishment of common goals?
- Does the team understand where its work fits into the total context of the organization's goals, principles, vision, and values?

#3. COMMITMENT:

- Do team members want to participate on the team?
- Do team members feel the team mission is important?
- Are members committed to accomplishing the team mission and expected outcomes?
- Do team members perceive their service as valuable to the group?

- Do team members anticipate recognition for their contributions?
- Do team members expect their skills to grow and develop on the team?
- Are team members excited and challenged by the team opportunity?

#4. COMPETENCE:

- Does the team feel that it has the appropriate people participating?
- For example, in a process of improvement, is each step of the process represented on the team?
- Does the team feel that its members have the knowledge, skill, and capability to address the issues for which the team was formed?
- If not, does the team have access to the help it needs?
- Does the team feel it has the resources, strategies, and support needed to accomplish its mission?

#5. CHARTER:

- Has the team defined and communicated its goals; its anticipated outcomes and contributions; its timelines; and how it will measure both the outcomes of its work and the process the team followed to accomplish their task?
- Does leadership or other coordinating group support what the team has designed?

#6 CONTROL:

- Does the team have enough freedom and empowerment to obtain the ownership necessary to accomplish its mission?
- At the same time, do team members clearly understand their boundaries?
- How far are members allowed to go in pursuit of solutions?
- Are limitations defined at the beginning of the project before the team experiences barriers and rework?
- Are the team's reporting relationship and accountability understood by all members of the organization?
- Has the organization defined the team's authority to make recommendations to implement the plan?
- Is there a defined review process so both the team and the organization are consistently aligned with both direction and purpose?
- Do team members hold each other accountable for project timelines, commitments, and results?

- Does the group have a plan to increase opportunities for self-management among organization members?

#7. COLLABORATION:

- Does the team understand the team and group process?
- Do members understand the stages of group development?
- Are team members working together effectively interpersonally?
- Do all team members understand the roles and responsibilities of team members and team leaders?
- Can the team approach problem solving, process improvement, goal setting, and measurement jointly?
- Do team members cooperate to accomplish the team goals?
- Has the team established group norms or rules of conduct in areas such as conflict resolution, consensus decision making, and meeting management?
- Is the team using an appropriate strategy to accomplish its action plan?

#8. COMMUNICATION:

- Are team members clear about the priority of their tasks?
- Is there an established method for the teams to give feedback and receive honest performance feedback?
- Does the organization provide important business information regularly?
- Do the teams understand the complete context of their existence?
- Do team members communicate clearly and honestly with each other?
- Do team members bring diverse opinions to the table?
- Are necessary conflicts raised and addressed?

#9. CREATIVE INNOVATION:

- Is the organization really interested in change?
- Does it value creative thinking, unique solutions, and new ideas?
- Does it reward people who take reasonable risks to make improvements? Or does the group reward the people who fit in and maintain the status quo?
- Does it provide the training and the necessary resources to stimulate new thinking?

#10. CONSEQUENCES:

- Do team members feel responsible and accountable for team achievements?
- Are rewards and recognition supplied when teams are successful?
- Is reasonable risk respected and encouraged in the organization?
- Do team members fear reprisal?
- Do team members spend their time finger pointing rather than resolving problems?
- Is the organization designing reward systems that recognize both team and individual performance?
- Is the organization planning to share gains with the team and individual contributors?
- Can contributors see their impact on increased organization success?

#11. COORDINATION:

- Are teams coordinated by a central leadership team that assists the groups to obtain what they need for success?
- Have priorities and resource allocation been planned across the team?
- Are cross-functional teams and working together effectively?

#12. CULTURE CHANGE:

- Does the organization recognize that the team-based, collaborative, empowering, enabling the organizational culture of the future is different than the traditional, hierarchical organization it may currently be?
- Is the organization planning to, or in the process of, changing how it rewards, appraises, hires, develops, motivates, and manages the people it employs?
- Does the organization plan to use failures for learning and support reasonable risk?
- Does the organization recognize that the more it can change its climate to support teams, the more it will receive in payback from the work of the teams?

If you spend time and attention on each of these recommendations you will ensure that your work teams contribute as effectively as possible to your overall business success. It's a lot to do, but there's a lot at stake.