

SIGMA

Leadership Series



**Great Leaders
Build Great Teams**



GREAT LEADERS BUILD GREAT TEAMS

“ Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.

— Henry Ford

Many organizations have implemented teams for tackling new problems, large projects, or major initiatives. However, poorly performing teams can be outdone by individuals who work separately and combine outputs at the end. The highest-performing teams achieve synergy — the result is more than the sum of the parts. Luckily, encouraging productive, synergistic teams is within reach of leaders who design and support them. A leader’s ability to facilitate teams can make or break the team’s short-term outcomes and long-term performance.

Facilitating Teamwork is the ability to promote teamwork, cooperation, and identification with the work group. Leaders who are skilled in this area are effective at encouraging employees to think of themselves as part of something bigger than their individual roles, and they encourage the extra patience and communication that teamwork requires.

Are You a Team Builder?

In assessing your ability to facilitate teamwork, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the task require a team?
- Have I clearly explained the goals and expectations of the team?
- Have I outlined the roles and responsibilities of each member?
- Am I providing the teams I lead with enough support and resources to complete their tasks?
- Am I monitoring my team for issues or conflicts? Do I address these issues as they arise?
- How do I reward the team as a whole? How do I address the performance of each individual team member?

Improve Your Ability to Facilitate Teamwork

Consider whether teamwork is right for the project at hand. One of the biggest reasons that leaders are unable to facilitate productive work from a team is because the team itself does not need to exist. Certain tasks, such as those that involve recalling and expressing information in a formal report, are better left to one talented individual. Use a team when the project is too large for one person, the work requires multiple specialties, or tasks are interdependent — for example, Employee A's output depends on Employee B. If individuals have no need to rely on the expertise or work of others and are only rewarded for their individual contributions, putting these individuals together and calling them a team will not produce the positive outcomes that are seen with high functioning teams.

Don't be afraid to lead. Often leaders can be afraid to provide much input into teams. Remember, a leader's role is to provide employees with direction and support. Teams with clear direction feel more capable of reaching clearly communicated goals. Don't be hesitant to act as an authority when teams are struggling. Newly formed teams in particular benefit from a leader who can set clear goals, communicate these goals, and monitor team progress on projects or initiatives. In addition, a leader is instrumental in setting the norms and expectations for behavior in developing teams. Encouraging collaboration and striving for difficult goals can shape a team for success.

Teams require resources. Before forming a new team or giving an existing team a new project, remember that teams require a different set of resources than individual employees do. Teams must have the space to work together, the tools and equipment required to get the task done, and the intellectual resources that can only be obtained by using talented, motivated individuals within teams. Before implementing teams, consider if your organization has the resources to not only form teams, but to ensure the continuation and success of these teams.

Start Doing These 4 Things Now to Build Stronger Teams

The following steps can help you become better at facilitating teamwork:

1. **Define the roles of each member.** The positive effects of synergistic teams don't happen on their own, and teams are generally poor at dividing team tasks. Be sure to clearly define the role that each member has within the team, as teams with greater role clarity tend to spend less time analyzing how to do the project, and more time actually working on a solution or output. Remember the roles should be appropriately matched to each member's knowledge, skills, and experience.
2. **Set both individual and shared goals.** Within any given team setting, there should be an overarching goal that the team as a whole is trying to achieve. This may be the completion of a project, hitting certain targets, or solving specific problems. Within the larger shared goal, each individual should have a complete piece of the project that they

are responsible for. This encourages team members to feel that their contributions matter and allows them to engage with the task and remain motivated over time. Remember, even if each individual has their own task, these tasks should be interdependent with the tasks and outputs of other team members.

3. **Continue to manage individuals within a team.** Having employees working closely together can sometimes result in conflicts, and a leader should not leave interpersonal issues for the team to sort themselves. These issues often result in lower performance and satisfaction with the team. Conflicts are common when teams form but be aware that they can arise at any point in the team's lifecycle. Using communication and problem-solving skills can aid in resolving conflicts before they affect performance.
4. **Reward team performance.** Not only should teams be working toward a shared goal, but they should be striving to achieve a shared reward. This encourages members to work together and doesn't single out the performance of any one individual. Rewards can be monetary, such as a bonus divided between team members, or something less tangible, such as recognition and praise for team successes.

Assess Facilitating Teamwork With the LSP-R®

The [Leadership Skills Profile – Revised® \(LSP-R\)](#) is a personality-based leadership assessment that measures 50 core competencies, including Facilitating Teamwork. The assessment can be administered online in 25 minutes, and comes with an automatically generated Focus Report, including scores, personalized feedback, and templates for creating competency-based leadership development plans (view a [sample Focus Report](#)).

LSP-R® Free Trial

See how you score on FACILITATING TEAMWORK.

Experience the LSP-R for yourself and see how you score on Facilitating Teamwork. Receive customized feedback and templates for creating a personalized action plan. Take 25 minutes and experience the impact that data-driven personality insights can have.

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