



Team Building

Why Build teams?

We often have to work in teams to draw input from a wide range of expertise. Successful teams do not tend to just happen – they need to be built.

How Build teams?

Use the following to help create successful teams.

Common vision - Be able to clearly state what is to be achieved by the team. A one to two sentence summary helps. Preferably develop (or if pre-set, discuss and request input on) the goals and objectives with the team members. Check the team understand and buy in to the goals of the group and revisit goals frequently. Example goal statement: "We provide credible, relevant information to those helping farmers in Afghanistan".

Clear roles - Understand the activities required to achieve the goals. Select team members with the skills required to implement those activities. Then, work with members to clearly identify their individual roles and responsibilities, how they interact with other team members and how they contribute to the overall goals. Avoid any overlap that may cause confusion. Be open to team members asking for clarification and encourage them to seek clarification if roles are unclear. Check understanding by asking them to explain their individual roles and how they contribute.

Communication - Communication is key. Have regular meetings as a team and with individuals to listen and share progress, challenges and ideas to improve. Team leaders must truly listen and respond to suggestions. Good communication helps team members feel connected,

encourages cooperation, ensures coordination of activities and so helps avoid frustrating duplication or confusion of effort. Find a simple way to track progress and contributions.

Competence Individuals will implement activities within the project. Assess the skills they will require and select a team for success. Sometimes team members will require coaching and close supervision and at other times they can work independently. Provide the support (mentoring, or training etc.) and/or encourage self development as needed.

Commitment - Commitment comes when talented people understand their roles and are given the opportunity to show their abilities. Communication plus joint setting of goals and clear responsibilities with good communication all help establish a sense of ownership, ensure members are fully informed and builds commitment. Acknowledge and recognize the efforts of individuals.

Consequences - Jointly set performance goals and outputs with timeframes. What recognition will there be for success? How will underperformance be corrected? Most people want to succeed! Meet and provide feedback. Often times, simple verbal recognition is a powerful way to encourage contributions.



People work better if they have clear roles. Such clarity allows them to have some independence to bring their own creativity and skills to achieve the team goals.

For more information visit: International Programs: ip.ucdavis.edu

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