Effective Quality Teams

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Objectives

THE EFFECTIVE QUALITY
TEAM - OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Understand the value of synergy
- Recognize the characteristics that enhance team effectiveness
- Understand the benefits and expected results of quality teams
- Structure the team meetings to assure success

LFQ401

Synergy

Positives

■ The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

■ Two heads are better than one.

Negatives

■ If you want it done right, do it yourself.

■ Too many cooks spoil the broth.

■ A camel is a horse designed by a team.

The key to valuing groups is gaining appreciation of differences. Differences are the raw material for synergy. If two people in a meeting have exactly the same viewpoint, the presence of one is superfluous.

SYNERGY - DEPENDS ON DIFFERENCES

- Perceptions
- Experience
- Values
- Background

- Working styles
- Levels of detail
- Thinking style
- Interests

LFQ403

HOW IS SYNERGY ACHIEVED?

- Participation
- Listening
- Accepting differences
- Healthy conflict
- No domination

- Accepting all ideas, initially
- Clear objectives
- Agreed-upon goals
- Trust

LFQ404

**CHARACTERISTICS OF
EFFECTIVE TEAMS**

- Clear purpose
- Participation by all
- Listening
- Constructive disagreement
- Open communication

- Clear roles and work assignments
- Leadership
- Style diversity
- Self-assessment

LFQ405

Research shows that generally most effective teams share some common characteristics.
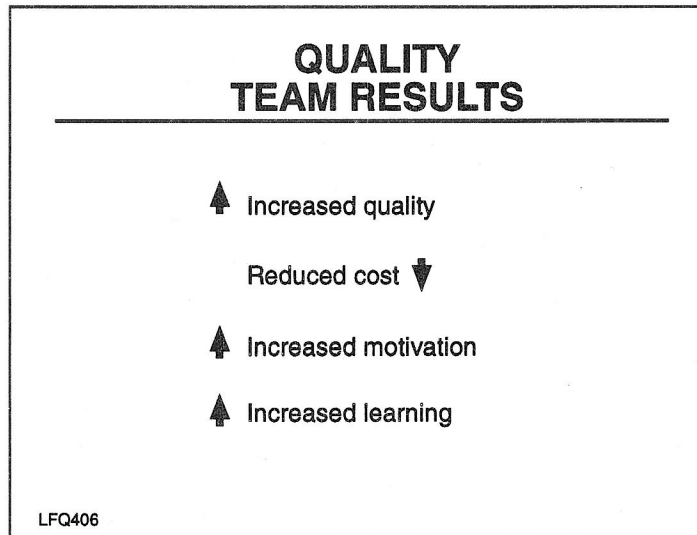
Characteristics of Effective Teams[2]

Clear Purpose	The vision, mission, goal, or task of the team has been defined and is accepted by everyone. There is an action plan
Informality	The climate tends to be informal, comfortable, and relaxed. There are no obvious tensions or signs of boredom.
Participation	There is much discussion, and everyone is encouraged to participate.
Listening	The members use effective listening techniques such as questioning, paraphrasing, and summarizing to get out ideas.
Civilized Disagreement	There is disagreement, but the team is comfortable with this and shows no signs of avoiding, smoothing over, or suppressing conflict.
Consensus Decisions	For important decisions, the goal is substantial but not necessarily unanimous agreement through open discussion of everyone's ideas, avoidance of formal voting, or easy compromises.
Open Communication	Team members feel free to express their feelings on the tasks as well as on the group's operation. There are no hidden agendas. Communication takes place outside of meetings.
Clear Roles and Work Assignments	There are clear expectations about the roles played by each team member. When action is taken, clear assignments are made, accepted, and carried out. Work is fairly distributed among team members.
Leadership	The formal leader models the appropriate behavior and helps establish positive norms.
External Relations	The team spends time developing key outside relationships, mobilizing resources, and building credibility with important players in other parts of the organization.
Style Diversity	The team has a broad spectrum of team player types including members who emphasize attention to task, goal setting, focus on process, and questions about how the team is functioning.
Self-Assessment	Periodically, the team stops to examine how well it is functioning and what may be interfering with its effectiveness.

[2]Reprinted with permission: Parker, Glen M., *Team Players and Teamwork: The New Competitive Business Strategy;* San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1990.
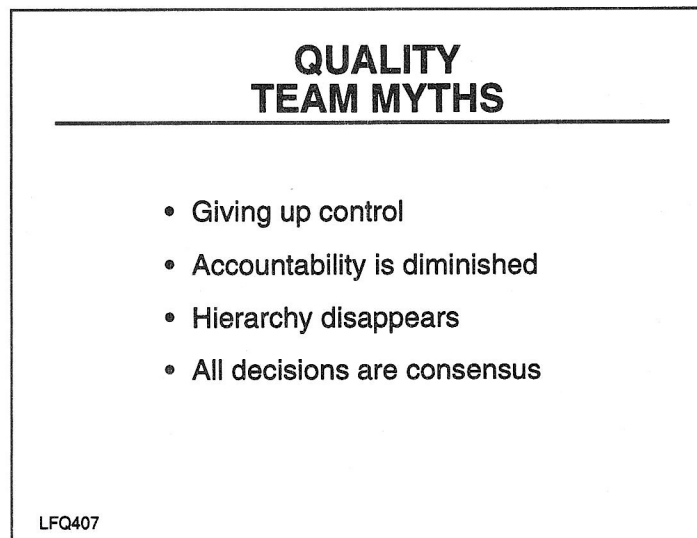
Why Use Quality Improvement Teams?

Team Results

An effective team can expect to achieve the following results.

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        QUALITY
     TEAM RESULTS
_____


   ▲  Increased quality

      Reduced cost  ▼

   ▲  Increased motivation

   ▲  Increased learning


LFQ406
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Quality Team Myths

Some are reluctant to use teams because they worry that teams result in the following.

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        QUALITY
      TEAM MYTHS
_____



   •  Giving up control

   •  Accountability is diminished

   •  Hierarchy disappears

   •  All decisions are consensus



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Benefits of Teams

Teams benefit not only the organizations that use them, but also the members that serve on them.

TEAM BENEFITS TO EMPLOYEES

- Empowered to make decisions

- Measured on accomplishments

- Gain variety and responsibility

- Learn something new each day

LFQ408

Training Teams

To be effective, quality teams need to be well trained.

QUALITY TEAM TRAINING

- Structured problem solving:
    - The quality improvement process
- Quality Improvement Tools®
- Team interaction skills

LFQ409

Signs of Trouble

All of us, unfortunately, have probably been a member of a team that was not effective. The team may even have been effective at one time, but something went wrong.

SIGNS OF TROUBLE

- One member dominates
- Mission is not clear
- Meeting is tense
- Little accomplished
- Disagreements aired in private
- Turf issues
- Critical outsiders are not cooperating

- Leader makes decisions on own
- Trust is low
- Little sharing among team
- Confusion about roles and assignments
- No diversity among members
- Team does not self-assess

LFQ410

Signs of Trouble[3]

- You cannot easily describe the team's mission.

- The meetings are formal, stuffy, or tense.

- There is a great deal of participation but little accomplishment.

- There is talk, but not much communication.

- Disagreements are aired in private conversations after the meeting.

- Decisions tend to be made by the formal leader with little meaningful involvement of other team members.

- Members are not open with each other because trust is low.

- There is confusion or disagreement about roles or work assignments.

- People in other parts of the organization who are critical to the success of the team are not cooperating.

- The team is overloaded with people who have the same team player style.

- The team has been in existence for at least three months and has never assessed its functioning.

[3]Reprinted from Parker, Glenn M., *Team Players and Teamwork: The New Competitive Business Strategy*; San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1990.