Working in Teams

Preparation

Review Reference Manual

Equipment, Materials, Supplies

- ❑ Newsprint, Easel, Markers, Masking Tape

- ❑ Blank paper

Exercise Preparation

- ❑ Review *Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences*

- ❑ Review *Exercise 2: The New Zin Obelisk*

    - ❑ Make a set of 30 New Zin Obelisk Information Cards for each group.
    - ❑ Optional: Make copies of the Answer Sheet to distribute to participants after they finish the exercise.

Room Arrangements

Participants should be seated at tables in groups of even numbered (preferably 4 to 6) people.

Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this module is to present key principles of effective teamwork and an opportunity for participants to experience the benefits and challenges of teamwork.

Objectives

At the end of this module participants will be able to:

- Discuss the characteristics of an effective team and factors influencing team effectiveness
- Describe the stages of team development.
- Recognize what stage a team is in.
- Discuss the importance of team building.
- Discuss the benefits and challenges of working in teams.

Content	Time
Introduction	5 minutes
Why Work in Teams?	15 minutes
Characteristics of Effective Teams	10 minutes
Team Roles	5 minutes
Stages of Team Development	20 minutes
Team Building	5 minutes
Exercise: Zin Obelisk	45 minutes
	Total Time: 1 hour and 45 minutes

Time/Materials   Content/Activities

Introduction

5 minutes

DISCUSS the purpose, objectives, and overview of the content, including a preview of the training methods to be used.

Purpose

Slide 1

TELL participants the purpose of this module is to present key principles of effective teamwork and an opportunity for participants to experience the benefits and challenges of teamwork.

Objectives

Slide 2

PREVIEW the objectives from the reference manual.

Overview

Slide 3

PREVIEW the module content

TELL participants these objectives will be met by discussing the topics, using personal experiences as examples. They will end with an exercise that will be used to discuss the benefits and challenges of teamwork.

Why Work in Teams?

15 minutes

Slide 4

Definition of a Team

STATE the definition of a team and emphasize that this definition will be used throughout the session and that each part is significant.

"A high-performing task group whose members are interdependent and share a common performance objective."

interdependent and share a common performance objective."

This definition implies that deadlines exist and that team members are committed to achieving a particular goal.

DISCUSS material from the reference manual covering:

Slides 5-8

- Types of teams
- Benefits of working in teams

Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences

Analysis of Prior Team Experiences

DISCUSS the distinction between a group of people coming together for a common purpose and a team of people who are interdependent and share a common objective that can only be obtained with the full participation of each team member.

INTRODUCE the activity

- **TELL** participants this exercise will invite them to remember past team experiences and distinguish the pluses and minuses of each experience

CONDUCT the activity

- **TELL** participants to turn to *Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences* in their manuals.
- **TELL** participants to complete *Question 1* on the worksheet. (5 minutes). Review instructions if necessary.

SUMMARIZE the activity.

- **ASK** two participants to share the pluses they experienced being on a team.
- **ASK** two participants to share the minuses they experienced being on a team.
- **ASK -** "Do the pluses outweigh the minuses?"
- **ASK -** "Have you experienced any personal benefits to being on at team that go beyond achieving the team's objectives"
- **ASK** one participant to share a personal benefit. (Alternatively you may ask participants to share their personal benefit with a partner - allow 1 minute for each person to share.)
- **TELL** participants to review the list of benefits found in the reference manual. **DISCUSS** any benefits listed in the reference manual which were not mentioned by participants
- **STATE** that in this training program participants will develop skill in enhancing the positive aspects and diminishing the negative aspects of working in teams.

Characteristics of Effective Teams

10 minutes

Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences

Slides 9 & 10

Definition of characteristics of an effective team

ASK participants to consider the two teams they "used" for the first exercise. **ASK** if any teams were effective, and what made them so. (large group brainstorm)

Analysis of the effectiveness of prior teams

INTRODUCE the activity.

- **REVIEW** the characteristics of effective teams found in the participant manual and listed in the second question of the exercise. **EXPLAIN** any characteristics which participants do not understand.

CONDUCT the activity

- **TELL** participants to complete *Question 2 on Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences* while thinking about the two teams they used to answer the first question.

SUMMARIZE the activity

- **ASK** which characteristics were present in their effective teams.
- **TELL** participants they will learn how to promote these characteristics to make teams more effective

Team Roles

5 minutes

Slides 11-19

Definition of team roles

DISCUSS information from the reference manual about team roles.

Stages of Team Development

20 minutes

Slides 20-36

Definition of the stages of team development

DISCUSS information from the reference manual about the stages of team development. **DESCRIBE** each stage and **GIVE EXAMPLES** of feelings and behaviors common in each. **DISCUSS** what a coach can do to support a team in this stage.

As you discuss each stage, **ASK** participants for examples from their own experience of teams in each of the stages. **EMPHASIZE** that the purpose for knowing these stages is so as coaches they can identify what stage a team is in and therefore what kind of support will help them move forward to be more effective.

Consider asking some of these questions to focus on important concepts:

- What do you think would happen when a team gets new

members, or the job assigned to the team changes? (return to forming, need introductory and explanatory activities).
- What is good about the storming phase? (gets alternative ideas out for discussion, encourages members' involvement)
- What can be a drawback of the norming stage? (everyone accepts an influential opinion without questioning, they do things that feel good and may not be technically correct)

Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences	***Analysis of prior team experience related to stages of team development***

INTRODUCE the activity

- **TELL** participants that the purpose of the following activity is to see the different patterns teams have as they go through these stages.

CONDUCT the activity

- **TELL** participants to complete *Question 3 on Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences.*
- Ask participants to choose one of their team experiences and indicate how much time they estimate their team spent in each of these stages.(Participants may draw a line graph, bar chart, or indicate in another way the relative time their team engaged in each of the stages.)

SUMMARIZE the activity

- **ASK**: "Was there equal amount of time spent in each stage?" "Did the forming stage take place?" "How long did storming continue?"
- **DISCUSS** whether each team will go through every stage. (Researchers believe each team will experience each stage, but the amount of time spent in each is influenced by how mature the team is, how familiar the members are with each other, etc.)
- **NOTE** the different patterns that have emerged.

Team Building

5 minutes

Slides 38-44

DISCUSS information from the Reference Manual on team building including:

- Definition of team building
- Need for team building training and exercises
- Role of the coach
- Appropriate team building activities

Exercise 2: The New Zin

INTRODUCE, CONDUCT AND SUMMARIZE the exercise as described on the exercise sheet and notes to the instructor.

Obelisk

45 minutes

Transition   **REVIEW** the objectives that were covered in this module. Relate the concepts to the next module.

Exercise 1: Analysis of Prior Team Experiences

Definition of a team: "a high-performing task group whose members are interdependent and share a common performance objective."

Instructions for this activity.

- List two teams in which you have participated. These teams may have existed at work or in your community. You may choose a current team in which you are participating.
- Think about and write the pluses you experienced from being on each team. Pluses may include personal benefits, outcomes, and/or unexpected side effects.
- Consider and write the minuses you experienced from being on each team.

Team # 1 _____-

Pluses	Minuses

Team # 2 _____-

Pluses	Minuses

2. Check all the characteristics that apply to your past or current team experience.

Characteristics of Effective Teams	Team #1	Team #2
Clear role definition and expectations for:		
Team Leader	❏	❏
Team Members	❏	❏
Time Keeper	❏	❏
Recorder	❏	❏
Facilitator	❏	❏
Trainer	❏	❏
Clear goal and objectives	❏	❏
Timelines and a sense of urgency	❏	❏
High level of interest and commitment	❏	❏
Minimal interruptions and distractions	❏	❏
Organizational acceptance	❏	❏
Positive and trusting team climate in general	❏	❏
Individual recognition and appreciation	❏	❏
Sensitivity to each other's needs and expressions	❏	❏
Constructive team self-assessment	❏	❏

3. Indicate by a line or bar graph how much time you think that ***one of your teams*** spent in each stage.

Time

Forming   Storming   Norming   Performing   Closing
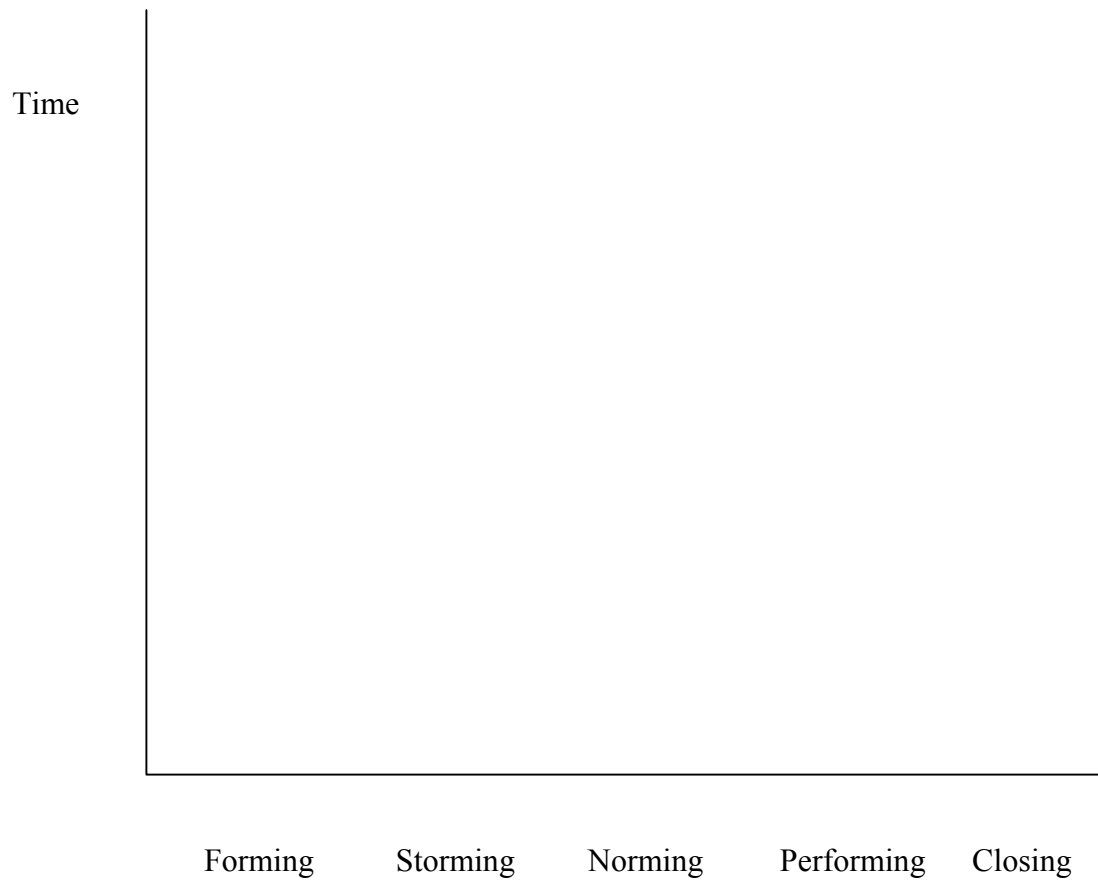
Exercise 2: The New Zin Obelisk

Goals:

- To give the team members the opportunity to experience and examine the sharing of information in team problem solving.
- To give the team members the opportunity to study leadership, cooperation, and other issues in team problem solving.

Group Size:

A team of four to seven members

Time Required:

Approximately fifty minutes

Materials:

1. A copy of the New Zin Obelisk Instruction Sheet and the New Zin Obelisk Review Sheet for each team member (in core course participant manual)
2. A set of the New Zin Obelisk Information Cards for the team (trainer must prepare)
3. Blank paper and a pencil for each team member
4. A copy of the New Zin Obelisk Answer Sheet for the facilitator's use (or copies for each participant as desired)
5. A flip chart and marker

Physical Setting:

A quiet room in which chairs can be arranged in a circle. When more than one team is working at a time, sufficient space between teams so they are not disturbed by others' work.

Process:

1. The facilitator distributes a copy of the New Zin Obelisk Group Instruction sheet, blank paper, and a pencil to each team member and instructs the members to read their sheets. (Five minutes).

2. The facilitator distributes a set of the New Zin Obelisk Information cards randomly among the team members and instructs the team to begin the task that was described in the Instruction Sheets. (Twenty-five minutes).

3. The facilitator calls time and distributes a copy of the New Zin Obelisk Review Sheet to each team member.

4. The facilitator reviews the experience with the team members, using the questions on the New Zin Obelisk Review sheet. (Thirty minutes).

5. The facilitator lists salient points on a flipchart and, if necessary, the answer and rationale to the problem.

Variations:

•   Any number of teams may be directed simultaneously. A set of the New Zin Obelisk Information Cards should be provided for each team.

•   Team members may complete the New Zin Obelisk Review Sheets individually before the group processing takes place.

•   The facilitator may introduce extraneous information to complicate the team's task.

THE NEW ZIN OBELISK INFORMATION

Instructions: make a set of thirty 3 x 5-inch cards for each group, each containing one item of information from the list below or simply cut along the dotted lines between each statement. The cards should be distributed randomly among members of the team.

✂---

In Atlantis, time is measured in days.

✂---

Each day is subdivided into wickles and wackles.

✂---

A Zin is a sacred object that is cared for by priests.

✂---

All Zins are the same size.

✂---

A Zin is fifty feet in length.

✂---

A Zin is one hundred feet high.

✂---

A Zin is ten feet wide.

✂---

Zins are made of stone blocks.

✂---

✂--

Each stone block measures one cubic foot.

✂--

Day one in the Atlantean week is called Codday.

✂--

Day two in the Atlantean week is called Octiday.

✂--

Day three in the Atlantean week is called Eelday.

✂--

Day four in the Atlantean week is called Clamday.

✂--

Day five in the Atlantean week is called Salmonday.

✂--

There are five days in the Atlantean week.

✂--

Atlantean workers have a standardized working day.

✂--

The Atlantean standardized working day has nine wickles, beginning at daybreak.

✂--

Sixteen wackles of each standardized working day are devoted to rest.

✂--

✂--

There are eight wackles in a wickle.

✂--

Each worker lays 150 blocks per wickle.

✂--

There are always nine workers in a gang.

✂--

One member of the gang is attached to the Atlantean army and does not lay blocks.

✂--

Every Salmonday is a public holiday.

✂--

Work on the Zin starts at daybreak on Codday.

✂--

Only one gang is working on the construction of the Zin.

✂--

There are eleven gold scales in a gold fin.

✂--

Each block costs twenty-two gold fins.

✂--

Bonus payments are made if religious devotions are made as blocks are laid.

✂--

✂--

A shortage of funds means that only three Zins can be constructed this year.

✂--

An allocation of 30,000 gold fins is available for monuments this year.

✂--

THE NEW ZIN OBELISK INSTRUCTION SHEET

In the ancient city of Atlantis, a solid, rectangular obelisk called a Zin was built in honor of the goddess Charlotta. The structure took less than two weeks to complete.

The task of your team is to determine on which day of the week the obelisk was completed. You have twenty minutes to complete this task. Each team member will be given cards containing information related to building the Zin. You may share this information orally, but you may not show your cards to other team members.

THE NEW ZIN OBELISK REVIEW SHEET

1.   What behaviors helped the team accomplish this task?

2.   What behaviors hindered the team from completing its task?

3.   How were the stages of team development evident during the exercise?

4.   How did leadership emerge on the team?

5.   What feelings did you experience as the task progressed?

6.   What suggestions would you make to improve the team's performance on future tasks involving collaboration?

7.   Did knowing the "correct" answer help or hinder evaluating the effectiveness of the team? What implications does this have for problem solving situations?

THE NEW ZIN OBELISK ANSWER SHEET

The answer to the problem is Octiday.

Rationale

1. The dimensions of the Zin indicate that it contains 50,000 cubic feet of stone blocks.

2. The blocks are one cubic foot each; therefore, 50,000 blocks are required.

3. Each worker works seven wickles per day (two wickles are devoted to rest).

4. Each worker lays 150 blocks per wickle; therefore, each worker lays 1,050 blocks a day.

5. There are eight workers per day; therefore 8,400 blocks are laid per working day.

6. The fifty-thousandth block, therefore, is laid on the sixth working day.

7. Work started at daybreak on Codday, and as work does not take place on Salmonday, the sixth working day is Octiday.

Comments to the Facilitator:

New Zin Obelisk

Over time, some common observations and key concepts have emerged from this exercise. Keep in mind – these are not tested truths, only observations of teams doing this exercise over time.

Teams in which everyone understands the issues (problems, tasks to be accomplished) do "better" than teams where this is not true. In this exercise, because some people have key information and some people have useless information (the clues about the gold fins, for example, do not contribute to solving the problem) teams do much better if they first share all the clues and then display them in a way that all can see – perhaps posting on newsprint.

Teams generally do better when there is leadership, facilitation, and prioritization. In this exercise, a leader might direct the posting of clues, A facilitator might see if a member is not giving his or her clues (for whatever reason – shy, afraid, vengeful, not asked) and encourage full participation. Someone who perceives the parts of the work might encourage the team to form subsets of the team to work on certain parts of the problem (calculations of volume, or of time for example).

The pressure of getting a solution by the end of the exercise may cause some teams to guess at an answer – if they guess right, are they lucky or experts? In real life, sometimes you get lucky – be careful to know when it is luck and when it is expertise and don't sell your team as Zin building experts if they are not!

In wide experience, only a very few teams have been known to solve the problem within the assigned time. In each case, there was something about the team that enabled them to see through the problem. In one case in Poland, the people were a real team – familiar with each other, used to working with each other, with a leader and a facilitator, and the team posted their work on newsprint. One person saw the relationships between clues, the team split the work and reached the answer. In one case in Zambia, the team members asked each other "what are your clues" to hear all the clues then wrote them on paper in a way that related them – all the wickles and wackles clues together, all the height, length clues together, etc. In another case, we are told of a team who had a very bright person. After hearing the clues of the team, he was able to develop an agenda of what needed to be calculated first, second, third, then moved the clues so people with the related clues sat together to work on parts of the problem.

Observations about the review questions:

First, not all questions need to be asked and answered – the choice of questions is yours, based on the things you saw during the exercise – emphasize the interesting things!

1. What behaviors helped the team accomplish this task?

Posting work, getting all members to contribute clues, an intact team, someone who sees relationships between clues, seeking clarification of communication, validation of information,

asking good questions all seem to help teams.

2. What behaviors hindered the team from completing its task?

Holding clues secret or not being allowed to share clues (if this restriction was added to the exercise), team members unfamiliar with each other, getting over concerned with strange words, paying attention to non-essential information, not knowing which information was essential, poor communication or feedback, press of time all seem to hinder teams.

3. How were the stages of team development evident during the exercise?

Most teams are in a forming and storming stage for most of the exercise, and only occasionally get to performing, if they are made of unfamiliar people at the beginning of a workshop; if they are an experienced team, may shift between storming and performing. Ask them to look for evidence: hesitancy, need to review instructions, arguments, members disconnecting from the team. Occasionally some teams get into norming – someone thinks they have the answer and convinces others of its rightness – usually this is a wrong answer! But it may happen!

4. How did leadership emerge on the team?

Natural leaders usually emerge, but the rare team may appoint someone. If there is a facilities engineer in the group, he sometimes takes charge. Ask if one person was the leader, or if several people shared this role over time – some people may lead for one portion of the work only.

5. What feelings did you experience as the task progressed?

Anything is possible –just relate to the stages discussion, or ask if that had been addressed could the team have worked better together (such as: an individual feeling ignored – if that had been seen and participation had been encouraged, would clues have been more easily available)

6. What suggestions would you make to improve the team's performance on future tasks involving collaboration?

This is totally up to them – assign roles, post work, do introductions and orientation, practice better communication skills, etc.

7. Did knowing the "correct" answer help or hinder evaluating the effectiveness of the team? What implications does this have for problem solving situations?

Some groups feel horrible after they know the result and see how they could have done better. They might feel terrible if they fail to reach a solution in the future, and a coach would really need to work with them to find value in the work that had been accomplished. Some teams feel arrogant if they have success, or they exaggerate their minor successes into major. A team that does this might accept less than correct results – they may stop work before a true root cause is discovered, or they might fall more easily into group think.