

## Working Effectively in Interdisciplinary Teams Nine Criteria for Effective Team Work Part Three

Let's move onto criteria number 6 now and to take us through that we have Abbie. Thanks, Joe. Criteria 6 is to use good project management techniques. One of the ways management can support a team is to provide them training with project management, and that can help them to be more effective. Use of good project management techniques within the team can help the team avoid some common interpersonal pitfalls. This can be done by establishing the scope, clarifying the roles, identifying the tasks and the task relationship and identifying and mitigating the risks. We want to make sure that we get all the adequate resources allocated to the project team as well to the project.

We also can identify and control the change by using good project management techniques. This can help the team complete projects on time and within budget. An example of where a project management can provide a tool is in the management of the scope of a project. The team will need to understand the scope and should scope get out of hand, known as scope creep, they may need more time and resources to meet the expanded scope. Understanding this issue as a team will give the team the opportunity to use not only good interpersonal skills within the team, but also to manage the project process as well. The team will need to identify as a group whether the scope needs to be revisited and then they need to communicate that with management if changes are necessary. Joe?

Thanks a lot, Abbie. Let's go on now to the 7th criteria, establishing a climate of trust and inclusion and to start that off, let's go straight to another clip from the Soaring Eagles team.

Why does our teamwork so well together? I think part of that is -- or a very big part of it is trust, trust in each other, trust that we can -- trust that we can speak openly, we can criticize each other without feeling like it's a personal attack, trust in each other's expertise and respect for each other, too, I think is really a very important part of the whole process.

I see people growing. I see old foresters like myself that have learned new skills from people that have just come on the job. And I think the main difference is the attitude that they bring, and they come with an attitude that says, well, we can do this, or, why can't we do this? And they also don't come with some of the baggage of the past.

Everyone is there together to be supportive of one another. Everyone wants the team to be successful. We want to meet our deadlines. We want to turn out quality products. And we're all very support and helpful of each other.

What I've noticed with our particular team is that we're able to come together and talk about all of these projects that we have and bring our disciplines together and come up with products that are acceptable to many of the different users of our product.

It's not just one team member getting their assignment and going off and then we all come back together. We work together throughout the week or the months. It's not just

when we come together and sit in one room for a meeting for an hour or five hours.

Great. Now let's continue on with this subject of building a climate of trust and inclusion. With our own team here today of Jude, Karen and Linda. Jude is first.

Let's talk more about criteria 7 of establishing a climate of trust and inclusion, and we know in teaming how important this is. Openness is very important. Sharing ideas and questions and concerns, not holding back information. Also credibility is very important to maintaining this team integrity. One needs to demonstrate competence. Doing what you say you will do and owning up to lapses in accountability. Karen?

Thanks, Jude. Respect is also really important, both respect that you show and that you receive as a team member. It's important to acknowledge and use the skills and expertise of your team and to respond to and resolve the legitimate concerns that your team members express. Accountability is another factor that's very important. Team members need to trust that promises, commitments and agreements will be met by all their team members, both in the specific tasks they take on and also in team behavior and interactions. It's important through all this to focus on accomplishing the goals of the team and aiming to achieve tangible results. Linda?

Thank you, Karen. Another area is individuality. This is valuing the individual styles and differences of how our team members react and act within our team meetings, capitalizing on those individual differences and the strengths that come from individuals. We're going to go to Elena Misquez in the Palm Springs Field Office who will share some of her experience with the value of using personal profiles to

understand and appreciate the differences. Elena.

Good morning, Elena. How do you go about using these differences?

Good morning. Well, at the very beginning of our planning process, the planning team lead at the time, Rebecca White, had us all do a personality profile, and then, after, of course, we took the test, then we compared our results and really got to know what were the interests and tendencies of the other team members. For me it really opened my eyes as to the strengths and tendencies of each of the team members and it helped me to best utilize their skills in the development of the plan.

Thanks a lot, Elena. Truly working on a team involves everyone bringing a certain toolbox to the table, and everybody's toolbox has certain individual strengths and weaknesses in them, and what you need to do is share with your team what those are through some type of inventory and then teamwork is really the result when you can capitalize on those strengths that everyone brings. The Soaring Eagles team also has some insight into personal styles.

I think one of the key pieces in the successful team is recognizing the value of the different communication styles and definitely being aware of your own style. For instance, I tend to be more assertive in the meetings and talk a lot, and now I have an idea that that could be disruptive to some people or it may keep other people from pitching in their ideas, because one team member may be taking over the meeting more so than others, and so that has helped me to sit back and I think I have become more of an effective team player because I am listening to the other team members for

their input and not just staying stuck on what I think might be a solution to a project or whatever.

You can know who is stronger at certain things. There's people that are stronger at organization on the team. There's people that are stronger at like big picture thinking on the team. There's creative people on the team. If you know that and you have a project that requires that -- those parts of that type of personality, you can direct the parts and break the parts of your project out to those people, that those are their strengths. If you know also their weaknesses, you can work together to support each other. So if you know, if my weakness was organizational skills or details and someone else's strength was details, we could work together on that and they could take the detail part of it and I could take the more big picture part of it.

Corey and Jean any, thanks a lot for that great perspectives this morning. Now we're moving to number 8, setting guidelines to deal with unproductive team behaviors.

Thank you, Joe. The 8th criteria is setting guidelines to deal with unproductive team behaviors. Ground rules are a first good step for this. They help us manage conflict, deal with our negativities, deal with sabotage of the team, dealing with lapses of commitment and accountability, how to deal with the personal values that might be in conflict with BLM, our team, the mission, the vision, the RMP. Dealing with hidden agendas and defensive competition. Let's talk a little bit specifically about conflict. Conflict is the result of any opposition or antagonistic interaction. It can be functional or unhealthy -- excuse me -- it can be functional or healthy, it can be unhealthy, we'll talk about that in a moment -- and healthy conflict causes us to consider new ideas

and that's the good kind.

Dysfunctional or unhealthy pits us against each other and that's unproductive. Conflict is normal and natural. If we didn't have it, we would never change the way we do anything. A lot of reasons are around for why we have conflict. People today, we live pretty stressful lives and that stress often overflows into the workplace. We also have incompatible expectations about why we're here, what is important that we take care of. We also have differences on how things should be done and, of course, one of the things we live with on a daily basis is the increasing complexity of our work. External pressures that come from our various publics and the people that are outside of our organization also create some level of conflict.

Another contributor to conflict can be our nonverbal communication. Body language is what we call it, and body language tends to relay our attitudes and our emotions. I have seen in my many years of working with teams that it can do more to destroy a team than any words spoken. Now we're going to play a game, and the game is "what's my message?"

First we're going to go to Abbie. It's pretty obvious that Abbie has lost her patience. She's frustrated, she's had enough with this team, but hopefully not for real up here. Let's take a look with Jude. Jude's demonstrated he's not agreeing with us. Let's take a look at Karen. Karen has checked out. She's no longer listening to the conversation. I have a challenge for all of you right now. Look around in the room where you are right now and check the nonverbals among your own teammates. Are you surprised by what you see? This is something to think about. Now for more on conflict. Let's go back

to the Soaring Eagles team once again.

We don't tend to try to take one another on. We will take issues on. We will discuss in a very hard way the disciplines and the issues, how they relate to the issues and how one discipline may see an issue different than another. We'll talk about that. We feel free to talk about that in a respectful manner. But as far as conflict between individuals, we don't have that much. I think that's the mutual respect and the fact that we appreciate one another.

Now let's look at some conflict resolution block styles. These are styles that we fall into, and when we're in them, we're unable to resolve conflict. Some people are aggressive in conflict. We've all seen this style in conflict. They come on strong. They push hard for their own agendas. Their style is one that uses an attack mode. They not only start with whatever is bothering them at the moment but oftentimes their past annoyances find their way into the conversation as well. This style's biggest problem is it's hurtful. It offends and hurts other members of the team. And the results of it is not only that it does not resolve the conflict at hand but it results in more conflict related to how the treatment is felt by the others on the team.

Passive members in conflict can actually be as difficult as the aggressive styles because what is happening is the team has been robbed every their true input and their true feelings. Passive individuals in conflict often give in even when they don't want to. Usually there's some kind of retaliation later. It could be, and this is really important, it could be a loss of support, that that person just does not support the team or the members of the team who have created their disharmony. One of the biggest

problems with this particular behavior is it can lead to people becoming victims, feeling victims of the team, of the organization, of the project, whatever it may be.

There's only one stall that actually resolves conflict, that's being assertive.

Assertiveness resolves conflicts. It is the only style that embraces win-win resolutions.

Let's look at the definition of assertiveness. Some people say, I'm not being aggressive, I'm just being direct and honest. They are missing that important respectful piece to that definition. Others might say I'm not being passive, I'm just being respectful, and they are missing the direct and honest piece. But assertiveness is all three. It's direct, it's honest, and it's respectful while we interact with others. Our 9th criteria is have fun and celebrate milestones. When teams are asked to describe the elements of the best teams they've ever been a part of, without fail, having fun is always on the top list. I have a favorite quote for you. "Have fun. Misery is optional." Recognition is actually a very powerful motivator and that can be from management or within the team.

Sometimes we wait for management to recognize us. Powerful teams recognize inside the team. The completion of any milestone should always be celebrated, and the team should decide where their milestones are, and those Soaring Eagles, they know and like to have fun as well. Let's find out what they consider to be fun.

There are a couple of people on the team that seem to see it in their role to make things fun. There are Robin and Stephanie I see as being planners of fun things. And then Tim I see as being kind of the guy with the jokes during the team, people to make laugh during meetings. Those are all awesome characteristics for a team. The team has fun. They plan picnics and they just laugh a lot during their meetings, which goes a long ways towards productivity.

One thing you definitely need to do to be an effective team is have fun, and that's one thing that we do very well, and so many meetings can go on and on and on, and now and then you just have to throw in some humor. Once in a while, actually, "Gumby" and "Pokey" come to visit our meetings, and sometimes just kind of bending little "Gumby's arms around and throwing "Pokey" at Tom relaxes everyone and reduces the tension and just kind of serves as an impromptu break in the meeting and just remind everyone that, you know, let's not take this all too seriously.

One thing many I think is important -- that I think is important and I think our team all agrees with this is to recognize your success and then celebrate the success as a team. For one thing, I think it's good for us to bring closure to a project and to say, okay, we've got through this stage of the project. Let's kind of celebrate that and recognize it. One way to do it is simple things like, you know, bringing cookies to the meeting or just giving somebody a pat on the back and saying, "hey, you finished this, you did a good job, way to go." I think every little bit of encouragement helps and makes people realize "wow, I did that and I feel good about it."