

Working Effectively in Interdisciplinary Teams Sabotage

Okay. You all did a great job with that scenario. Next up we have scenario number 2, which is called a case of sabotage. Please turn to page 29 now in your Participant Guide and this time we're only going to take three minutes to work your team since you've got the routine down now. Good luck!

Okay. Now we'd like to hear from you. We've got the green light on again. So who would like to go first sharing one or two ideas your team came up with?

This is Diane.

Jerry from Ukiah.

I heard Ukiah.

This is Gary from Ukiah. We were talking about consensus never really was reached evidently and that's assuming everybody was open and honest in the decision making process. Also, that the decision making guidelines that the team comes up with should be revisited or reiterated.

Excellent. Thanks a lot, Gary. Let's have another comment.

This is Diane.

Hi, Diane. Go ahead.

I'm calling from the Safford Field Office in Arizona where we have more than 20 employees participating today! We all agree that the team should have never revisited the decision. They made the decision. They should stick with it, and by revisiting that only encourages the saboteur's behavior.

That's a than interesting comment. Are there cases, Abbie, perhaps, when a team would be empowered to revisit a decision?

In some cases one of the team members may have new information that may lead the team in a direction that is more legally defensible, in particular, new case law that occurs during the course of the project or new policy or procedures that comes out. So there are times when revisiting a decision that's already been made by the team is necessary and okay. But those need to be spelled out in advance when that's going to be all right.

I didn't get that impression in the way we wrote this scenario that that was the case. Let's have another answer now from somebody that addressed this.

This is Grand Junction, Colorado.

Hello, Grand Junction. Go ahead. What's your name?

This is Wade Johnson, and we have about 25 people in our group.

You've got it over the southwest field office.

We're looking for any prizes we can get. We pretty much agree with all the other comments that were made. It looks like to me that there's really a breakdown as far as the whole team dynamics, and you just need to go clear back and examine the ground rules and make sure everybody buys into them and everybody realizes that so far the disagreement has come from a misunderstanding of what the basic ground rules should be, that there needs to be consensus and from that consensus you build from there with no negatives coming out of the group.

Excellent, Wade. Thanks a lot for that comment from Grand Junction. Now let's have another comment from one of the offices out there today.

This is Dennis from Rock Springs.

Hi, Dennis. Go ahead.

Hi, Dennis.

Hi, there. This may be a schedule problem. Not everybody can respond in such a short time schedule. Some people are a little bit longer in their thinking. Other people may mistake a comma for a period in their speech and get rushed through.

I would like to address if that I may. You know, you're really right on that. Some people, I always talk about the fact that some people think by talking. I happen to be one of those. I often say, you know, I'm not sure I even believe everything I say. But some people really do have to think by thinking and sometimes in the team meeting that's not possible, so you bring up a good point.

Let's have another idea in dealing with this scenario.

This is Walt George in the Wyoming State Office. By like to address the moral issue, and I'd also like to add personal values into that scenario. I think that's a situation that's very sensitive but probably not appropriate to the teamwork, and it's important for the team to honor those personal feelings but provide maybe an informal setting where those personal values can be discussed.

Very good. Thank you very much for that comment. Let me ask a question of the panel here this morning. Say people are bringing opinions into the team, they've got some very strong opinions. In what cases should those kinds of things be considered?

I think you need to ask that person who is bringing in those opinions, do you have facts or evidence that saw is supporting that position? That will help you to decide whether that's something that should factor into the decision or not. I think that's a hopeful way to tackle that issue.

Another question. Linda, maybe you can discuss a technique to help define what each team members position is.

One of our responders mentioned the team hadn't achieved consensus. One of the things I think we can do ensure that takes place. You have seen some our team members using the thumbs and affirming we have a consensus. I think a round Robin for is that really a good idea. But I would also like to have you consider that if you're making an important decision that needs to be supported by the team that every person in the round Robin states their support, and then if they come back with these behaviors, then you say in the team, you say I support what we agreed on. That should take care of some of this.