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Conflict Management Options

How to Bake the Perfect Team

Upcoming CORP Workshops:

- Darwin
- Alice Springs
- Katherine



Did you know...

CORP Workplace Solutions offers a comprehensive range of **Conflict Management Options** for facilitating effective solutions to workplace conflict?

Ask for a copy of our *Conflict Management booklet* or contact CORP today!



Increasingly organisations are acknowledging the human and financial cost of unresolved conflict. Productivity, retention of staff, business reputation and profitability are all at risk if there is no effective, unified strategy for the management of workplace conflict.

CORP's range of Conflict Management Options offer effective solutions to workplace conflict which can strengthen staff competencies in resolving own issues and ultimately reduce financial losses for organisations via the introduction of conflict prevention strategies.

Whether the workplace conflict involves one, ten or an indeterminate number of individuals, CORP can provide the expertise to facilitate a program for resolution, customised to meet your specific organisational needs.

To assist in identifying the option best-suited to your current need, please contact Jo, CORP consultant, on (08) 8941 5661 or enquire by email to corp@corp.org.au

How to Bake the Perfect Team

Smart recruitment and perceptive leadership are both essential in creating high-performing teams. But what's the best recipe?

"A great team is more than the sum of its parts."

It's a cliché, but that doesn't mean it's not true. No doubt you've seen it yourself at one point or another, the group of also-rans who somehow together form a world-beating unit, or indeed the paper dream team that in action is a manager's nightmare.

But seeing employees as cogs in a machine makes the fundamental error of assuming we're standardised and therefore easily interchangeable, which of course we're not. You really are unique in what you can contribute, *just like everyone else.*

The machine analogy also makes the assumption that if you put all the right parts in the right place, you will have an effective team, but that ignores the critical role of leadership and culture.

A better analogy is baking a cake. You need the right ingredients (people) and the right method (leadership), but even then you can't take the recipe at face value. A little judgement is required).

With that in mind, here's a guide to making a great team — light, fluffy and delicious...

Ingredients

Team roles, clearly defined...

In the 1960s the influential researcher Meredith Belbin

fashioned his team role theory, which states that there are certain roles that need to be fulfilled within any effective team, among them outgoing, enthusiastic '*resource investigators*', sober, strategic '*monitor-evaluators*' and innovative, introspected '*plants*'.

According to Belbin's theory, most people can perform between one and three of these roles, so creating a strong team is about making sure you find out what roles people are suited for and then put them in it.

'We tend to encourage people to play to their strengths and learn the things they can marginally handle, and keep away from those things for which they have a low affinity,' Belbin (now 90) tells us.

... and carefully selected

The problem arises when a job-seeker's incentive for advancement is at odds with the organisation's need to put them in the right place.

'There are people who are just good interviewees who don't actually deliver much,' confesses Randall Peterson, professor at the London Business School's leadership unit. *'The quality of most interviewing is also pretty poor. It usually runs along the lines of these are the company's values, what do you think? Well what do you think they are going to tell you? They want a job.'*

This results in people who aren't in the right role, causing your team to fall flat.

To get round it, of course, you need to spend time and effort figuring out what kind of person the interviewee actually is, and then decide whether it's what your organisation and team needs.

Diversity is the spice of life

The right people aren't defined just by their aptitude in certain roles. Aside from the obvious — their level of skill and experience (being more than the sum of your parts isn't much good if the parts themselves are useless) — it also pays to think about the diversity of your team members.

Diversity can be seen in some HR departments as a tick-box for people who aren't straight, white, middle class, able-bodied men. It's a definition leading business author Gareth Jones takes issue with.

'The first characteristic of the organisation of your dreams is difference beyond diversity,' Jones says. 'Tick boxes for diversity and inclusion haven't produced diverse organisations.'

The value in difference (or diversity of thought) is that you have people who see things a different way, because they are drawing from different experiences. Having a truly diverse team in this sense of the word means having access to more varied ideas and a wider perspective on the ideas they already have.

Method

Co-ordination (mix well)

Take all that, splat it together and then incinerate for three hours... No matter how carefully selected, having the right people does not make a great team by default. Good management is essential.

Take diversity, for instance. *'The research is really clear that diversity in itself does not predict performance, but diversity well-managed does,'* says Peterson, who adds that badly managed diversity can actually produce some of the worst-performing teams, plagued by misunderstanding and infighting.

Good management of diversity in particular involves co-ordinating the team and making sure everyone communicates openly.

'Even with the most positive will in the world, you're going to have misunderstandings. I've found this repeatedly, that instead of saying we're having a problem co-ordinating with each other, we blame someone on the team – it was all fine until this new person came along. This is usually deadly,' Peterson says.

Psychological safety (don't overheat)

The most fashionable phrase in team research for the last few years has been 'psychological safety'. Broadly, it means how comfortable people feel in speaking their mind or being themselves, without fear of reprisal or humiliation.

'The key issue here is leadership. If leaders punish people who raise issues then you don't have psychological safety. And now you've completely undercut the key strength of a team which is identifying problems,' says Peterson.

Achieving psychological safety is easier said than done, of course. A New York Times article earlier this year documented how data-hungry Google nerds identified psychological safety as the single common element of its top-performing teams, but struggled to find out how to implement it at scale.

They eventually identified radical openness and the willingness of a leader to bring their personal life — their whole self — to work, as being key. Where the leader goes, the rest will follow.

Purpose (you do want cake, right?)

Having a team where everyone feels safe is a great start, but the icing on the cake is for that team to know what it's for. Unless the goal is clearly articulated — and indeed team members are hired with the team's goal in mind — it could easily be unfit for purpose.

With that in mind, it's important to remember that for some tasks, the best team is no team.

'In the last 8-10 years in particular companies have spent a lot of time and energy promoting team, team, team, as though it's the cure for all problems, and it's absolutely not the case. Teams are better at certain things like identifying risks, but they're absolutely terrible at others,' says Peterson.

'If it's something where one person would be able to do it if they had enough time, or a disjunctive task that moves at the speed of the slowest individual, such as an assembly line, then teams are generally not helpful.'



You may want to let them eat cake, then, but sometimes plain old bread will do just fine.

www.managementtoday.co.uk



Workplace Solutions

2017 CORP Workshop Calendar

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Note: offer does not apply to CORP Talks

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DISCOUNT

For further information,
or to register for a
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Darwin

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Katherine

Regional Training Centre

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***Katherine conditions:**

\$285pp for full day

\$175pp for half day

\$45pp for CORP Talks

Maximum **10** participants



Jamaica's Womens Relay Team, Beijing-Olympics 2015

If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.
African Proverb

Darwin

Tuesday 7 February	Fixed vs Growth Mindsets — CORP Talk!	12noon- 1pm
Tuesday 14 February	Emotional Intelligence — What's your EQ?	8.30am- 12noon
Tuesday 21 February	Getting your Message Across — Key Communication Skills	8.30am- 4pm

Mediations | Formal Referrals | Mgt Coaching

CORP Workshops — coming soon!

Darwin | Alice Springs | Katherine

DARWIN

Tuesday 7 March	Change Management — CORP Talk!	12noon- 1pm
Tuesday 14 March	Resilience—The Grit Factor	8.30am- 12noon
Wednesday 15 March	Mindful Leadership	8.30am 4pm
Tuesday 28 March	Emotional Intelligence for Leaders	8.30am- 12noon
Thursday 30 March	Enhancing the Customer Experience	8.30am- 12noon

ALICE SPRINGS *Limited places available in Alice Springs CORP workshops — please book early!*

Thursday 2 March	Resilience – <i>the Art of Bouncing Back</i>	8.30am- 12noon
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KATHERINE *Limited places available in Katherine CORP workshops — please book early!*

Wednesday 15 March	Resilience – <i>the Grit Factor</i>	8.30am- 12noon
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Build Your Planning Event



Your Way...

Establish direction, increase profitability, encourage innovation or raise employee morale with a CORP-facilitated Planning Event.

1. Choose Your Venue



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4. Flavour Options



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Workplace Conflict Management – Options

- **Workplace Conflict Assessment**
(call for quote)
- **Workplace Conflict Investigation**
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- **Group Facilitated Discussion**
(minimum 2 hours)
- **Mediation**
(minimum 6 hours for 2 party mediation)
- **Formal Referral**
(minimum 1½ hours / session)
- **Conflict Coaching**
(minimum 2 hours)

To assist in identifying the option best-suited to your current need, or to request a *Conflict Management Options* booklet, please contact CORP consultant Jo on (08) 8941 5661 or by email to corp@corp.org.au



Did you know...?

CORP Workplace Solutions offer **Customised Training Programs** to meet your specific organisational needs — on-site or off-site — on a variety of topics, including:

- **Family & Domestic Violence**
- **Critical Incident & Trauma Response for Managers**
- **Communications Skills for Managers**
- **Customer Service**
- **The Neuroscience of Leadership**
- **Appropriate Workplace Behaviour for Managers**
- **Giving & Receiving Constructive Feedback**
- **Leading Organisational & Cultural Change**
- **Difference & Diversity – Working in a Mixed Team**
- **Managing Aggressive Clients**

For further information contact CORP Workplace Solutions on (08) 8941 5661 or visit our website at www.corp.org.au