Project Team Dynamics: Looking in the Mirror

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Overview

- A few exercises which will help you reflect on your team dynamics
- Highlight the theme of differences as a source of tension within groups, but also a group’s greatest asset
- Avoidance of tension/conflict is the most common factor in breakdown of group functioning
Stages of Group Development

Forming
Storming
Norming
Performing
Adjourning

Synergy
1. When you are with a group of people, would you usually rather:  
   ○ join in the talk of the group - E  
   ○ talk individually with people you know well - I

2. In a large group do you more often:  
   ○ introduce others - E  
   ○ get introduced - I

3. Would you say it generally takes others:  
   ○ a lot of time to get to know you - I  
   ○ a little time to get to know you - E

4. Do you spend a lot of time:  
   ○ by yourself - I  
   ○ with others - E

5. Can you:  
   ○ talk easily to almost anyone for as long as you have to - E  
   ○ find a lot to say only to certain people or under certain conditions - I
6. Can the new people you meet tell what you are interested in:
   ○ right away - E
   ○ only after they really get to know you - I

7. Would most people say you are:
   ○ a private person - I
   ○ a very open person - E

8. Do you find being around a lot of people:
   ○ gives you more energy - E
   ○ is often “draining” - I

9. Do you usually:
   ○ mingle well with others - E
   ○ tend to keep more to yourself - I

10. At parties do you:
    ○ do much of the talking - E
        ○ let others do most of the talking - I
1. Would you say you are more:
   ○ easy going - P
   ○ serious and determined - J

2. In most situations you are more:
   ○ deliberate than spontaneous - J
   ○ spontaneous than deliberate - P

3. Are you more:
   ○ organized and orderly - J
   ○ flexible and adaptable - P

4. Do you tend to notice:
   ○ disorderliness - J
   ○ opportunities for change - P

5. On the job do you want your activities:
   ○ unscheduled - P
   ○ scheduled - J
6. Is clutter in the workplace something you:
   ○ tolerate pretty well - P
   ○ take time to straighten up - J

7. Is it preferable mostly to:
   ○ just let things happen naturally - P
   ○ make sure things are arranged - J

8. Do you prefer to work:
   ○ just whenever - P
   ○ to deadlines - J

9. Do you tend to be more:
   ○ regulated and structured - J
   ○ easygoing, “live and let live” - P

10. Do you usually want things:
    ○ settled and decided - J
    ○ just penciled in - P
Talk about your I/E and P/J types and how they might be affecting team dynamics now or in the future?

If your group is over-represented in one aspect or the other, how might this affect team functioning? Potential blind spots?
Tough Decisions
Which of the following best describes how you handle conflicts?

1. I don’t like conflicts, and I try to avoid them. I would rather not be forced into a situation where I feel uncomfortable or under stress. When I do find myself in that kind of situation, I say very little, and I leave as soon as possible.

2. To me, conflicts are challenging. They’re like contests or competitions—opportunities for me to come with solutions. I can usually figure out what needs to be done, and I’m usually right.

3. I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved? I gather as much information as I can, and I keep the lines of communication open. I look for a solution that meets everyone’s needs.

4. When faced with a conflict or even a potential conflict, I tend to back down or give in rather than cause problems. I may not get what I want, but that’s a price I’m willing to pay for keeping the peace.

5. I want to resolve the conflict as quickly as possible. I give up something I want or need, and I expect the other person to do the same. Then we can both move forward.
Differences and Diversity

- Our minds tend to react to differences as “wrong” and/or “bad”
- Our minds aren’t always our best asset
- Diversity can be understood as how we relate to differences
  - Accept, Allow, Make room for…
    vs.
  - Invite, Embrace, Curiosity
 Truly embracing differences will be messy, uncomfortable
Differences also provide the fuel which drives Synergy
Synergy requires psychological safety
- The ability to read and react to other people in the group (social sensitivity)
- Equal opportunity to participate in the group
Consultation

- Sign up for a consultation slot for Friday between 1:45 – 3:30pm
- Catch me at a coffee break, lunchtime, etc.
- Email me to arrange a time...

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