Project Team Dynamics: Looking in the Mirror

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WPI SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR PROJECT BASED LEARNING
JUNE 20 - 23, 2018
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
MBTI Exercise  I/E

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
Group Work

- 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
Conflict Resolution Styles

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
Summary

- 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 2:15 – 4:00pm
- Catch me at a coffee break, lunchtime, etc.
- Email me to arrange a time...

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