CHECKLIST FOR HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS

Why do some teams perform well while others struggle? How can you assess how effectively your team is working now, and identify methods for improvement? Research shows that 85% of the reasons that teams of people succeed or struggle has more to do with interpersonal issues, than technical competence. But both are needed for effective teamwork. Below is a checklist you can use to identify the strengths and development needs of your own team:

1. **Clear Goals**
    It's very hard to get there if you don't know where you're going! And it's very hard to accomplish your goals if you haven't made them clear. Make sure there's no question about your team's purpose, function and objective.

2. **Clear Roles and Responsibilities**
    It's important that roles and responsibilities are clearly specified in order for people to be accountable for accomplishing their part of the team's tasks. Misunderstandings and conflicts frequently occur when roles and expectations are not clearly defined.

3. **Information Sharing**
    In order for the team to make the best decisions, each team member needs to be provided with relevant information. High performing teams don't guard information… they share it freely.

4. **Competent Team Members**
    Competent team members need to be placed in the right position. At times, a highly talented person can be ill placed which can throw off the team functioning. Consider both the competency and placement of each individual team member.

5. **Values Diversity**
    We don't all work the same way, or have the same styles. This can be a key source for interpersonal conflict. However, when teams learn to value each other's differences they can leverage each other's strengths. Team building exercises can help individuals to appreciate diversity and work together more effectively.

6. **Creative Problem Solving**
    When you value diversity of opinion, your team can be more adept at solving problems. How effectively a team can generate new solutions, and focus on the end objective, will largely determine their success.

7. **Flexibility**
    High performing teams check their progress periodically and adjust their course when needed. This is an important element for allowing them to become adept at meeting the goals of their team.

8. **Effective Conflict Resolution**
    How teams resolve their conflicts can make or break them. Effective conflict resolution skills that focus on the task at hand, not the individuals, helps teams move forward and redirect their focus toward positive outcomes.

9. **Effective Time Management**

How teams structure their meetings, and meet their deadlines, reflects on their effectiveness. Teams that manage their meetings well encourage higher performance and the increased likelihood of accomplishing their objectives.

10. **Good Morale**

Low turnover and longevity is a benchmark of good morale. A team that successfully values the individual as well as the team has the best likelihood of success.

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