

Reproduced with the permission of choice Magazine, www.choice-online.com

Reproduced with the permission of choice Magazine, www.choice-online.com

choice

the magazine of professional coaching

Team & Group Coaching

The landscape of coaching many



GROUP & TEAM COACHING

The landscape of coaching many

What are the differences between team and group coaching? When and how do you introduce team or group coaching? How do you effectively measure the impact of team or group coaching? This issue uncovers the secrets of successful group and team coaching experiences for both coach and clients, including how to design and launch programs to create engagement, inspiration, motivation and accountability for participants.



Reproduced with the permission of choice Magazine, www.choice-online.com

Reproduced with the permission of choice Magazine, www.choice-online.com

COACHING TEAMS

Developing a strong foundation

By Terry H. Hildebrandt, PhD, MCC, MCEC

While working as an internal coach for more than 11 years, I often worked with new and existing teams to support them in improving their effectiveness.

What I discovered is that investing in creating a strong foundation can accelerate a team's performance, improve relationships, and create a positive work climate.

I found that teams need to invest in five key areas: Strategy, Structure, Process, Culture, and Results. A Team Coach's role is to ask the right questions and facilitate dialogue to create and maintain these five areas as an integrated system. Savvy team leaders collaborate with team coaches to provide the processes and tools to enable these conversations. I will briefly explore each of these key areas along with the key questions that a team coach needs to ask.

STRATEGY

When coaching teams, I always start with Strategy, which includes:

- ▶ **Purpose** – Why does the team exist? Who are its stakeholders/customers? What does it produce? What value does its products/services provide to its key stakeholders?
- ▶ **Vision** – What does success look like? What will this team ideally look like 2-3 years from now?
- ▶ **Mission** – What are the team's big goals? How does the team's mission connect to the larger organization's mission?
- ▶ **Strategic Objectives** – What objectives enable the team to accomplish its mission and reach its vision?
- ▶ **Strategic Initiatives** – What projects or programs does the team need to launch to achieve the strategic objectives?

CREATING A **STRONG TEAM** FOUNDATION

STRATEGY	STRUCTURE	PROCESSES	CULTURE	MEASUREMENT & RESULTS
Purpose Vision Mission Objectives Initiatives	Roles & Responsibilities Talent Organization Charts	Delivery Communication Decision-Making Continuous Improvement	Values Operating Agreements Team Identity	Scorecard, Reward, Recognition, Team Learning

STRUCTURE

Structure is all about staffing, roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships. Structure includes:

- **Talent** – What skills, knowledge and abilities are needed to achieve the strategy?
- **Positions** – What job positions do we want to create to attract the right people with the right skills?
- **Responsibilities** – What are the duties, deliverables, and expectations for each of the positions?
- **Management** – Who reports to whom in the team? Who are the key stakeholders in management and leadership, and what roles do they play? Who is the sponsor of the team?

PROCESSES

Processes are the steps by which teams create results. Processes consist of inputs, action steps, and outputs. Processes always exist in any team, but often they are ad hoc or ill-defined. By focusing on understanding key processes, teams can improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Processes include:

- **Products/Services** – What are the core deliverables of the team?
- **Core Processes** – What are the core processes that create the products/services?
- **Communication** – How does the team coordinate and communicate internally among team members and with other stakeholders?
- **Decision-Making** – How are key decisions made?
- **Project Management** – How do we manage the various programs and projects to keep everything on track?
- **Process Improvement** – How do we continuously improve our processes? What methodology do we use?

TEAM CULTURE

A positive team culture is what makes a team fun, creative, and enjoyable. Coaches and leaders need to intentionally create and maintain team culture. Culture includes:

- **Shared Values** – What is important to each of the team members and how do these core values come together to create shared values that all team members agree to support?

➤ **Operating Agreements** – How do the values translate into practical operating agreements? This can include how to handle conflicts, accountability, inclusion, and respect to name a few.

➤ **Team Identity** – How do team members see themselves? What kind of team are they? What do they want to be known for? Using metaphors and imagery can facilitate better understanding of team identity. For example, “we want to be all rowing together in this boat.” “We are a Tiger Team that is competitive and aggressive in going after the competition.” “We operate as a family that supports and cares about each other.”

MEASUREMENT & RESULTS

Without results, most teams will quickly lose energy and untimely dissolve. Measurement of results along with celebration and accountability are fundamental for a high-functioning team. Team coaches need to focus on creating these systems:

- **Scorecard** – What are the key areas of interest? How do we pay attention to the whole system to monitor its health? How often do we need to collect data? How do we report it?
- **Reward & Recognition** – How do we celebrate success as a team? How do we recognize team members for their efforts and accomplishments?
- **Reviews & Learning** – How does the team reflect on its results, learn from success and failure, and make course corrections? What changes are required to strategy, structure, processes, measurement, and/or culture?

CONCLUSIONS

Building and maintaining a solid team foundation is critical for team coaches to understand and facilitate. Asking the right questions and holding space for meaningful dialogue can accelerate a team to achieve results.

Team leaders do well to hire a team coach to work with them to provide the processes and tools to enable the conversation required to build the foundation. A team coach can attend to the team’s inquiry and reflection processes and allow the team leader to engage in creating the content along with the team. •