OVERCOMING THE ABSENCE OF TRUST

Let’s keep the ‘end game’ in mind: You want to improve the levels of trust on your team. Specifically so that you can ultimately improve the performance results of the team.

This means that you have to break down barriers, and that you need to facilitate empathy and common understanding amongst team members.

PERSONALITY AND BEHAVIOURAL PREFERENCE PROFILES

Read overview on page 199.

I agree with Patrick Lencioni: Behavioural preference and personality style psychometry is one of the most effective ways to help people do just this.

He recommends the MBTI as ‘best available’. I mentioned in Module 3 that it’s also one of my favourites. I also mentioned that I have had great results working with DISC (there are both personal and team assessments available), as well as with Dr Kobus Neethling’s ‘Brain Instrument’, and Dr Melodie de Jager’s ‘Mind Moves’ profile.

Tip: Don’t forget to check out legal and regulatory restrictions, as well as your own company’s policy regarding the use and application of personality / behavioural profiling (as well as 360-Degree Feedback which is coming up next) before you proceed. Also, don’t spend money without checking first on what in-house resources you have at your disposal.

360-DEGREE FEEDBACK

Read overview on page 200.

Lencioni cautions against the risk of having team members making specific judgments and providing one-another with constructive criticism. He also suggests that 360-Degree Feedback should be divorced entirely from remuneration review and performance appraisal.

I agree that this is risky business. But I disagree with his suggestion that you not make 360-Degree
Feedback a part of your formal appraisal and review process. Let me explain…

You are either serious about improving your team’s performance, or you are not. Also, your team is either mobilized in their support of these efforts, or they are not.

If you, or the team, remain uncertain of your commitment to improving your collaborative team results, then Lencioni is indeed correct: do not make 360-Degree Feedback a part of your formal appraisal and review process. In fact, it would be best for you to avoid doing any 360-Degree Feedback whatsoever.

If, on the other hand, you, and your team, buy into the notion that ‘trust’ is the very foundation of team results, and that it would be in your interest to improve trust amongst team members, then your next decision is to make a call on just how serious you are about this.

Dead serious? Well, in that instance, you have no choice but to have team members commit to the visible demonstrations of the behaviours necessary for the transformation of the team’s results. And, if you are that serious, how could you, even for a moment, consider that team members not hold one-another accountable for the way in which they behave? Peer review now becomes an essential component of your strategy - In fact, you do not have the luxury of any alternative, you simply have to make 360-Degree Feedback a part of your formal appraisal and review process.

**SUGGESTION:** Have your team discuss your shared future and make a collaborative decision.

Now you need to determine the tools and / or mechanisms that you’ll be using for your 360-Degree Feedback.

**Stop – Start – Continue (or SSC):** In Module 4 I provided SSC templates. You could use this system to have team members evaluate one-another’s performance (and yours) at regular intervals.

**360-Degree Feedback instruments:** There are a host of instruments available – do some research and pick one. We have developed our own online 360 instrument. It’s a sophisticated, tried-and-tested system that generates easy-to-use reports and which also allows individual and group comparisons. Get in touch if you want to learn more.
EXPERIENTIAL TEAM EXERCISES:

Read overview on page 200.

Lencioni cautions against the use of ropes courses and other experiential team activities. He concludes though, that “experiential exercises can be valuable tools for enhancing teamwork as long as they are layered upon more fundamental and relevant processes”.

He’s being cautiously polite.

So I’ll say it as it is: Unless you are heading up an emergency response unit, or a military / paramilitary operation, do not consider ropes or adventure-based activities under any circumstances.

Mine is a qualified opinion. As the retired Commanding Officer of a combatant military unit, I am well familiar with the merits of using adrenalin as a bonding medium, but this methodology has no place in the corporate world. In fact, you will do more harm than good.

As for experiential learning activities: Sure. If you are looking for some good clean fun, and if you have the explicit approval of all team members (without coercion or peer pressure having been exerted during the decision-making process). You should not, however, expect an outcome other than having some fun.

I’ve written a comprehensive white paper on this topic – shout if you want a copy.

THE ROLE OF THE LEADER

Read overview on page 201.

We’ve done what needs to be done to lay a foundation for solid team trust. But this is only the beginning. If you’ve ever been in any long-term relationship you will know first-hand that the real work only starts once the honeymoon is over.