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The Mystery of Teams

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a MESSAGE from SYLVIA

The First Class Manager Coach

Have you ever noticed that the word **team** is a big buzz word today?

Actually, it's been a buzz word for the last decade. The same can be said for **team player**. Everybody is supposed to be a team player, and we spend a lot of time talking about it. While you may be expected to be this, you may not exactly grasp what it involves. Or maybe you grasp parts of it and not other parts. It's tough to be something you don't completely understand. It's difficult to be something that's only a fuzzy concept in your mind.

In my experience, many people think they function adequately or even effectively on teams. Until you ask their fellow teammates and get a different story.... You hear comments like: "Sue didn't tell us she couldn't finish her assigned tasks by Tuesday. Tim never did buy into the purpose of the project. Beth let me proceed with an idea she couldn't support. Dave didn't contribute anything to the work over the course of two weeks. We spent at least thirty minutes arguing during every team meeting we ever held." When you hear these kinds of things, you know the team isn't thriving—primarily because individual team members lack clarity around their roles and responsibilities. They may also lack clarity about what their behavior needs to look like while serving on a team. Several people may be

getting together twice a week to accomplish a certain project, but they surely aren't functioning well as a team.

This issue of my ezine focuses on how to build and participate in high functioning teams. Check out my feature article below to learn more about the ingredients of healthy teams.

Sylvia

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Healthy, Hardy Teams: 12 Basic Indicators

Teams are made up of a group of people who are organized to work together for a particular reason, often but not limited to accomplishing a project of significant complexity. Created for a long or short term purpose, their members are expected to work in cooperation to meet established goals. Functional teams may be formed to design a new product or service. Cross functional teams may be formed to develop a process for marketing those new products or services. Executive teams are formed to provide ongoing, solid, consistent leadership to organizational staff. Why a team is created isn't of paramount importance. What matters most is how that team will communicate, make decisions, deal with conflict, demonstrate respect, manage change, meet deadlines, and celebrate success. A tall order!

Review the following indicators of a healthy, hardy team. Know that all of these indicators must work together for optimal results. Ignore or forget even one? You may be surprised at the damage done.

1. Team members are united by the team's overall purpose.
2. The team has clearly defined goals and objectives.
3. The "right" people serve on the team.
4. Team member roles are appropriate and clearly defined.
5. A decision making process is in place and has been described to all

team members.

6. Needed resources are available to team members.
7. Team members engage with a collaborative spirit.
8. Challenging conversations occur with respect for all parties.
9. A conflict resolution process exists and is utilized.
10. Productive meetings are held regularly, as determined by the group.
11. An accountability method and process has been decided.
12. Team members celebrate their success once the work is completed.

We live in an age where everybody talks about teams: the team they currently serve on, the team they will create, the team they will lead, the team they may be part of next year. Allow me to make a bold statement: while many structures exist within organizations to facilitate the formation of teams and their work, the majority of teams are significantly dysfunctional. This dysfunction impacts both relationships and productivity. Teams are comprised of human beings with different personalities, styles, approaches, comfort levels, talents, and priorities. Despite their value and attractiveness, all of these factors must be managed simultaneously. It really does take some skill to do that.

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Offers and Opportunities

5 Major Myths to Running a Small Business

\$39

Available now on [Udemy](#), the new Internet platform which seeks to dramatically change education by empowering millions of experts around the world to teach and share what they know.

The complete course includes a 50 minute video and five separate work sheets. Sylvia explains how some common misconceptions cause small business problems in the video. The worksheets feature exercises that ask provocative questions which probe your particular business circumstances.

For \$39, download video and worksheets to access your own copies of all the materials whenever and however you wish. Also provides permanent access through UdeMy to participate in discussions with other students and Sylvia online.

[Click](#) to get more information/download. UdeMy signup required.

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RESOURCES

2 Books on Teams

Patrick Lencioni's little book entitled, *Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, available on Amazon for about \$15.00, is a must read! With short, easy to comprehend chapters, this resource explores various manifestations of team dysfunction and teaches you how to overcome them using innovative, sometimes bold strategies.

The Discipline of Teams: A Mindbook-Workbook for Delivering Small Group Performance by Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith is another meaningful resource. A \$24.00 hard bound book, it raises small group performance to a new level. Providing specific guidance and exercises, the authors offer tools that teams need to create and manage themselves according to a performance based agenda.

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TIP

Score YOUR Team

If you are currently serving on a team at work, assess the level of functionality you experience using the ingredients for healthy teams in my feature article above. On a scale of one to ten, with ten representing the highest possible score, what number would you choose to rate your team's

overall health? Specifically determine what needs to happen to increase that number within just a thirty day period. Then identify the single step YOU, personally, can take to improve your team's function.

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Where in the World is SYLVIA?

As part of Harrisburg Area Community College's Institute of Entrepreneurial Studies *Talkabouts* (York campus), Sylvia will facilitate a round table discussion on emotional intelligence and how it can positively impact business during a special event that includes both an expo and educational opportunities on May 31, 2012.

On June 20, 2012 Sylvia will present a Lunch 'n Learn for the Human Resource Professionals of Central PA (HRP): "Modeling and Building Trust: The Foundation of First Class Leadership."



Join Sylvia on these social networks!

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About This Ezine

This Ezine is 1) to provide readers with valuable FREE content which contributes to both personal and professional growth and 2) to invite them to take next steps toward working directly with Sylvia.

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Launching Lives Ezine is dedicated, above all, to "building people ... building businesses." ©2010, 2011, 2012

About SYLVIA



More information is available at her

[Launching Lives Website](#)

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Sylvia Hepler, Owner and President of Launching Lives, is an executive coach based in South Central PA. Her mission is to support corporate and nonprofit executives and business owners as they solve problems, develop leadership skills, and increase balance in their lives. Her background includes: nonprofit executive management/leadership, public speaking, business and freelance writing, teaching, and retail sales.

A [certified executive coach](#) through The Rescue Institute in Colorado and a participant in extensive continuing education, Sylvia is a platinum level expert author on [ezinearticles.com](#). She has produced an audio CD entitled, “Making Change”, [three special reports](#) for persons in management positions, and an audio product designed for new

managers.

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Launching Lives SERVICES

Launching Lives is an executive coaching company located in South Central PA. Its mission is to support managers and executives to solve their most pressing problems, develop leadership skills, and increase balance in their lives utilizing a holistic approach. Launching Lives focuses on BUILDING PEOPLE through individual private coaching, group coaching, specialized products, workshops, speeches, and retreats. Most coaching takes place by phone.

Often people don't really know HOW they might benefit from coaching. Quite simply, ask yourself these questions: "What can't I seem to resolve on my own? What is keeping me awake at night? What am I missing when I look at a certain situation? How can I get to the next professional level? How can I learn certain skills quickly? How can I narrow my professional gaps? How can I motivate my staff? How can I communicate more effectively so I serve myself and others better? How can I reduce my work-related frustration? How can I develop a viable plan of action for myself and/or my organization? How can I obtain greater job satisfaction? Coaching is the SOLUTION to any of these issues.

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