Tips for Building Stronger Teams

Teams are essential to everyday service delivery, regardless of what business we are in. We all work in multiple teams, some of which are ongoing and others which are project specific, some are internal to the organisation, while others are multi-disciplinary or multi-agency. Regardless of the nature and purpose of the team, it is everyone's responsibility to play their part in ensuring the team delivers its outcomes in a way that maximises and is respectful of each participant's contribution.

More remote working arrangements have created increased awareness of the importance of being part of and having the support of a functioning team. When teams are dispersed as at present, it is essential to ensure a range of formal and informal mechanisms for 2-way communication. Leaders at all levels in organisations need to be alert to the impact of current restrictions and actively support strong team identity.

Here are some simple ways to improve teamwork.

1. **Be clear about purpose.**
   Teams are more effective when they share a common purpose – while this is often expressed in the vision statement of the organisation, it has to be translated into meaningful goals and outcomes for specific teams. Members must sign up to the purpose of the team and identify how they can add value. A great teambuilding exercise is to ask each individual what they bring to the team and specifically how they want the team to support them.

2. **Respect the individuality, talents, skills, and gifts of every person on the team.**
   Understand each personality type, what motivates them and allocate people to projects and services to which they are most aligned. Ensure when allocating TASKS that people have the Talents, Attitude, Skills, Knowledge and Style to achieve the Tasks. Too often we concentrate on skills and knowledge – when sometimes it takes the right attitude and style to get the desired result. Teams should undergo personality profiling such as DISC or BANKCODE to assist with understanding their own and each other's natural way of thinking and behaving.

Next week we will look at the importance of communicating openly and with respect within teams, including giving feedback and acknowledging achievements.

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