



Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups

1.) Quick Quote to Consider

"In great teams conflict becomes productive. The free flow of conflicting ideas and feelings is critical for creative thinking, for discovering new solutions no one individual would have come to on his own." Peter Senge

2.) Test your ability to "Lead the Talent War"

Along with companies relying more on the intellectual capital of its employees to add value to customer relationships, we've also seen an increase of working in teams. In the March 2001 issue of Harvard Business Review, Vanessa Urch Druskat and Steven B. Wolff write about "Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups." How well does your executive and management teams work together? Read the following excerpt and then take a mini quiz on how cohesive your team works together.

"Study after study has shown that teams are more creative and productive when they can achieve high levels of participation, cooperation, and collaboration among members. But interactive behaviors like these aren't easy to legislate. Our work shows that three basic conditions need to be present before such behaviors can occur: mutual trust among members, sense of group identify (a feeling among members that they belong to a unique and worthwhile group), and a sense of group efficacy (the belief that the team can perform well and that group members are more effective working together than apart).

At the heart of these three conditions are emotions. Trust, a sense of identity, and a feeling of efficacy arise in environments where emotion is well handled, so groups stand to benefit by building their emotional intelligence.

Group emotional intelligence isn't a question of dealing with a necessary evil — catching emotions as they bubble up and promptly suppressing them. Far from it. It's about bringing emotions deliberately to the surface and understanding how they affect the team's work. It's also about behaving in ways that build relationships both inside and outside the team and that strengthen the team's ability to face challenges. Emotional intelligence means exploring, embracing, and ultimately relying on emotion in work that is, at the end of the day, deeply human."

How well does your team work together? Complete the following mini-quiz to see how cohesive your team works together.

Read each of the following statements with your team in mind. Rate each of the statements as it applies to the team using the following rating scale:

- 4 — This statement definitely applies to our team.
- 3 — This statement applies to our team most of the time.
- 2 — This statement is occasionally true for our team.
- 1 — This statement does not describe our team at all.

- _____ 1. Our mandate, goals, and objectives are clear and agreed to.
- _____ 2. We have strong, agreed upon beliefs about how to achieve success.
- _____ 3. Our roles are clearly defined and accepted as defined by all team members.
- _____ 4. If we were each asked to list team priorities, our lists would be very similar.
- _____ 5. When making decisions, we agree on priorities.

Now add up your score.

If you scored:

20–16 Your team probably has a lot of emotional intelligence at work for it and is successful in achieving your mandate. Keep it up!

15–11 You work well together, but probably need to define priorities, objectives, and roles better.

10–6 You need to work more on increasing the emotional intelligence of your team to be even more effective.

5–0 Are you sure you're a team? Emergency — call in the teambuilders at Northwood Consulting immediately!

If you're interested in reading more of the article on "Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups", order reprint R0103E from Harvard Business Review at www.hbr.org/explore.

Quiz excerpted and abridged from More Games Team Play by Leslie Bendaly

3.) Let Northwood Consulting Increase Your Team's Emotional Intelligence

If you weren't completely satisfied with your score from the above quiz, let Northwood help you increase the effectiveness of your team. Whether it's improving communication, creative thinking or problem-solving, learning how to balance work demands, facilitating a retreat, or developing leadership abilities, Northwood can help your team increase its emotional intelligence.

We're committed to making profound differences in people's professional and personal lives through one-on-one or team coaching and customized workshops that get results.

Call Marti (301.650.4160) or Karen (301.990.6331) today to find out how Northwood can increase your team's emotional intelligence.

4.) Free Team Audit

How effective is your team at working together to achieve your objectives and vision? What are your weaknesses and strengths in sharing leadership, group work skills, group climate, cohesiveness, team member contribution, or change compatibility? If you'd like to find out,

let Northwood conduct a FREE Team Fitness Audit. After completing the audit, we'll make recommendations on how you can improve your team's performance. Call Karen at 301.990.6331 or Marti at 301.650.4160 to schedule your FREE Team Fitness Audit.