

Team Building

What Has To Be In Place For Teams To Be Successful

Teams are being used because organizations such as Lions Clubs International have a growing need to achieve success with goals and objectives in a much more complex society. The need is for being swift and efficient, but many times with fewer resources. To be effective, teams must stay in touch with the rapidly changing needs. Teams are not the solution to every problem or challenge, however, when created, the following is a short list of items that teams must have in order to do what they do best.

1. Teams must have clearly defined purposes and goals that serve the organization

- When teams are working on something that is clearly important to the organization, people will feel that their time is being well spent
- Goals help team members focus on what they are trying to accomplish and why.
- Goals give teams direction
- Goals must be measurable so the team knows when they have been reached.

2. Teams need clearly defined parameters within which to work

- Early on, the team leaders need to explain the importance of their task to the organization.
- The team leaders must explain:
 - a. the parameters for the task
 - b. the expectations of the organization
 - c. The timeline for the task (project)
 - d. The budget and available resources
 - e. The kinds of decisions their team is expected to make

3. Teams need to be able to communicate within the organization

- The team leaders should define how their team is connected to other teams, to clubs and community.
- Team members need to know how to communicate within the group, and how often.
- It should be decided within the team who is responsible for all communication with other factions of the organization. That individual must make special efforts to ensure that all necessary communication channels to the organization are open and operative.
- Key questions to be answered by the team:
 - a. How does the team get the data it needs?
 - b. How does the team let the organization know what they are doing?
 - c. How does the team take advantage of technology to get its work done?

4. Teams need to have people with the necessary knowledge and skills to accomplish their tasks.

- They often need access to people with diverse talents and points of view. For example teams may need to find people with skills in planning, applying logic and data in problem solving, decision making, running effective meetings, communicating, documenting, or conflict management.
- If vital skills are lacking, new players should be recruited or training should be provided to fill the gap.
- Team leaders have the responsibility to make sure that the needed skills are “on board,” and that people have the time available to accomplish the tasks assigned.

5. Teams need to know how they are going to accomplish their tasks

- Teams work best when they have a detailed understanding of how their work will proceed and how tasks will be accomplished.
- Teams should be able to clearly identify the steps needed to complete the task.