



THE 5 DYSFUNCTION OF A TEAM



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A leadership fable

Sens de l'outil

Lencioni's model provides a simple and rich framework to identify the pitfalls that a team may face throughout its life.

For the Shift Maker, it is a valuable basic tool that can serve several purposes:

- evaluate the performance of a team,
- make a diagnosis,
- suggest ways to enable the team to resolve its dysfunctions and return to a healthy functional mode.

Lencioni's model is graphically represented as a pyramid made of different storeys representing a successful team building. To reach the top level, the team must have sufficient stability on the bottom level. So, the floors are not watertight and the team navigates from a level to the next, sometimes iterating to reach the top.



It all starts with overcoming the lack of confidence

"Without trust, teamwork is simply impossible." This trust assumes a level of openness from everyone and an acceptance of vulnerability, which is an essential element for trust. "Nothing inspires trust as much as vulnerability."

There is a temptation to stay hidden behind the mask and avoid criticism. It's about building a more authentic relationship by accepting to take risks and by leaving some space for each team member's vulnerability. This will create an excellent breeding ground and support the emergence of collective power as a way to address fragilities. In the end, it will help build a strong, conscious and effective team.

The leader leads the way to:

- model self-confidence that allows to appear vulnerable,
- develop self-awareness and knowledge of own strengths and weaknesses to serve the group,
- stimulate the search for complementarity,
- take and assume one's own place in the team.

No longer afraid of confrontation

This means leaving behind the philosophy of harmony at any costs, which hides difficult topics. The ability to openly discuss issues and to address conflicting elements, creates space for debate between team members. Doing so, the team may openly express and defend their points of view while maintaining a high level of listening.

A collective direction can only be built based on authentic exchanges, rich debates and disagreements. Indeed, team members will only be able to fully commit to a collective direction once they free themselves up from their individual point of view.

The leader creates an environment that :

- encourages debate and the sharing of ideas,
- clearly places true exchange over harmony, favorise l'information
- promotes information and therefore the involvement of team members,
- allows the contribution of different points of view.

Solving the lack of commitment

When things are not clear, especially the objectives, it is very difficult to have a united force...

This can slow down processes and generate discomfort. Ambiguity leading to difficulties for team members to take actions and implement the decisions that have been made is a clear symptom which illustrates a difficulty in getting through this stage.

In certain situations, it takes iterating back to the previous step and reach a more in depth alignment around the direction to be taken.

The role of the leader in involving and implementing action plans is to :

- implement decisions,
- respect the implementation of the plan,
- manage uncertainties and stimulate continuous improvement.

No longer avoiding responsibility

Beyond the commitment to serve the group, each team member is expected to take a clear responsibility. Symptoms of this dysfunction include people not facing their responsibilities, complacency with bad results or lack of coworking and interdependence between team members.

As one needs to be in a position to rely on one another, it is key that everyone takes responsibility for the team to move forward.

The role of the leader in taking responsibility is about:

- define the criteria for success and ensure that they are known and followed by all,
- explicitly respect everyone's responsibility,
- monitor progress and keep people accountable or responsible,
- give space to the collective challenge supported by individual responsibilities.

Avoiding lack of attention to results

The top level of the pyramid focuses on reaching tangible results as set in the objectives. It is about keeping the focus on what the team exists for. The pitfalls at this level are often created by personal egos that take precedence over the collective purpose.

The leader has a key role in :

- making explicit the success of individuals, which exists only through the success of the team's results,
- stimulating the cohesion of each person towards the collective goal,
- celebrating progress together.

The 5 dysfunctions remain a permanent point of attention as they potentially exist in any team at any stage of its journey.