

Teambuilding Tools For Supervisors

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The Organizational Ecosystem

In an organization the ecosystem consists of the interconnected web of people working on interrelated goals, objectives and projects, all aimed at achieving the organization's mission. Because interaction between people is what connects all the parts, a supervisor's essential focus is encouraging and providing a solid platform for the interaction to occur. Change and surprise are daily occurrences due to complex communication patterns and shifts both within and outside the organization. Constant adaptation and readjustment through interaction is the key to organizational success.

Supervising Teams From 30,000 Feet

Supervising teams is like viewing and managing an entire ecosystem. It requires stepping back to see the whole landscape. It means focusing more on the delicate balance and interactions between each part of the ecosystem than on the individual parts. In an environmental ecosystem the interconnected elements are water, weather, soil, plants, and animals. A change in one element affects the balance and health of all the other elements. Even with close management, eco-systems change and evolve in surprising ways. Continual adaptation is the key to ecosystem health.

Supervising from 30,000 feet is about managing interconnections and interactions

- Between members of a team working to achieve shared goals
- Between teams sharing interconnected departmental goals
- Between interconnected departments with responsibility for the organization's mission
- With other organizations and entities whose missions overlap

The Shift from Supervising Individuals to Supervising Teams

Supervising Individuals	Supervising Teams
1. Views workers as collection of separate individuals working on independent goals	1. Views workers as dependent on each other for achieving interconnected goals
2. Focus on developing each worker's technical expertise	2. Focus on developing expertise plus ability to effectively work in and lead teams
3. Takes leadership for decisions & solutions	3. Facilitates shared leadership and decision making among team members
4. Attempts to control outcomes	4. Outcomes and solutions arise from facilitated interactions between team members and teams
5. Responsible for coordinating goals and objectives for individuals and team	5. Facilitates coordination of interconnected goals and objectives among team members
6. Focus primarily on own department	6. Focus on interconnections with other departments for achieving organization mission
7. Sees content expertise as own most important contribution	7. Sees building teamwork within and among teams as own most important contribution
Outcome = Strong Individuals Working Toward Their Individual Goals	Outcome = Strong Teams With Synergy Around Interconnected Goals

Teambuilding Toolbox

Interdependence: Build Team Members' Sense Of "We"

What are the over-arching goals we all share? What are the ways we are connected with and depend on one another in our team and organizational ecosystem?

Interaction: Build Team Members' Trust For Open Sharing Of Resources, Expertise And Honest Wisdom

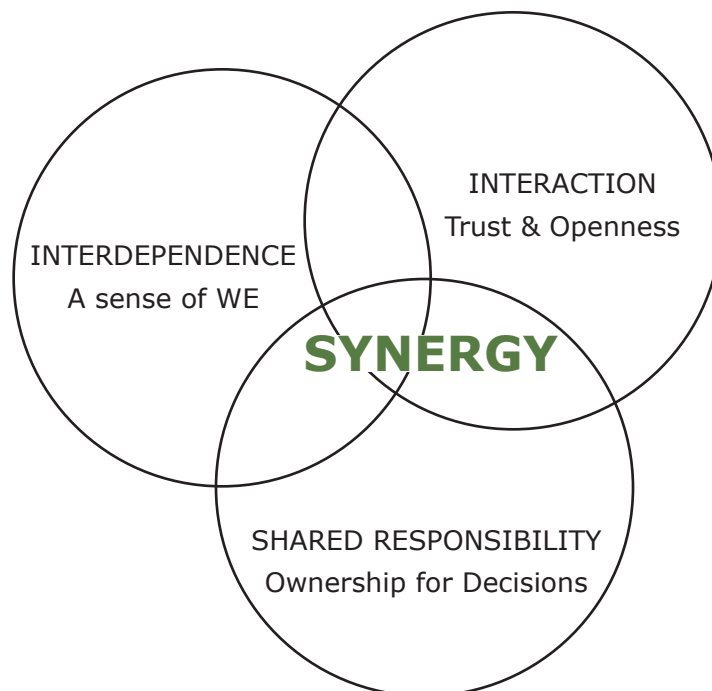
What resources do we each bring to the task at hand. What do we honestly believe about how to go about our work together? How do we want to communicate?

Shared Responsibility: Build Team Members' Ownership For Shared Results

What decisions should members make together? What decisions and guidance should the supervisor offer? What decision making tools can we use for achieving the best possible decisions and outcomes?

Synergy

Synergy = the whole is greater than the sum of its parts
Together we can achieve better results than each of us working alone



Team Supervision Assessment

Rating: 1 = not at all; 2 = very little; 3 = somewhat; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = very much so

1. The extent to which you are supervising from 30,000 feet

1 2 3 4 5

2. The extent to which most members on your team have a sense of being dependent on one another to achieve shared goals (Interdependence)

1 2 3 4 5

3. The extent to which the working climate on your team fosters a climate for open sharing of resources, expertise, and honest wisdom (Interaction)

1 2 3 4 5

4. The extent to which your team shares decision making and ownership for over-arching goals and important issues (Shared Responsibility)

1 2 3 4 5

5. The extent to which your team meetings attend to building a strong team such as taking time and using processes to develop the team

1 2 3 4 5

6. The extent to which the team organization in your department or area has an effective teamwork structure in place, including having the right people on the right teams and appropriate leadership and facilitation for the teams

1 2 3 4 5

7. Extent to which you have the right skills for developing and supervising teams

1 2 3 4 5