

E-PME  *Enlisted*
PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

Team Building 4.E.05

Learning Objective(s): **DISCUSS** the elements required for building and maintaining an effective team.

Why You Need to Know This

Whether you realize it or not, as a member of the Coast Guard you will have the opportunity to serve on many different teams. Some teams are large, like Team Coast Guard or your unit. Others may be smaller, like an aircrew, a boarding team, or a work group. Regardless of the size, for any team to function effectively it must be filled by competent and committed members who are willing to play their part and keep the team working towards a common goal. This does not happen by itself. Team leaders must be able to build trust among team members and know how to leverage the talents of people working on a common task, in complementary roles. The successful execution of the Coast Guard’s missions requires team leaders who can skillfully guide their teams towards outcomes greater than those possible by any one person working independently.

This lesson will provide you with the information you will need to know in order to build or maintain an effective team.

Topics Covered

This section will cover the following topics:

- Decisions-Making Methods
- Establishing Trust
- Four Stages of Team Development
- Roles and Responsibilities

At the end of this lesson you will be required to participate in a learning activity. You are encouraged to first review the learning activity and the sign off requirements located in the “**You and Your Supervisor**” section of this lesson. Reviewing this information before you begin the lesson will allow you to take proper notes and focus on key learning points.

Decision Making Methods

When it comes to leading and managing teams the three decision-making methods commonly used in the Coast Guard include:

- **Leader-made** - One person make all the decisions.
- **Leader-made with input** - Input is provided by the team, but considered at the discretion of the leader.
- **Team-made** - All team members have a chance to provide input and to have a say in the final decision.

The advantages and disadvantages of each approach can be found in the table below:

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Leader-Made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick decisions are made • The decision is direct and to the point • The person making the decision knows what he/she wants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of buy-in from the team may shut down some members • The single leader may not have all the answers, but often times think they do • No diversity of ideas or opinions
Leader-Made with Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group members have greater buy-in • Decisions are made quicker than team decisions • Decisions are made using more information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making can become time consuming • Leader may not use input
Team-Made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team members have sense of empowerment in the decision making process • Team members have sense of ownership into the process and the final decision • More ideas are generated by the team • Better end product is achieved by considering all possible solutions • Diversity of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process is time consuming • Increase likelihood of conflict • Some team members may have limited knowledge or experience • Lack of ownership or responsibility may result when team members input is not considered in final decision

Establishing Trust

Trust is a critical ingredient for creating and maintaining a high level of performance within a team. Mutual trust requires members of a team to believe they can depend on each other to achieve a common purpose.

Trust is not a fact; rather it is a sense of confidence that develops over time. Trust requires time and effort to develop and can quickly be lost. The main elements of trust include a belief in a person's **character** and **competence**.

The key ingredients for invoking trust include:

- Clearly communicate team goals
 - Establish well-defined roles
 - Support and encourage team cooperation
 - Maintain well-defined decision-making procedures
 - Seek balanced participation from all team members
 - Create and follow mutually established ground rules
 - Be aware of group processes and team dynamics
 - Pay attention to people's concerns and feedback
 - Make team members feel valued
 - Develop a sense of belonging and team pride
 - Give team members a cause they can rally around
 - Focus on short term goals
 - Manage conflict directly
 - Utilize scientific approaches for consistent results
 - Employ performance improvement plans
 - Use action plans to set the course
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Group Development All group and teams go through stages of development. Identifying and understanding these stages will help the team leader move through them and create a more cohesive team by recognizing that each of these stages is a natural part of team building process.

The four stages of team development identified by Dr. Bruce Tuckman include:

- **Forming**
- **Storming**
- **Norming**
- **Performing**

The table below provides a brief description of the four stages along with suggestions for how a team leader should manage their team at each stage:

Stage	Description
Forming	Team members in the <i>Forming</i> stage will usually appear tentative and unclear on what is expected of them. The team leader will need clearly communicate required standards and goals, and help to manage the team's expectations.
Storming	In the <i>Storming</i> stage team members may become defensive and hostile toward one another as they attempt get consensus on group decisions or exercise personal power. During this phase the team leader must make sure conflicts to not get out of hand, and that individual team members do not become the team's scapegoat.
Norming	The <i>Norming</i> stage is characterized by a sense of belonging and a share committed to mutual goals. At this stage the team leader should continue to provide direction and corrective feedback when required.
Performing	Teams in the <i>Performing</i> stage are fully functional, self-organized and work well together. The main task of the team leader at this point is to offer support and encouragement, and to reinforce and celebrate team achievements.

Team Roles

In order for teams to function effectively it is import that everyone understands their **roles** and **responsibilities**. Team roles define who will be responsible for what. It is important that every team member is involved and knows the role they play in contributing to the team’s goals.

The two main roles include **team leader** and **team member**. The responsibilities for both roles are listed in the table below:

Team Roles and Responsibilities	
Team Leader	Team Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give clear direction • Ensure members are acquainted • Create a positive atmosphere • Assign straight-forward, simple tasks • Be sensitive to members’ need for direction • Effectively manage conflict • Move toward negotiation and consensus • Encourage members to assume more tasks responsibly • Allow team assign their own tasks • Encourage team to review their own goals and progress • Listen and facilitate • Participate, consult, inspire • Be involved in tasks as needed • Keep communications and information flowing • Reinforce and celebrate achievements • Provide vision • Demonstrate followership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work cooperatively and cohesively with fellow team members • Be an attentive listener • Support each other’s efforts to do well • Differ with others in a constructive manner when needed • Participate equally • Be able to give and receive constructive criticism • Be able to negotiate • Value other’s opinions • Demonstrate followership

Learning Activity



To successfully complete this requirement you will need to discuss the topics listed below with your supervisor:

1. When it comes to leading and managing teams, which of the three decision-making methods is most commonly used in the Coast Guard?
--Why is this? Also, do you see yourself using different styles for different situations?
2. Why is trust essential for teams to function effectively?
3. What are the four stages of team development?

For you and Your Supervisor

In order to meet the sign-off requirement for this lesson **YOU** must perform the following:

1. Prior to meeting with your supervisor review the contents of this lesson and organize your thoughts.
2. Discuss your chosen responses.

Before signing off on this requirement your **SUPERVISOR** must:

1. Make sure the member knows the elements required for building and maintaining an effective team.
2. Provide the member with corrective feedback and answer any questions they may have related to this topic.
3. Sign-off the check-off sheet on the Record of Enlisted Professional Military Education (E-PME) Performance Requirements.

References

The references used to develop this lesson can be found at CG Directives (CG-612), www.uscg.mil/directives:

- Leadership Development Framework, COMDTINST 5351.3(series)
- [Apprentice Leadership Program Student Guide \(http://www.uscga.edu/LDC_display.aspx?id=10283\)](http://www.uscga.edu/LDC_display.aspx?id=10283)