

Five Steps to BUILDING A TEAM

Teamworking is crucial to working in the NHS. Here, Fiona Setch explains that the doctor leading the team must value colleagues and strive to be inspirational



Team building is a process, not an event. As with assessing a patient and developing an appropriate care plan, thinking about your team and its development requires careful thought and an action plan.

1. There is no 'I' in the word 'team'. However, there is a 'me', and a good starting point for team building is to focus on your role as consultant and leader of the team. A recent Sunday Times survey of the best 100 companies to work for in the UK revealed that the top companies were led by inspirational bosses. Translated into team working and the role of the consultant, the research revealed that 'inspiration, rather than perspiration' is one of the key motivating factors for team members.
2. As the leader of your team, how you deal with people rather than your job title is what will make the difference to team members.

There are many qualities that are needed to inspire. A poll undertaken by the Departments of Trade and Industry and Learning Skills Council revealed the following attributes were crucial for successful team leadership.

- ✓ Listening to team members;
- ✓ Valuing individual contributions;
- ✓ Respecting individual differences'
- ✓ Communicating effectively'
- ✓ Having clear objectives and clarity about roles within the team;
- ✓ Involving staff in decisions'
- ✓ Showing appreciation when a good job is done;
- ✓ Genuinely caring for the team;
- ✓ Time allocated to develop team working;
- ✓ Encouraging opportunities for individual and team development.

3. Within health care, teams automatically have a shared goal of providing good patient care, and your hospital team is probably decided by the availability of your staff. Therefore, your team may change due to changing shifts, medical rotations, and the very nature of multidisciplinary teamwork will provide differences of opinion and conflict. It is how you approach these aspects of team working that can make working in your team either a positive, inspiring experience or a toleration of the job for your team members.

For example, think back to when you were a medical student or an SHO. You spent time working in several different clinical teams – who were your role models, and why?

4. A SWOT analysis can be a good starting point to think about your team leader skills. When completing your SWOT (see diagram on next page), think about the following:
 - ✓ Do your team members enjoy meetings and ward rounds that you chair?
 - ✓ How do you think your colleagues would complete this SWOT on your leadership skills?
 - ✓ Do you build into your busy schedule time for your teamwork?
5. A team-building training event can be a brilliant opportunity to increase team awareness. However, an equally valuable starting point could be to increase your self-awareness of your leadership style.

There are several excellent diagnostic tools and models to enhance team working, such as Belbin Team Role Theory (Dr Belbin); Learning style questionnaire (Mumford & Honey); Myers Briggs Type Indicator (Oxford Psychologists Press).

Effective leaders get the job done while maintaining good working relationships, and are prepared to learn and develop leadership and teambuilding skills.

SWOT analysis of Team Leadership Skills

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES (areas for development)
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

To be an even more effective team leader I need to:

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