TEAM BENCHMARK™

Team Development Survey™

Mapping a path for increased team effectiveness™

TRIAXIA® PARTNERS

Teamwork is Cooperation at Its Highest Level

Today, most of us work in a group setting where we are dependent, to some degree, on the work of others. The whole group must be effective for us to perform effectively as individuals.

Teamwork is cooperation at its highest level. Cooperation results from a desire to achieve goals that individuals alone are not capable of accomplishing. Therefore, we team up and pursue these outsized goals in a cooperative effort.

The higher the degree of cooperation, the better the results. At a key point on the continuum, we begin to see the signs of synergy (Point A) and the group becomes a true team.

Seeing cooperation as a relative concept allows us to appreciate the dynamic between individual team members and the team itself. A team is a collection of individuals who are often all over the continuum. Where each member stands on this continuum is a matter of individual choice. Every time a team member moves a bit to the right, toward higher levels of cooperation, the effect moves the entire team to the right as well.

Notice in Figure 1 that the potential also exists for negative levels of cooperation (Point B). We all have experienced times when the results of our cooperation were less than expected because either the group didn't possess the necessary skills for cooperation or it engaged in inappropriate competition or infighting. In such situations, we often conclude that we would rather work alone.

Figure 1
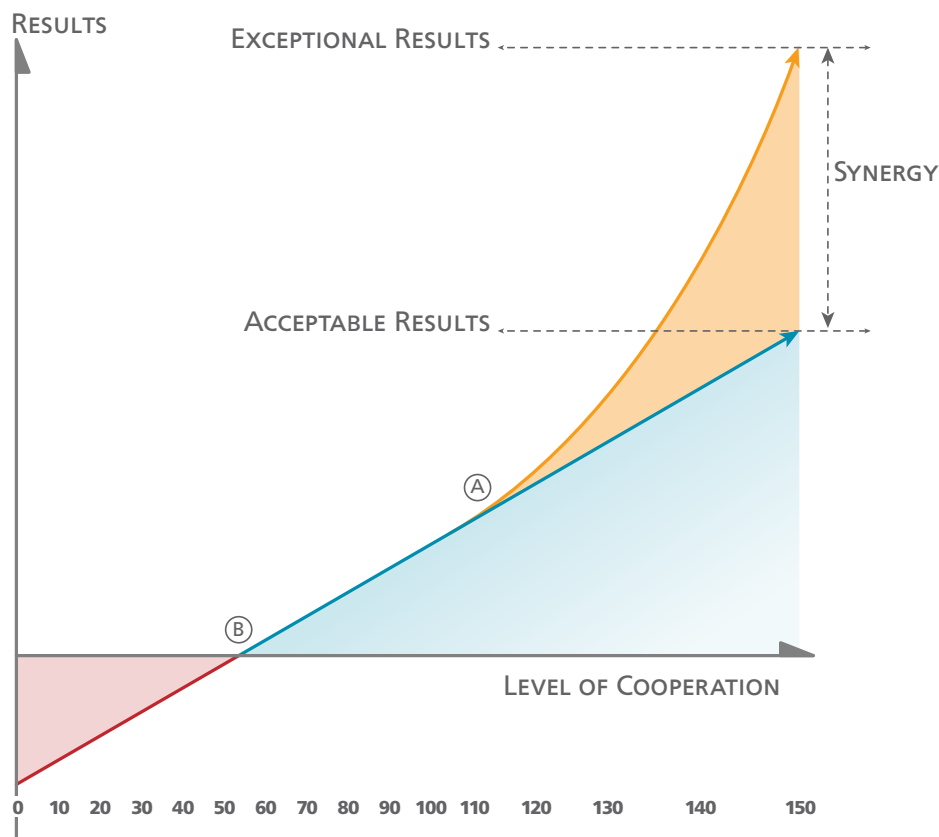
We break cooperation into its two component parts: Willingness and Skill.

Willingness to cooperate is a critical first step in any team effort. If team members do not come up with a good answer to the question, "Why should I cooperate?" they probably won't. A clear answer to this critical question is needed to develop the commitment and motivational levels required to achieve exceptional results.

Skill is the second dimension of cooperation. We are not referring to the technical or functional expertise of individual team members, but rather the ability of the group to blend those skills to accomplish team goals. This process includes the ability to effectively and efficiently mobilize the gifts, skills, and experiences of team members in various team tasks like goal setting, problem solving, decision making, and conflict resolution.

By understanding that skill and willingness result in cooperation, we can build a model of team development (Figure 2). The vertical axis represents willingness; the horizontal measures skill. Theoretically, these two dimensions are independent. All of us can think of instances in which a group of people had a great attitude (willingness) toward cooperation but lacked the skills to pull it off. For example, a new Broadway play in the first few days of rehearsal. Similarly, there are times when individuals who have the ability to cooperate are unwilling to do so because of a competitive spirit or a lack of commitment to the team's direction.

Willingness to cooperate deals with the issue of motivation. Examples include commitment to team goals, energy, creativity, willingness to subordinate individual results to those needed by the team, and initiative to help others.

Skill in cooperation deals with our ability to "team up" in accomplishing tasks. Examples include goal setting, communication, decision making, and problem solving.
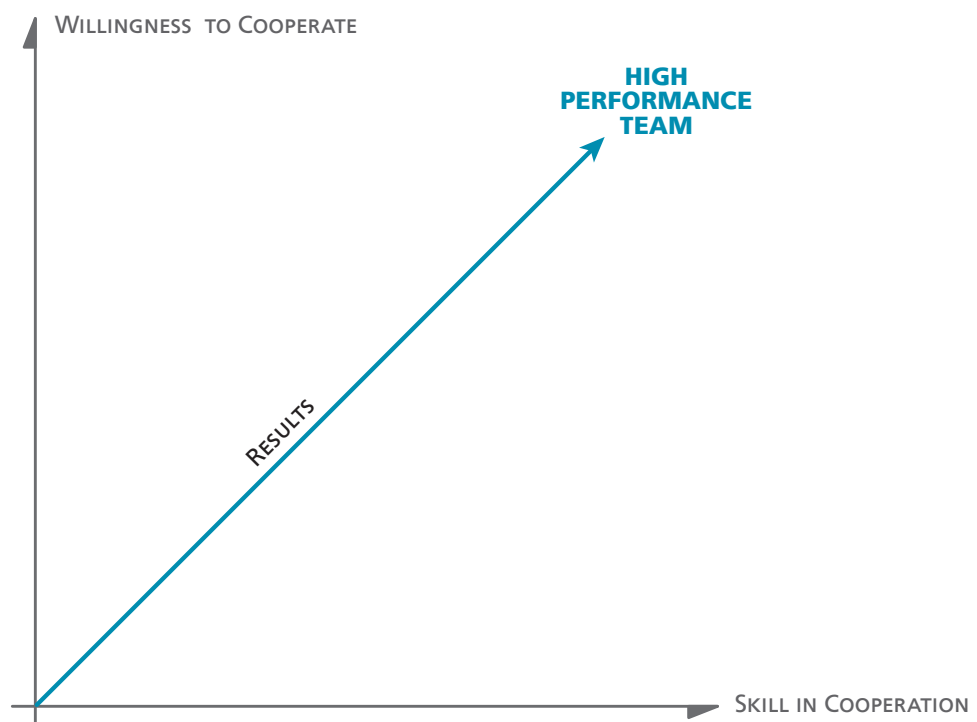

Figure 2

Interpreting Your Team's Results

Each question within the Team Development Survey™ was rated by your team members on a ten (10) point scale ranging from Not at All Descriptive (1) to Very Descriptive (10). Of the 30 questions, 15 addresses the Willingness dimension of cooperation, while 15 focus on the dimension of Skill in Cooperation. Your answers have been compiled to provide both individual scores and an average team score for each Benchmark Factor.

Low performance in either Willingness or Skill can result in serious challenges for your team and is worthy of closer examination and a clear action plan for improvement. Use the following chart to assess your factor-specific scores:

1–2.99	3–4.99	5–6.99	7–8.99	9-10
Poor	Somewhat Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent
Indicates your team rarely demonstrates this behavior. There is significant room for improvement.	Indicates your team occasionally demonstrates this behavior. There is room for improvement.	Indicates your team can demonstrate this behavior, but it is inconsistent. There is potential for improvement.	This range indicates your team often demonstrates this behavior. There is moderate room for improvement.	Indicates your team almost always demonstrates this behavior. There is little room for improvement.

The following pages present the combined results for your team in a format designed to facilitate insight, discussion, and action planning for increased team effectiveness. The report is organized as follows:

- **Willingness to Cooperate** – This section shows the Willingness scores for individual team members and then lists the Willingness questions, in order of average team score, from highest to lowest. The scores will be shown without attribution. At the end of each section, we include several discussion questions that your team may find helpful in better understanding the information.

- **Skill in Cooperation** – The Skills section uses the same format to present the feedback regarding how your team has assessed its skill in cooperating.

- **Stages of Team Development** – According to our research, there are eight (8) possible stages of team development. Your team's scores in this diagnostic will place your team in one of these stages, and enable candid conversation within your team on how well it is currently cooperating versus what may be possible with some focused team effort.

- **Present vs. Potential Effectiveness** – This section of the report offers your team an opportunity to discuss what the team is leaving on the table regarding performance. Discussion questions are included to help your team agree on a realistic assessment of potential team effectiveness if the team invested some time and effort to improve.

- **Increasing Team Effectiveness** – These principles of team development give you a road map for moving your team to the next stage in its development.

- **Next Steps and Action Plans** – The action plan discussion and format will be helpful in allowing your team to discuss and determine next steps for developing team effectiveness.

Willingness to Cooperate Results at a Glance

The following table lists each team member's response to each Willingness to Cooperate descriptor, each team member's overall response average, and your team's average score for each descriptor.

Willingness to Cooperate Results

Below are your team's Willingness to Cooperate descriptors, including any participant comments, listed by average score.

Discussion Questions

1. Which Benchmark descriptor did the team rate the strongest?

2. Which Benchmark descriptor received the weakest rating from the team?

3. Overall, does the team agree with the scoring for each question?

4. For each area of disagreement in scoring, identify specific reasons for differences in perspective. (It may be helpful to review the team's comments included with the results.)

5. Within Willingness to Cooperate, can you, as a team, identify the primary issue that most needs development? What is it?

Skill in Cooperation Results at a Glance

The following table lists each team member's response to each Skill in Cooperation descriptor, each team member's overall response average, and your team's average score for each descriptor.

Skill in Cooperation Results

Below are your team's Skill in Cooperation descriptors, including any participant comments, listed by average score.

Discussion Questions

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5. Within Skill in Cooperation, can you, as a team, identify the primary issue that most needs development? What is it?

A Theory of Group Development

One of the first, and certainly the most memorable, constructs for group development is Bruce W. Tuckman's model: Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing.

The model, first published in 1965, was a product of Tuckman's work with the Naval Medical Research Institute on a project studying small groups as they related to small crew vessels and stations.[1] During his time on the project, Tuckman's manager gave him 50 articles on group development and asked him to see what he could make of them.

After considerable analysis, Tuckman found that, for the most part, the findings supported a two-dimensional model of group behavior: interpersonal activity and task activity. These combined into a somewhat sequential four-step development path. Although his initial titles were better understood by social psychologists, (e.g., orientation, testing, dependence, group cohesion, etc.), he soon coined more memorable terms (Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing), and over the next few years they became "coin of the realm" in describing group development.[2]

Our model, Stages of Team Development, builds on Tuckman's work, but also incorporates the findings of other scholars, as well as our own research over the past 30 years. A broad summary of the findings could be described as follows:

- In general, peer review of Tuckman's conclusions support the idea that small groups (teams) follow similar paths of development

- Not every research effort came up with four stages (some felt there were two, many found three), but most concluded that the two dimensions of interpersonal and task behavior combined, in most instances, to create a particular stage

- In general, there is consensus that there is a fifth stage for many small groups called termination ("Adjourning")

- Not every group makes it all the way to "Performing". Many get stuck or derail along the way.

- Our observations lead us to believe that some groups do not progress at all, developmentally, for one reason or another. These groups are seen in the Stages of Team Development (Confused Crowd, Warring Factions, etc.).

Figure 3 shows the correlation between Tuckman's stages of group development and our model. The following pages unfold the Stages of Team Development model and show where your team is developmentally.

Figure 3
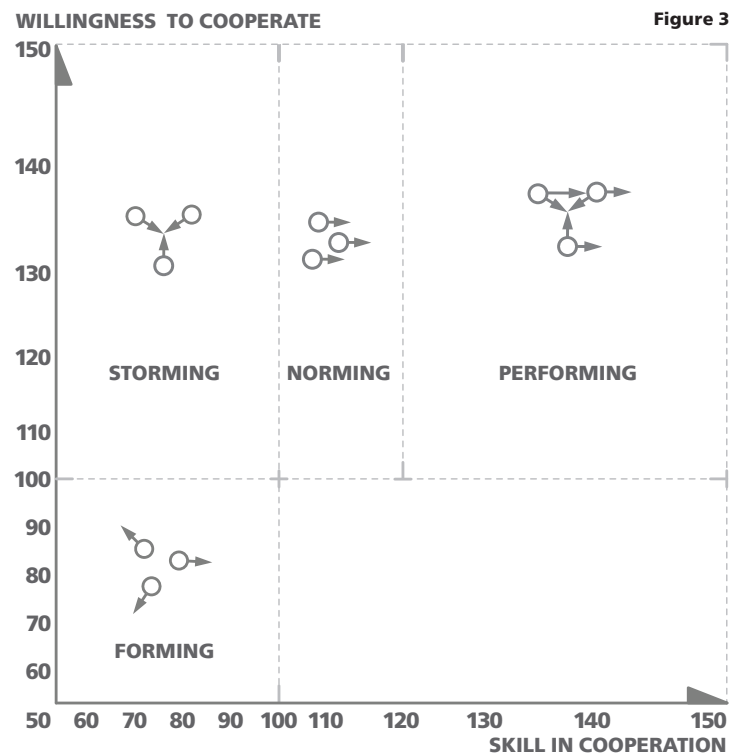
[1] Psychological Bulletin 63:384-99, 1965 (Navy Medical Research Institute, Bethesda, MD)
[2] Tuckman's later research with colleague Mary Ann Jensen (1977) suggested a fifth stage of development: "Adjourning".

Stages of Team Development

These eight possible stages of development represent general categories. In reality, a group may exhibit the characteristics of more than one stage. These categories simply offer some guidelines by which your group may evaluate its current performance.

BASIC GROUP: PERSON-CENTERED

The key distinction of a group (versus a team) is that the results are additive. Each additional person adds one more unit of output (the same amount of output the individual could produce alone). Both willingness and skill in cooperation are relatively low — just enough to keep the group together.

ADOLESCENT TEAM: PEOPLE-CENTERED

This is generally the first step toward teamwork. The focus is on getting to know the other team members: their strengths, weaknesses, and unique contributions to the team. The process of sharing this knowledge builds trust and a willingness to subordinate individual interests to a greater vision.

LEARNING TEAM: PROCESS-CENTERED

This stage is usually the second phase of team development. After the team members get to know each other, trust and willingness have grown to the point that they begin to discuss openly their processes and skill areas, evaluating how they can cooperate more effectively.

HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAM: PURPOSE-CENTERED

This team can balance the tension between people and tasks, individual initiative and collaboration, and clear division of labor and commitment to the task, in its entirety. Flexibility, adaptation, and responsiveness characterize this team, and the results are exceptional.

INDIVIDUAL STARS: SELF-CENTERED

This group demonstrates high skill in cooperation. They know how to do it. However, they are not willing to subordinate individual goals, interests, and needs to achieve a cooperative effort. The competence is there, but it is blocked by competitive or distrustful attitudes.

CONFUSED CROWD: REASONABLY HIGH WILLINGNESS, LOW SKILL

For this group, the issue is basically one of competence. Although their motivation is positive, members are stepping on one another's toes and running in circles in an effort to cooperate. As a result, the team is less productive than if the individuals were working alone.
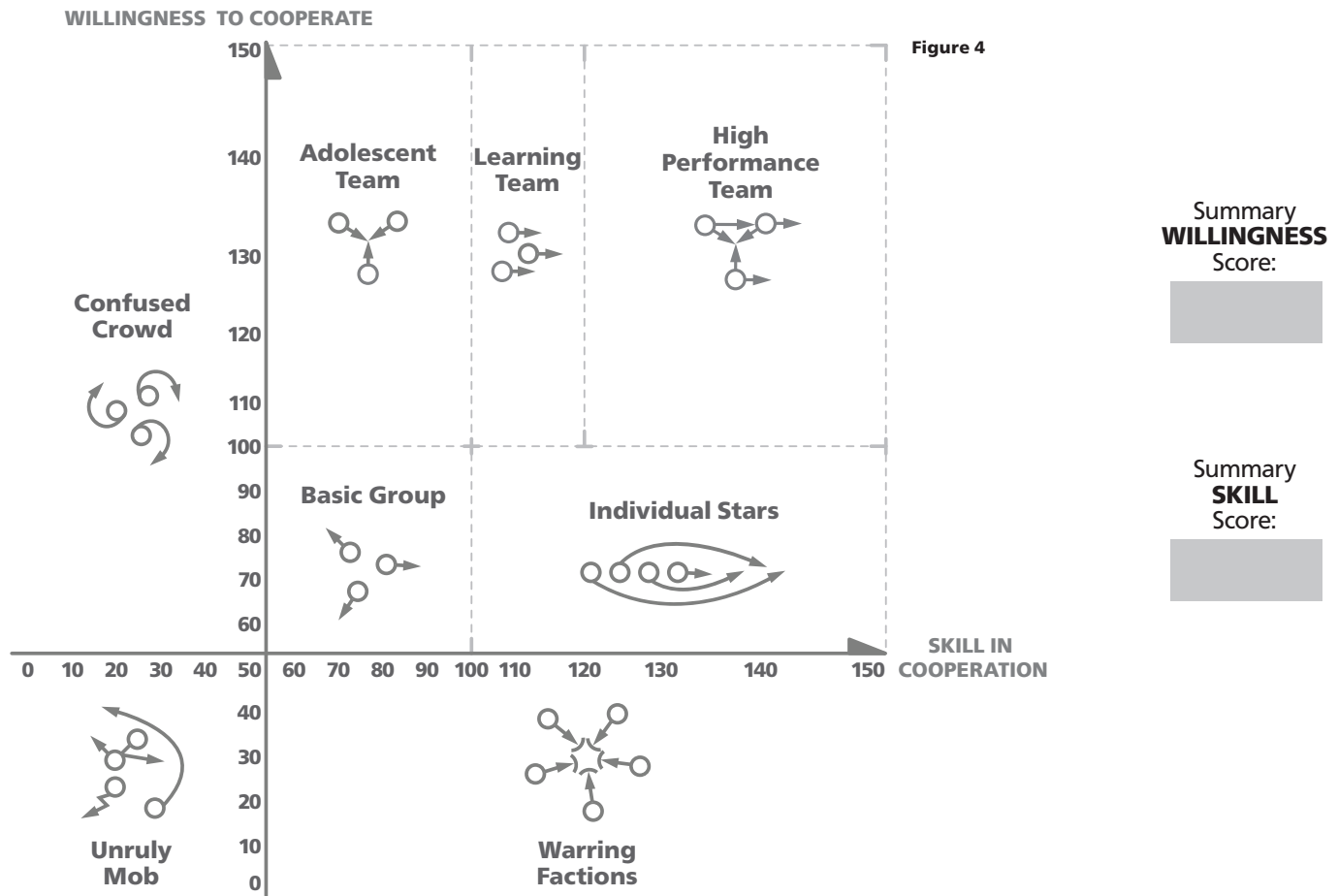
WARRING FACTIONS: LOW WILLINGNESS, REASONABLY HIGH SKILL

Competition or lack of trust creates hostile, competitive environments. The result is inevitably a group of interdependent people acting independently, often to the detriment of each other.

UNRULY MOB: LOW WILLINGNESS, LOW SKILL

This situation is anarchy at worst, chaos at best. Team members don't know how to work together, and they don't want to learn. If the issues here can't be positively addressed, we generally recommend abandoning attempts to form a team.

Developmental Stage for Your Team

WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE

Figure 4

150 —

Adolescent Team   Learning Team   High Performance Team

140

Confused Crowd

130

120

110

100

90   Basic Group   Individual Stars

80

70

60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150   **SKILL IN COOPERATION**

40

30

20

Unruly Mob   10   Warring Factions

0

Summary **WILLINGNESS** Score:

Summary **SKILL** Score:

Observations & Discussion

- -

1. Where is your team average on Figure 4 (★)? Read the description for your team's stage on the previous page. Is this an accurate description?

2. If not, what phase do you feel is more accurate?

3. How similar is your personal assessment to the team average?

4. How similar or different are the evaluations of the other individual team members to your personal assessment? Are they significantly different?
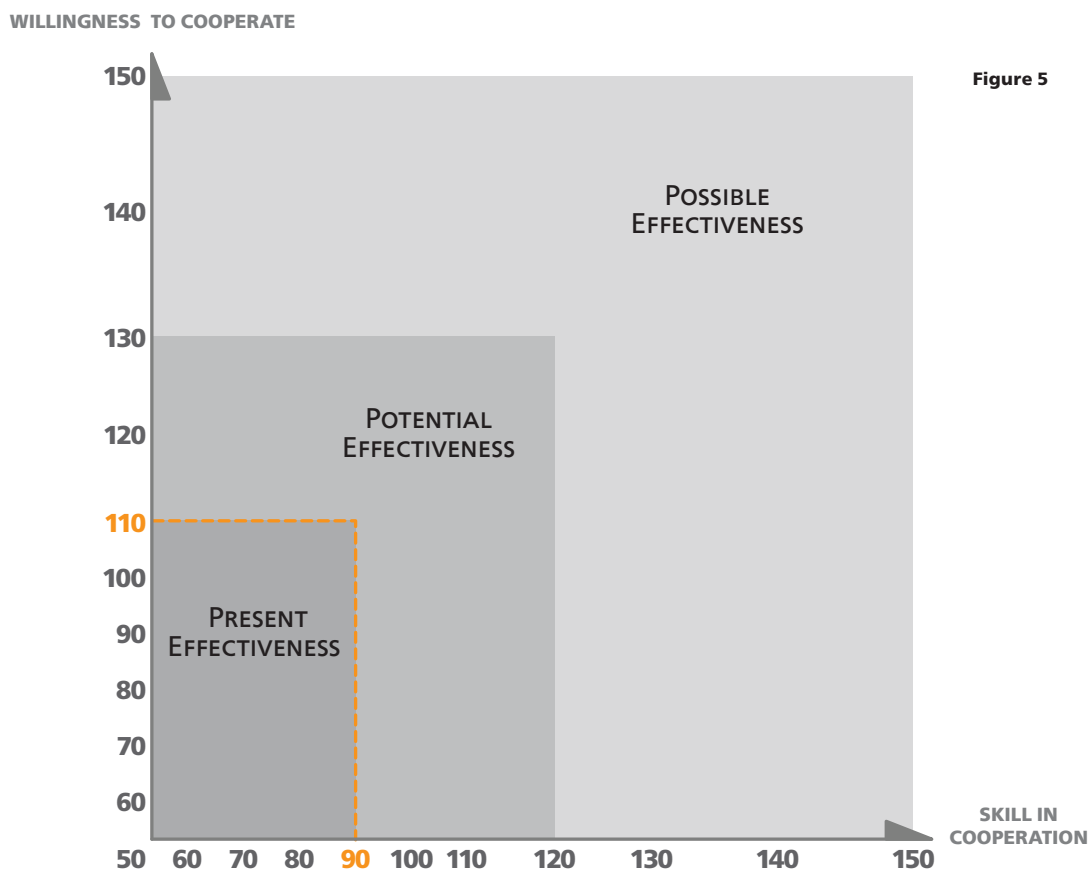
   Why?

Present vs. Potential Effectiveness

To illustrate the levels of effectiveness possible through cooperative effort, let's return to our matrix with the two dimensions of cooperation. In Figure 5, notice the proportions of our numeric scale along the two dimensions.

On both axes, the distance between numbers 50 through 100 are equidistant to portray the additive portion of the results. Beginning with the number 100 on both scales, the distance between each number grows larger as you move up the scale graphically, demonstrating the effects of the synergy found at higher levels of cooperation.

For purposes of this illustration, assume that the entire area encompassed by the two axes equals a team's total *possible effectiveness*. This area represents the ideal — 100 percent effectiveness — and few teams ever reach this pinnacle. Within this area is another level, which we will designate *potential effectiveness*. This is what can be achieved with your current team if you all pull together and provide maximum effort. This is the payoff of increased effectiveness. Finally, there is your *present level of effectiveness:* where you are now according to your scores.

In Figure 5, the team average for our sample team's score was 110 for Willingness and 90 for Skill. We have shaded their estimate for present effectiveness. After some discussion, the team members decided that with time and effort they could increase these scores to 130 and 120 respectively, thereby defining their potential effectiveness.

WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE

Figure 5

POSSIBLE EFFECTIVENESS

POTENTIAL EFFECTIVENESS

PRESENT EFFECTIVENESS

150
140
130
120
110
100
90
80
70
60

50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150

SKILL IN COOPERATION

Improving Your Cooperation Score

Using the grid in Figure 6, your team can perform the same exercise. Using the team average given on the graph below, mark the axes and color in the area that defines your present level of effectiveness. Remember, this is not an objective, definitive measurement, but rather an exercise to stimulate self-awareness about your team's present and potential performance.

WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE

Figure 6

SKILL IN COOPERATION
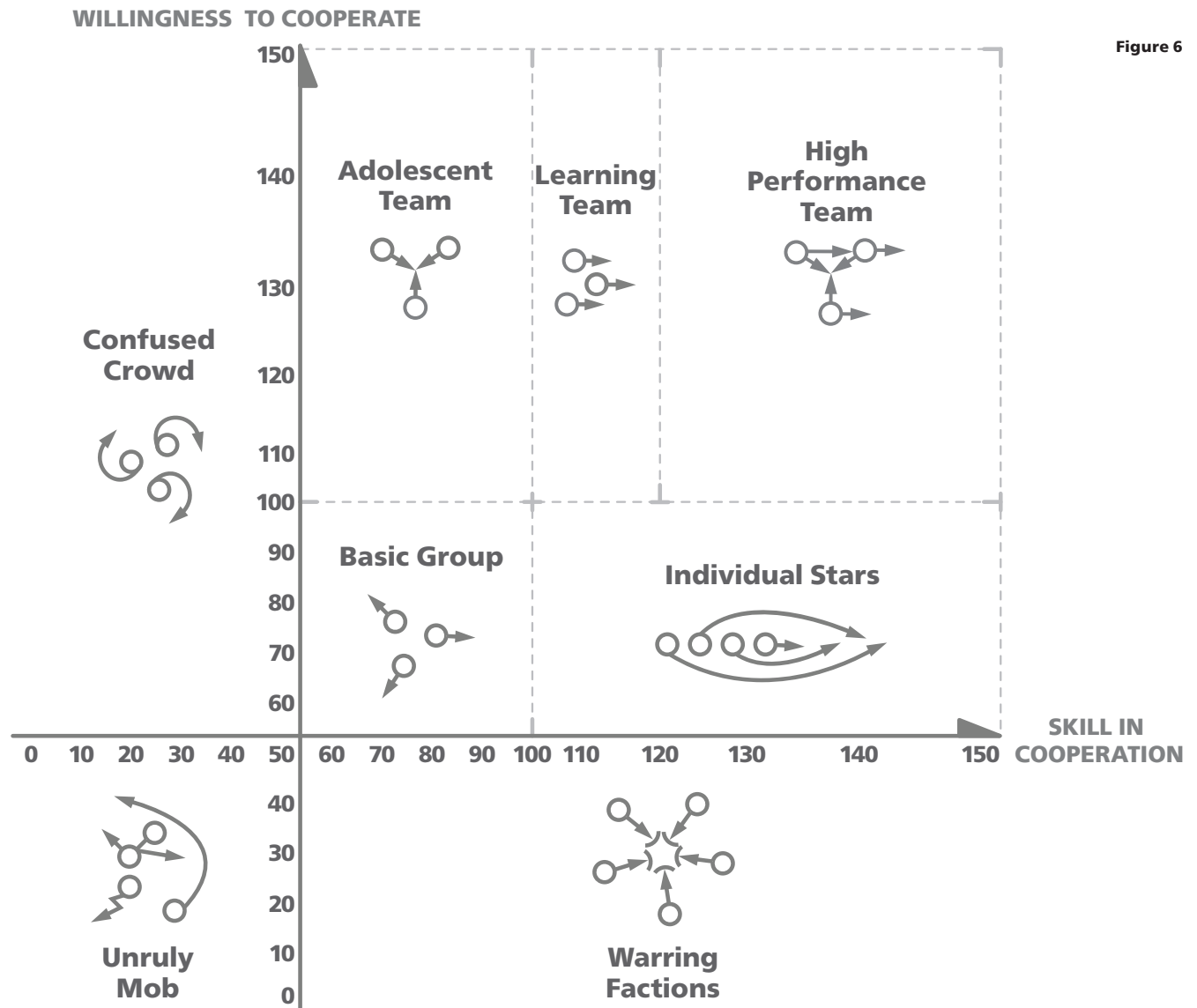
Summary **WILLINGNESS** Score:

Summary **SKILL** Score:

Discussion Questions

1. Looking at the Present/Potential Matrix on the previous page, do you feel the team has accurately measured its *"present"* performance? If so, what is your reaction? Are you encouraged or discouraged?

   If not, what do you feel would be more accurate and why?

2. Now that your team has assessed its *current* effectiveness, take a minute to consider its *potential* effectiveness. Review the key factors your team identified as having the best opportunities for improvement and estimate your new Skill and Willingness scores based upon that growth.

3. What descriptors, with intentionality and effort, could you improve over the next 12 months?

4. What specific changes will need to be implemented for your team to achieve its performance potential?

5. Based on your team's discussion, mark on Figure 6 a new, estimated average score for Willingness and Skill, and then use those points to shade in your team's potential effectiveness.
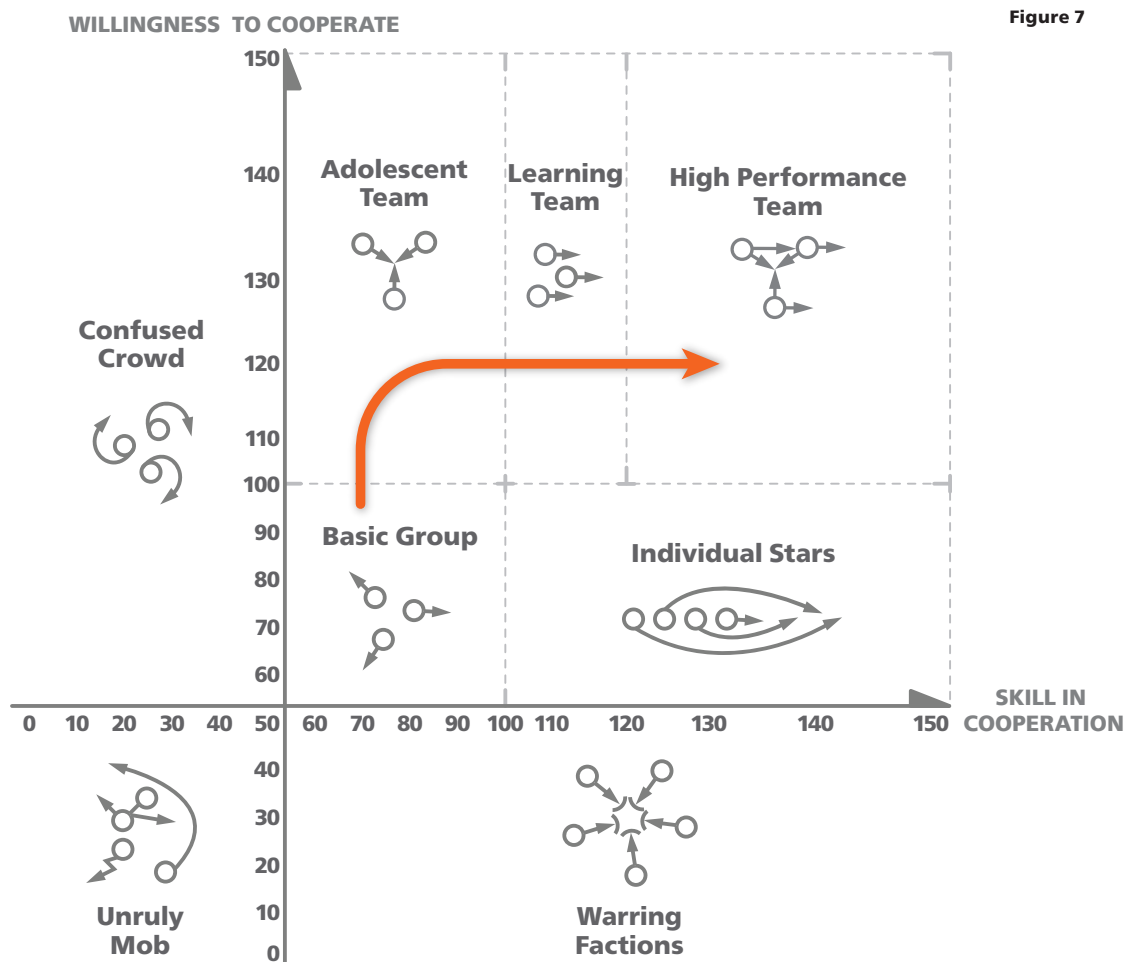
Increasing Team Effectiveness

The key to building team effectiveness is knowing where to start. Teamwork is a product of commitment, knowledge, and skill.

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1. COMMITMENT

Cooperation is a matter of choice. It's hard work to place your trust in others, hoping that you can do more together than you could alone. As you can see in Figure 7, growth in effectiveness often moves up through the dimension of willingness **before** the issue of skill can be effectively addressed and the team can move up to High Performance.

The key to developing the commitment or motivational levels necessary to get your team through the inevitable rough spots is a good answer to the question, "Why should we team up and cooperate?" Your team must clearly understand the purpose to which it is called, and its purpose must be relevant, significant, achievable, and urgent. Only then will the necessary degree of commitment and motivation be there to harness individual drives and self-interests into a cohesive, cooperative effort.

Figure 7

WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE / SKILL IN COOPERATION

Confused Crowd · Adolescent Team · Learning Team · High Performance Team · Basic Group · Individual Stars · Unruly Mob · Warring Factions

Increasing Team Effectiveness (Continued)

2. KNOWLEDGE

A team is like a machine, and to most of us, the knowledge of what makes teams work is similar to our understanding of what lies under the hood of a car. Should we ever look, we are confronted with an indecipherable tangle of wires, tubes, pieces, and parts.

If we are going to build an effective team, fix a broken one, or start a stalled one, we must understand what's under our hood. What are the characteristics of an effective team? What are their respective roles? How do they fit together?

3. SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Simply understanding the issues is not enough. We must become skilled mechanics of team dynamics, and that takes time and practice.

High performance teams are highly focused on continuous improvement. It is a critical part of the foundation underlying total quality. Their basic premise is that everything can always be done a little better. This assertion introduces us to the concept of "process gains" in teamwork.

For example, a sports team practices its plays until execution becomes consistent, precise, and effective. The players do their best to minimize the possibility of "broken plays." The equivalent plays for a management team might be making a decision, solving a problem, or having a meeting. These processes must be planned and practiced until the team can execute them flawlessly.

High performance teams need to be aware of possible process gains and losses that occur in the very act of working together. Ask the hard questions after a meeting, after making a major decision, and after any major team process that's done on a regular basis. Where did the process break, where did it go right, and how will your team continue its progress toward high performance?

Next Steps

We understand that team effectiveness is just one of many elements that determine overall performance. However, it's an important factor and can have a significant effect. How would you relate your team's results to the level of team performance showcased in the Stages of Team Development graph?

To answer this question, you need to identify the success measurements and/or key performance results for your work group. Below, list the particular success measurement or performance results for your team (e.g., product development time, quality, sales, profits, etc.). If you moved from present to potential team effectiveness, what would be the impact on these results?

| Results/Success Measurements	Present Effectiveness	Potential Effectiveness
Product development cycle	Average 3 months behind schedule	90% on schedule

Action Plan Worksheet

1. What are the specific barriers between present and potential levels of team performance that currently hinder your team's effectiveness?

2. What can your team do to overcome these barriers? Be specific.

3. What specific steps can you take as a team to increase the level of willingness to cooperate? Reviewing the team scores for the willingness questions may stimulate your thinking.

4. What specific steps can you take to increase the level of skill in your cooperative efforts? Reviewing the team scores for the skill questions may stimulate your thinking.

5. What other specific steps should be taken to tap into your potential as a team?

Monitor and Measure

1. Set a date to review your progress with the team

2. Review your Action Plan

3. What is working? Not working?

4. Are you achieving your desired results? If so, how can you continue to leverage our effectiveness?

5. If not, what must you start doing?

6. What must you stop doing?

7. What changes will you implement going forward?

You have completed the
Team Development Survey™
Report
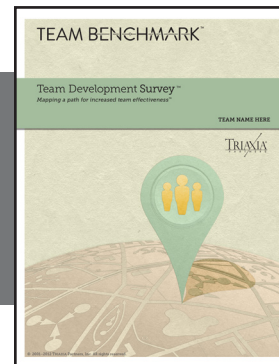
Also available from

TEAM BENCHMARK™
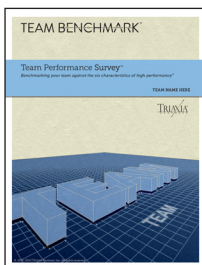
TEAM PERFORMANCE SURVEY™
**BENCHMARKING YOUR TEAM AGAINST THE SIX CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE**™

The Team Performance Survey™ assists your team in evaluating its strengths and weaknesses against in each of the six characteristics of a high performance team. The resulting report enables your team to address and prioritise its needs with the confidence of knowing they are targeting the right issues.
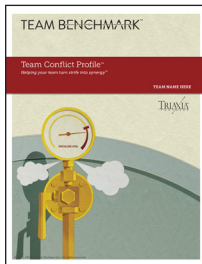
TEAM CONFLICT PROFILE™
**HELPING YOUR TEAM TURN STRIFE INTO SYNERGY**™

This Team Benchmark™ diagnostic enables your team to identify and address conflict issues that derail team effectiveness. The report highlights attitudes, actions, and processes that can stifle your team's ability to work together. Utilizing this information, the team will be able to give immediate attention to the key issues driving conflict and define a clear path for improvement.
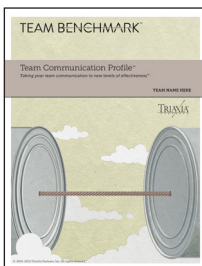
TEAM COMMUNICATION PROFILE™
TAKING YOUR TEAM COMMUNICATION TO NEW LEVELS OF EFFECTIVENESS™

The Team Benchmark™ Team Communication Profile™ helps your team assess its ability to communicate. Effective team communication doesn't just happen, but demands the application of time-tested principles and processes. This diagnostic enables team members to identify and address specific issues that clutter and confuse team communication.
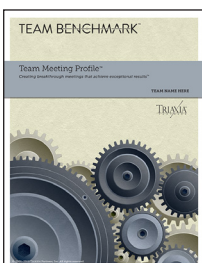
TEAM MEETINGS PROFILE™
ACHIEVE UNCOMMON RESULTS ON COMMON GROUND™

This powerful meeting diagnostic will provide your team with unique insight on how well they are managing meeting together. Meetings are the playing field for high performance teams. Effective or not, meetings cost money and consume valuable resources. The real issue is not the cost of meetings, but rather the cost of poor meetings. High performance teams master the three critical dimensions needed for effective meetings: the people, the purpose, and the process. This diagnostic allows your team to graphically identify strengths and weaknesses across each of these three key components.