Team Members

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Research Question

- How does not balancing task behaviors and social behaviors negatively affect a team's dynamic?
    - What happens when a team focuses too much on task behaviors? What happens when a team focuses too much on social behaviors? Compare and contrast the results.

Task Design

Two teams will be assigned the same task of developing a mobile app for a startup within six weeks, but each will adopt a different approach. Team 1 will be excessively focused on task behavior, prioritizing efficiency, deadlines, and structured execution. Team 2 will place too much emphasis on social behavior, prioritizing communication, collaboration, and team dynamics over strict task completion. While both teams share the same goal, their differing approaches may impact their effectiveness, productivity, and overall project outcome.

Team Composition Variables

Both teams will consist of five agents, each assigned the roles of Project Manager, Full Stack Developer, UX Designer, DevOps Engineer, and Marketing Research Specialist. Both teams will have the same expertise areas including coding, leadership, communication, and bug fixing. However, each team will exhibit distinct personality traits and working styles.

Team 1 will be task-focused, characterized by conscientiousness, detail orientation, goal-setting, and neuroticism. In contrast, Team 2 will take a more social approach, with traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, and open-mindedness. Both teams will be culturally diverse, ensuring a range of perspectives. Key experimental variables will include personality traits, communication patterns, decision-making processes, leadership styles, team dynamics, and performance metrics, all of which will contribute to evaluating their overall effectiveness.

Outcome Metrics

Process metrics: Team 1 will follow a low-frequency communication pattern, meeting only as needed, which will allow for a quick turnaround from code commitment to deployment. Team 2 will maintain high communication through multiple channels, frequently discussing updates and issues. However, this emphasis on feedback will result in a slower completion time for coding tasks.

Performance metrics: Team 1 will prioritize efficiency and deadlines, leading to faster task completion. However, this focus may come at the expense of solution quality, as limited collaboration and creativity could result in less innovative outcomes. Their approach is likely to overlook user feedback, concentrating solely on functional requirements, which may impact user-centric design. While their feature completion rate will likely be high, the solutions may lack flexibility or innovation.

Team 2 will emphasize collaboration and discussion, which may slow down task completion. However, this approach is expected to result in higher solution quality, as diverse input will foster creativity and user-centered design. They will strongly consider user feedback, ensuring a well-developed user experience. Despite this, their feature completion rate may be lower due to a less structured execution and prolonged decision-making processes.

Team experience metrics: Team 1 will likely experience lower satisfaction due to potential stress, pressure, and a lack of emotional support. Psychological safety may be low, as mistakes might not be tolerated, and open discussions could be limited. Additionally, collaboration and morale are expected to be poor since team bonding and communication will not be a priority. Team 2 is expected to have higher satisfaction, as a more supportive, engaging, and enjoyable work environment will be fostered. Psychological safety will be high, allowing team members to feel comfortable expressing ideas and concerns. Collaboration and morale will also be strong, as relationships and teamwork will be prioritized, creating a more positive and cohesive team dynamic.

Connection to Course Concepts

From this simulation, we hope to understand how balancing task behaviors and social behaviors contributes to effective team leadership, and how failing to balance these two can negatively impact the outcomes of team performance and cohesion. Our simulation will highlight the two basic types of team

behaviors we discussed, being task behaviors and relationship behaviors. According to Levi & Askay, effective leaders must adaptively balance these behaviors based on the team's needs and the task at hand. In this case, a team that focuses too heavily on task behaviors might hit deadlines, but suffer from low trust and cohesion, while a team overly focused on social bonding might feel connected but fail to deliver results. We want to put this to the test and see the outputs it produces. This also ties into Hackman's Five Conditions, particularly the importance of having a compelling direction, enabling structure, and psychological safety. Additionally, the IPO Model is important to this simulation because we can see how team success depends on both inputs like team composition and leadership, and processes, like communication, decision-making, conflict resolution. Lastly, we're able to use this simulation to see the effects of Tuckman's stages of group development, particularly the storming phase, where teams often struggle with balancing productivity and relationship building. Teams that neglect relationship behaviors might get stuck in conflict or disengagement, while teams overly focused on harmony might avoid the necessary tough conversations about accountability and performance.