

# **Group Case Study**

## **-Team 14-**

Sreekar Bathula  
Olubiyi George  
Deena Jivan  
Akoh Jackson Udeng  
Zaynab Zennour

**Case: Paul McGinley: Leading a Multinational Team of Individuals**

Communication & Collaboration II: Teamwork - MGT-6043

Hult Business School MBAN Program 2022-2023

Dr. Matthew FISHER

**Who is Paul McGinley as a leader? What are his values, experience, strengths, and weaknesses?**

Paul McGinley is an Irish Tour professional born in Dublin in 1966. He started his sporting career as a Gaelic football player, following in his father's footsteps. A career change was later forced on him when he broke his kneecap at 19, after which he became a golf player at the United States International University in San Diego.

His golf player career quickly blossomed when he won the Irish Amateur Championship in 1989 and the South of Ireland Championship in 1991; this led to his selection for the 1991 Britain & Ireland Walker Cup team. He turned professional later that same year and joined the European Tour in 1992, winning his first title on the Tour in 1996 in Austria. In 1997, together with Pádraig Harrington, he won the World Cup for Ireland. In January 2013, he was presented as the European Ryder Cup golf team captain.

McGinley's leadership style is inclusive, collaborative, and focused on creating a positive and supportive team culture. He emphasized the importance of building trust and respect within the team and actively worked to promote a sense of camaraderie. (Edmondson, 2001)

McGinley's leadership style emphasized accountability, responsibility, communication, and transparency. These values are evident in his handling of the team before and during the tournament. He established communication with the team long before their convergence for the tournament, reviewed their post-match conferences, and debriefed the caddies after every match.

McGinley's strength lies in his ability to communicate effectively with the team despite their varying cultural backgrounds, articulate expectations, and goals, and provide guidance and support to help the team members succeed.

Overall, Paul McGinley cannot be said to have any apparent weaknesses. He appeared to have equipped himself with self-awareness, allowing him to cover every loophole in his leadership and personality; this was reflected in his arrangement with Sir Alex Ferguson, serving as his soundboard and a check and balance to his strategic decisions. Further, McGinley embraced technology to compensate for his lack of golfing experience and technical know-how.

**What were McGinley's key challenges in taking on the Ryder Cup captaincy?**

1. **Team Management:** One of his main challenges was managing and leading a diverse team of players from different countries, cultures, and backgrounds.
2. **Managing Cultural Diversity:** He had to navigate different communication styles, expectations, and approaches to problem-solving among his players. (Brett, 2006)
3. **Building Trust and Cohesion Among the Team:** Another key challenge he faced was building trust and cohesion among his team, particularly with the players' different levels of experience and skill.
4. **Team Motivation and Concentration:** McGinley also faced challenges in terms of managing and motivating his team during the high-pressure and high-stakes environment of the Ryder Cup. He had to find ways to keep the team focused, motivated, and working towards a common goal despite the intense pressure and scrutiny from the media and the public.
5. **Managing Logistics:** McGinley also faced challenges in logistics and organization, as he had to coordinate and manage the various aspects of the Ryder Cup, including the venues, travel, accommodation, and practice schedules for his team.
6. **Keeping the Team Abreast of the Ever-Changing Rules:** He also had to navigate the complex and ever-changing rules and regulations of the Ryder Cup tournament.
7. Dealing with Injuries and Drop in the Performance of Players.

**Why was McGinley ultimately successful? What did he get right in leading a multinational team of individuals?**

Some of the key things he has achieved while leading a multinational group of individuals include:

1. **Understanding Players:** McGinley took a methodical approach to getting to know players deeper. He studied their performance using data from their press conferences to better understand their mental state, views, and thoughts on their performance. He also spoke with player support groups, such as physical therapists, coaches, and managers, to filter information about players and gather information about them. (Edmondson, 2001)
2. **Communication:** McGinley understands that different players have different levels of comfort with the amount of information they need about the team and their role. Hence, he tailored his communication and shared information with each player for Fit.
3. **Data-driven strategy:** McGinley hired a full-time data team, [strokeaverage.com](http://strokeaverage.com), to track player progress throughout the qualifying campaign. The data team gathered information on players' strengths and weaknesses. It also provided insights into Gleneagles golf course by analyzing data from the last ten years of the Johnnie Walker Championships held at the venue.
4. **Building cohesion in the group:** McGinley admitted that traditional team-building methods would not work and focused instead on making the players feel comfortable and respected as individuals. He constantly communicates with them before the tournament and creates an environment where different cultural interests and tastes are respected. (Zak, 2017)
5. **Manage expectations:** McGinley managed the high expectations of the media and the public and avoided putting pressure to win on the team. He used messages and graphics created by award-winning author and artist Nick Bradley, displayed in team rooms, to promote message continuity throughout the week.

6. **Flexibility and adaptability:** McGinley has a flexible approach to decision-making, adjusting his plans as needed based on feedback from her lieutenants. He also sought advice from Sir Alex Ferguson to help him understand how to deal with dynamic star players in the team.
7. **Team Bonding:** McGinley Fostered a culture of trust and support where team members feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas and where everyone feels like they are part of the team. He also ensured that every color picked for the team, including the design of team rooms, had a meaning, including recognition of the host country and ties to the roots of the team members, and he ensured that each member of the team understood precisely what each color meant. (Brett, 2006)
8. **Improved Individual Identity:** At the Ryder's Cup in Gleneagles, he identified the caddies as essential members of the team and treated the team accordingly. He assigned tasks to them alongside the authority to implement these tasks. Recognizing the caddy's input and valuing their opinion about the game and the player improved the sense of responsibility of the caddies. It ensured that they bought into what the team was trying to achieve and actively contributed towards it.
9. McGinley Resisted the temptation to "over-captain" his team. Based on his task orientation, McGinley uses a strong and consistent task-oriented leadership style, as perceived by team members, during the entire life of the team or project. (Zak, 2017)
10. More importantly, McGinley recognized that every individual on his team are master in their respective craft and resisted the temptation to "over-captain" them, that is, micromanage. He made it his duty to provide the facts as data and trusted the team to do what they did best. During the tournament, he would keep communication at the bare minimum as he believes this might negatively affect their daily performance.

**References :**

Brett, J. B. (2006). Managing Multicultural Teams. *Harvard Business Review*, 88.

Edmondson, A. B. (2001). Speeding Up Team Learning. *Harvard Business Review*.

Lynda Gratton, A. V. (2007). Bridging Faultlines in Diverse Teams. *Harvard Business Review*, 27.

Zak, P. J. (2017). The Neuroscience of Trust. *Harvard Business Review*.