Teamwork

Fluff Disclaimer:
I'm not a fan of fluffy discussion about being nice.

But teamwork is critical to having a successful career

We can all get better at teamwork.

Topics

1) Teamwork
   a) What's a team?

   b) Team rules

2) Habits of Highly Effective People

Source: "Teamwork and Team Building", Jeff Butterfield.

Why Teamwork?

- Group
  - people working on similar tasks,..

    but not collaborating
  - Ex: Some programmers in same office, individually working on similar but different projects.
  - Ex: Study group

- Team
  - .. **shared objective**
  - .. **develop trust**
  - .. **shared decision making**

Successful teams can:

- Complete more/larger tasks
  - can divide big tasks into small tasks for individuals

- **Produce higher quality work**
  - diverse skills reinforce abilities of team members

- Learn and improve
  - learn from the skills of other team members

- Respond to change
  - people join/leave, jobs change: team can react

- Stronger sense of commitment
  - depending on each other enhances morale

Basics: Team Stages

- **Forming**
  - polite getting-to-know each other

- **Storming**
  - members compete to voice opinions; conflict normal.

- **Norming**
  - conflicts resolved; relationships allow effective team work (norms).

- **Performing**
  - Team has gelled, productive "teamwork"

- **Transforming**
  - extraordinarily productive; not usually attained

- **Adjourning**
  - Done work; disbanding.

Basics: Advice

- Positive attitude correlated with success:
  work harder, cooperate better
  - good skills with positive attitude better than expert with negative attitude

- Big teams (>10 members) less productive due to communication/decision overhead

Exercise

- Who thinks they are a safer than average driver?

- Who thinks they are a better than average team member?

- If we ranked everyone by teamwork skills, there would be the bottom 10 people.
  - What advice could we give them to improve?

Basics: Team Rules

- respect everyone

- **constructively criticize an idea/work; not the person**

    - accept constructive criticism; strive to improve it not defend it.

- **praise in public, reprimand in private**
    - no BCC to others or forwarding comments without permission

- do the work you commit to;
    - inform team quickly will not complete

Basics: Team Rules (cont)

- Communication
  - everyone has their say;..

    not everyone gets their way.

  - each person able to speak: allow equal participation
  - one person speaks at a time
  - no side discussions
  - be brief and on topic
- Meetings
  - be on time; be focused: no electronic interruptions (text/email/..)
  - don't do work during meetings

Basics: Team Decision Making

- Agree on how decisions are made
  - how many people need to vote?
  - is majority good enough (breeds discontentment)
- Don't avoid conflict to get a decision
  - .. **Avoid group-think:** discuss alternatives.
  - nominate someone to play devil's advocate
- Respect different opinions
  - dissenters may see some aspect you overlooked
  - this avoids group-think
- Use time to soften disagreements.

Habits of Highly Effective People

This may sound like a lot of fluff, but try to see how it applies to you. Make an effort to improve your group work and interpersonal skills.
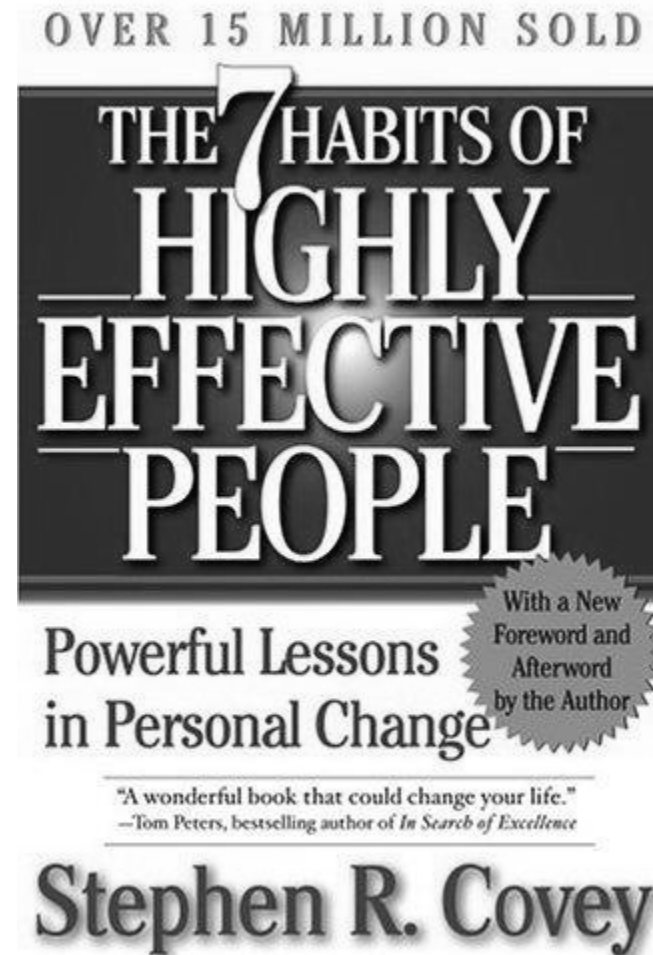
1: ..

- Life doesn't just happen; make choices
  - You choose engagement or you choose ambivalence

- Reactive people are governed by..

- Proactive people choose their behaviour.
  - Take responsibility for your actions/situations.

- Success is not based on competition:
  - someone need not lose for you to win.

- ..

  - Find mutually beneficial solutions.

- Be courageous to express and fight for your ideas;
  - Be considerate of feelings of others.

  - Balance courage and consideration!

- Believe there is plenty for everyone
  - not a zero-sum game

- Listen.
  - First listen and try to understand before reacting/judging.
  - Ex: PhD candidate misunderstanding questions!

- Listen with an intent..
  - Don't half-listen waiting for a chance to make a point.

- Be able to restate a person's view/questions before replying.

6:..

- 2 heads better than one
- diverse group able to create better solutions together
- ..
  - everyone doesn't have to be the same to be part of the team.
- Truly value diversity
  - not "I wish everyone would agree with me faster so we could make some progress!"

Summary

- Teams
  - Team stages
  - Team rules
  - Team decision making
- Habits
  - Be proactive
  - Win-Win
  - Seek first to understand, then to be understood
  - Synergize / collaborate