A Problem of A Lack of Effective Collaborations Between Teams

Steven Cheung

What is the problem?

A problem of the current practice is a lack of effective collaborations and communication between teams and team members. As a consequence, the real issues are not identified and the concerns are not directly addressed to other team members. These consequences are often caused by a fear of being challenged or upsetting the relationship between team members and leaders. This problem will restrict people from learning, and it is likely to create work-around solutions which might not be applicable and hence, not solve the underlying issues. These work-around solutions also have a potential to complicate these once small issues between different projects, which may result in an inability to identify the origin of the issues. With people not being able to understand and fix the root cause, it is likely that more work-around solutions will be implemented over time and results in a snowball effect.

Furthermore, this problem will also limit teams from effectively sharing their knowledge and experience. This occurs when team members are solely aiming for high efficiency and not wanting to teach others as it is easier and quicker for the more skilled staff to complete the task. Another reason is that once the skills are taught, there is a fear of increased competition between team members for a higher reward position that requires a similar set of skills. Thirdly, people who lacks certain skills are afraid to express their weaknesses thus they show little interest to learn new skills. In summary, these issues will contribute to a hostile learning environment which will limit team members to learn anything new efficiently.

Why is the problem important?

Humans are required to handle complex and innovative tasks, and we have to constantly work with new ideas, take risks and trial new approaches, and be creative in new working conditions. This requires us to continuously up-skill ourselves through learning and collaborating with others for new ideas. Therefore, it is important to ensure that we are building a healthy learning environment for the teams to learn and collaborate effectively.

As we grow, we will be expected to handle an increasing amount of tasks. It is more beneficial for us to spend less time to identify, understand, and fix the issues arose, and put our focus on the important tasks. Hence, we must ensure that we are implementing applicable solutions that can address and fix the root cause of the issues, and not further complicating the situations in the long-run.

Overall, the aim for us to create an environment of effective collaborations is to improve the performance and efficiency in the workplace, and be able to meet the ever-changing future needs.