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Form a team, not a committee.

Mark McCormack  
(1930–2003),  
CEO of International Management Group

### Starting up

**A** Think of at least two advantages and disadvantages of working in teams.

**B** For each category in the quiz below, tick the three statements that most apply to you. Then read the explanations on page 152.

### What sort of team player are you?

Doers vs Thinkers	Details vs Ideas	Mind vs Heart	Planners vs Improvisers
<p>a) I consider what I say. b) I contribute a lot in discussions. c) Action is more important than reflection. d) I listen to others before I say anything. e) Discussion gives me energy and ideas. f) I don't say a lot at meetings.</p>	<p>a) I often come up with unusual solutions. b) It's important to be realistic. c) People see me as a creative person. d) I like practical solutions. e) You shouldn't overlook details. f) You shouldn't get lost in details.</p>	<p>a) I like to think logically. b) I keep emotions out of decision-making. c) I avoid confrontation. d) I sometimes tread on people's toes. e) Understanding people is as important as being right. f) I care about other people's feelings.</p>	<p>a) Meetings have to be prepared for carefully. b) I like surprises. c) I hate time-wasting at meetings. d) Too much time can be spent on preparation. e) People say I'm a punctual person. f) I need a deadline to get me going.</p>

**C** Work in groups and compare your answers. Then discuss these questions.

- 1 How important are thinking styles in effective teamwork?
- 2 Do you think your group would make a good team, based on the results of the quiz? Explain why or why not.

## Listening

### Building successful teams



▲ Janet Greenfield

**A** 8.1 Listen to the first part of an interview with Janet Greenfield, an American specialist in Human Resources. What are the three key points for effective team building that Janet mentions? Use these headings to help you: corporate culture, expectations and contributions.

**B** 8.2 Listen to the second part of the interview. Work in pairs. Take notes on a) Vince Lombardi's ideas and b) how his ideas are applied to business.

**C** Discussion: describe a team you have been in that was either a) successful, b) unsuccessful and say why.

## Vocabulary

### Prefixes

**A** Match the prefixes of the words 1–10 to their meanings.

Prefix	Meaning of prefix		
1 <i>mis</i> manage	a) not	b) do badly	c) former
2 <i>pro</i> -European	a) opposite	b) in favour of	c) before
3 <i>predict</i>	a) not enough	b) against	c) before
4 <i>post</i> -merger	a) after	b) too much	c) not enough
5 <i>dishonest</i>	a) very	b) former	c) not
6 <i>ex</i> -boss	a) opposite	b) former	c) after
7 <i>bilateral</i>	a) against	b) after	c) two
8 <i>reconsider</i>	a) again	b) former	c) after
9 <i>irresponsible</i>	a) again	b) not	c) against
10 <i>hypercritical</i>	a) not enough	b) very	c) opposite

→ Vocabulary file page 171

**B** Complete the text below using some of the words in Exercise A in the correct form.

Our company went through a difficult period a few years ago. Bad decisions were taken which caused us to lose a lot of money. Because the company had been .....<sup>1</sup>, the chief executive had to resign. Last year, we merged with a much larger company. During the .....<sup>2</sup> period our future strategy was discussed. It was decided that we could consider becoming a more global organisation with a strong presence in Europe.

Most of us were .....<sup>3</sup>, we liked the idea of expanding into Europe. Indeed our .....<sup>4</sup> had been strongly in favour of doing this. However the two new board members were strongly against the idea but never said so openly. I think this was very .....<sup>5</sup>. Instead, they behaved in an .....<sup>6</sup> manner during meetings. For example, they would be .....<sup>7</sup>, raising stupid objections if someone came up with a good idea.

Because the meetings were so unproductive, the Board of Directors got cold feet and asked us to .....<sup>8</sup> the decision to expand into Europe.

**C** Add prefixes to the words in the box to give their opposite meanings. Then use them to discuss the questions that follow.

communicative	decisive	efficient	enthusiastic	flexible	focussed
imaginative	loyal	organised	practical	sociable	stable
					tolerant

1 Who is the best or worst person you have ever worked with? Explain why.

2 What qualities could you contribute to a team? What qualities would the other members need to have to create an effective team?

**Reading**  
**The key to successful team building**

**A** *None of us is as smart as all of us.* Do you agree? In what situations is it true or not true? Give examples.

**B** Read the article and answer these questions.

- 1 What is the difference between the past and the present in terms of the key to success in a career?
- 2 What does the writer say about competition in the first paragraph?
- 3 In the second paragraph what does the writer say you need to be a good team player?
- 4 What three points does the writer make about effective teams in the third paragraph?
- 5 According to the writer which of the following attitudes should team members have?
  - a) We know exactly what we are trying to achieve.
  - b) I will lead when necessary.
  - c) People value my work.
  - d) I speak when invited by the team leader.
  - e) I am encouraged to be very critical of colleagues' opinions.
- 6 Why does the writer think that cultural differences do not have a big influence on teams?
- 7 What is the difference between Thai and Western team members?

**C** Discuss the following statements.

- 1 A team always needs a leader.
- 2 A team should change its leader regularly.
- 3 Tension between team members makes a team more effective.
- 4 Teams need people with similar personalities in order to succeed.

**D** Complete the missing letters in the following words. Which of these qualities do you possess that would be useful when working in a team?

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1 p_t_ _ nc_      | 6 t_ _ ghn_ss |
| 2 f_r_s_ght       | 7 st_m_n_     |
| 3 cr_ _ t_v_ty    | 8 d_pl_m_cy   |
| 4 _ rg_nis_t_ _ n | 9 h_n_sty     |
| 5 _nt_ _t_ _ n    |               |

**E** Answer these questions.

- 1 Do you have any other qualities which would be useful for a team?
- 2 What would you find difficult about working in a team?
- 3 If you were a team leader, how would you get your team members to co-operate?



## THE KEY TO SUCCESS

# None of us is as smart as all of us

BY HOWARD CANT

A good team player has the key to success. Being the smartest, being the brightest, being the hardest; all of these attributes that worked so well in business in years gone by, now will not push you up the ladder quickly. How good a team player you are and how well you share your knowledge with your colleagues is the all-important factor in growing your career today. If you can build a company culture that does not worry about who gets the credit for something, think about what you could achieve! To survive in the big bad tough working environment of today you don't need to have your own people competing with each other. It is the commercial 'enemy' against whom all their energy should be focussed.

It's not always easy to be a good team member and compromise your own views for the good of the whole, but it works for the betterment of the company. You have to believe in the workings and power of the team and recognise where your own strengths and contribution fit in. You have to be honest, both with yourself and with your team members. You will have conflict within the team and as long as this is controlled then it can be a very healthy element for both the team and the development of the business. Research into high-performing teams shows that each member cares for the development of his team mates. This appreciation of each other's learning and development is key to the success of a team and the commitment of each member to the other.

Over 70% of a manager's time is spent in some form of group activity, often in meetings with others; relatively little time is spent in the supervising of single individuals or on one-to-one discussions, thus the need for team building. Indeed, the success of individual managers depends on how well that manager's team or teams improve in quality and productivity on a continuous basis. In reality, group productivity is more important than individual task accomplishment. The most effective teams are able to solve complex problems more easily than



one person can, for many capable minds are brought to bear on an issue. However, all teams must be managed well by a capable facilitator who understands that every team is unique, dynamic and ever-changing. Moreover, teams have behaviour patterns, just as individuals do and, just as children develop into adults, teams have developmental stages, being more productive and efficient at one stage than another.

It is also extremely desirable for team members to have the following attitudes; 'I know what I have to do and the team's goals are clear', 'I am willing to share some responsibility for leadership', 'I am an active participant', 'I feel appreciated and supported by others', 'Other team members listen when I speak and I respect the opinions of others', 'Communication is open, new ideas are encouraged and we are having fun working together'.

Teams soon develop a clear problem-solving approach that can be applied time and again as long as their leader initially creates a common purpose and vision, pointing the team in the right direction.

Cross-cultural issues can assail and impact the working of teams, but it is well to remember that, despite culture, most team members have similar objectives in life. Objectives that relate to happiness and health, to success and recognition, to love and being well-accepted by others. The clever team leader recognises and plays upon these similarities while moulding the cultural differences to benefit the team. For example, Thai team members place a greater focus on personal relationships in everything they do while Western team members are looking more for personal achievement.

From Benjarong Magazine, Thailand

## Language review

### Modal perfect

- The modal perfect is formed using **modal verb + have + past participle**.  
*We might have won the contract.*
- Two uses of the modal perfect are:
  - criticising or commenting on past actions.**  
*You should have told me the meeting was cancelled.*  
*She got there very early. She needn't have allowed so much time to find the place.*
  - speculating about the past or present.**  
*He may have moved to another department.*  
*He must have finished now.*

→ page 133

**A** Answer *yes, no* or *not sure* to each of the questions below.

- You should have chosen her for the team.*  
Was she chosen for the team?
- He must have made over 30 changes to the project.*  
Did he make over 30 changes to the project?
- They needn't have spent so much time on the report.*  
Did they spend too much time on the report?
- They could have prepared better if they'd had more time.*  
Did they prepare as well as they wanted to?
- The team would have been stronger without him.*  
Was the team as strong as it could be?
- Sylvia may have arrived by now.*  
Has Sylvia arrived yet?
- Thomas should have reached Barcelona by now.*  
Has Thomas reached Barcelona?
- They couldn't have done enough research as the launch was a failure.*  
Did the team do enough research?

**B** Which of these statements uses the modal perfect correctly? Suggest alternative modals for the incorrect statements.

- It's too late to apply for the job now. You must have applied last month.
- It was silly to leave your wallet in the hotel room. It would have been stolen.
- The fire in our showroom last night could have destroyed all our merchandise.
- He bought the land cheaply and sold it at a higher price to developers, so he needn't have made a lot of money.
- Gerry wasn't at the meeting. He might have been delayed in traffic.
- You couldn't have seen Mr Lebeau at the conference because he was in Hong Kong at the time.
- He looked exhausted when he arrived. He should have had a bad flight.
- He was charismatic and decisive. We must have made him team leader.

**C** Role play this situation in pairs.

A sales rep went on a three-day business trip. He/She:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| • stayed in a five-star hotel     | • hired a top-of-the-range car          |
| • phoned home from their room     | • drank most of the mini-bar            |
| • ordered breakfast in their room | • had clothes dry-cleaned by the hotel. |

After the trip, the Finance Director thinks the rep's expenses are excessive and refuses to pay them. The sales rep defends their actions. Use as many of the following structures as possible: *should have / shouldn't have / could have / needn't have / + past participle*.

## Skills

### Resolving conflict

**A** Read the suggestions below about ways of dealing with conflict. Put each of them under one of the following headings: either *Do* or *Don't*.

- 1 Delay taking action, if possible.
- 2 Get angry from time to time with difficult members.
- 3 Try to see the problem from the point of view of the team.
- 4 Be truthful about how you see the situation.
- 5 Encourage open and frank discussion.
- 6 Try to ignore tensions within the team.
- 7 Bring potential conflict and disagreement into the open.
- 8 Give special attention to team members who are creating problems.
- 9 Persist with 'impossible people' – you may win them over.
- 10 Try to find 'win-win' solutions.

**B**  8.3 Listen to the conversation between Karen, Head of Department, and Larissa. Which suggestions, listed above, does Karen use to deal with the conflict between Larissa and her colleague, Sophie?

**C** Read the transcript of the conversation on page 164. Underline the phrases she uses to deal with the conflict. Add them to the Useful language box.

#### Useful language

**Expressing your feelings**  
My main concern is ...

**Showing sympathy**  
I know how you feel.

**Making suggestions**  
One thing you could do is ...

**Identifying the real problem**  
What's really bothering you?

**Expressing satisfaction**  
Yes, that would be very helpful ...

**Resolving the conflict**  
How do you think we should deal with this?

**Expressing dissatisfaction**  
I don't think that would do much good.

**Reviewing the situation**  
Let's meet next week and see how things are going.

**D** Work in pairs. Role play the following situation. Use phrases from the Useful language box above to discuss the problems.

A team of six multinational staff is managing a number of apartment blocks in Nice, France. However, one of the team is unhappy. The employee is difficult to work with and uncooperative.

Team leader turn to page 146.

Team member turn to page 155.

