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Focus

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Building High-performance Teams - II

There are five steps to building a high-performance team. A cohesive team needs to build trust, master conflict, achieve commitment, embrace accountability, and focus on results.

1-Trust one another

When team members are genuine and transparent, they build trust. In this context, trust means knowing your teammates care about the good of the team, and not personal agendas.

2-Engage in unfiltered dialogue around ideas

When there is trust, team members can speak freely and engage in plain-spoken discussion about options. Trust equals speed. Speedier decisions are a competitive advantage.

3-Commit to decisions

When team members are able to freely offer opinions and debate ideas, they will be more likely to commit to decisions. Great teams *don't* seek consensus, but they do -- in the end -- all commit to a common course of action. *Warning:* If people don't have a chance to weigh in, they won't buy in.

4-Hold one another accountable

The critical accountability of a high-performance team is to peers, not to the leader. When peers demand accountability of each other, social pressure usually ensures everyone keeps their commitments.

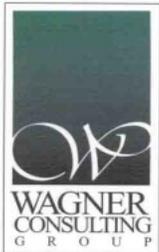
5-Focus on achieving collective results

The ultimate goal of building greater trust, healthy conflict, commitment, and accountability is one thing: achievement of team goals.

As Mississippians remember the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's devastation of the

Gulf Coast, it's worth noting that our success in avoiding what could have been a much worse outcome was partly due to a high-performance team of people in the Harrison County Emergency Operations Center. These heroes worked in terrible conditions - as did others in Hancock and Jackson Counties -- to coordinate local response and work with the incredible generosity of governors, corporations, the military, and individual volunteers from across America. We had no riots. There were no mass outbreaks of infectious disease, despite a total loss of sanitary sewer infrastructure. Less than 300 people died in Mississippi. This was a superb example of a high-performance team focused on results!

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