

## Introduction to Team Skills

## Today's Class

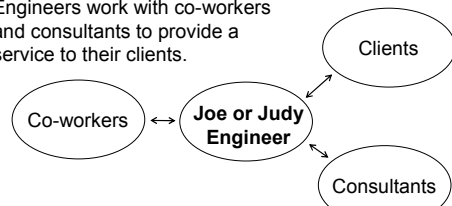
- Presentation on why engineers need to learn team skills (15 min)
- Lost on the Moon exercise (30 min)
- Homework Assignment for next class

## What's a team?

A team is a group of people who depend upon one another to accomplish their tasks. Judd Adams, Team Training Consultant

## What does engineering have to do with teams?

Engineers work with co-workers and consultants to provide a service to their clients.



Working with others effectively = Better service

Better service = Professional success

## Why Should I Learn Team Skills?

Reason #1:

Employers want engineers with good team skills.

## Employee Rating Form from an Alabama Engineering Firm

A superior employee:

- has demonstrated superior technical competence in a wide range of skills;
- has displayed outstanding leadership and team skills at every opportunity;
- learns & adapts to changing circumstances quickly;
- achieves more than expected through consistently hard work & dedication;
- finds innovative solutions to problems; demonstrates a passion for exceeding the expectations of customers;
- communicates exceptionally well spontaneously with little or no preparation

## Employee Rating Form from an Alabama Engineering Firm

A marginal employee:

- has marginal technical competence with certain skill areas;
- displays little interest in assuming leadership;
- tends to cause dissension among team members;
- works best in isolation;
- resists change;
- shows pattern of absence from work suggestive of lack of dependability;
- when faced with problems, seeks out others to solve them;
- demonstrates little concern for anticipating the needs of customers;
- awkward in communicating ideas to others.

## Why Should I Learn Team Skills?

Reason #2: The business world is changing.

- Knowledge is judged by its contribution to the common task, not by the rank of the person contributing the knowledge.
- “Therefore, the modern organization cannot be an organization of boss and subordinate. **It must be organized as a team**”, Peter Drucker, Harvard Business Review

## Why Should I Learn Team Skills?

- **Opportunity:** As a new employee, your good ideas will be heard.
- **Challenge:** As an older employee, you must compete with ideas from new, freshly-trained engineers.
- **Remember:** You will only get credit for good ideas that others understand and use.
- **Therefore: Learn to work effectively with others.**

## I've been on teams before! What's there to learn?

- Most organizations consist of many teams whose members do not fully understand their interrelationships, performance standards, and work styles.
- Almost all teams can improve their performance by applying conscious attention to these relationships and developing an explicit plan for making improvement.

Judd Adams, Team Training Consultant

## You know you're part of a good team when:

Team members:

- depend on each other,
- share a common goal,
- enjoy each other's company,
- have common expectations about team behavior, and
- communicate!

## You know you're part of a dysfunctional team when:

Team members:

- are independent of each other,
- have different goals,
- don't like to be around each other,
- have different expectations about team behavior, and
- don't communicate!

## How do I become a more effective team member?

- Value effective team work.
- Pay attention to your team work.
- Learn from other's experience.
- Have a plan\* to improve your team skills.
- Practice.

\*"Have a plan, trust the plan, work the plan"  
Paul Bear Bryant

## Common Team Stumbling Blocks

- Personality conflicts leading to misunderstandings
- Miscommunication
- Wasted time in meetings

## Overcoming the Stumbling Blocks

### Stumbling Block

### Learn to:

- Personality conflicts
- Miscommunication
- Wasted time in meetings
- Work with different personalities
- Listen effectively
- Structure meetings

## Lost on the Moon

- Work individually to rank the items from 1 (most essential) to 15 (least essential) **(5 min)**
- Work with your team to rank the same items. **(10 min)**
- Copy the answers from the NASA scientists (see next slide) and compute your individual score and your team's score **(5 min)**

## Solution to Lost on the Moon

Item	Rank from NASA scientists
Box of matches	15
Food concentrate	4
50 feet of nylon rope	6
Parachute silk	8
Portable heating unit	13
Two .45 caliber pistols	11
One case dehydrated milk	12
Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen	1
Stellar map (moon's constellation)	3
Life raft	9
Magnetic compass	14
5 gallons of water	2
Signal flares	10
First-aid kit containing injection needles	7
Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter	5

## Why did the teams get better scores?

## Homework for Next Class

- Read in the Team Skills Module:
  - Section 3: Work Styles
  - Section 4: Listen Actively
- Take the MBTI, (Myers-Briggs personality Type Inventory)
- Take the Work Style Questionnaire and answer the questions about strengths and weaknesses at the bottom of each page.