

THE ACADEMY

Growing Your Team

– *Helping those you lead to be productive and fulfilled*

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GROWING your team is more than just planning a few group activities and games, it involves really coming to understand yourself, your team (including their strengths and weaknesses), and how you will work together.

During the **Growing Your Team** Workshop, participants will develop an understanding on how people relate with others and be able to use this to build the relational strength and effectiveness of the team they lead.

Unit 1 – Understanding Team

We begin the process of **Growing Your Team** by exploring the concept of Team. What is a team? What does the Bible say about team? Is it a biblical concept? How is a team different from an organization?

What is a Team? –

A team is two or more people working together to accomplish a common task. It is more than a group of assembled people; it is a collection of individuals guided by a common purpose, striving for the same results.

Now if you were to look the word “Team” up in your concordance, you would not find it. However, the concept that we just described is common – take for example the 70 leaders God gave to assist Moses in Numbers 11, or Paul and his companions setting out on their first missionary journey in Acts 13 – these fit the definition of Team quite well. They were working together to accomplish a common task or purpose.

This is, therefore, the first question that we as leaders need to ask – is my team really a team – are we bound by a common purpose or are we simply a group of people who happen to work in the same place?

If you are a team – then you are ready to move on to understanding how to grow together.

We do this by looking at a 3 stage process of Team Development.

Unit 2 – Understanding Yourself & Your Team Members

Step 1 – Understand the Individual

Your Team is made up of unique people, gifted and strengthened by God’s specific design. In Ephesians, Paul makes it clear that even the work that God has for us has been prepared or designed in advance. (Eph 2:10) As a leader, a large part of your responsibility is making sure that those you lead are able to do what God has designed them to do. This requires that you know not only their gifts and talents, but also understand how they best work, what motivates them, what de-motivates them, and what kind of leadership will best enable them to be productive and fulfilled.

There are many tools around that will help you to get to know your team. One of the most helpful is the Relational Styles inventory developed by Development Associates International. This inventory helps us to

understand how we best work with other people, and how as leaders we can modify our leadership style so that we are able to release and motivate people into being and doing what God has called them to.

The relational styles inventory looks at two key preferences in how we work together

- Task vs People orientation
- Detail vs Big picture orientation

Unit 3 – Putting Your Team Members in the Right Place

Once we have understood our team member's gifts, talents and preferences, then we are able to address the issue of what roles people best fit in the team.

I am by nature a People and Big Picture focused person. While I can do administrative/detail oriented work – it is not my gift and takes a lot of energy and attention for me to do. On the other hand give me a workshop to facilitate and I thrive and in fact often have more energy at the end of the day that I started with.

By placing our team in roles that suit not just their skill base but also their relational preferences, we are able to ensure that they can not only do the work but also create a significantly more enjoyable working environment.

Unit 4 – Motivating Your Team Members for Excellence

Most leaders tend to use the carrot and stick form of motivation – rewards provide a positive (carrot) form of motivation and consequences a negative (stick) form. The problem with this form of motivation is that it is not self sustaining. The moment the leader ceases providing motivation – the team member's motivation drops away.

As leaders what we long for is team members who are able to develop and sustain their own motivation.

Getting your team into the right positions will go a long way towards providing motivation because when our work gives us satisfaction, then our base level of motivation is much higher. Leaders, however, need to also work towards providing an environment that encourages and affirms each member for their contribution. The absence of external motivators – such as appropriate financial compensation and a hospitable, well equipped physical working environment can de-motivate staff – but simply increasing salary or providing new office equipment won't create motivation by itself. As leaders, if we want motivated staff then we have to value them and let them know it.

Unit 5 – Understanding Your Team

Step 2 – Understand the Team

Having understood our team as individuals, we then need to help the team understand how they fit together. Each team will have a unique combination of gifts, abilities and relational styles. The leader's role in this stage is to help each member of the team appreciate and understand the other members of the team and to feel understood and appreciated themselves.

This is not a one off process, it is a process of understanding each other and applying that understanding as your team works together. A one off team building meeting facilitated by someone who understands team dynamics is, however, a great way to start this process.

Unit 6 – Understanding Yourself as Team Leader

Step 3 – Understand the Leader

The final step in this process is for you, as the leader, to understand your role in the team. If your goal is to ensure that your team is “productive & fulfilled”, then as a leader you need to adapt your leadership style to suit those you lead.

Some of your team will need a lot of direction, others very little, some will need a strong relationship with you, others will be happy with simply knowing that you are around if they need you. To get the best out of each and every staff member – you have to be the kind of leader that is willing to adjust their style to enable each of those you lead to excel.