

# **Building a Productive and Collaborative Team**

## **Summary**

- Set realistic expectations.
- Gain commitment to the objectives.
- Establish ground rules for your team (team norms).
- Consider team member's ideas as valuable.
- Encourage listening and brainstorming amongst the team.
- Put the ownership on the team members; provide the team with enough freedom and empowerment. Support the team's decision.
- Build trust and reinforce the team's sense of purpose.

## **Information You Need to Know:**

A team's success depends on realistic expectations being set from the beginning. Make sure everyone is aware of why the team exists; this includes external partners, as well.

However, you should not expect the team to perform outstanding from the beginning. Team formation takes time and working with the team to establish ground rules will be extremely beneficial. In establishing ground rules, allow the team members the opportunity to voice their opinion and you should also provide your thoughts. As the team journeys from being a group of strangers to becoming united team with a common goal you should anticipate the following recognizable stages: Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing. If you foster an environment where the team members feel valued and empowered you are likely to see a positive outcome. By empowering the team, this helps employees own their work and take responsibility for their results. Provide the team guidance, but allow them the opportunity to make decisions and support their decisions.

Do not forget to continue to remind individuals why the team exists, reflect on what the team has accomplished and recognize them for their efforts.

## **Peer Insight:**

*We want to hear from you. Do you have any suggestions on how to reward and/or recognize employees? Do you have any tips or best practice ideas? Please share your ideas with ITA at [ITABestPractices@mail.doc.gov](mailto:ITABestPractices@mail.doc.gov)*

At this time there are no best practices from ITA Leaders.

***For more information on this topic check out these resources:***

Web sites:

[Eight Ways to Build Collaborative Teams](#)

[Building Partnerships](#)

[Team Building / Employee Empowerment / Employee Involvement](#)

[7 Ways to Motivate Your Team](#)

[Team Building Without Time Wasting](#)

[Create a Helping Environment](#)

[Team Building – University of California – Berkeley](#)

[How Do You Motivate Your Team?](#)

[Team Effectiveness Assessment](#)

[Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing](#)

[Multivoting: Let the Team Decide](#)

[Effectively Managing Team Conflict](#)

[21 Questions for Making Teamwork Work](#)

Webcast:

[Building High Performance Teams](#)

[Fired Up Leadership: How to Make Your Team Thrive](#)

[10 Steps for Leading Productive Meetings](#)

Books:

[The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork](#) by John C. Maxwell

This book is a companion book to Maxwell's, The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership. Maxwell shares the vital principles of building and maintaining a successful team.

The One Minute Manager Builds High Performance Teams by Ken Blanchard, Donald Carew, Eunice Parisi-carew,

Never before in the history of the workplace has the concept of teamwork been more important to the functioning of successful organizations. Ken Blanchard, bestselling coauthor of *Raving Fans*, *The One Minute Manager*, and *Gung Ho!* teams up with Donald Carew and Eunice Parisi-Carew to explain how all groups move through four stages of development on their way to becoming high performing teams -- orientation, dissatisfaction, integration, and production. The authors then show how a manager can help any group to become fully effective quickly and with hardly any stress.

The First-Time Manager's Guide to Team Building by Gary S. Topchik

The book helps readers discover how their own leadership and management style influences the success of their teams. Managers will learn how to:

- Make the transition from team member to team leader
- Understand the difference between a team and a work group
- Hold team members accountable
- Make their teams more productive
- Manage challenging situations
- Resolve conflict within a team

Quick Team-Building Activities for Busy Managers: 50 Exercises That Get Results in Just 15 Minutes by Brian Cole Miller

Every group can benefit from team-building exercises. But sometimes it's not practical to embark on a full-scale training initiative. Now, supervisors, managers, and team leaders have 50 team-building activities to choose from, all of which can be implemented with no special facilities, big expense, or previous training experience.