Team management strategies

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1 Introduction

Proper team management significantly increases the chance that a team will do well. A team needs a capable and efficient team structure in order to accomplish its tasks. Team management can be a main cause of why a team does not do well. Conflict usually tears the team apart and makes it less productive. Teamwork involves communication, coordination, constructive criticism, etc… Effective team management ultimately prevents most issues before they can present themselves.

2 Advantages and disadvantages of teamwork over working alone

Teamwork has many advantages over working alone. One advantage is that people have different ideas, so they can collaborate, and there will be different input on the task on hand. Another advantage is that there is more manpower, so objectives can be easily completed. There is a strong sense of support from working on a team. Another advantage is that teammates can check their facts with each other. Some disadvantages are that teammates can argue over ideas, more people make communication more difficult, and thus some ideas may not come across clearly. On any team, an individual can choose to idle, allowing teammates to do all the work while they remain unproductive. Teamwork has pros and cons that manifest themselves according to how a team is managed.

Pros	Cons
• Greater resources for problem solving • Greater creativity and innovation • Improved quality of descision making • Greater commitment to tasks • Higher motivation • Better control and discpline • More individual need satisfaction	• Social loafing • Personality conflicts • Differences in work styles • Task ambiguity • Poor readiness to work

3 Factors that affect the success of a team

The overall success of a team isn't defined by whether a team takes first or last. The success of the team is determined by whether or not they met their goals for the game. Various factors determine a team's success. One is how well the team coordinates. For example, If one member is told that that the team is using VAL programming language, but the leader fails to notify that particular member that they switched the programming language to C, that member will still use VAL, thereby wasting time and resources. Another factor is conflict. If team members argue over small things, then nothing gets done. Conflict also creates bitterness between teammates, which lowers team morale and stunts progress. Members have to be able to trust each other. The norms, or agreed-upon structure and habits of a team, also affect its productivity. There are different types of team structure depending on what team members prefer.

4 Types of Team Management

4.1 Autocracy

Autocracy means that the leader has full control over the group's decisions. Team members agree to follow one leader. An autocracy has both costs and benefits. One possible disadvantage is that teammates could harbor bitter feelings over the leader's decision and might not work as productively. This is a "Command and Control" type of team in which the leader expects acquiescence from teammates. A benefit is efficiency; all decisions are made quickly without any dispute. In fact, some companies like the *New York Times* use an autocratic leadership.

4.2 Democracy

In a democratic team structure, the leader basically takes the vote and opinions of all the members and decides based on the majority. This is one of the most commonly used types of leadership, as it gives members a chance to voice their opinions, while not completely letting the team dissolve into anarchy. This is an "engage and create" type of team structure. Disadvantages of a democratic structure are that more time and resources are spent on making decisions. Our GCER robotics team uses a democratic structure, and we are currently progressing well. Companies like DaVita, Fusionfarm Inc, and Valtech use the central principle of democracy.

4.3 Laissez-Faire

Laissez-Faire lets the members completely go wild with little or no control over them. Laissez-Faire can be the opposite of an autocratic team, which means that the leader gives funding and expects the job to be done. The advantages are that the teammates have higher spirits because they have freedom to do whatever they want, but they have a higher chance of goofing off and getting nothing done. There are also some disadvantages. If the norms are too slack, the members will abuse those norms. No commitment lessens the overall performance of a team, because a teammate will not commit to the common goal and thus will deprive the team of its manpower. In order to strengthen the team, good communication, no conflict, commitment, moderate norms, etc… are all required. Starbucks uses this leadership and has been quite successful with it.
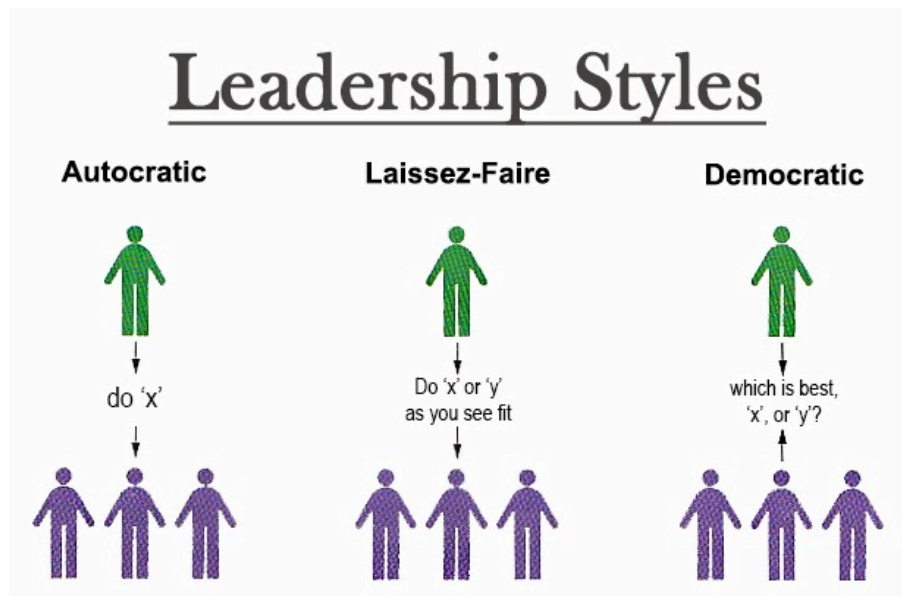
5 Summary

Every team is managed differently, each works differently in different situations. Team managers wish for a good team. They all share the common goal that their team will do well without making it hard for the leader to lead the team. The ideal team is different from different perspectives. Teams should efficiently try to maximize their potential by managing teams well. The concept of teamwork doesn't only apply to Botball; it applies to anything that a group has to accomplish together.

6 Thanks

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