Is Your Team Ready for this Process?

Because the assessment and accompanying material is designed for an intact team, there are a number of issues that can affect the success of your program. Before conducting the assessment and follow-up sessions, consider these questions:

Is the team really a TEAM? **Yes____ No_____**

A team is a relatively small number of people (from three to twelve) who meet on a regular basis and are collectively responsible for results. The team members share common goals as well as the rewards and responsibilities for achieving them. Not every group is a team. For example, a group that appears to be a team might simply be a collection of people who report to the same manager, but who have relatively little interdependence and mutual accountability. If a group does not meet the criteria of a true team, this process is unlikely to produce the results they expect.

Is this team ready for "heavy lifting"? **Yes____ No_____**

The advantages of being a highly functioning team are enormous. But they can only be achieved if the team is willing to invest considerable time and emotional energy in the process. It won't work if the team is interested only in shortcuts and half-measures.

Is the leader truly committed to building a team? **Yes____ No_____**

The fact is, leadership matters. For a team to be successful, the leader must understand the power of teamwork and be prepared to lead the effort in terms of setting an example and dedicating time to it. Still, it's important to note that many leaders who seem uninterested in teamwork are often just skeptical about the possibility of achieving it or afraid that acknowledging the need for it might reflect poorly on them. In these cases, success is possible as long as team leaders are willing to start the process with good intentions.

Is this the right time? **Yes____ No_____**

Certain situations make it difficult to effectively implement the feedback process. We suggest that you reconsider conducting the sessions if any of the following situations exist:

- *The team is very new*. A team should have been together for a minimum of six to eight weeks prior to utilizing this assessment. For new teams, it would be better just to introduce the model and discuss the behaviors of a cohesive team.
- *There is about to be a change in the nature of the team*. The time is probably not right if a team member will be leaving or the team's responsibilities are about to change significantly. In those situations, it would be better just to give a presentation on the model and then wait to conduct the assessment until the team is stable.
- *There is going to be or recently has been a significant organizational change*, such as a merger, a reorganization, or a new CEO.
- *The team has an unusually heavy workload with impending deadlines*.

The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team Model

Following is a brief summary of the five behaviors.

- **Trust** One Another

  When team members are genuinely transparent and honest with one another, they are able to build vulnerability-based trust.

- Engage in **Conflict** Around Ideas

  When there is trust, team members are able to engage in unfiltered, constructive debate of ideas.

- **Commit** to Decisions

  When team members are able to offer opinions and debate ideas, they will be more likely to commit to decisions.

- Hold One Another **Accountable**

  When everyone is committed to a clear plan of action, they will be more willing to hold one another accountable.

- Focus on Achieving Collective **Results**

  The ultimate goal of building greater trust, conflict, commitment, and accountability is one thing: the achievement of results.

Planning Checklist

- ☐ Review materials (Facilitator's Guide, PPTs, handouts, support materials)
- ☐ Meet with team leader; cover the following:
  - Purpose of training
  - Is team ready?
  - Ask team leader about team members, team issues, organizational issues and culture
  - Modeling appropriate behavior
  - Be prepared for scores that are different than expected
  - Be open to debate
- ☐ Meet or communicate with team; cover the following:
  - Purpose and value of the session
  - Explain the assessment
  - Identify the team and all team members
  - Setting ground rules for the session
- ☐ Set up assessment in EPIC
- ☐ Customize facilitation as desired to accommodate audience, timeframe, and team results
- ☐ Prepare flip charts
- ☐ Prepare handouts
- ☐ Obtain individual profiles from EPIC and bring to session
- ☐ Make sure you have all necessary equipment and supplies