The Team Leader

"As a team leader, you are also a team member" (Florida Power & Lights).

Roles

- Conducts meetings
- Provides direction
- Assesses progress
- Interfaces with other teams and support resources
- Represents the group to management

Responsibilities

1) Pre-meeting preparation
   a. Set agenda and distribute
   b. Arrange for meeting place
   c. Arrange for needed visual aids and equipment
   d. Organize others to present information
   e. Ensure that meeting records are updated
2) During the meeting
   a. Greet everyone
   b. Review team progress toward goal
   c. Lead team through agenda
   d. Arrange for note-taker
   e. Involve team members in meeting
3) Post-meeting activities
   a. Follow-up with members with issues
   b. Provide guidance to members as requested
   c. Ensure that meeting minutes (who is doing what, when?) are completed and posted
   d. Complete records of team meeting
   e. Communicate and coordinate with sponsor and facilitator

Desirable Leadership Characteristics

- Ability to listen
- Accepts others’ ideas
- Enthusiasm
- Helpfulness
- Ability to Focus
- Sensitivity
- Tolerance for human imperfection

A team’s first leader is usually the highest level supervisor or manager on that team. In time, however, other team members can and should assume the role.
The Team Facilitator

The basic function of the facilitator is to support the team in using the 7 Quality Control tools, the 7 Management and Planning tools, and the problem-solving methodology while they work together to solve a problem or improve a process. The facilitator concentrates on the process of working together.

Primary Roles Include:

- Help the leader
- Seek opinions
- Coordinate different ideas
- Test for consensus
- Apply tools and techniques
- Summarize key points
- Provide feedback to the group

The Facilitator Assists the Team Leader:

1) Helping to prepare for meetings.
2) Consulting on the use of TQC tools and techniques.
3) Recommending the use of staff specialists or experts.
4) Sharing experiences and results of other teams.
5) Helping to critique the effectiveness of the team meeting.

Desirable Characteristics of a Facilitator:

- Observant
- Neutral
- Trustworthy
- Polite
- Good memory
- Empathetic
- Adaptable
- Patient
- Flexible
- Even-tempered
- Sense of humor
- Centered
- Objective
- Non-judgmental
- Articulate
- Calm
- Perceptive
- Firm

Note: Leaders and facilitators obtain skills and desirable characteristics over time with both training and practice. An individual need not know how to exhibit all the desired characteristics of the role at the outset; being a group leader or facilitator is part of the training for the individuals serving in these positions.
Team Members

“Particularly during pilot projects, team members should be selected carefully. Ideally, these people are… those who are committed to improving quality, who identify with the team’s goals, who are cooperative team players, and who possess the capability to become leaders and/or facilitators.” (Total Quality: An Executives’ Guide for the 1990’s).

Roles and Responsibilities

1) During the meeting: Attend and participate in all team meetings.
   a. Recommend meeting agenda items.
   b. Offer your wisdom, experience, knowledge, and ideas.
   c. Ensure that decisions and follow-up assignments are clear.
   d. Help critique and improve the meeting process.

2) Between meetings: Actively participate in team activities.
   a. Identify processes which need improvement.
   b. Listen to customers for satisfaction and dissatisfaction.
   c. Collect and analyze data on processes.
   d. Track effectiveness of solutions.
   e. Communicate your experience and knowledge of teams with others.

Desirable Membership Characteristics

- Observant
- Cooperative
- Listener
- Sensitive
- Positive
- Committed
- Active Participator
- Energized
- Supportive
- Desire to Improve
- “Can Do” Attitude
- Open to Change

References:


Thoughts on Facilitation

1) The facilitator’s purpose is to make things easy. The facilitator is the servant of the group.

2) Get agreement on ground rules and measures of team success at the beginning.

3) Working together has great power. Once a group convenes, it has its own power.

4) Every group is different, even though the process of working with the team is standardized.

5) Beware of the “cross-town bus.” An unrelated topic can create great excitement and take the members (along with the facilitator and leader) off in a new direction.

6) Oxygen is important.

7) Give permission to the team members to move around.

8) At the end, let the group know how well they did. “You did great work.” As tempting as it is to let the group give you credit for great facilitation or training, keep the power with the group so it can “own” its success and replicate what worked for the future.

9) Evaluate what worked and what could be improved... at every team meeting.

10) Establish agreement on how to handle confidentiality within/ outside of the group.

11) Keep your team meeting times to 1 ½ hours or so. You may have to start out with a 3-4 hour session, but you will want to move the time back to 1 ½ to 2 hours as you progress. The team and the sponsor will need to agree.

12) Concentrate on the process, not the people.

13) Teamwork isn’t culturally natural.

14) Team composition is critical to the outcome. Five different groups will most likely generative five different solutions.

15) Develop an environment to tell the truth.

The J. DeMott Company
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