



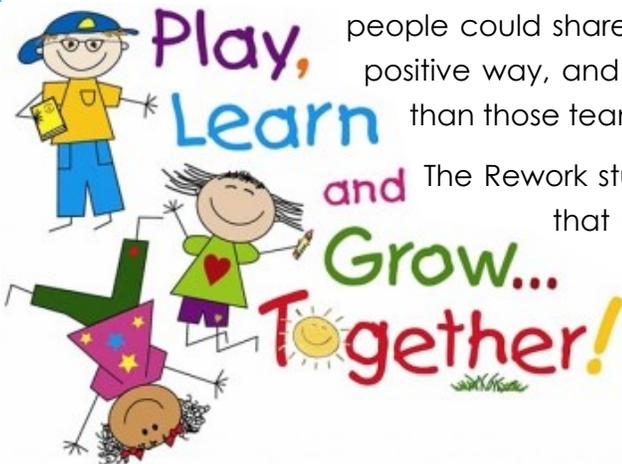
CLINICAL CONNECTION

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ACHIEVING MISSION SUCCESS THROUGH MAXIMIZING TEAMWORK

It is a known fact that the best teams achieve greater results and do better than others. In a recent two-year study of 200 teams completed by Google, they tried to identify what motivates the most effective teams and what the character traits and skills are that make up these teams.

The results were not surprising to this writer; the best and most effective teams “played nice together.” They are the dream team. There was no magic formula that the group had to be composed of the best and brightest or that there needed to be a mixture of talkative or thinkers in the team or that there should be those who had expertise regarding the task of the team. It was none of those. Once again, it was not surprising that the results demonstrated that effective teams included the creation of an environment where people felt they could express their ideas and thoughts without being ridiculed or ignored. Google’s research discovered that if



people could share their ideas, speak freely, question each other in a positive way, and float new ideas, they performed more successfully than those teams who may be stifled in those areas.

The Rework study (Google) found that there were five key things that determined whether a team would do well and included the following:

1. Psychological safety: Can we take risks on this team without feeling insecure or embarrassed?
2. Dependability: Can we count on each other to do high quality work on time?

THE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS.

--ARISTOTLE

3. Structure and clarity: Are goals, roles, and execution plans on our team clear?
4. Meaning of work: Are we working on something that is personally important for each of us?
5. Impact of work: Do we fundamentally believe that the work we're doing matters?'

Google's data indicated that psychological safety impacted the team's work more than anything else. According to Google, psychological safety is defined as "an individual's perception of the consequences of taking an interpersonal risk or a belief that a team is safe for risk taking in the face of being seen as ignorant, incompetent, negative, or disruptive." The teams that demonstrated high psychological safety found that the team members feel safe to take risks around other team members. They exhibit confidence that the other team members will not embarrass or alienate others when they admit that they made a mistake, asked a question, or made a suggestion. The results also suggested that teams that have higher psychological safety are less likely to leave the organization, thus improving retention.

The infographic helps to identify the stepping stones to create high performing teams starting with psychological safety.

Similar to Google's Rework study, a characteristic usually voiced by those who choose or chose health care as a profession is altruism. Many will say that they want to help others. In a recent study published in the *Academy of Management Journal* by Jasmine Hu, an assistant professor

of management at Notre Dame University and Robert Liden, a management professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago analyzed 67 different teams working at six companies where they discovered that employees do well when they feel their work will help their colleagues, customers and community. According to Hu, "The social aspect of teams is very important because many times people are just not motivated to work for money alone; they want to have the opportunity to achieve a positive impact on the lives of others."²

Safety and altruism seem to be the predominant themes for creating high performing teams in health care. In addition, messaging and communication from leaders must be integrated into your plan for creating high performing teams. The ten questions that arise for this writer are:



1. Is the mission and vision embedded in everything you do, and not just a statement on a newsletter or annual report?
2. Is every member of the team committed to and “live” by the mission and vision?
3. Do all leaders “live” the values of the organization?
4. Do you hire high performers who will embrace the mission, vision and values?
5. Do you release employees who do not exemplify the mission, vision and values?
6. Have you created a trusting culture within the organization from top to bottom and bottom to top and everything in the middle? Listen more, ask questions, speak less.
7. Are employees allowed to speak without fear? Focus on solutions, steer away from blaming.
8. Are employees heard?
9. Are promises made but results are not delivered?
10. Do you celebrate successes and failures? “If you want something new, you have to stop doing something old.” Peter Drucker



LEADERSHIP

A recent article published by *Wharton @Work* addressed a key element of creating high performing teams, that being what Sydney Finkelstein, PhD calls **superbosses** in his book, *Superbosses: How Exceptional Leaders Master the Flow of Talent*. Finkelstein defines superbosses as “leaders who inspire the best performance from their people and launch astounding numbers of them into their own high-powered careers” which is accomplished through teaching; teaching being a responsibility to those they lead rather than a mandate as a leader. There are three action steps offered to assist leaders in becoming superbosses:

1. Make the time to teach. Set aside informal time in your day to spend time mentoring those who expect to learn from you.
2. Build relationships that foster trust. Know what your employees do, how they tackle problems they encounter each day, listen and ask questions, and use this forum to teach on a personal level.



Are you a Superboss?



3. Impart knowledge through a variety of lessons. Keep teaching fresh and professional. Model behaviors that reflect values of hard work, commitment, and leadership qualities.

If you are taking the necessary actions, congratulations on becoming a superboss!

KEY TAKEAWAYS

There is not a dearth of high performing, talented people whom you are able to attract for the future unless you have developed internal talent who will cause your organization to be touted as one that respects high performers and empowers them to continue to be high performers. Growth, productivity, and profitability are dependent on being a notable high performing organization. As an interviewer, what type of employee do you search for; is it someone like you? If you answered yes, this writer would venture to say NO! Look for people dissimilar to you; someone who is driven (sometimes the best people are those who have been fired from other jobs), resilience (again, someone who overcame being fired and is moving forward), and comes from outside health care who can adapt to a changing environment quickly. Finally, decide what energizes you when working within a team and create a team that is not complacent with being mediocre. Create the team with the five characteristics already mentioned and add the characteristics that the team comes up with that energizes them for success, and let them take off. You just might be surprised how creative and innovative that is naturally revealed if you just pass the baton and relinquish control.

"A high-performing team provides minimal negative energy, maximum productivity, creativity, pride in a job well done, and ultimately a great environment to work everyday."

- Lee Ellis

LeadingWithHonor.com
Wisdom for Today

High Performance Teams are:

- **MOTIVATED** by the **MISSION**
- **UNITED** by the **VALUES**
- **PROUD** of the **REPUTATION**

-Epluribus Group

¹ Rozovsky, J. Google People Operations. 2015

² Hu, J. & Liden, R.C. Antecedents of Team Potency and Team Effectiveness: An Examination of Goal and Process Clarity and Servant Leadership. 2011



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