

MODULE THREE: KEY LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Module aims:

- To develop and improve your leadership skills.

BUILDING A TEAM AND MAINTAINING A TEAM CULTURE

REFLECT

Just have a moment to think about the last time you felt that you were part of a great team – you may be in one now. What made it great? You might perhaps say one or some of the following statements...

- It was just great fun
- We all worked together so well
- You know everyone knew just what they needed to do
- You trusted those around you to do their job well
- Everyone was there to support you
- The buzz about the place was amazing

Whatever it was, it is unlikely that the moment you came together as a group that you were buzzing. So, what got you to that point when things in the team were just ‘buzzing’? Consciously or unconsciously a number of things will have clicked into place.

AIM

The aim of this module is to present you with a few ideas & strategies around how best you can pull together a team, keep them motivated and go on to deliver effectively whatever your long-term goal is

I believe that there is scope at this early stage to just do a bit of self-reflection. Just take 5 mins and ask yourself the following questions:



- What are my strengths?
- What are my weaknesses?
- Am I an introvert / extrovert?
- What are my key characteristic traits?

Once you done this ask 2 or 3 of your closer friends the same questions about yourself and compare the answers.

Why am I getting you to do this? The simple reason is that when looking at your team, ideally you wish people to complement each other and bring a number of different skills together.

REALITY CHECK...

As a student leader, irrespective of the club – be it academic / sport / the arts you may find yourself in a position whereby you inherit whatever team is in place. This undoubtedly (and understandably) may be daunting to you and begs the question “where do I start”?

THE EARLY DAYS

Consider starting off by fact finding ...what I mean here is:

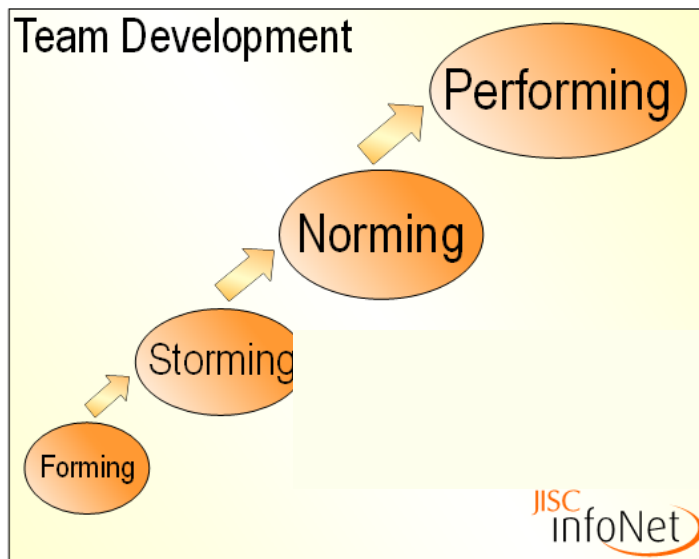
- Look around ...what is good about the team, what's bad, what requires perhaps a little bit of attention to be better?
- In what we are trying to achieve (purpose of the team) – do we have the right people in the team with the necessary skills. A successful team is not born out of one person doing all the work – its about shared roles and responsibilities. As you read this you may be saying “that may be well and good but if I do not do the work, nobody else will and things will take a nosedive for the worse”. If this is the case, I would say give people a second chance once you have clarity on their roles and responsibilities.
- Get to know your team – I often use the analogy of a car and say look under the bonnet. So...



- Spend some time with them socially – you are likely to be surprised at what else they can perhaps bring to the team
- Look them up on social media – do you have anything in common (this is a great start point to any relationship building)

TUCKMAN & BRUCE MODEL OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Before going any further it would be useful to put ‘team development’ into context. I would like to introduce you to the Tuckman model of 1965.



1. Be very clear when you are forming on what your roles are as well as asking yourself the question ‘are the right people doing the right roles’? The more time you spend on the latter the quicker you will pass through the storming stage. Make sure you have review meetings to see if people are comfortable / adapting to their new roles and if not be flexible enough to change who is doing what.
2. To get to a level whereby your team is ‘performing’ it takes time so... be patient.

TAKING STOCK

So, at this stage we have:

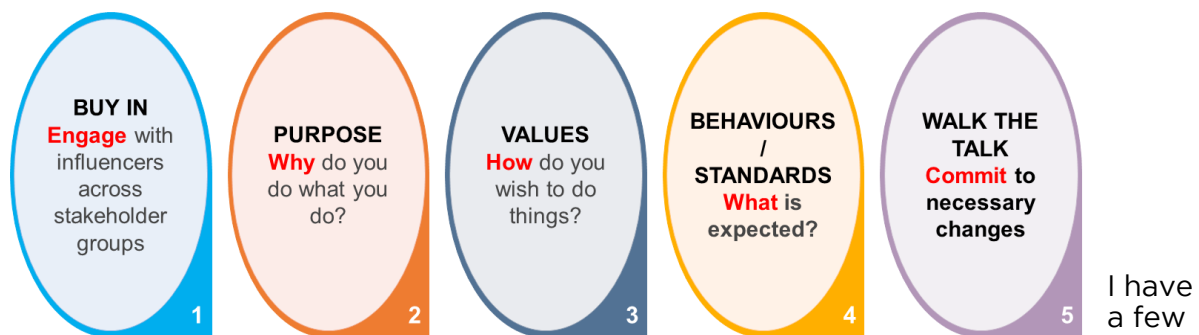
- Looked at the team around you and got to know them a little bit better
- Completed some self-reflection
- Considered what stage your team is at on the Tuckman Team Development Model
- Perhaps given people within your team new / adapted roles and responsibilities

BUILDING A POSITIVE TEAM CULTURE

There is so much out there on Culture and what it means – bottom line is simply this...

It's how we do things around here

Once you have the right people in your team doing the right roles it is then that you collectively ask yourselves the question how do we wish to do things around here? In order to best look at this or change your culture there are 5 steps that you may wish to consider. These are as follows:



thoughts on the above steps here

Buy In

This means exactly what it says ...getting buy in from people in your team to do whatever you are thinking of doing. The reality is that *you* will not necessarily either have time or be able to get buy in from all so identify those people of influence, try and get them to buy in and then they can convince others to come on board (be this a committee or other influencers). DO NOT continue forward unless you feel you have buy in..if this means approaching other people then so be it!

Purpose

This is about getting clarity on what your team is there to do. Put simply – why do you exist? This does not necessarily mean winning – you may be there to grow numbers in your particular society for example. Consider if you set up correctly to fulfil what you wish to? Perhaps discuss this with your committee.

Values

Values are the fundamental beliefs of your organisation – as guiding principles they dictate behaviour and can help people understand the difference between what is right and what is wrong.

Do you have values?

Do you know what they actually mean?

Are they relevant?

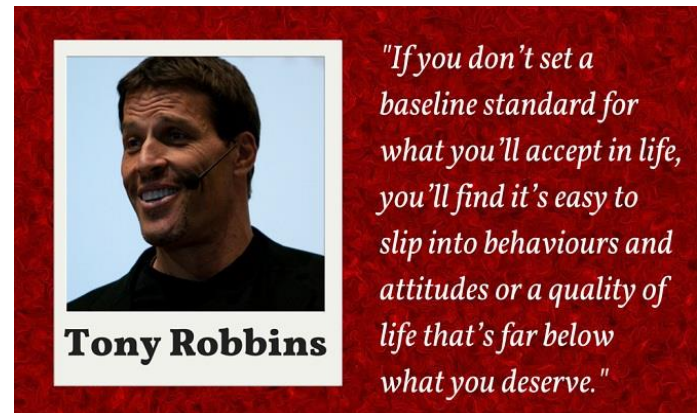
Do other people know, understand them and live by them?

Are they used as a tool to challenge one another?

Lots of questions I know but all pertinent. If you do not have values you may wish to run a session with your committee on establishing some – here are a few thoughts on how best to do this.

Behaviours / Standards

You should only look at this stage of the process once you have clarity and understanding of your organisational values. It is behaviours that connects everyone to a culture – you are asking yourselves the question what are acceptable behaviours in the various environments in which we work? If you already have and know such behaviours, then you can move onto the next stage. If you don't have clarity on such behaviours – here are a few thoughts on how best to do this



Walk the Talk

This is all about everyone, particularly you as the leader, committing to what you have agreed to do and keeping the culture alive.

This is not easy as it requires you to challenge people if they are not behaving in keeping with your agreed standards. Remember you are not alone here, and I would encourage you to get your committee to all play their part in keeping standards up.

Be in no doubt, for this to work, you and your committee have to lead by example every day by adopting the appropriate agreed standards and behaviours.

Here are a few ideas in keeping the culture front of mind for people:

- Make it part of someone's role – such as the Culture Ambassador
- When you meet as a committee – make sure Culture is on the agenda in order to discuss good and bad examples
- Have a monthly 'prize' for the committee member who has shown a particularly positive behaviour relating to the culture

How do you change a negative culture?

The first thing to establish here is what makes the culture negative? Be honest here and be clear what it is. It may be one / some of the following:

- You actually do not have values and therefore appropriate behaviours at all
- Things have 'drifted' a bit and although you have values nobody is really bothering with them. In this case have a session with key influencers on behaviours – few thoughts here
- You may have lost your direction and need to clarify your purpose again

TAKING STOCK

To take stock again on what have we have covered thus far?

- Looked at the team around you and got to know them a little bit better
- Completed some self-reflection
- Considered what stage your team is at on the Tuckman Team Development Model
- Perhaps given people within your team new / adapted roles and responsibilities
- You have had a long hard look at the culture of your organisation and where necessary made appropriate changes ensuring that you have 'buy in' from people of influence and people that you trust. This is a journey that never stops and you have to keep on top of all the time.

SETTING GOALS

So, be clear on what your long term goals are and be SMART in setting your short term goals



S Be very clear on what you wish to achieve

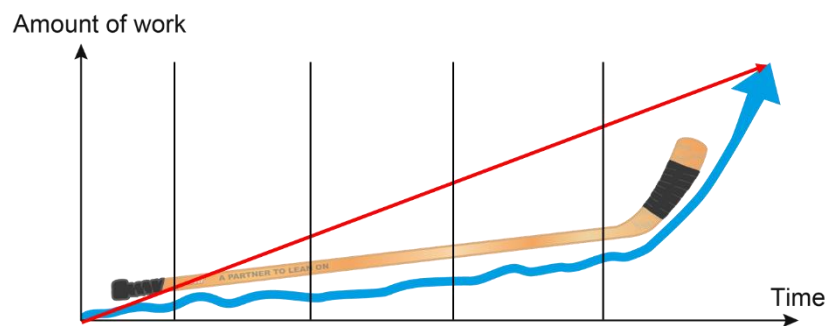
M Make sure goals are trackable

A Challenging yes but needs to be achievable

R Does it make sense and dovetail into the bigger picture

T State when you will complete it

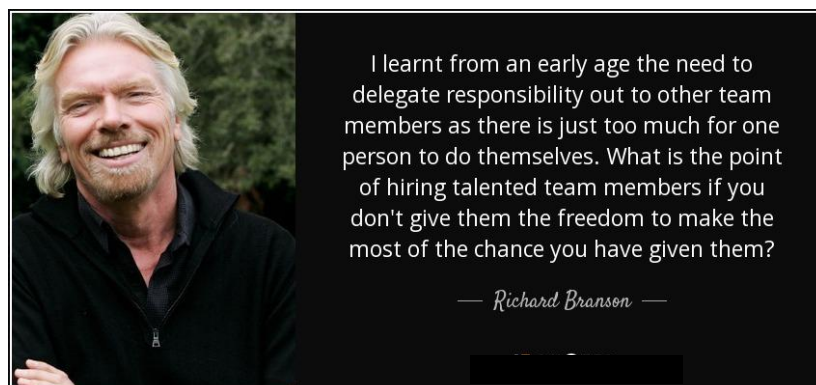
So...make life easier for yourself and others and set SMART short-term goals avoiding the stress and maintaining the motivation of your team



EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

As the leader, like it or not, you are not going to be able to do everything (effectively) all of the time. To this end it is really important that, when appropriate, you delegate jobs to your committee / wider team.

First, let's be clear what delegation is...it is getting somebody to do something on your behalf so despite you delegating responsibility YOU are still accountable for the job in hand if it were to go wrong!



Here are a few tips on delegating effectively Zidle, M (2011) Free Management Library Blog
If you even only do just 3 or 4 of these it will make a real difference!

Delegate early. Make an effort to delegate the task early to avoid unnecessary pressure. This allows the person to better plan the task.

Select the right person. Ensure that the person has the time to take on the responsibility. Assess the skills and capabilities of your team and assign the task to the most appropriate person. Make sure the person has the training and resources to succeed.

Communicate the rationale and benefit. Identify the reason for the task and how it will contribute to the goals of what you are looking to achieve as a team. Also, point out how the delegated task could benefit the person. For example, develop a specific skill. that may put them in a position to take on a greater role in future.

Delegate the entire task to one person. This gives the person the responsibility, increases their motivation and avoids ambiguity in accountability. Otherwise, different people will have different ideas about who does what when.

Set clear goals and expectations. Be clear and specific on what is expected. Give information on what, why, when, who and where. Leave the “how” to them. Confirm and verify task goals and expectations.

Delegate responsibility and authority. Ensure that the person is given the relevant responsibility and authority to complete the task. Let them complete the task in the manner they choose, as long as the results are what you specified. Be willing to accept ideas from the person on task fulfilment.

Provide support, guidance and instructions. Point the person to the resources they may need to complete the task or project. That could be people they need to coordinate with or crucial information. Be willing to be a resource yourself.

Take personal interest in the progress of delegated task. Request to be updated on the progress of the task, provide assistance when necessary. Be careful not to be intrusive; giving the perception that you do not trust the person. Keep communication lines open, regular meetings on large tasks can provide this ongoing feedback.

If you're not satisfied with the progress, don't take the project back immediately. Rather, continue to work with the person and ensure they understand the project to be their responsibility. Give advice on ways to improve. This ensures accountability and dependability.

Evaluate and recognise performance. Evaluate results more than methods. Analyse cause of insufficient performance for improvements and recognise successes as soon as possible

HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN THE MOTIVATION OF THOSE AROUND YOU?

Leadership is not easy at the best of times – but is made increasingly harder when things do not perhaps go to plan and you start to lose or not achieve what you set out to do. One of the first things to go is the motivation of your team.

Here are a few thoughts for you to consider when needing to motivate your team. The key is selecting the right course of action for the right situation.

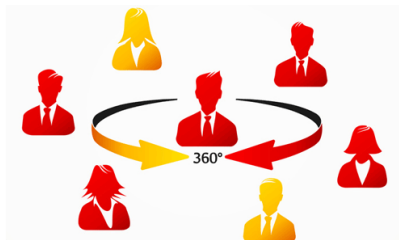
- With your SMART short-term goals – celebrate the small wins.
- Avoid the mundane – change things and do not fall into the trap of ‘we have always done it this way’. This is not to be confused with changing things for the sake of changing them!
- Appeal to people’s emotions. Fear focusses people attention for a short period of time BUT if used often is a de-motivator. People are also motivated by positive emotions such as excitement, pride, a sense of belonging, and the thrill of achievement.
- Ensure the load is being spread across the team effectively. Someone may be de-motivated as they feel they are doing too much – and this could be the case.
- Never underestimate the impact of empowerment and with this trusting your team to get on with the job in hand.
- Finally, as ever, be prepared to get your hands dirty.

**DON'T
BE AFRAID
TO FAIL.**

**BE AFRAID
NOT
TO TRY.**

HOW AM I DOING?

In this module we have covered off a lot of material but none of it is ground-breaking or complicated. What will be important from your perspective, if you have implemented a few new things with your committee and the wider team, is to



get appropriate feedback from people as to how you are getting on. The simplest and most effective way to do this is conduct what is known as a 360 degree feedback.

This is a process where your peers on the committee as well as club members (and other appropriate stakeholders) evaluate you. You receive an analysis of how you perceive yourself and how others perceive you