

## **Team excellence and collaborative team leader reaction paper**

The Team Excellence and Collaborative Team Leader Questionnaire designed as diagnostic tools to help teams sort through the complex problems confronting them and to pinpoint areas for action taking. These questions are taken from the two instruments developed by LaFasto and Larson. The first seven questions come from the Team Excellence Survey, developed by LaFasto and Larson in 1987 to measure a team's health in terms of the criteria of team excellence (goal, structure, team members, commitment, climate, standards, and external support). Leadership is measured by the next six questions, taken from the Collaborative Team Leader Survey developed by LaFasto and Larson in 1996. These six questions address goal focusing, ensuring a collaborative climate, building confidence, demonstrating know-how, setting priorities, and managing performance. All of these team and leadership factors have been found to relate to team effectiveness (Northouse, 2012).

The first question is about the justification of the formation of the team and whether the team has a clear, elevating goal. It's imperative that every team has a clearly defined goal or a purpose to serve. The goal or purpose must be based on a need. The high score on this question indicates that my team feels that there is a clearly defined goal that needs to be achieved. Each team member must know what goals we have set in order to complete the project at a high level. The team members should feel that the goal is compelling enough that each member can derive a worthwhile sense of identity from it (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). An elevating goal means that each member of our team knows that the goal is challenging and that it will allow us to learn how to work well with a team. The second question of the survey asked if our team has a result-driven structure for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback. We have structured our team so that we can get the results we want as efficiently as possible. The design

of team is influenced more by the need for results rather than other issues (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). The third question asks us if our team has competent team members who possess essential skills and abilities to accomplish the team's objectives. Our team has scored in the high range (4) which means our team members have the essential skills and abilities that are necessary to help the team achieve the goal(s). The high score in our team's unified commitment in question four means that each of our team members has a unified commitment to achieving our team goal first before achieving any individual objective. By working together every team should develop a sense of 'team spirit'. Personal success could be achieved through accomplishing the team's goals and objectives (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). The high score in question five reflects our team's collaborative environment. Trust and collaboration go hand-in-hand, and they embody the very essence of what teamwork is all about. Trust allows team members to remain focused on the problems that are important rather than focusing on relationship issues that stem from distrust. Trust also facilitates team members compensating for other members and picking up their slack because they know they will be treated in a similar manner (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). The high score in question six means that our team has set high standards of excellence to improve performance. For an effective team, setting the bar high is imperative for a team's success. If standards are set too low, then the team will never have to strive to achieve goals; which will indicate that the team is not high performing. Teams are most likely to have high standards when the same can be said about the individuals that make up the team (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). We received high score for getting external support and recognition for question seven. External support and recognition is the idea that the team is given the resources that it needs to succeed and that the team is supported and recognized by outside influences that are

capable of contributing to the team's success. The external support and recognition factor seems to be more an effect of team success than a cause of it.

I believe that an effective team leader should be a good communicator. He or she should explain the team's goal to its members during the team formation. Furthermore the leader should keep the team members updated on any changes to the goal as well as why the changes were made. Doing this is being focused on the goal and this is an area where my team members gave me a score of 4 on the questionnaire.

My team members gave me a score of 4 on ensuring a collaborative climate. I believe that this is an accurate score as I try to create an environment at work where people feel comfortable talking about the team's progress and any potential problems or issues that could affect the team's success. I was given a 4 in creating confidence by my team members. I agree with this assessment because I believe it is important to support and encourage my team so that they grow in confidence in their abilities. My team members gave me a 4 for demonstrating technical know-how. I feel this is fitting because I try to keep abreast of the latest technological advancements so that I can better address any technical issues that may arise. As the leader I always make the team's goal is our first priority. Because teams are most likely to fail when they allow other issues or problems to override the goal that is most important (Larson & LaFasto, 1989), I agree with the score of 4 that was given by my teammates for question 12 for setting priority. For question 13, my teammates gave me a 3. I agree with this score because I sometimes struggle with confrontation. I try to keep my team member's confidence at a high level, so I feel I need to work on being able to point out areas that need improvement while at the same time, helping them to remain confident in their abilities.

In conclusion, when comparing answers with my teammates, our numbers across the board were high, indicating strength of leadership. Upon reflection, most of the questionnaires thus far have been in the high range. This makes me wonder how accurate these types of tests are, when teammates don't have the option of anonymous answers, biases can be more common. But if these answers are accurate, then the high overall scores would indicate that both myself and my teammates believe we have a strong team with an effective leadership system in place.

## **Addendum:**

### **Authentic-Leadership Self-Assessment Questionnaire**

Several studies have identified four major components of authentic leadership: self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing and relational transparency. Authentic leadership is influenced by a leader's optimism, moral reasoning & critical life events. Authentic leadership self-assessment questionnaire contains items about different dimensions of authentic leadership (Northouse, 2012).

Authentic-leadership theory helps us to discover an effective leader and tells us how to become an authentic and moral leader. Authentic-leadership develops leader overtime instead of a focusing on a fixed trait. However authentic-leadership should be used carefully as the theory has not yet been experimented enough. The moral component of authentic-leadership is not completely explained (Northouse, 2012).

After finishing the questionnaire I have scored an 18 for self-awareness, 17 for internalized moral perspective, 18 for balanced processing and 19 on relational transparency. After analyzing these scores I can categorize myself as an effective leader.

## References

LaFasto, M. J., Frank & Larson, E., Carl. (1989). *What Must Go Right/ What Can Go Wrong*. Newbury Park, CA

Northouse, Peter G. (2012-02-02). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (p. 281). SAGE Publications.