

Great teams have great role players

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Have you ever wondered why some teams excel while others, with basically the same talent and resources, struggle? Are you having trouble getting maximum participation from members of a team that you lead? Are team members willing participants or were they told or directed to be on the team? How was the team selected? Who selected each member?

Ideally, it would be nice if you could select your own team members, establishing a role for each one of them, but unfortunately in many instances it is a person with higher authority who deals you your hand. Regardless how your team is assembled, you can (and should) take charge to establish a framework for cooperation and collaboration.

Different roles are necessary in order to maximize participation and effectiveness. It's sort of like a football team. When a coach sends the offense out on the field, the eleven players participating in the play won't all be wide receivers. A quarterback, linemen, and running backs will also be part of

the mix. Each player has a specific role in regards to passing, blocking, running, and catching in order for plays to be effective--you can't have players who can only catch.

When putting together a team, look for participants who can fulfill the following roles:

1) *Facilitator*: This person knows how to get the job done and is capable of guiding others in accomplishing the overall objective. Organization and delegation skills are his or her strengths.

2) *Cheerleader*: This person is there to help boost morale and motivate others. A cheerleader will always try to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative.

3) *Devil's advocate*: This person can seem argumentative but really just wants to get to the heart of any assumptions or problems and find the best possible solution or outcome. If your idea can survive someone trying to poke holes in it, then it's probably a good idea. If someone actually can poke holes in it, then your idea obviously needs work.

4) *Muse*: The muse brings creative sparks to meetings and inspires others

to think outside the box. This person will bring plenty of ideas to the table, igniting some kind of reaction from team members.

5) *Counselor*: Wisdom comes from experience and this person comes with lots of it, using firsthand knowledge and observations to provide unique insight into solving problems or meeting objectives.

6) *Specialty experts*: Sometimes you need a team member(s) who can perform a specific skill-set for certain functions. For instance, if one of your team's objectives is to raise money, then you need someone skilled in the art of fundraising. Or maybe you need a talented marketer or salesperson.

Each of these roles can provide an important contribution to the group as a whole. Having a diverse group of personalities and skill-sets will give you the necessary psychological boost the team might need, as well as create strong links in the team cog. Teams assembled with great role players and a good leader will outperform teams thrown together with no rhyme or reason.

~ The End ~