



EffortlessHR May 2009
Employer's Advantage Newsletter



For Your Information - Building a Team – How to ACE it

There are many types of teams – there are sport teams, debate teams, dance teams, teams of horses, and there are of course, business teams. There are even more types of teams, which you could probably list if you wanted. Teams can be good, bad, so-so, or great.

If you look at just these few listed here, what do they have in common and what makes a great team? All teams are comprised of more than one person, and let's face it when you get more than one person in the same room, the dynamics change. The individual is no longer dealing with one set of ideas or policies, or need. The dynamics of a group of people brings into play different ideas, comments, and thoughts. The issue becomes – “how to develop and build a great team”.

In looking at teams and what they have in common, it becomes fairly obvious there are three underlying principles in building a team and it is how you ACE it.

ACE stands for:

A – Accountability

C – Commitment

E – Empowerment

Accountability is the first ingredient in team building. When putting a team together, make sure you set goals and establish the purpose for the team. It becomes the “job description” for the team and helps the team members understand their functions within the team. Effective leaders lead their people and inspire them by creating an environment that motivates them to ask, “What else can I do?” over and over until the results are achieved.

The daily activities that comprise people's jobs must then be consistently in alignment with the targeted results. This can happen only if people understand the results they are supposed to achieve in the job they are to perform. Accountability is assuming responsibility for the actions and results that is the charge of your team.

Commitment, the second ingredient in team building is defined as the bond of an employee to the organization, the strength of which depends on the degree of employee involvement, employee loyalty, and belief in the values of the organization. In other words, the desire to do well, succeed, and make the team (the organization) look good is important to the team members, both individually and as a whole.

Empowerment is the third ingredient in building a team. Empowerment is the ability for management to allow employees to make decisions. Building decision-making teams is often one of the models used in employee empowerment, because it allows for managers and workers to contribute ideas toward directing the company. When employees feel as though they can choose and can make direct decisions, they usually feel better about themselves and their jobs and the organization. Employee's who are not constantly watched and criticized are more likely to consider work as a positive environment, rather than a negative one.

By working together for the good of the organization, teams can provide effective and efficient processes. Once the goal or purpose of the team has been reached, the team can be disbanded. The individuals can then be available for other teams to be established as needed. Team building is a fluid operation of the organization and changes with the needs and goals of the organization. In fact, some individuals may be participants in more than one team at a time. It all depends on the ability of the individuals involved and what they are tasked to accomplish.

If they establish their team structure and follow the guidelines, they will in fact, ACE it.

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FROM JIM SIRBASKU'S DESK

America's Best Companies and How They Do It

Organizations that are flourishing in this economy must have it easy, right? You know which ones they are. Their products and/or services are always in demand. If economic downturns have touched them, it is not apparent to the outside world. In fact, they are the envy of the rest of the world and have many people asking, "Can we start selling what *they* are selling?"

The most important question is not *what* are they selling, but *how* are they succeeding.

We have answers for you right here, taken from Profiles research. What we have learned from studying hundreds of America's best companies and conducting interviews with their top leaders is that productive people play a large part in making these organizations go. These companies make the job look easy because their management of people is part of a well-executed plan.

Our survey included more than 1,600 publicly traded U.S. companies and helped reveal the practices that enable them to out-produce their colleagues down the street or across the country. Here are five common traits of America's best organizations:

1. Their cultures are driven by performance and this performance is the result of an understanding shared by the company's top leaders. Leaders not only understand the current culture, but they know what the company will look and feel like, and how it will operate, next year and in 10 years. They work as a team and have the skills, tools and experience to bring in only the people who will best fit their culture. They have the courage to reject even highly qualified workers who are not a good match to the culture.

2. Top managers are highly effective. The managers of top U.S. companies are not only personally successful, but they also ensure that the individuals for whom they take responsibility are successful too. The effectiveness of these managers flows from natural talent, and it requires them to communicate, lead others, adapt quickly to change, skillfully build personal relationships, manage tasks with efficiency, take action that gets results, and develop others as well as themselves. Top companies know what it takes to select, train and retain top managers.

3. High-performance companies accomplish more work with fewer people because they know exactly what everyone does at work. This requires that managers have a clear view of their mission and that they never get off track on other tasks. Highly effective companies scrutinize each request for new positions. They expect more from every employee, asking them to arrive at work on time or early. Quitting time is dictated by the completion of the work, not by the hands of the clock. If someone is doing work that is ancillary to the most important tasks, effective leaders look at ways to streamline it.

As reluctant as leaders of these top organizations are to create new positions, they are eager to invest in technology and training if it means more efficient use of people and less job creation. Running lean and mean turns them into flexible work athletes who can easily handle special projects, seasonal high demands, unplanned worker absences, and other surprises. They are cross trained to do more than one job. When new people come on board, selection and training processes ensure they are productive from the start.

4. They achieve goals at the employee level, which translates to results at the organizational level. With objectives and goals clearly defined, and performance measures aligned to match, employees focus on what matters most. The employee selection process is designed to bring in employees who best fit the job, match the team, and are compatible with their managers. If lack of skill leads to reduced performance, the organization provides training to close the gap.

Companies whose employees are reaching their goals are more likely to be those that have invested in ergonomic furniture and other necessities that enhance employee comfort. They know that reducing injuries and increasing workplace comfort enhances worker satisfaction and productivity.

5. Top companies stress innovation. This doesn't mean they clamor for blockbuster ideas; they are more likely to encourage increased efficiency by fine-tuning products or processes. Small and continued growth is more realistic and less expensive than the occasional "big idea" that turns heads for a short time.

But just as important, these companies encourage the exchange of ideas among employees, managers and top leaders with an open communication style that empowers everyone. And they act quickly on good ideas by putting them into action because they know that inaction is counterproductive.

If you want to know more about top-performing organizations, including which companies are included in our survey, visit www.americasmostproductive.com. You can download the full report and review other important information about what keeps an organization on top. Perhaps some of the ideas you find there will set you on your own path to a clear vision of what is possible.

Jim Sirbasku, CEO
Profiles International

America's Most Productive Companies Are...

P	Particular and purposeful in hiring.
R	Rigorous in matching roles and responsibilities to goals.
O	Organized , with effective frontline managers.
D	Determined to recruit top performers.
U	Understanding of the importance of new technology.
C	Clear about goals.
T	Transparent in communicating with employees.
I	Innovative in improving and fine-tuning what they already do well.
V	Visionary about the future.
E	Energetic and encouraging .

Product Focus

Essentials for the Productivity Toolkit

Profiles' Productivity Toolkit is as important as your first aid kit. The scrapes and scratches of work life are easier to manage when you have these excellent assessments at the ready:

ProfileXT®

The PXT uses several scales to determine job fit, a key indicator of how well an employee will perform and how long he will stay on the job. PXT puts to work a Job Match Pattern that your organization develops by examining employees who are most and least successful in a specific position. Their scores provide benchmarks for new job candidates in the same position.

- Allows you to match the test taker's score on each scale item to a Job Match Pattern of scores for a specific position. The further the score falls outside of the pattern (high or low), the greater the negative impact on the Job Match Percent.
- Lets you find more top-performing candidates for a job.
- Helps you find more appropriate positions for those who are a poor fit for the job.

People who use the PXT as directed consistently report more productivity. And there are many ways to use it. For example, those who rely on PXT companywide have found it helpful for determining the best candidates for internal promotions.

Profiles Team Analysis™

The information in this analysis comes from data collected through the Profiles Performance Indicator™ and makes team building both challenging and rewarding. The team analysis system highlights the attributes of each team member, reveals group strengths and alerts the leader to potential problems. The information helps eliminate conflict, build cooperation, improve communication, and assure that the team achieves results.

Profiles Workforce Compatibility™

PWC's strength lies in two key areas: what it measures and the information provided by those measurements. PWC examines seven important characteristics that define the relationship between the employee and the manager: self-assurance, self-reliance, conformity, optimism, decisiveness, objectivity, and approach to learning.

Once those characteristics are measured and analyzed for both boss and worker, each receives a report. The manager's report provides a detailed description of the differences between the two on each characteristic, as well as a "best practice" working style for both the manager and the employee. A "Working Together" section gives ideas for managing the employee, and a "Next Steps" section offers detailed instructions on how to proceed. The employee's report shows the worker his or her similarities to—and differences from—the boss, and includes ideas for creating a smoother working relationship.

PWC helps both manager and employee communicate better, identify conflicts before they occur and successfully resolve problems.

CheckPoint 360°™

This useful assessment helps answer these questions:

- What strengths of this manager can I capitalize on?
- Which areas should my manager focus on developing?
- How can I provide guidance in this area?
- How do I effectively manage conflict?
- Do I have enough leaders in the pipeline to meet tomorrow's needs?

CheckPoint 360° employs 70 interview questions about specific management behaviors to give a complete picture of a manager's capabilities in areas such as communication, leadership, adaptability, relationship-building skills, task management, productivity, development of others, and self-development. Profiles' clients have used CheckPoint360° to help them grow effective leaders, build their talent bench, guide leaders through career transitions, develop top talent, and use leadership development to enact key changes in the business.

SkillBuilder™

The CheckPoint Skillbuilder Series helps the good get better and the best stay at the top by emphasizing key characteristics of listening, processing information, communicating effectively, building relationships, thinking creatively, working as a team, and many other areas.

Profiles Performance Indicator™

This assessment helps us better understand how to motivate each employee successfully. There is no time for conflicts that stand in the way of smooth workflow. PPI is the key to moving employees beyond disagreement so that they can focus on the real work.

Ready to put these assessments to work in your organization? Call us at (520) 546-3947.

STRATEGIES FOR WINNING

World-Class Salespeople* Spotting the 20% Who Sell the 80%

Who would have predicted that Vilfredo Pareto's famous 80-20 rule, formulated more than 100 years ago, would still apply to sales organizations today?

Research consistently demonstrates that more than half of those in professional sales lack the basic attributes required for success in this difficult profession—attributes that world-class salespeople possess naturally, or develop through training or single-minded focus. Of the remaining half, 50% have the potential for success in some form of sales but are currently selling the wrong products or services. That leaves about 25% to sell about 80% of the world's products and services.

Enlightening, isn't it?

That's why it's important for you to be keenly aware of the attributes of world-class salespeople. If you can recognize them, you can hire more of them! You can also tell when salespeople on your team need training and support, and you'll have a good idea of how to help them.

Measure your salespeople by this list of the ten attributes shared by world-class salespeople:

1. They Possess an Irrepressibly Positive Attitude All of their glasses are half full and every cloud they encounter has a silver lining. Knock them down nine times and they stand up the tenth. Without this iron optimism, a life in sales is a stressful and daunting existence. *Do your sales heroes live in a partly cloudy or partly sunny world?*

2. They Understand that Sales is a Numbers Game They don't lose their cool when a call goes badly, a deal goes south, or a first contact ends in refusal—they simply focus more clearly on the next call. They know their hit rate from past experience. They know how often they'll have to take No! before they get one Yes! *Do your salespeople know the value of their calls?*

3. They Live to Prospect World-class salespeople are prospecting all the time, especially when things are going well. They know that sales success depends directly upon continually filling their pipelines with well-qualified prospects. Prospecting is their obsession. They never stop. *Is prospecting 24/7/365 in your organization?*

4. They Are Totally Sales Driven These people live for the chase that results in a closed deal; they are internally motivated to go to whatever lengths they must to win. They seem to have unceasing energy. Once they decide to act, nothing slows or stops them until they have succeeded. *Are your salespeople in top gear?*

5. They are Competitive They don't like second place, and they're not good losers. Sure, they know they must act like good losers from time to time for social reasons. But deep down they need to win, and losses just strengthen their resolve. They can't be kept in second place for long. *Is your team too good at losing?*

6. They are Obsessed with the Next Step Everything they do is aimed at getting to the next step—the next level of commitment that will gradually instill in the customer the trust and confidence needed for a Yes! World-class salespeople think solely in terms of specifics such as where, when, how, and how much. Concepts like sometime, in the future, later, and whenever, are simply not in their vocabularies. The most successful salespeople at Profiles know that their success is inevitable, but they still drive to "accelerate the inevitable." *Are your salespeople driving their cases forward at least one step with every customer or prospect contact?*

7. They Know that They—and Their Products—are World Class Quiet confidence oozes from top salespeople, and unbridled enthusiasm for the company—and its products and services—gushes from them at every meeting. No one is left untouched by the passion they exhibit when they talk about themselves, their companies, or their products and services. They evangelize. *Have your people been to the top of the mountain?*

8. They Qualify Hard Before Investing Time and Energy World-class salespeople know that their time is too precious to waste on people who don't need what they provide. They understand their products and services inside and out, understand the needs they address, understand why their offerings are so much better than those of their competitors, and know enough about their prospective customers to rarely find themselves in front of someone who is not a genuine prospect. *Do your salespeople look before they leap?*

9. They Expect to Hear No! Once they know they are in front of the right people, these champions are confident that they have considered every possible No! situation that might arise, and they understand how to address these objections in a way that builds the confidence and trust of their prospective customers. *Are your front people always ready to handle key objections?*

10. They Sell Through Customer Knowledge Ask customers of world-class salespeople what sets them apart and they'll tell you, "They understand us." These people never stop trying to find out more information about their customers and their customers' needs. They know that the only way they can deliver sales is through partnership and problem solving. *How much do your salespeople know about their customers and prospects?*

You must look for these attributes when hiring salespeople. It sounds simple enough, but how do you objectively measure these attributes?

Effectively Spot the 20%

That's a challenge we faced when building our 800-strong worldwide sales force at Profiles, and we met it head on with the development of the Profiles Sales Indicator (PSI). The PSI analyzes your existing salespeople to produce a profile reflecting what it takes to be a successful salesperson in your organization. Using your prospective salesperson's responses to a 15-20-minute online survey, the PSI objectively analyzes the person for these attributes:

- Competitiveness
- Self-reliance
- Persistence
- Energy
- Sales Drive

By comparing these results with the profile of your most successful salespeople, PSI can predict on-the-job performance in these critical sales disciplines:

- Prospecting
- Closing Sales
- Call Reluctance
- Self-starting
- Teamwork
- Building and Maintaining Relationships
- Compensation Preference

All seven disciplines are essential to the success of the top-performing 20% of salespeople responsible for 80% of all sales.

The PSI's clear, readable reports can be used for selecting salespeople as well as for effectively managing and training existing salespeople so that they can reach the performance levels of your top performers. PSI worked so well for Profiles that we're certain it will work well for your organization, too. You can read more about it on the web at: www.profilesinternational.com.

Take action today to move all of your team into the 20% zone, and watch your sales soar.

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Announcement:

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), there were over 95,000 discrimination charge filings in fiscal 2008. With the economic downturn and the mass layoffs - how many do you think there will be in 2009? And, more importantly, are you a part of the statistics?

EffortlessHR and several other businesses, including Sandbrook Benefits Group, BASIC, and Karp & Weiss have put together an informational seminar entitled, "Ready for More Change?" - a look at what is

coming down the employment law highway and how it will impact businesses. If you are interested in hearing more about this seminar, please let us know. Currently we are offering it in the Tucson area, but would be willing to talk to you about providing the information for other locations. Give us a call at 520 546-3947 for more information.

