

Backgrounder

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team™ (Lencioni 2002)

TEAMWORK IS THE ULTIMATE ADVANTAGE

In 2002, Patrick Lencioni wrote a leadership fable called *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*.

Today, with over two million copies sold, the ideas from this book have had a profound impact on how we view--and improve--teamwork. In 2014, a new era in team development began, when the concepts from *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* were used to create a new framework for driving stronger teamwork across entire organizations: *The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team*™. Now, for the first time, a complete toolkit exists for teams, leaders, and HR professionals who want to get the greatest results possible from their teams.

To achieve the advantage, teams must:

1. **Trust One Another**

Members of great teams trust one another on a fundamental, emotional level, and they are comfortable being vulnerable with each other about their weaknesses, mistakes, fears, and behaviors. They get to a point at which they can be completely open with one another, without filters.

2. **Engage in Conflict Around Ideas**

Members of teams who trust one another are not afraid to engage in conflict around ideas that are key to the organization's success. They do not hesitate to disagree with, challenge, and question each other, all in the spirit of finding the best answers, discovering the truth, and making great decisions.

3. **Commit to Decisions**

Teams that engage in conflict around ideas gain commitment to decisions, even when some members of the team initially disagree. That is because they ensure that all opinions and ideas are put on the table and considered, giving confidence that no stone has been left unturned.

4. **Hold One Another Accountable**

Teams that gain commitment to decisions and standards of performance do not hesitate to hold one another accountable for adhering to those decisions and standards. What's more, they don't rely on the team leader as the primary source of accountability; they go directly to their peers.

5. **Focus on Achieving Collective Results**

Team members who trust one another, engage in conflict around ideas, gain commitment to decisions, and hold one another accountable are more likely to set aside their individual needs and agendas and focus on achieving collective results. They do not give in to the temptation to place their departments, career aspirations, or status ahead of the collective results that define team success.

IMPROVE TEAMWORK...ACROSS ALL YOUR TEAMS!

When teams have a shared language around teamwork and when they dedicate time to understanding and cultivating these behaviors, amazing things happen. That's because these behaviors – or more precisely the lack of these behaviors – is exactly what inhibits most teams from achieving their full potential...

When members of a team don't trust each other, they won't ask for help when they need it or say "I'm sorry" when they should.

When members of a team aren't comfortable with conflict, they will withhold their ideas for fear of being judged or they will just smile and nod instead of sharing their actual opinions.

When members of a team don't truly commit to decisions that are made, they will pretend they are onboard only to have project deadlines pass and work quality suffer.

When members of a team don't know how to effectively hold each other accountable, the team can spiral into negativity and resentment when work isn't completed as planned.

When members of a team care more about their own goals than the priorities of the group, collective results will take a back seat to personal agendas.

Do you want to help your teams – all your teams, at every level – perform to their full potential? Then act now to build a common language about the behaviors that create a truly cohesive team.

The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team™ is a trademark of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.