

Library Rebuilds Team by Developing Trust and Holding Each Other Accountable

INTRODUCTION

As an organizational development consultant, Tammy worked closely with leaders to identify soft skill needs of their departments and teams. This often led to long-term solutions that required extensive implementation periods. Her goal was to work alongside these teams, helping them create and sustain healthy team dynamics. Her role involved encouraging the growth of both leaders and teams by planning and facilitating team development opportunities. This example focuses on a team that underwent a challenging and prolonged process to get productive and healthy.

SITUATION

When a new leader assumed responsibility of one of the seven libraries at Vanderbilt University, they were faced with a significant challenge: how to rebuild a department that had been without direct leadership for several years. The team had become demoralized from lack of attention, direction, and encouragement. The leader encountered a mix of smart experts, hard workers, and a few underperformers who were negatively impacting team dynamics. The entire team needed motivation and a reason to trust both the leader and one other.

ACTIONS TAKEN

Following an in-depth needs assessment and ongoing consultation with the leader and the library staff, a series of programs and sessions were agreed upon to combine skill and team development. Tammy used Patrick Lencioni's *The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team* as the model for this work. TRUST is the foundation of the model, with additional building blocks that includes having healthy conflict, committing to team goals, holding each other accountable and focusing on results.

The series of sessions included:

TRUST & CONFLICT

- The DiSC Workplace assessment & report: This helped determine team members' communications style preferences and how they naturally handle conflict.
- The Emotional Bank Account: An examination of the team's behaviors and habits to determine whether they contributed to building or breaking trust.

COMMITMENT

- Developing Team Norms: the team created a set of agreements to increase team effectiveness and satisfaction.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Creating a Culture of Accountability: Supporting the team agreements developed in previous sessions, the team worked together to define how they would hold each other accountable for their commitments. This included approaches for feedback, structuring meeting agendas, and fostering behaviors that ensured clarity and following work agreements.

RESULTS

Through time and lots of effort, the leader successfully built a healthy team. While Tammy conducted team development sessions, the leader focused on managing performance building a solid, cohesive team that worked hard and trusted one another. Team members committed to the team plan and agreed to hold each other accountable resulting in increased satisfaction and effectiveness as they served the students and faculty.

The success story of this Vanderbilt University team demonstrates the transformative power of prioritizing trust, accountability, and teamwork. By investing in training sessions, establishing team agreements, and fostering a culture of respect and support, the team experienced remarkable improvements in their teamwork and service to the students and faculty.

LET'S TALK!

If you're interested in implementing a similar approach with your team, Key Learning & Development offers a free consultation to discuss your needs. Contact Tammy today to schedule a call.