

Unit 15: Developing Successful Business Teams

Unit code: D/602/1466

QCF Level 5: BTEC Professional

Credit value: 5

Guided learning hours: 30

Unit aim

This unit provides the learner with an understanding of the factors needed to create successful business teams and enables them to develop skills for effective management and participation in successful business teams.

Unit introduction

Many organisations now focus on teams as a key element in their organisational structure. However, successful teams do not happen as a matter of chance. They have to be planned and supported if they are to become successful. Only then will they be able to work effectively as a team and meet their objectives.

Planning to establish a successful business team requires an understanding of team dynamics and the importance of leading and developing of a team. Team dynamics are concerned with how teams evolve and the processes that determine whether the team is successful or not. For example, team member satisfaction will be derived not only from the achievement of tasks but also from the quality of team relationships and the more social aspects of teamwork.

Building and maintaining a successful business team involves fostering constructive relationships between team members. This requires a commitment to open communication throughout the team. Maintaining levels of motivation in all team members is a crucial aspect of successful business teams. Signs of conflict in a team need to be resolved quickly as they can affect the stability and purpose of the team.

Developing individual team members includes assigning personal goals that suit the strengths and skills of the individual, and ensuring that each member feels that their contribution to the team's overall task is valued. Team goals should be the foundation for developing successful business teams. Goals should be SMART and provide a clear, measurable framework whilst being flexible and adaptable in the light of changing circumstances. Goals need to provide scope for individual and team development whilst enabling organisational tasks to be achieved. Successful business teams monitor their activities, reflect on how they work and look for ways of improving their performance.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

On completion of this unit a learner should:

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Understand the features of successful business teams	1.1 describe the characteristics of successful business teams 1.2 assess the importance of team roles in successful business teams 1.3 analyse the value of using theoretical models when building successful business teams
2 Be able to support team development	2.1 explain the stages of team development 2.2 plan how to motivate team members to achieve given objectives 2.3 encourage open communication between team members to support team development 2.4 evaluate ways of resolving conflict between team members
3 Be able to monitor the performance of teams	3.1 monitor the performance of a team against given objectives 3.2 recommend how to improve performance against given objectives

Unit content

1 Understand the features of successful business teams

Characteristics of successful business teams: definition of team; types of team eg functional, project, matrix, contract, self-managed team; difference between a group and a team; characteristics of successful business teams eg participative leadership, loyalty, trust, open communication, shared goals and objectives, shared responsibility, shared vision, common purpose, cooperation between members, motivation

Team roles in successful business teams: Belbin's team role theory; differences between team roles; Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI); strengths and weaknesses; contribution of team roles to the team; balanced teams

Theoretical models: behavioural models eg Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid, McGregor's theory X and Y model; contingency/situational models eg Adair's Action Centred Leadership model, Tannenbaum and Schmidt's Leadership Continuum, Fielder's contingency model; Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership model; Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership (Bennis, Bass)

2 Be able to support team development

Stages of team development: models of developmental stages eg Tuckman (forming, norming, storming, performing), Leigh and Maynard's starting, sorting, stabilising, succeeding, stopping, Honey's chaotic, formal and skilful; team leader role in facilitating development at each stage; team building eg team development activities, training, mentoring

Motivating team members to achieve given objectives: importance of motivation; importance of negotiation and bargaining skills for motivation; theories of motivation eg McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Vroom's Expectancy theory, Alderfer's ERG theory, Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory; factors that motivate people to perform eg praise, encouragement, recognition, celebration of achievement, clear goals, clear feedback, learning, development

Open communication and team development: participative decision making; meetings; team briefings; communication channels; thought-showers/buzz groups; groupthink; building inter- and intra-team and organisational relationships; communication through goals; communication through knowledge; access to information; data sharing; win-win theory; synergy

Ways of resolving conflict: causes of conflict eg dissatisfaction with workload, perceived lack of fairness, insufficient sharing of information, perceived lack of appreciation, personal grievances against other team members; conflict resolution methods eg communication channels, open communication- importance of addressing issues for the whole team, gathering information, sharing information, listening skills, thought-showers/buzz groups, collaboration, consensus, agreeing the problem, keeping people and problems separate, building trust

3 Be able to monitor the performance of teams

Monitoring the performance of the team against given objectives: setting SMART objectives; principle of setting quantified standards; comparison of performance with standards; quantity-based measures (level of production, number of customer enquiries processed, error rate, quantity of scrap, customer feedback, speed of response); qualitative measures (views, opinions, performance data, sampling, timing, proportion of work checked); methods of collecting and interpreting data on performance (work schedules, progress review meetings, milestones, regular reporting systems); importance of contingency plans; making adjustments to plans; importance of continuous feedback relating to objectives (listening, observing, asking others); dealing with problems; taking corrective action, importance of fairness and openness

Improving performance against given objectives: measuring performance, evaluating performance against SMART objectives, setting and re-setting SMART objectives; benchmarks; targets; corrective action; follow-up actions; model of good practice (Leigh and Maynard's Fun, Open, Regular, Challenging and Energising); involvement of team in reviewing performance; good practice in giving feedback (Leigh and Maynard's Effective Feedback); importance of celebrating achievements; thought-shower/buzz group techniques, team-building activities, training and development

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit introduces learners to the process of planning and developing successful business teams. Learners will benefit from the opportunity to complement tutor input with discussions on areas such as group dynamics and supporting winning teams. Topical case studies could be a useful way of illustrating the processes involved in developing successful business teams.

For learning outcome 1, learners could explore the characteristics of successful business teams. It is important that learners recognise the distinction between teams and successful teams. A useful starting point could be to draw on learners' experiences from their workplaces and social lives. This will provide scope for discussion and for drawing out the characteristics of a successful team. Tutor input is required on team role theories such as Belbin. Learners could discuss examples of teams which have not worked effectively because of the poor mix of roles. Further tutor input is required on the value of using theoretical models when building successful teams. This is a fruitful area for discussion and learners could apply the theories to their own experiences.

For learning outcome 2, learners need to understand that simply putting a team together in the workplace does not guarantee that it will be successful. Tutors can use topical examples to illustrate the different development stages teams go through. All learners will have some ideas about what motivates them in the workplace. A useful starting point is to generate discussion on motivation and to draw on learner experiences and opinions. This will lead into tutor input that could be required to cover the theories of motivation. Initial discussions around learner experiences will be helpful for the tutor in putting the theories into context for the them.

There are always topical examples of conflict occurring in the workplace. This may be manifested in a number of ways, for example poor working practices, dissent, disagreements and industrial disputes. Tutors could use these examples to generate discussion on ways of resolving conflict between team members. This could also provide opportunities to introduce the value of open communications in the workplace.

For learning outcome 3, a useful starting point is a discussion on how learner performance is monitored in their place of work. They may be monitored as individuals or they may have experienced being monitored as part of a team. The discussions could provide a platform for the tutor to introduce the importance of SMART objectives and the variety of qualitative and quantitative measures used to monitor performance in the workplace. Examples of good practice of improving team performance can be found on the internet and in newspapers and journals. This is a good way of generating discussion and getting learners to think about how they would improve the performance of their own teams.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to unit and programme of assignments
Tutor input – characteristics of successful business teams Discussion
Tutor input – Belbin’s team roles theory Group exercises
Tutor input – successful business teams: theoretical models Discussion
Assignment 1: Developing a Model for Building a Successful Business Team
Tutor input and discussion – stages of team development
Tutor input – motivation theories and practice Case studies and discussion
Tutor input – communication in teams Examples and discussion
Tutor input – causes of conflict in teams, resolving conflict Case studies, discussions
Assignment 2: Providing Support for Team Development
Research activities
Tutor input – monitoring the performance of teams Examples and discussion
Tutor input – improving the performance of teams Examples and discussion
Assignment 3: Monitoring Team Performance
Research activities
Review of unit and programme of assignments

Assessment

For AC1.1, learners need to describe the characteristics of a successful business team. Description should be more than just a list and learners will be expected to show that they understand the importance of the characteristics of successful business teams by giving reasons or examples to support their descriptions.

For AC1.2, learners need to link theory and practice in their assessment of the importance of team roles in successful business teams. They should use theories such as Belbin's team role theory to explain the roles needed in a balanced team, linking it to their assessment.

For AC1.3, learners need to analyse the value of using theoretical models when building successful business teams. In their analysis, they should be able to categorise the models in an appropriate manner, discuss the similarities and differences between them and draw out the strengths and weaknesses.

For AC2.1, learners need to explain the stages of team development. They will need to show that they understand the importance of development and how successful business teams have gone through the developmental stages.

For AC2.2, learners need to plan how to motivate team members to achieve given objectives, using examples of practical measures, whilst linking these ideas to the appropriate theories.

For AC2.3, learners need to encourage open communication between team members to support team development. They need to look at ways that are appropriate in the context of the teams that they are endeavouring to support.

For AC2.4, learners need to evaluate ways of resolving conflict between team members.

For AC3.1 learners need to monitor the performance of a team against given objectives. Learners should use methods that are appropriate to the team(s) they are planning to monitor.

For AC3.2, the recommendations should naturally follow on from work completed for AC3.1. The recommendations should be realistic and appropriate to the performance of the team(s) they have monitored.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the criteria in the assessment grid. This is for guidance only and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Assessment criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
AC 1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Developing a Model for Building a Successful Business Team	The learner uses their own organisation or one they are familiar with and develops a model for building a successful business team.	Report
AC 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4	Providing Support for Team Development	The learner explores ways to provide support for team development.	Report
AC 3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Monitoring Team Performance	The learner explores ways of monitoring the performance of a team.	Report

Essential resources

There are no essential resources required for this unit.

Indicative resource materials**Textbooks**

Boynton A and Fischer B – *Virtuoso Teams: The Extraordinary Stories of Extraordinary Teams* (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2008) ISBN 0273721836

Clutterbuck D – *Coaching the Team at Work* (Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2007) ISBN 1904838081

Clutterbuck D and Megginson D – *Further Techniques for Coaching and Mentoring* (Butterworth-Heinemann, 2009) ISBN 1856174999

Dufrene D and Lehman C – *Building High-Performance Teams, 4th Edition* (South-Western, Division of Thomson Learning, 2010) ISBN 0324782195

Kehoe D – *Developing High Performance Teams* (McGraw-Hill Professional, 2008) ISBN 0070137900

Leigh A and Maynard M – *Leading Your Team: How to Involve and Inspire Teams, 2nd Edition* (Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2002) ISBN 1857883047

Martin Hays J – *Building High-performance Teams: A Practitioner's Guide* (Argos Press, 2004) ISBN 098023859

McCreary J S – *Creating the 'I' in Team: Building Superior Teams with Intelligence, Initiative and Integrity* (Sunstone Press, 2007) ISBN 0865345384

Parker B – *The Pit Crew Challenge: Winning Customers Through Teaming* (Ecw Press, 2007) ISBN 0978222156

Runde C and Flanagan T A – *Building Conflict Confident Teams* (Jossey-Bass, 2008) ISBN 0470189479

Vogt J W – *Recharge your Team: The Grounded Visioning Approach* (Praeger Publishers Inc, 2008) ISBN 0313355428

Journals

Leader to Leader (Leader to Leader Institute)

Management Today (Haymarket Business Media)

People Management (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

Professional Manager (Chartered Management Institute)

Websites

en.wikipedia.org	Overview of motivation theories and further links
www.belbin.com	Belbin's team roles theory
www.businessknowhow.com	12 tips for winning teams
www.businesstown.com	Short article on building winning teams
www.leadership-studies.com	Overview of leadership theories and models
www.managementhelp.org	Articles and further links on building successful business teams