

Building on a **BELBIN**[®] Base

Why Teams?

In an increasingly complex and information rich world, the value of effective collaboration is growing in recognition. More and more work is being undertaken by teams rather than by individuals. Research consistently suggests that teams have the ability to outperform individuals within organisations. This is especially the case when the skills, judgements and experiences of team members are diverse yet complementary. This diversity enables teams to respond effectively to most challenges thrown their way.

Teams Enable:

- Recognition and use of each person's unique contribution
- Efficient assignment of work drawing on members' strengths and expertise
- Engagement and satisfaction that meets the social needs of individuals and the group
- Most effective 'data collection' in rapidly changing situations
- Quality decision making through the 'wisdom of teams'

Effective teamwork increases productivity, encourages engagement, spurs innovation and builds morale.

However...

While all teams are groups of individuals, not all groups of individuals are teams.

Simply putting together a number of people and expecting them to work together as a team is not enough.

Effective teamwork results when all its members work as teamplayers – all cooperating and working towards a common goal.

'A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.'

– Katzenbach & Smith

Team Architecture

What differentiates successful teams from those that fail?

High performance teams know the techniques of teamwork – the importance of:

- Setting the Team Goal
- Team Knowledge (Functional and Behavioural)
- Guiding Principles
- Leadership Focus
- Regular Performance Review
- Measurable Performance
- Positive and Productive Team Culture

‘An effective and high performing team is clear on what it is working to achieve – and efficient in how it goes about doing this.’

How do Belbin Team Roles help?

The Belbin model is a well researched behaviour based approach that lays the foundations for sustainable team based management systems.

The fundamental premises of Team Roles theory are that team performance depends on the balance of contributions individuals make – and that different people make different contributions:

- When a team has this knowledge it can draw fully on all the talents its individuals members bring to the team task.
- Equipping team members with the knowledge of where each person fits releases the team energy into the task – rather than expending it on working out how to get on with each other.
- The team can be greater than the sum of its parts – it can achieve synergy. No one can be expected to be good at everything. That is why we need each other. Diversity in a team spells strength.

Belbin’s research recognised behaviour styles that individuals display when working in group or team situations – the nine Team Roles.

Successful teamwork – ‘Building on a Belbin Base’