

The **BELBIN**[®] Team Architect

‘Building on a Belbin Base’

‘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

Sustainable teamwork rarely ‘just happens’ – though most of us will remember some surprising team experiences. Often rising out of crisis situations, these are frequently recalled as short spells where everyone pulled together to deliver exactly what the situation demanded. Achieving such high performance over long periods is another story and the product of deliberate and systematic team learning – building the essential know-how and skills.

- **The Team Goal**

The team will have spent time developing a clear and robust team goal, one that all members support and use as a guide in their day-to-day work decisions. It encompasses not just the organisation’s vision and the team’s purpose but also the aspirations of each member.

- **Team Knowledge**

All team members will know what skills and talents each person brings to the team – both functional professional skills and Team Role behavioural styles.

- **Guiding Principles**

The team will have established a set of guiding principles (ground rules/protocols) agreeing how best its members can work together. Lifting behaviour expectations from the ‘assumed’ to the ‘considered and agreed’.

- **Leadership Focus**

There will be a strong leadership focus within the team – where leadership is viewed as a process rather than a position. A skilful team will move the responsibility around to make best use of its talent pool.

- **Measurable Performance**

The team has agreed and relevant performance measures. An approach focusing the team on continuous improvement – on learning from its own experiences about how to do things better.

- **Regular Performance Review**

The team will regularly review its own performance – complementing the regular ‘work in progress’ meeting with a ‘how are we going?’ or process aspects of the team’s performance.

- **Assignment of Work**

There is an effective assignment of work within the team. This draws on individuals existing skills and talents and their potential to grow. There are agreed expectations of what has to be delivered and there is room for initiative in how the work will be undertaken.

- **Positive and Productive Team Culture**

There will be a sense of energy and focus in the team. A high performance team knows what is doing and enjoys the process.

- **Success Rate**

The team has a high success rate – more often than not it achieves what it sets out to do. Initially focuses on immediate and tangible outcomes to build momentum.

- **Recognition and Reward**

Top individual and team performance is recognised and rewarded - successes are celebrated. This recognition and reward focuses on behaviours critical to team performance.