



Teams and Team Characteristics

What do we mean by “team”? The word “team” applies to *any group working together toward a common goal*.

In Scouting, the team could be the group going on a particular outing, the group planning an activity, the troop leadership team or the entire troop. Just because we call something a “team” does not mean that the group functions effectively *as a team*. What makes a “team” of people stronger or different than simply a “group” of people?

A team works toward a common goal. All members work together for a common purpose and for the betterment or advancement of each member. A high-performing team works well, energizes and supports all of the team members, and produces high quality results.

What are some characteristics of effective teams?

Common Purpose

- A team is a group of interdependent people who cooperate to achieve exceptional results
- They have common purpose for which they are all accountable.
- The goal or goals must be clear to all members
- Members feel a common purpose; their personal goals are linked to the team goals
- It's a win/win

Interdependence

- A team cannot be successful unless all members of the team are truly successful and committed in their fulfilling their roles

Appropriate Roles, Structure, and Process

- People know their roles and boundaries and their value to the team
- Decisions are agreed upon and supported
- Feedback is timely and useful
- Communications channels are open

Leadership and Competence

- Members have the necessary technical and interpersonal skills to accomplish their tasks and work together
- The team has the leadership and support it needs to be successful



Team Climate

- The team environment is open and collaborative
- People show respect and trust for one another, and they value different opinions
- There is a genuine interest in gaining agreement

Performance Standards

- The team sets high standards and monitors itself for continuous improvement
- Team members critique their own performance and decisions against a high set of standards

Clarity and Understanding of Boundaries

- The team has a clear understanding of its task and the limits of scope for accomplishing the task
- The goals of the team and the methods to be used are understood by all
- All members of the team know, understand and are committed to the collective Vision for the success of the entire group