

Inspiring Project Buy-In

Aim

This exercise would be a good introduction to a session, module or workshop on managing a project team where the emphasis is on people management as opposed to the project management process or planning techniques. Allow 30 minutes for completion.

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to ...

- share good practice on issues such as recruiting, building and inspiring the project team

Suggested Resources

- copy of task sheet per participant
- pens
- flipcharts

What to Do (15 minutes)

Before you introduce the exercise, deliver a brief presentation to put it in context.

Tuckman, a psychology professor, first published his model of team development in 1965.[1] He suggested that all teams experience a relatively unproductive initial stage before becoming a self-reliant unit.

Tuckman noted that there are three issues which determine how well teams perform:

1. content – what the team does
2. process – how the team works towards its objectives
3. feelings – how team members relate to one another

Tuckman found that most teams concentrate almost exclusively on content and virtually ignore process and feeling; unless the issues of processes and feelings have been satisfactorily addressed, it is unlikely that the team will reach the most productive final stage.

Explain that you will divide the participants into three or four groups. Ask participants to self-select one of the following issues they would like to explore in detail with their peers:

- recruiting your project team so the project has the best chance of success
- building your project team so that they relate well to one another and work

together effectively

- inspiring your project team so that they remain focused, motivated and positive throughout the project life cycle
- developing a virtual team – how might your approach to managing the project team differ in this context?

Ask each team to take 10 minutes in their group to brainstorm ideas for their chosen topic. Ask them to list them on a flipchart.

Review Activity (10 minutes)

Bring the groups back together and ask a volunteer from each group to briefly feed back their ideas.

Apply Learning (5 minutes)

To what extent do participants currently focus on people issues when managing projects? Is it a strength, or something they could improve on? Ask them to note down some actions for improvement.

List learning points on a flipchart, and run through them with participants. Get them to note these down for future reference.

Project Team-Building – Task Sheet

This exercise encourages you to share good practice on issues such as recruiting, building and inspiring a project team.

Task

1. Select one of the following issues you would like to explore in more detail with your peers:

- recruiting your project team so the project has the best chance of success
- building your project team so that they relate well to one another and work together effectively
- inspiring your project team so that they remain focused, motivated and positive throughout the project life cycle
- developing a virtual team – how might your approach to managing the project team differ in this context?

2. You have 10 minutes in your group to brainstorm ideas for your chosen topic. List them on a flipchart.

3. Be prepared to feed back briefly your ideas.

[1] B W Tuckman, 'Developmental Sequence in Small Groups', Psychological Bulletin, 63, 1965.