

SO SIGNING YOUR TEAM IS OUT BALANCE

High-performing teams can provide an undeniable advantage over the competition. However, most managers will tell you that although it is easy to put together a team with great potential, it rarely performs at its maximum capacity.

**The right mix of personalities
is critical to forming a team
with the**

**PROPER
BALANCE**

of psychological roles.

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WHAT IS A TEAM?

A team is three or more people who have a common goal, whose ability to achieve that goal is dependent on each other, who share common leadership, and who share success or failure.

People have two roles within a team: *functional* and *psychological*. Functional roles are defined by a person's position or title – chief executive, engineer, accountant, etc. Psychological roles are roles to which people naturally gravitate based on their personalities.

“ “ When individuals are formed into a team with a designated task, there is an awkward phase in which everyone is searching for how they fit in – their psychological role. ” ”

– Dave Winsborough
Partner, Winsborough Limited, New Zealand

There are five psychological roles to which people naturally gravitate: *results, relationships, process, innovation, and pragmatism.*

“ “ Psychological roles need to be balanced in two ways,” said Winsborough. “First, a team needs to have complimentary fit, which is to say it has enough diversity among its members to fill every psychological role. Second, it has to have enough individuals to provide a critical mass in each psychological role. Without those two levels of balance, teams tend to underperform in a few telltale ways. ” ”

1

Nobody, or everybody, seems to be in charge

In order to drive performance, teams need one or two individuals who gravitate toward a results role. These individuals typically seem warm and approachable, and in a team setting they naturally assume a managerial role. Results-oriented team members are necessary

to organize work, clarify roles, distribute tasks, and evaluate outcomes.

Too many results-oriented team members, however, can result in infighting and competition for leadership roles, which can be equally distracting.

“ Without someone to take charge and establish goals and timelines and hold individual members accountable to their commitments, teams tend to drift away from their goals over time. ”

– Ryan Ross
VP of Global Alliances, Hogan

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2

Nobody gets along

No matter how strong the individual members of your team, if they won't work together, it does little good. Relationships-oriented team members are important for building cohesion within the group.

Personally, relationships-oriented team members tend to be upbeat, gregarious, and outgoing.

“ Relationships-oriented team members are important not only because they maintain harmony within the group, but also because they tend to champion customers and stakeholders,” Ross said. “However, they can be overly focused on getting along rather than performance, so it's important to balance them with results-oriented members to keep the team moving forward.” ”

3

They aren't producing any big ideas

Large companies have trouble innovating – they tend to be risk averse, set in their ways, and hindered by bureaucracy and internal politics. Companies rely on small, nimble teams to drive promising ideas from conception to market, and teams rely on

innovative individuals to produce those ideas.

Team members who gravitate toward the innovation role have a talent for spotting trends and patterns, identifying problems, and generating creative solutions.

“ “ These are the big-picture thinkers,” Ross said. “They are great for anticipating problems and coming up with creative solutions to them. However, they also tend to have a problem with practicality. ” ”

4

Their ideas never get anywhere

A team's big ideas don't serve anyone if they never make it to market. To stay productive, organized, and on schedule, teams rely on people who naturally focus on process.

Team members who naturally focus on process are concerned with implementation, the details of execution, and the use of systems to complete tasks. They are reliable, organized, and conscientious about following rules and protocol.

“ Without enough people in the process role, teams lack sufficient self-discipline and good process,” Ross said. “However, with too many people in the process role, teams can become rigid and lack the tactical agility they need to overcome obstacles as they encounter them.” ”

5

Nobody plays the Devil's advocate

Every team needs a good pragmatist – a practical, somewhat hardheaded challenger of ideas and theories. They promote realistic approaches and aren't easily swayed by the need to preserve harmony or innovation for its own sake.

“ Without enough of these individuals, teams tend to spend a lot of time pursuing ideas that seem great at first, but prove impossible to implement,” Ross said. “Too many of these individuals, and the team becomes too critical and closed-minded to allow new ideas to develop.” ”

The right mix of personalities is the key to balancing a team's psychological roles and unlocking its potential. To learn more about finding the right balance of personalities for your team, check out our companion eBook, *The Truth About Teams.*

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