Creating Synergy

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Creating Synergy

Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the first paragraph of the paper.

From academia to corporations, the argument for revisiting synergy has been strengthened, making the term a common buzzword of the 21st century (Liedtka 45). On the other hand, what is not so common is achieving this state of high performance. According to skeptic Harold Greeneen, synergy is “a carcinogenic slice of baloney that serves no other purpose than to bring false hope to a capitalist America” (qtd. in Liedtka 45). However, at a time when there is an increase in business consolidations and complex technology, the need for synergy in work environments is all too vital, according to the sources cited in this paper. This research paper addresses the argument for synergy and its place in the team culture of America, specifically in the advertising industry and academia. This study applies the team effectiveness theory using the Team Performance Model (TPM) to instruct and evaluate teamwork within advertising agencies and academia. It is through the fundamental education and understanding of the team effectiveness theory and the Team Performance Model (TPM) that teams will be able to increase their team performance and achieve synergy.
Creating Synergy
By Mindae Kadous and Brianna Lipovsky

True synergy is the rarest thing in the world...it occurs when one entity that behaves in one way and another entity that behaves in another way merge into a third entity that starts to behave in an entirely different way. For the most part, the phenomenon is limited to chemical laboratories.

—Harold Greeneen, former chairman of ITT

(qtd. in Liedtka 45)

From academia to corporations, the argument for revisiting synergy has been strengthened, making the term a common buzzword of the 21st century (Liedtka 45). On the other hand, what is not so common is achieving this state of high performance. According to skeptic Harold Greeneen, synergy is “a carcinogenic slice of baloney that serves no other purpose than to bring false hope to a capitalist America” (qtd. in Liedtka 45). However, at a time when there is an increase in business consolidations and complex technology, the need for synergy in work environments is all too vital, according to the sources cited in this paper. This research paper addresses the argument for synergy and its place in the team culture of America, specifically in the advertising industry and academia. This study applies the team effectiveness theory using the Team Performance Model (TPM) to instruct and evaluate teamwork within advertising agencies and academia. It is through the fundamental education and understanding of the team effectiveness theory and the Team Performance Model (TPM) that teams will be able to increase their team performance and achieve synergy.

Synergy is defined as “the notion that cooperative interaction among acquired subsidiaries or merged parts of a corporation creates an enhanced combined effect” (Severin and Tankard 358). In other words, synergism is focusing a group’s efforts so $2 + 2 = 5$. In order to reach such success, teamwork is vital. Yet too many people are puzzled by the meaning, process, and value of teams. A basic definition of team is “a number of persons associated together in a work or activity” (MGMT: 302 handout). The word teamwork is defined as “a number of associates working together on a common activity, each doing a part, but all subordinating personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole” (MGMT: 302 handout). It is through teamwork that synergy can be accomplished.

In reference to the sources cited in this paper, there exists in work environments today, an increasing fragmentation of communication and the inability to work as a team. The failure of America’s corporate culture to holistically improve and maximize group success has long been a problem according to W. Edwards Deming. Deming, who died December 20, 1993, was a worldwide management consultant for more than 40 years. He is a published author of many books that address corporate management practices and the importance of building employee capability and customer satisfaction. Deming stressed the concept of continuous improvement and the significance of great leadership. As a teamwork consultant, he constantly sought to bring America up to speed with its competitor, Japan. At the time, the Japanese had succeeded in quality management and creating great synergy within and between their corporations, giving them the competitive edge. When asked how he would like to be remembered in the United States, Deming replied, “I probably won’t even be remembered, well, maybe as someone who spent his life trying to keep America from committing suicide” (qtd. in MGMT: 302 handout).

How then can corporate America keep from committing suicide? One way is through team building, which is a resourceful tool for supplying the skills needed to create success in any community or team. The team-building concept came to play in the 1960’s as a way to resolve the dilemma of ineffective teamwork. It can be used on the football field, in classrooms, and anytime a group of people collaborates. In business, Mike Blansfield created the underlying theory of team building years ago. His core concept is called the team effectiveness theory. The team effectiveness theory is defined as “the ability of a team to effectively collaborate on team issues and agendas in order to contribute to the success of the team and achieve high performance results” (Weisbord 38). The Team Performance Model (TPM) integrates this theory and helps teams to think of the full range of possible issues when collaborating. The TPM has seven main elements, each representing a set of concerns team members face as they work together.

The steps of the model are interdependent, and the progression from stage 1 to 7 is not chronological, but rather cyclical. These 7 steps are discussed in detail in the Collection and Analysis of Data section of this paper. Few group members, leaders, and managers have training or knowledge about these group dynamics. Due to this, teams constantly fail in achieving synergy.

Review of Literature

If you can get the best people in a harmonious environment, results will come. —Jay McNamara, chairman of McCann Erickson (qtd. in Dougherty 28)

As far as McNamara is concerned, ideas are an advertising agency’s reason for being. “The spawning of ideas,” said McNamara, “is greatly dependent on
teamwork and the proper environment” (qtd. in Dougherty 28). An advertising agency’s whole culture is organized around the process of creating. Their job is to create results, pitch these results to their clients, get their clients to see the results and hire them, and keep their clients by getting the job done right. How hard is it to create this synergy between advertising agencies and clients? Well, there are many factors that play into this success, both within the agency’s internal relationships and its external relationships. Internally, ad agencies deal with collaborating on producing a final product, while at the same time encouraging individualistic thought and behavior. Externally, ad agencies are faced with advertising differences between what they think is a great ad verses what their client thinks is a great ad. Keeping this relationship a flexible one, where the conservative nature of the client and the creative nature of the agency work in synergy together, can prove to be very difficult.

This challenge proves true according to a survey conducted for Salz Consulting by Thurm Marketing and Consulting Inc. in Princeton, NJ. The survey asked leaders at client companies and agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of their working relationships. According to the survey, the usual internal and external conflicts between clients and ad agencies have heightened due to the sluggish advertising economy. This slowdown has caused serious consequences such as lower-quality campaigns, less teamwork, and more focus on money. When asked to rate the quality of work from their agencies on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 highest, the mean rating from advertisers was 7.1, only a tenth of a point lower than 2000 (Elliot 6). Advertisers also responded that there was more tension in relationships with their agencies. This response rose 6 percent from 30 percent last year, while agencies responded that there was more tension in relationships with clients (Elliot 6). This response doubled to 54 percent from 27 percent in the 2000 survey (Elliot 6). However, there is a strong argument for the effectiveness of teamwork in the advertising industry. For instance, Nancy L. Salz, president of Nancy L. Salz Consulting, points out that “The percentage of agencies reporting more teamwork in relations with clients is at a survey high of 50 percent. This is important because those advertisers reporting more teamwork in their agency relationships rated their advertising 22 percent higher than those reporting less teamwork” (qtd. in Elliot 7).

It is clear from these results that teamwork, if done effectively, has successful outcomes. Teamwork brings synergy and high performance to the work place. This survey proved that teamwork could be a means of creating thriving relations between advertisers and agencies. Mark Hodes, managing director of OgilvyOne, Chicago, claims, “The client just wants simplicity in how they deal with their partners. If you build up barriers and create an agency within an agency, you will not succeed” (qtd. in Beardi 68).

Collaborating is not a simple process, though. It takes great leadership, individual effort, and flexibility to get the intended results according to Gregory Smith, C.E.O. of Jay Advertising in Rochester, NY. “Being in the business for as long as I have been, I’ve seen the highs and lows. No matter what though, it’s the people who articulate themselves, are flexible, and get along well with others that are still along side me today at Jay Advertising,” says Smith. “It’s really a shame, but I have seen great creatives fail because they could not work together” (Smith, personal interview).

At Warner-Lambert Corporation, one of the key elements to creating successful copy is teamwork. James Staffaroni, a team member of Warner-Lambert’s copy testing team notes, “We have found teamwork among marketing research, product management, and ad agency to be absolutely essential to the successful copy testing” (Staffaroni RC2). More and more companies are seeing the need to perfect teamwork amongst co-workers and improve external relations. Making money has proven to be a business wholly dependent upon its parts and their working relations. Larry Martin, VP of Tucson Newspapers Inc., addresses what Warner-Lambert Corporation has discovered regarding teamwork. “We need to tear down the walls between advertising and circulation departments to become true partners and boost sales,” says Martin. “We must have a team effort in all this, and work within a mutual respect of each other” (qtd. in Stein 13).

It is clear that teamwork has a place in the advertising industry, and the business world at large. What is not clear is why so many advertising industries are failing to achieve synergy within their account teams and with their clients. Being able to work in teams, starts first with the individual and their understanding of the role of teams. Due to tight budgets and lack of time, many advertising agencies cannot provide individuals with tutorials and evaluations on how to better work in a team. Therefore, in many cases the individual must take it upon him/herself to obtain the skills needed to reach high performance with a team.

If an individual is interested in pursuing a career in the advertising industry, he/she should make the most of learning effective teamwork at the academic level. This knowledge can give him/her the competitive edge in the field of mass communications. However, the same problem that many advertising agencies experience regarding teamwork also exists behind classroom doors. Many students have negative experiences with working in teams, and their attitudes
towards them affect their performance in teams. James A. Buckenmyer, author of the article “Using Teams for Class Activities: Making Course/Classroom Teams Work” found that students generally felt teams were unproductive and unpopular for the following reasons:

1. The teams did not work well together and everyone had his or her own agenda.
2. The team members often were not clear about the expectations for the team regarding both the specific outcomes expected by the faculty and the level of team performance expected by each of the team members.
3. Some team members become “free riders” and the remainder of the team members felt they had to take up the slack and they lacked knowledge of what could be done to solve the problem.
4. Group members did not know how to maintain a team and build group effort.
5. Team members did not know how to choose a team leader and what to expect from the team leader.
6. Team members rarely made definite work assignments for each member and did not set an agenda for the group.
7. There was rarely any effort to meet as a group outside of class. (Buckenmyer 98-99)

Another negative condition that can occur when working in teams is groupthink. Groupthink occurs in some groups when pressure to both reach the group goal and conform to the group opinion are so great that the individual members surrender their own beliefs, avoid conflict, and view the issue from the group’s perspective (Barker et al. 178). Groupthink takes working in teams a step too far. Many faulty decisions and policies have resulted from the groupthink phenomenon. It causes group members to feel pressured into making quick decisions, before evaluating how they feel about the situation.

These attitudes that many students hold towards working in teams can greatly affect their performance in teams in later employment. Because of the newly regained emphasis on teamwork and achieving synergy in the workplace, many professors are starting to realize their role in teaching these vital skills. Buckenmyer writes:

University professors, especially those in colleges of business and related areas, have been using teams in various ways in their classes. Such in-class use of teams has been strongly endorsed and supported by external organizations as well as alumni. Both organizations and alumni repeatedly indicate that the increased use of teams in the “real world” has increased students’ need for exposure and experience with teams. (Buckenmyer 98)

One current approach to exposing students to effective teamwork is through the use of multimedia, such as LinkWay from IBM, a distance-learning tool. This tool allows interaction between students to complete a project. Multimedia serves as an opportunity for collaboration among teachers, among students, and even between different classrooms. According to Arthur Searle, technology education teacher, multimedia helps create teamwork. “Multimedia lends itself to projects where students work individually on components of the whole,” says Arthur. “A student project leader can then easily link together all the components through the network. When the project is integrated as a whole, it can even be output as a videotape presentation” (Buckenmyer 110).

Collaborative writing and planning in the mass media, advertising, and industry can also enhance teamwork. Ede and Lunsford define collaborative writing as “the production of a single text by co-authors or group authors” (Harbor 48). These two researchers found that upon graduation many students pursuing a career in mass communications will be asked to not only to write, but also to write with others. It has been found that through collaborative-writing assignments students become active participants; they develop leadership, self-reliance, and the ability to work with others. Yet, many students on the collegiate level are failing to learn effective collaboration and teamwork before they graduate.

Marian Haber, author of the article “Strategies of Collaborative Writing and Intellectual Enrichment” writes, “College journalism courses should include teaching of collaborative writing techniques and strategies that can ensure quality of output and success in their writing efforts” (Harbor 47). Angela Meradji, a Communication/Journalism major at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, NY, says that there is great necessity for such collaboration at the academic level in order to be prepared for the “real world.” “From my experiences in both a professional workplace and as a student leader, I would say that teamwork training is very valuable, especially if you are planning to pursue a career in mass communication,” says Meradji. “Teamwork skills make people more aware of communicating their thoughts clearly, and working under sometimes undesirable conditions to accomplish a common goal” (Meradji, personal interview).

Professionals in the advertising industry and academia acknowledge the lack of effective teams in their work environments. Many ad agencies and professors that have seen it used effectively have recognized the positive results of teamwork. But some companies and professors lack the knowledge and resources needed to teach individuals about the importance of teamwork and a synergistic environment. Budget and time are two key factors that inhibit the team effectiveness theory to be
adapted. However, high performance within teams is becoming more and more critical to companies and individuals who are suffering from the drought in the economy.

Collection and Analysis of Data
Hypothesis: Through fundamental education and understanding of the team effectiveness theory and the Team Performance Model (TPM), teams will be able to increase their team performance and achieve synergy.

First, this hypothesis was applied to a study done with the advertising agency, Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland in Rochester, NY. Tammy Wilkes, Director of Human Interests at Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland, was contacted regarding this original research study. Tammy Wilkes received the following proposal.

AGENCY RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Objective
To look qualitatively and quantitatively into teamwork effectiveness, as it relates to the advertising industry, specifically with an advertising agency in the Rochester market.

Method
The researchers will begin this process by (1) surveying participants in the agency in regards to their teamwork skills (2) conducting a tutorial (1-2 hour) on team building and the team effectiveness theory; stressing the Team Performance Model (TPM) (3) two to three weeks later, participants will be resurveyed to see if the learned skills were actually effective in the agency environment. All distilled results and final report will be available upon completion.

Participants
An account team (i.e.: Creatives, AE’s, Media, Production, etc.) that collaboratively work on one account together.

Rationale
Within advertising agencies, teams are ineffectively used, causing tension between members of the agency and between the agency and the client; thus, having an overall effect on the final product that will be communicated to the masses. However, there is opportunity for high performance and synergy to exist in the workplace once educated about teams.

Tools Used
Surveys, observational research, learning seminar (tutorial), and TQM theories.

Tutorial
The researchers will be teaching the team effectiveness theory using the Team Performance Model (TPM) and other teamwork skills. Team activities will be used to illustrate theories and learnings.

Case Study
The participants used in this case study were the Kodak team at Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland. The team consisted of 8 members: creatives, art directors, copywriters, account executives, media, and the human-interest director. The researchers conducted a two-hour tutorial, teaching the team members about the team effectiveness theory using the Team Performance Model (TPM) (See Appendix A). The 7 stages of TPM that were stressed are:

1. Orientation: In this stage team members deal with the urgency of membership and acceptance, all which are rooted in one’s own sense of self.
2. Trust Building: The stage when team members learn about each other, finding out if everyone genuinely dedicated to the task, and if there are any interior motives or hidden agendas.
3. Goal Clarification: Every team needs to address and clarify the purpose of the team and the final product that needs to be achieved.
4. Decision Making: This stage calls for action and a game plan; one that is dependent on all those involved in the process.
5. Implementation: This stage addresses how tasks will be done.
6. High Performance: The stage where everything falls together and clicks.
7. Renewal: Point when team members ask themselves “Why continue?”

Throughout the tutorial, group activities were performed in order for team members to better apply the teachings. The participants were first asked to close their eyes, and as a group, instruct the researchers step by step on how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. The Kodak team was then asked the following questions:

1. Was the final product achieved?
2. Are you satisfied?
3. Did you communicate your instructions clearly?
4. What did you learn about your individual communication skills?
5. Are there correlations with the end product (PB&J) and your product for Kodak?

Another group activity that was performed explored how consensus seeking and the impact of assumptions in decision-making enhance decision-making. This activity was called The Cash Register Activity (See Appendix B). Individually, each member was given five minutes to read a story and respond to questions as true, false, or unknown. Next, the individuals were placed into teams where they worked together to come up with a consensus for each question. The Kodak team was then asked the following questions: 1) What assumptions or inferences did you bring to this situation? 2) What did you learn about yourself? 3) What were the benefits of sharing perceptions with the rest of the team?
The Primary research used for this study constituted of quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative portion of the primary research, a survey was used (See Appendix C). The survey was comprised of 35 questions on the following topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Purpose)</td>
<td>Team members express understanding of how to contribute to the overall purpose of the organization.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Purpose)</td>
<td>Individuals on this team have goals that contribute to the team’s accomplishment of objectives.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Purpose)</td>
<td>A mission statement is referred to when making important team decisions.</td>
<td>Remained Constant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Purpose)</td>
<td>Satisfying customers is central to all that we do here.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (Role Clarity)</td>
<td>People on this team express clear understanding about what they should be doing on the job.</td>
<td>Remained Constant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (Role Clarity)</td>
<td>Job responsibilities are openly discussed and clarified.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Role Clarity)</td>
<td>Every role to meet our objectives is filled</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (Role Clarity)</td>
<td>The right people are in the right jobs.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (Work Environment)</td>
<td>Suggestions made by members are fully explored</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (Work Environment)</td>
<td>Team members help each other if needed.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (Work Environment)</td>
<td>Team members show respect for the diverse backgrounds and talents of other members.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (Work Environment)</td>
<td>Team members appear to trust each other.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (Work Environment)</td>
<td>People seem to enjoy working for this organization.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (Work Environment)</td>
<td>Team members have the work materials, resources and tools they need to do their job.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (Conflict Management)</td>
<td>Team members use consideration and tact when voicing disagreement.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (Conflict Management)</td>
<td>When in conflict, team members state their own wants and needs clearly and directly with one another.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 (Conflict Management)</td>
<td>Differing points of view are discussed until agreements are reached that make sense to all parties involved.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (Communication)</td>
<td>Important decisions are based on a strong cross section of viewpoints.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 (Communication)</td>
<td>Team members share information openly and freely.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (Communication)</td>
<td>Individuals keep others informed about their projects and priorities.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 (Communication)</td>
<td>The team effectively involves everyone in discussions so that a few people do not dominate.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 (Communication)</td>
<td>Team members have effective methods of communicating changes or important information to both internal and external customers.</td>
<td>Remained Constant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 (Performance)</td>
<td>Our team reviews its roles, performance and expectations.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 (Performance)</td>
<td>Good performance is recognized and rewarded.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 (Performance)</td>
<td>Our team’s performance gets results.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 (Performance)</td>
<td>Performance standards are clearly defined.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 (Performance)</td>
<td>Team members get the training they need to perform well.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 (Feedback)</td>
<td>Team members praise each other for a job well done.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 (Feedback)</td>
<td>When things do not go well, team members receive constructive feedback.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 (Feedback)</td>
<td>Feedback is provided in a non-judgmental way.</td>
<td>Remained Constant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 (Team Time)</td>
<td>The team manages its time effectively.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 (Team Time)</td>
<td>Meetings are well organized and are a valuable use of time.</td>
<td>Remained Constant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 (Problem Solving)</td>
<td>Solutions to problems are based on facts and data.</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 (Problem Solving)</td>
<td>Team members evaluate alternatives before making decisions.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 (Problem Solving)</td>
<td>Problems are clearly defined at the beginning of any discussion.</td>
<td>Increased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the 35 questions was ranked on a scale of Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, and Almost Always. To test the reliability of the survey results, the researchers used the test/retest method to insure that the results were consistent. For Pie Charts and numerical data pertaining to each question, see (Appendix D). The results showed the following:
For the qualitative portion of the primary research, observational research was conducted by videotaping the tutorial session. By reviewing the videotape, the participants’ body language and verbal comments were noted and evaluated. During the teaching of the TPM, a comment was made concerning Stage 2: Trust building. “Revealing hidden agendas is not going to work in this industry...maybe in the perfect world, but not here. There is a reason why they are hidden” (Tutorial Session, observational video). Stage 3: Goal Clarification was another stage in which the Kodak team expressed team frustrations. Similar to the results of the survey conducted for Salz Consulting by Thurm Marketing and Consulting Inc. in Princeton, NJ, the Kodak team experiences tension with their client relations. “Clarifying goals and developing a commonality as to where the project is headed can be a difficult thing. To get a client and agency on the same wavelength isn’t always the easiest thing” (Tutorial Session, observational video).

During the Cash Register Activity the body language of all the individuals was very conducive to teamwork. They circled around their groups, faced each other, and looked at whoever was speaking. They each took turns discussing their assumptions and listening to each other. While collaborating, comments by group members that were noted were, “Are you OK with that decision?” and “I still think it’s false, what do you think?” (Tutorial Session, observational video). Each person naturally seemed to fill a role in working together. Each team had a leader, encourager, task-focuser, and a secretary. Overall, the teams’ consensuses on the answers were almost all correct according to the answer key for the Cash Register Activity.

The end of the tutorial was open to discussions and comments. As a team with seven years’ experience together, the participants expressed few problems collaborating together. “We are pretty well in tune with each other. We have been working together for many years. We are dysfunctional at times according to the TPM, but we know our dysfunctions. It’s like being married!” (Tutorial Session, observational video). This limited the overall effectiveness of our tutorial, but according to their responses, the tutorial session served as a way to reinforce what they do well and also, what they need to work on. “I think that it reinforced what we do and it shows how and why we are such a good team. I think I speak for all of us when I say this has been a confidence builder” (Tutorial Session, observational video).

Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland recognizes the synergy that an effective team can provide for their agency. Nevertheless, they do not have a budget allocated for team-building seminars. They do, however, take teamwork performance into consideration when they conduct their annual performance reviews. The reviews ask team members to evaluate their team performance as a whole and their individual performance within the team (See Appendix E).

Hypothesis: Through fundamental education and understanding of the team effectiveness theory and the Team Performance Model, teams will be able to increase their team performance and achieve synergy.

Next, our hypothesis was applied to the Intro to Advertising/Copywriting class at St. John Fisher College. Professor Loporcaro received the following proposal:

ADVERTISING/COPYWRITING CLASS RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Objective
To look qualitatively into teamwork effectiveness, as it relates to the advertising field, specifically with the Intro to Advertising/Copywriting class at St. John Fisher College.

Method
The researchers will begin this process by (1) verbally surveying the class on their knowledge of teams and experience with teamwork (2) conducting a tutorial (1-2 hour) on team building and the team effectiveness theory; stressing the Team Performance Model (TPM) (3) verbally resurveying the class participants to see if the learned skills were actually effective in the group activities. All distilled results and final report will be available upon completion.

Participants
The students in the Intro to Advertising/Copywriting class at St. John Fisher College.

Rationale
Within academia, teams are ineffectively used, causing tensions between members of the group and negative experiences; thus, having an overall effect on the group’s final product and their attitude towards teamwork in future jobs. However, there is opportunity for high performance and synergy to exist in academia once educated about teams.

Tools Used
Verbal surveys, observational research, learning seminar (tutorial), and TQM theories.

Tutorial
The researchers will be teaching the team effectiveness theory using the Team Performance Model (TPM) and other teamwork skills. Team activities will be used to illustrate theories and learnings.

Case Study
The participants used for this case study were the students of the Intro to Advertising/Copywriting class at St. John Fisher College. The class consisted of 23 students. The researchers conducted a two-hour tutorial, teaching the team members about the team
effectiveness theory using the Team Performance Model (TPM) (See Appendix A). The 7 stages of TPM that were stressed are:

8. Orientation: In this stage team members deal with the urgency of membership and acceptance, all which are rooted in one’s own sense of self.

9. Trust Building: The stage when team members learn about each other, finding out if everyone genuinely dedicated to the task, and if there are any interior motives or hidden agendas.

10. Goal Clarification: Every team needs to address and clarify the purpose of the team and the final product that needs to be achieved.

11. Decision Making: This stage calls for action and a game plan; one that is dependent on all those involved in the process.

12. Implementation: This stage addresses how tasks will be done.

13. High Performance: The stage where everything falls together and clicks.

14. Renewal: This is the point when team members ask themselves “Why continue?”

Throughout the tutorial, group activities were performed in order for the students to better apply the teachings. The first activity that was performed explored how consensus seeking and the impact of assumptions in decision-making enhance decision-making. This activity was called The Cash Register Activity (See Appendix B). Individually, each member was given five minutes to read a story and respond to questions as true, false, or unknown. Next, the students were placed into teams where they worked together to come up with a consensus for each question. The students were then asked the following questions:

1. What assumptions or inferences did you bring to this situation?
2. What did you learn about yourself?
3. What were the benefits of sharing perceptions with the rest of the team?

Another group activity that was performed explored a group’s individual and team communication skills and their ability to communicate their message clearly to an intended audience. This activity was called the Lego Activity, in which teams were giving a bag containing 15 legos all colors and shapes. The teams were given 10 minutes to work together to build an object using the legos, and then write directions on how to build the object. The groups were not allowed to name their object in the directions. Once the 10 minutes were up, teams then switched their legos and directions with another team. Each team was given 10 minutes to build the object based on the directions given by the other team. The students were then asked the following questions:

1. Was the final product achieved?
2. Are you satisfied?
3. Did you communicate your instructions clearly?
4. What did you learn about your individual communication skills?
5. Are there correlations with the end product and your product for classes?

The Primary research used for this study constituted of qualitative methods. For the qualitative portion of the primary research, the researchers conducted an informal verbal survey at the beginning of the tutorial asking the students about their knowledge of teams and their attitudes towards teamwork. At the end of the tutorial, an informal verbal survey, asking the students the same questions was re-conducted to see if the learned skills were actually effective in the group activities. Their responses showed that they have all experienced positive and negative scenarios when working in teams. If an individual’s grade depends on the entire team’s performance, it can make group collaboration stressful. One student related his experiences with teamwork to the sport of football. “When a team works together, it all comes together and you just know it, you rise above what you are. You just notice when things start to click. The offense is passing and the defense is shutting the plays down” (Tutorial Session, observational research). Another comment noted was, “If you are not challenged, you are not going to do your best. I seem to do better in the classes where the work is more challenging” (Tutorial Session, observational research).

Another qualitative portion of the primary research was the use of observational research that was conducted by videotaping the tutorial session. By reviewing the videotape, the participants’ body language and verbal comments were noted and evaluated. The directions for the Cash Register Activity were to get into groups of four. Two people were left out and decided to work on their own as a twosome. The students were reluctant to move into a circle and work with those who they do not normally sit next to, unlike the Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland team. Instead, they all just sat in a line, which is not very conducive to working as a team. Team members on the ends were left out of most of the decision-making. Also, unlike the Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland team, most of the groups did not consult each other on their different answers. Instead, they were too quick to agree with one person in the group and did not question each other. This is an example of the groupthink condition that causes ineffective teams. Overall, the students did not answer as correctly as the Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland team did because they did not use teamwork to their advantage.
The observational research from the Lego Activity turned out to be similar to the results observed from the Cash Register Activity in how they formed their groups. However, each member’s individual involvement in the activity was greater and they worked more diligently on this project. Group 1 effectively used each of its team member’s suggestions in making the model and the directions as clear and precise as possible. For example, they drew diagrams and color-coded the pieces of the legos so their product could be understood by a mass of people. This proved true when Group 2 had the task of rebuilding Group 1’s model with the directions given and was able to successfully put it together in less time than other groups. There was a comment made that the directions were even “too easy.” Some of the problems encountered on a whole with this activity were time constraints, ambiguous wording, and directions that were unclear and interpreted in various ways.

The Advertising/Copywriting class recognized the importance of teamwork by the end of the tutorial. A comment given by a student described his understanding of the application teamwork in the advertising industry. “I expected these types of group situations in the advertising industry. However, I did not know the depth of them and it was helpful to learn about the importance of synergy in teams” (Tutorial Session, observational research). The researchers speculate that the increase in teamwork effectiveness between the Cash Register Activity and the Lego Activity was directly correlated to the teachings of the Team Performance Model (TPM), the researchers were able to address these vital concerns involving teamwork, and successfully gather results through two case studies. With reference to the original research done with the Kodak team at Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland and the Advertising/Copywriting class at St. John Fisher College, the hypothesis formulated for this research project can be applied; specifically taking effective teamwork procedures into consideration can heighten teamwork effectiveness in the advertising industry and academia.

Robin Meier, a Creative at Jay Advertising, could not have said it better: “I have learned so much in the advertising industry about your relations with those around you. There is no place I love to be more than at my job, because Jay Advertising has instituted, in its company, a presence of high morale, support, and leadership that has created great synergy for its employees” (Meier, personal interview).

Discussion:

Rowing takes chemistry to the nth degree because if a single guy has an off day, we will lose. Today was a perfect example of great chemistry: We calmed one another down, kept each other focused and worked in near perfect harmony.

—Steven Segaloff, coxswain of the U.S. Men’s Olympic Rowing Team (qtd. in Schrof 53)

This “harmony” or synergy that Steven Segaloff claims his eight-man rowing team achieved that particular day is proof that teams can reach this state of high performance. Contrary to what Harold Greeneen stated, synergy is not just a phenomenon limited to chemical laboratories. Synergy has a place in the organizational culture of America and can be accomplished through effective teamwork. This research paper took an in depth look at past studies and literature written on teamwork in the advertising industry and in academia. Based on the findings from two case studies, there is an evident need for understanding what it means to work as a team. In addition, an obvious need for understanding how to apply the stages of high performance to a team exists.

By using the team effectiveness theory and the Team Performance Model (TPM), the researchers were able to address these vital concerns involving teamwork, and successfully gather results through two case studies. With reference to the original research done with the Kodak team at Saatchi & Saatchi Rowland and the Advertising/Copywriting class at St. John Fisher College, the hypothesis formulated for this research project can be applied; specifically taking effective teamwork procedures into consideration can heighten teamwork effectiveness in the advertising industry and academia.

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