

## LECTURE – 7

### TEAM- WORK AND VOLUNTEERING

#### What is a Team?

Team Work is a combined action by a group of people, in which each person subordinates his or her individual interests and views to the unity and efficiency of the group. The most effectual teamwork is produced when all the individuals involved harmonize their contributions and work towards a universal goal.

**A team is a group of individuals, all working together for a common purpose. The individuals comprising a team ideally should have common goals, common objectives and more or less think on the same lines.** Individuals who are not compatible with each other can never form a team. They should have similar if not the same interests, thought processes, attitude, perception and likings.

Or

A team is a group organized to work together to accomplish a set of objectives that cannot be achieved effectively by individual.

Whereas, a group is not necessarily a team. **A group can have individuals with varied interests, attitude as well as thought processes.** It is not necessary that the group members would have a common objective or a common goal to achieve.

#### What Teamwork is not:

- **Teamwork is** not a group of people and one 'Star' doing all the work.
- **Teamwork is** hard when the leader just tells everyone what to do.
- **Teamwork is** strained when the team faces unrealistic deadlines.
- **Teamwork is** not just letting everyone have their own way.
- **Teamwork is** not always easy to achieve.
- **Teamwork is** not about reaching consensus on every issue.
- **Teamwork** suffers when team members quit or are asked to leave.
- **Teamwork is** not fostered when team members are not recognized in some way for their contributions.

#### Difference between Group and Team

*“With a group, the whole is often equal to or less than the sum of its parts; with a team, the whole is always greater.”*

It is important to make a distinction between group work and team work, because there is a difference. When students work in groups, often each student goes into isolation to work on a specific part of an assignment, with no input from other team members. Towards the end of the assignment, the group members might quickly combine each member’s section of a document, for example, then upload the assignment for a grade. In this instance, very little collaboration takes place and students can’t take advantage of the learning that often occurs in teams. However, in a team project, students interact with one another on various aspects of the assignment, collaboratively coming to a consensus and working together towards a common goal. Each team member is aware of what the other team member is working on, and the final deliverable for the assignment is very cohesive because of this. Therefore, a **team must have individuals with a common objective to achieve**. They should all work together and strive towards the achievement of a common goal.

### **Team members**

The team members must complement each other. All team members should help each other and work in unity. Personal interests must take a back seat and all of them must deliver their level best to achieve the team objective. Team members must not argue among themselves or underestimate the other member.

### **Team Size**

The team size depends on the complexity of the task to be accomplished. **Ideally a team should consist of 7-10 members**. Too many members also lead to confusions and misunderstandings.

It is not always that we require a team. Teams should be formed when the task is a little complicated. A single brain can sometimes not take all critical decisions alone, thus a team is formed where the team members contribute equally making the task easy. A team can actually create wonders if all the team members work in harmony. Success in the workplace depends on your ability to build a team, as well as to interact with others on that team.

Together, people are able to accomplish what one person alone cannot. This is known as synergy.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD/EFFECTIVE TEAM**

- **A clear, elevating goal:** This is a goal which has been communicated to all.
- **A results-driven structure:** The goal has been jointly decided by all the team members. They are fully committed towards achieving it.
- **Competent members:** Each team member has the required skill set in order to achieve the team objectives.
- **Unified commitment:** There is nothing happening in silos. With the total commitment from team members, achieving organizational goals becomes easier.
- **A collaborative climate:** Commitment from team members and a good leadership leads to a collaborative team with a productive work environment.
- **Standards of excellence:** Quality orientation is vital to the success of any organization.
- **External support and recognition:** Appreciation as well as appraisal is required to keep the morale of the team high.
- **Principled leadership:** Leadership defines a team. An able-bodied leadership can chart the team's path to success.
- Each team member participates actively and positively in meetings as well as projects. This shows a person's commitment as well as understanding towards a project.
- **Team goals are clearly understood by all:** Communication is vital for achieving successful completion of any project.
- Individual members have thought about **creative solutions** to the team's problem. Thinking out of the box is vital in today's economic scenario.
- **Listening is an important skill** for any team. Each team member is important. The thoughts and ideas of each team member have to be listened to, with respect, no matter how silly they may sound at first.
- **Everyone takes the initiative** in order to get things done. There is no concept of passing the buck. This is an indication of **clear communication** leading to understanding of individual responsibilities.
- **Each team member trusts the judgment of others:** Mutual trust and respect is highly important for the team. This is the only way to achieve the organization goals.

- **The team has to be willing to take risks:** Risk taking is an attitude which comes with confidence. Confidence on yourself as well as on the team, besides the ability to face all consequences.
- **Dissenting opinions are never ignored:** In fact, they are always recorded in order to be revisited in case the future situations dictate so.
- **Teams are given realistic deadlines:** External support as well as aid is vital to the success of any team.

An efficient team needs support from both inside and outside. It needs to meet the individual needs of its members in order to achieve the organization's goals

### **IMPORTANCE OF TEAM AND TEAM WORK**

Teams are formed when individuals with a common taste, preference, liking, and attitude come and work together for a common goal. Teams play a very important role in organizations as well as our personal lives.

*“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success - Henry Ford”*

The above proverb by Henry Ford can very well highlight the importance of working together in teams.

Every employee is dependent on his fellow employees to work together and contribute efficiently to the organization. No employee can work alone; he has to take the help of his colleagues to accomplish the tasks efficiently. It has been observed that the outcome comes out to be far better when employees work in a team rather than individually as every individual can contribute in his best possible way. In organizations, individuals having a similar interest and specializations come together on a common platform and form a team.

**Team work is essential for better output and a better bonding among employees.**

- **No organization runs for charity.** Targets must be met and revenues have to be generated. Tasks must not be kept pending for a long time and ought to be completed within the desired timeframe. A single brain can't always come with solutions or take decisions alone. He needs someone with whom he can discuss his ideas. In a team,

every team member has an equal contribution and each team member comes out with a solution best suited to the problem. All the alternatives can be explored to come out with the best possible solution. Thoughts can be discussed among the team members and the pros and cons can be evaluated.

- **Tasks are accomplished at a faster pace when it is done by a team rather than an individual.** An individual will definitely take more time to perform if he is single handedly responsible for everything. When employees work together, they start helping each other and responsibilities are shared and thus it reduces the work load and work pressure. Every team member is assigned one or the other responsibility according to his specialization, level of interest and thus the output is much more efficient and faster.
- **Work never suffers or takes a backseat in a team.** Singh was taking care of an important client and was the only one coordinating with them. Singh took a long leave and there was no one else who could handle the client in his absence. When he joined back after a long vacation, the organization had already lost the client. Had Singh worked in a team, others could have taken the charge when he was not there. In a team, the other team members can perform and manage the work in the absence of any member and hence work is not affected much.
- **There is always a healthy competition among the team members.** Competition is always good for the employee as well as the organization as every individual feels motivated to perform better than his other team member and in a way contributing to his team and the organization.
- **Team work is also important to improve the relations among the employees.** Individuals work in close coordination with each other and thus come to know each other better. Team work also reduces the chances of unnecessary conflicts among the employees and every individual tries his level best to support his team member. The level of bonding increases as a result of team work.
- **Team members can also gain from each other.** Every individual is different and has some qualities. One can always benefit something or the other from his team members which would help him in the long run. Everyone is hungry for recognitions and praises. One feels motivated to work hard in a team and to live up to the expectations of the other members. Each member is a critic of the other and can correct him whenever the other person is wrong. One always has someone to fall back on at the time of crisis.

Team and team work must be encouraged at workplace as it strengthens the bond among the employees and the targets can be met at a faster pace. Workload is shared and individuals feel motivated to perform better than his team members.

### **GUIDE LINES FOR EFFECTIVE TEAM MEMBER**

- Contribute ideas and solutions
- Recognize and respect differences in others
- Value the ideas and contributions of others
- Listen and share information
- Ask questions and get clarification
- Participate fully and keep your commitments
- Be flexible and respect the partnership created by a team -- strive for the "win-win"
- Have fun and care about the team and the outcomes.

### **VOLUNTEERING**

**Volunteering** is generally considered an altruistic activity and is intended to promote good or improve human quality of life. In return, this activity produces a feeling of self-worth and respect; however, there is no financial gain. Volunteering is also renowned for skill development, socialization, and fun. It is also intended to make contacts for possible employment. Many volunteers are specifically trained in the areas they work, such as medicine, education, or emergency rescue. Others serve on an as-needed basis, such as in response to a natural disaster.

Volunteering can be defined as any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation.

#### **Who can volunteer?**

Anyone can volunteer. You can volunteer irrespective of whatever your age, background or work experience you have. But you should have a skill that someone needs. No matter how busy you are, there will be something that you can do. It is little difficult to find volunteer roles if you are under 16, but not impossible.

## **Who is a Volunteer?**

A volunteer is a person that has a spirit of service, creativity, sensitivity for human pain, strong moral values, the ability to work in a team, and a social conscience. They practice solidarity, leadership, good interpersonal relationships, discipline, communication skills, and care for themselves and for others.

## **What is volunteer work?**

Formally, volunteer work is work done not for profit. It contributes to a greater cause that is for the good of your fellow man and society in general.

## **What motivates a person to do volunteer work?**

### *Volunteers do work for two reasons:*

- For reasons that are ideological, ethical, and moral; that give them a sense of the needs and problems of other. They want to do something that will better society, change situations, and transform the world.
- For personal reasons: to feel useful, to know and live new experiences, to develop as a person, to build relationships, and to work with others.

### *A volunteer has many motivations:*

- To be and feel useful
- For the satisfaction to do good and to do it well
- For fun and to break routine
- To learn, in the biggest sense of the word
- To give back to the society and humanity for which we have been given
- To meet people with interests like yours
- For the knowledge that you served as a volunteer
- To be able to help and share some knowledge or a talent

### *Four Keys to Being an Effective Volunteer:*

- **Voluntary.** The action of volunteering is the result of free choice. It is a personal option to not receive compensation for the work you do. Your personal motivations give you the greatest satisfaction.

- **Solidarity.** Volunteer action only functions when it is in agreement with others; where the interest is collective. Volunteering is a way to give an answer to the needs, problems, and social interests we see every day. Volunteer action is a promise of solidarity to create a better life for all.
- **Action.** Volunteering is not only a moral value. It does. It's action. If we sit as a good person and citizen but we do not make a move, we will be left empty. The one thing that creates change in this world is action.
- **Organization.** The goal of each volunteer is to improve reality, transform the world, and be effective. A volunteer requires organized action, uniting forces to make a difference. For that reason, volunteer work should be organized, systematic, and collective. It requires organization from its associations and foundations.

## **BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING**

With busy lives, it can be hard to find time to volunteer. However, the benefits of volunteering are enormous to you, your family, and your community. The right match can help you find friends, reach out to the community, learn new skills, and even advance your career. Volunteering can also help protect your mental and physical health. Learn more about the many benefits of volunteering and find tips on getting started as a volunteer.

### **1. Volunteering connects you to others**

One of the better-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Unpaid volunteers are often the glue that holds a community together. Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place. However, volunteering is a two-way street, and it can benefit you and your family as much as the cause you choose to help. Dedicating your time as a volunteer helps you make new friends, expand your network, and boost your social skills.

### **2. Volunteering helps you make new friends and contacts**

One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to an area. Volunteering also strengthens your ties to the community and



broadens your support network, exposing you to people with common interests, neighborhood resources, and fun and fulfilling activities.

### **3. Volunteering increases your social and relationship skills**

While some people are naturally outgoing, others are shy and have a hard time meeting new people. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice and develop your social skills, since you are meeting regularly with a group of people with common interests. Once you have momentum, it's easier to branch out and make more friends and contacts.

### **4. Volunteering is good for your mind and body**

Volunteering provides many benefits to both mental and physical health.

- **Volunteering increases self-confidence.** Volunteering can provide a healthy boost to your self-confidence, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. You are doing good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. Your role as a volunteer can also give you a sense of pride and identity. And the better you feel about yourself, the more likely you are to have a positive view of your life and future goals.
- **Volunteering combats depression.** Reducing the risk of depression is another important benefit of volunteering. A key risk factor for depression is social isolation. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system, which in turn protects you against stress and depression when you're going through challenging times.
- **Volunteering helps you stay physically healthy.** Volunteering is good for your health at any age, but it's especially beneficial in older adults. Studies have found that those who volunteer have a lower mortality rate than those who do not, even when considering factors like the health of the participants. Volunteering has also been shown to lessen symptoms of chronic pain or heart disease.

### **5. Volunteering can advance your career**

If you're considering a new career, volunteering can help you get experience in your area of interest and meet people in the field. Even if you're not planning on changing careers, volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice important skills used in the workplace,

such as teamwork, communication, problem solving, project planning, task management, and organization. You might feel more comfortable stretching your wings at work once you've honed these skills in a volunteer position first.

## **6. Volunteering can provide career experience**

Volunteering offers you the chance to try out a new career without making a long-term commitment. It is also a great way to gain experience in a new field. In some fields, you can volunteer directly at an organization that does the kind of work you're interested in. For example, if you're interested in nursing, you could volunteer at a hospital or a nursing home. Your volunteer work might also expose you to professional organizations or internships that could be of benefit to your career.

## **7. Volunteering can teach you valuable job skills**

Just because volunteer work is unpaid does not mean the skills you learn are basic. Many volunteering opportunities provide extensive training. For example, you could become an experienced crisis counselor while volunteering for a women's shelter or a knowledgeable art historian while donating your time as a museum docent.

Volunteering can also help you build upon skills you already have and use them to benefit the greater community. For instance, if you hold a successful sales position, you raise awareness for your favorite cause as a volunteer advocate, while further developing and improving your public speaking, communication, and marketing skills.

## **8. When it comes to volunteering, passion and positivity are the only requirements**

While learning new skills can be beneficial to many, it's not a requirement for a fulfilling volunteer experience. Bear in mind that the most valuable skills you can bring to any volunteer effort are compassion, an open mind, a willingness to do whatever is needed, and a positive attitude.

## **9. Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life**

Volunteering is a fun and easy way to explore your interests and passions. Doing volunteer work you find meaningful and interesting can be a relaxing, energizing escape from your

day-to-day routine of work, school, or family commitments. Volunteering also provides you with renewed creativity, motivation, and vision that can carry over into your personal and professional life.

Many people volunteer in order to make time for hobbies outside of work as well. For instance, if you have a desk job and long to spend time outdoors, you might consider volunteering to help plant a community garden, lead local hikes, or help at a children's camp.

### **10. Consider your goals and interests**

You will have a richer and more enjoyable volunteering experience if you first take some time to identify your goals and interests. Start by thinking about why you want to volunteer. Also think about what you would enjoy doing. Volunteer opportunities that match both your goals and your interests are most likely to be fun and fulfilling for you.