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Happy days are ahead with right team dynamics

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The right team dynamics can spell success for your organization. Having the right team can make everyone, well...happy.

Having the right team can help your organization survive economic challenges, deal with competition for projects, stimulate creative solutions, face challenges for resources and pull together during budget cuts.

Having the wrong team in the workplace can make everyone, well ... just plain miserable and unproductive. Ever watch *The Office*?

Putting the right team together doesn't necessarily mean putting ten perfectly cloned individuals in the same room. And, we'd like to prove our point through the example of the great American icon – the sitcom.

Take Andy Griffith, for example. If you put ten Andy Griffith's in a room, you'd have a utopian "Mayberry" for a while and then innovation would lapse as everyone would simply follow the rules, agree with each other and wear the same brown sheriff's uniform. Ten Lucille Ball's in a room would wreck havoc on your production line. Ten Gilligan's in a room might get you somewhere safely, but your team's inability to see beyond the palm trees might leave them feeling as if they were stranded on a desert island. And put ten Seinfeld's in a room? You'd laugh for a bit but, soon you'd notice that nothing was getting done!

Successful teams are diverse. They seamlessly blend age, gender and ethnicity together well. Remember Barney Miller, the ABC series focusing on NYPD's 12th precinct set in Greenwich Village? The team argued, laughed and cried in harmony as they successfully thwarted New York City's underworld. Captain Barney Miller successfully led New York's "finest:" cranky and watching-the-clock-til-retirement Jewish-American Detective Fish; well-meaning, youthful and naïve Polish-American Detective "Wojo" Wojciehowicz; smart and ambitious African-American Detective Ron Harris; philosophical, wisecracking gambler Japanese-American Detective Sergeant Nick Yemana; and Puerto Rican Detective Sergeant Chano Amanguale.

Successful teams balance skills and strengths. The series M*A*S*H did just that. That medical dramedy followed a team of doctors and support staff stationed at the 4077th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital stationed in South Korea during the Korean War. The cast demonstrated to viewers how leadership, subject matter experts and support team specialists are carefully balanced to produce optimal outcomes. Through "Meatball Surgery," time and time again, the surgical team under Colonel Sherman T. Potter's leadership worked together effectively to stabilize wounded soldiers as quickly as possible to produce the best outcome.

Successful teams collaborate for economic benefit and success in both the private and public sector. The casts of *All in the Family*, *The Jeffersons*, *Good Times* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* didn't only make us laugh; they also made us think on moral levels about the problems and controversies we face as a society. Both on CBS, the crew of WKRP in Cincinnati struggled long, hard and creatively to keep its financially, struggling radio station afloat, while the hard work of *The Jefferson* family showed America for the first time an African-American family's rise to the upper middle-class.

Successful teams communicate well. *The Cosby Show* revealed to us how the Huxtable family's open and honest living room and kitchen table discussions produced positive behavior. Whether it be sitting on the couch with the cast of *Friends* or around a bar with Sam Malone and his friends at *Cheers*, we saw the benefits of a whole group meeting together regularly to benefit from everyone knowing everything about what is going on around them.

All of these successful "teams" had the right players. In finding their success, they filled these roles:

- The Mr. Cunningham - The leader who knows the rules, has experience, has vision, can think strategically, is a great communicator, has compassion and is a servant leader.
- The Hawkeye/Fonzie - The out-of-the box thinker who handles pressure in crisis situations, is the voice of conscience and pushes the envelope on rules, regulations and processes.
- The Freckle-Faced Richie - The Good Guy (or Girl) who is competent, committed to the group, inspires camaraderie, models strong core values, influences calmly and is willing to be the voice of reason.
- The Frasier/The Professor from *Gilligan's Isle* - The superior intellectual who is highly confident, may be a perfectionist and who can be hard on the rules but demonstrate generosity and compassion at times.
- The Murphy Brown/Lou Grant - A career-oriented, passionate, team player who is tough on their team but who will support them to the end.
- The Radars/Klingers/Joey's of the world - The support team members who are rarely the stars but function as the problem-solvers and those willing to do the behind the scenes work.
- The Marian Cunningham/Clair Huxtable - Someone who can be the Mrs. Garrett from *The Facts of Life* and provide a shoulder to cry on or lift someone up in their hour of need.
- The Chachi - The young talent who is willing to learn and better themselves.
- The Al Delvecchio/Father Mulcahy - The peacemakers who possess the voice of reason and have a calming influence on the group.

When the right team members are in place, successful teams can respond when opportunity arises, correctly assess and analyze problems, create solutions and then implement and execute the plan.

Who fills these roles on your team? Know who they are and make sure everyone is aware of their role.

Remember hard work can be fun and fun can be had in hard work. If a great leader recognizes this, then happy days are in store for you and your organization.

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