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TEAMWORK & TEAMBUILDING: REACH HIGH & FAR

By Ante Demo

Being fortunate enough to be part of a successful institution such as Jantar, Ih Split, has given me the opportunity to develop professionally throughout the years. As the Director of Studies at the school, it has become ever more important for me to enhance my management and leadership skills in order to incorporate all the members of staff appropriately.

When it comes to team members, it is important to assess the different types of personalities within a team and try to give this person a suitable role within the team. There are some personality indicators/methods such as the Belbin test, which can help you determine your role. The results give various roles that you are suited for.

The roles are:

- **Shaper**
- **Plant (creative problem solver)**
- **Co-ordinator**
- **Monitor Evaluator**
- **Resource Investigator**
- **Implementer**
- **Team worker**
- **Completer-Finisher**
- **Specialist**

These are excellent indicators for management to incorporate your skills appropriately and not overwhelm staff with details that they are not able to cope with. As for team leader skills, the following are crucial:



- organising
- clarifying
- reflecting
- motivating
- comforting
- controlling
- concluding
- resolving conflicts

Without these, a team can get disorganised and many other negative effects can occur. To briefly describe a few, when Clarifying, it is always important to highlight what is going on, how long a task will last and seek approval from others.

When Motivating, it is crucial to be attentive, underline achievement, good ideas and give a chance for people to express themselves.

When Comforting, try to express empathy for certain situations and take a break if necessary.

When Concluding, make a proper ending and summarise. Never avoid Resolving Conflicts as this will fester and make even bigger problems in the long run.

When conducting meetings, it is necessary to highlight what is important, hearing others with a clear understanding of what needs to be done.

Summarising meetings and creating an action plan is recommended for any meeting.

Listening to your colleagues is obviously of great importance and reflective listening is one way to do it. One approach is to rephrase what you hear in order to check if everything is understood. It is also crucial to acknowledge by nodding, smiling or leaning forward.

Giving feedback is important when it is helpful and in the right moment. It shows you care as a team leader, making things clear and states a standpoint.

Giving feedback is not necessarily good or bad but is an opportunity to grow and develop your skills. When receiving feedback, it is important to listen carefully, ask for clarification and most importantly



take responsibility and not look for excuses and blame others. The person in question should demonstrate willingness and not take it personally.

The most important element for teams is TRUST. It allows for teams to grow, once this is broken, it is very difficult to recover this trust. A good climate for trust is honesty, openness and consistency in your approach.

I am of the opinion that by implementing the points covered above, many issues can be resolved or avoided, hence better team spirit and greater efficiency. It is also of great importance to continuously learn from your mistakes and move forward if success is to be reached.