



EXPERTS AT DEVELOPING CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TALENT

## LEADERSHIP COACHING NEWSLETTER

This Month's Topic: **Effective Collaborative Teams**

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I revisited an article I read a while back in Harvard Business Review, November 2007, "Eight Ways to Build Collaborative Teams".

What surprised me was the author, who conducted research at 15 multinational companies, reports interesting findings regarding what works and what doesn't in putting together effective collaborative teams. Here are some of their findings:

1. Teams that are large, virtual, diverse, and composed of highly educated specialists four traits that are crucial to teams also work to undermine them. The same characteristics that make teams successful make it challenging for them to get anything done and often undermine their success.
2. As the size of a team increase, beyond 20 members, the tendency for members to collaborate decreases.
3. As teams become more virtual, cooperation declines unless the company takes measures to build an intentional collaborative atmosphere.
4. The higher the proportion of strangers on a team, and the greater the diversity of background and experience, the less likely team members are to share knowledge or exhibit other collaborative behaviors.
5. The greater the proportion of experts a team, the more likely it was to disintegrate into nonproductive conflict or stalemate.

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to know that the larger a team is in size, the more complicated and challenging it is to manage them, get work accomplished, and sometimes obtain the results you were hoping for within the time frame you had in mind. This research points out just how much upfront leg work and structure may be necessary to set up a large team to be successful from the start. The question we should be asking ourselves is, "What is it that we need to do to strengthen and maximize the effectiveness of large, diverse teams while minimizing the disadvantages posed by their composition and structure?"

In next month's Vision Quest Consulting's newsletter, we will discuss the eight factors that lead to large team success.

### Recommendations

Recommended reading: "[The Five Dysfunctions of a Team](#)" by Patrick Lencioni or "[The 7 Essential Qualities of a Team Player: Becoming the Kind of Person Every Team Wants](#)" by John Maxwell

Recommended Corporate Leadership University training courses: [Click here](#). These courses are conducted by Vision Quest Consulting at your location of choice. Call or email us for more information. 978-692-4454, [wcapland@visionquestconsulting.com](mailto:wcapland@visionquestconsulting.com)

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