

## **The Benefits of Teamwork**

### **1. Collaboration**

There's no competition in the boat. People work together and support one another for the benefit of the unit. Decisions are normally talked through to a win-win solution.

### **2. Communication**

People who have learned to support and trust one another share what they know freely. It is open and honest, even though it may lead to conflict. Conflict is acceptable as a normal, even creative contribution and it is handled efficiently before it becomes debilitating to the individuals or the group.

### **3. Efficient Use of Resources**

Individual talents and strengths are recognized and utilized. When one member of the team lacks certain knowledge, competence or interest, another is there to fill the gap.

### **4. Commitment**

People who participate in and are responsible for decisions and solutions own them. They feel committed to carrying them out successfully.

### **5. Quality**

The level of creativity, when everyone in the group is free to participate fully, and the productivity that results when each one is committed to the goal leads to an awesome successful outcome.

## **Effective Team and Member Characteristics**

### **❖ Effective Team Member Characteristics**

- Listens to everyone
- Makes sure everyone gets to speak
- Believes that everyone is a resource
- Encourages growth and development
- Understands that individual needs are different
- Believes in synergy – team results are better than one individual effort
- Values diversity – all people are unique
- Attacks the problem, not the person
- Handles conflict; does not suppress it
- Creates a climate of trust and open communication
- Encourages everyone to learn and take risks
- Rewards achievement
- Offers support through coaching, counseling and advising

### **❖ Effective Team Characteristics**

- Clear goals
- All working toward the same goals
- Team members know each other
- Team achievement is higher than individual achievement
- Achievements exceed expectations
- There is trust among members
- Team members enjoy working together
- Good communication by listening to each other and being sensitive to others' needs
- Arriving at Consensus

### **❖ To be effective, teams need training...**

- Interpersonal communication (disclosure and feedback)
- Stages of Group Development
- Conflict Resolution
- Effective team meetings
- Problem-solving
- Decision-making

## The Consensus Process

(Achieving consensus is a journey that begins with multiple points of view and ends with mutual agreement. The process is based on a commitment by all participants to reach agreement.)

1. A topic or idea is placed before the team for discussion and decision.
2. Questions and concerns are raised; data and solution options are presented; ideas are recorded.
3. The team decides what it will do if consensus cannot be reached.  
(examples: vote, delay a decision)
4. Differences and disagreements as well as similarities are explored and encouraged.
5. Suggestions and modifications to the original topic are made; a new idea may be created by the team. (Your idea, my idea, a better idea!)
6. The facilitator checks for consensus and watches for non-verbal cues that suggest that some members don't agree.
7. The goal is for each member to be able to say, "I can live with this variation."
8. If there is still a single member who is struggling, the facilitator may ask the team for "stand aside" proposals such as:
  - \* not requiring the opposing team member to work on a given task
  - \* recording the dissenting viewpoint in the minutes and allowing the group to proceed with its decision.
  - \* setting a trial period for testing the decision and its implementation
  - \* stipulating that the decision does not set a precedent.The facilitator checks for consensus once more.
9. Finally the entire group supports the modified solution.  
Consensus occurs when everyone has been heard, agreement has been obtained and everyone has committed to his or her role in implementing the decision.

