
Creating a 'Teal' Engineering Culture: *Feasible or Fantasy*

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By

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OVERVIEW

Just over ten years ago, I was a VP and Training Director with a large southeastern bank that wanted a leadership development program designed and implemented within its operations division. Part of the desired outcome was the creation of a 'high performance culture' (the buzzword term at the time) that would increase profitability by decreasing operational expenses.

So we developed training for the employees and also 'trained' the executives via presentations, one-on-one meetings, and in any 'rah rah' opportunity that arose to trust their employees to do the right things and allow them the chance to succeed or fail (within reason, of course) as they learned evolved in their jobs.

After about six months of this, the executive VP of Operations was making his annual report to the Board members and proudly announced that operational expenses had fallen just over 12%. When asked for specifics on what they had done to result in such a dramatic decrease, he said, "I honestly don't know. We gave them leadership training, allowed them opportunity to use what they learned, and kept our hands off things unless they needed senior management to step in or act as advisors. They found ways to increase morale and thus productivity while becoming more efficient. They eliminated ineffective and outdated procedures, restructured work flows to reflect current conditions, and juggled staffing as necessary to cover the work. That is as specific as I can get."

At the time, we were experimenting with a concept that was later called a 'Holacracy' but this was at least a decade before the term became fashionable. "Holacracy" – *management by committee with an emphasis on experimentation*¹ - is the latest hot topic in business leadership and organizational theory. It is the foundation of a book, "Reinventing Organizations"², which has jarred the world of management

¹ <http://www.vox.com/2014/7/11/5876235/silicon-valleys-latest-management-craze-holacracy-explained>

² <http://www.reinventingorganizations.com/> - 2014

since its appearance in 2014. I say ‘jarred’ because the advocates of holacracy claim that centralization of power suffocates innovation. If that’s true, then it is easy to imagine how the CEO of a bastion of command and control like an engineering firm (or a project management professional) would feel about relinquishing their authority to a committee!

However, as I discovered in the bank, there are parts of the concept that will appeal to those in mid-career management positions looking for ways to get more productivity out of their teams and greater satisfaction out of their jobs. Also, new professionals who may not want to spend years ‘paying their dues’ working their way up a tedious organizational ladder will want to understand this concept as they search for their best employment fit.

And that brings us to the purpose of this course.

It is neither a thorough explanation of holacracy nor a pro-or-con discussion of its merits: you can read any of many books for that. Instead, it is a practical approach to how parts, but not all, of that philosophy can be introduced into an engineering culture with a high potential for measurable and desirable outcomes. Also, it will identify areas of greatest opportunity for new thinking as well as warn against situations guaranteed to fail.

There will be questions to ask yourself, your boss, your peers, and your team if you want to become more familiar and conversant in implementing parts of a ‘Teal’ (we will define this in the course) culture. Also, there will be plenty of ‘compare and contrast’ charts and graphics to help you visualize what we’re talking about.

Even if you are not in a position to experiment with any of these concepts, it will help you become more informed about so you can easily hold your own in any workplace discussion. I know the opportunity for organizational evolution exists within organizations today. And, like in our bank so many years ago, your company may already be doing a little but didn’t know it had a name.



Thank you for selecting this course. I hope it is useful for you.

Dick Grimes

Houston, Texas

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants in this self-study course will be able to:

1. Describe the evolution of organizations from the earliest recorded tribes to present-day multinationals.
2. List and explain how three distinct factors of organizational evolution could only happen in a society which has weakened or done away with class structures.
3. Identify and discuss several key events in the evolution of last century Western organizational thinking.
4. List and discuss the traits of a Teal organization.
5. Develop a strategy for implementing a Teal-like culture within their department.
6. Identify and discuss the two essential elements necessary for a Teal experiment to have any chance of success in an engineering culture.
7. Identify the key group within an organization whose support is critical for any chance of success with a Teal implementation.
8. Describe the key role trust plays in developing a Teal culture.
9. List three critical self-development factors that must be considered by any leader wanting to implement a Teal change in their work group.
10. Describe and implement several methods of improving employee morale.
11. Analyze any employee performance problems tracing back to their root cause.
12. Identify key factors from the past that resulted in their employees being the most productive.
13. List and discuss the five essential elements of motivation.
14. List and discuss the three essential elements of productivity.
15. Use a suggested guideline for implemented practices leading to a Teal community within a traditional engineering culture.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience for the course is any strategically thinking professional engineer who wants to determine whether it is feasible and practical to charter a Teal culture path within their organization.

Ideally, it is someone in a leadership position who wants to gain a basic understanding of this organizational concept thoroughly enough to be able to implement it in their organization or at least participate in a thoughtful discussion if the opportunity arises.



Also, you never know when an executive will ask, *“Has anyone heard about these Teal organizations? Is there anything to it that we can use in our company?”*

Don't you want to be the only one who can provide a meaningful answer?

A QUICK REVIEW OF HUMAN ORGANIZATION

Clearly, we have come a long way in our evolution as humans from huddling together around a Stone Age campfire for mutual safety to working together in a modern office. The structure of our relationships among each other has evolved from the simple to the complex as our abilities to think critically and creatively have also evolved.

A quick look at this organizational evolution is necessary to set the table for the discussion ahead. Since this course is built around a look at the 'Teal' organization, we will use the color wheel as a simple means to identify the various fundamental structures of human organizations ranging from the world of business to regional tribes, governments, and street gangs. ³

The colors we will use to represent structures are:

RED ORGANIZATIONS

These emerged first in history featuring a local chieftain leading his followers into war and pillaging against the surrounding neighbors.

Although the amount of followers could grow into thousands and sub-chiefs may emerge, there was still just one powerful leader who only relinquished control when he died or was killed. This is also true in the animal world with wolves and their pack social order.

³ **Authors note:** It is necessary to state here that the book upon which this course is based, *Reinventing Organizations*, goes into great depth about the anthropological origins of and differences between each of these broadly identified colored organizations. Please do not hesitate to get that book if you wish to have a more than fundamental understanding of this fascinating content.

For humans, this was the model of the Viking invaders of Europe, native Indian tribes as well as street gangs and organized crime families today.



Typically, these organizations could not plan for the long term (beyond the current chief's reign) and were not very stable since they only existed until a stronger red organization came along and pushed them aside.

AMBER ORGANIZATIONS

In time, man advanced his ability to farm which meant a food source was more predictable and dependable. When people no longer had to spend every waking moment foraging for food, there was time to develop their individual skills such as farming, weaving, building, etc. This led to larger populations with a sense of organization where we could assume some social stability, scale larger in size as our population grew, and begin to look toward the future.



The Great Wall of China, the Pyramids, and the cathedrals of Europe demonstrated our ability to plan ahead, organize labor, and continue our culture beyond the lifetime of the existing leader.

Amber examples of organization are the Catholic Church, the military and central government.

ORANGE ORGANIZATIONS

These organizations took the Amber concept farther by adding three essential factors: ***innovation, accountability, and meritocracy***. It is important to note that meritocracy could only exist in a society which has either weakened traditional class structures or done away with them altogether. Today's business world is full of Orange organizations.

We will break these powerful three aspects down a little farther to lay the foundation for the (potential) changes ahead as we progress beyond Orange.

- **INNOVATION** — It is the ability to question authority and what went before that is the foundation of innovation. Here is where we break from the traditional 'way we have always done it' to using our creative gifts. Clearly, the challenge of orthodoxy as we try to escape the restraints of tradition would have no place in the Catholic Church or any military or government branch. *(Note: Special military warfare teams are more Teal than the amber of the larger military branch from which they come as we'll discuss later.)*



In terms of engineering, the 'way we have always done it' is another way of saying 'process driven' which is a hallmark of Amber. Whether you call it tradition, custom, or routine, it stills means the same thing: that is our 'process'. It is the way we have always done it and that means we are not likely to change.

Orange structures have their processes, too, but they have a critical something else: *the capacity for projects*. While they may have an overall, Amber-like pyramid-shaped organizational chart with its vertical job progression silos, there are cross-functional project teams, virtual teams, internal consultants and subject matter experts available to others outside their home departments. This horizontal component means that Orange entities can grow faster, react quicker, and become stronger through their project skills.

- **ACCOUNTABILITY** – Where the leadership of Amber uses a command and control approach, introducing accountability allows Orange leaders to *predict and control*. A C&C (command and

control) leader would not only tell you what the objective was, but would also tell you how to achieve it.

In contrast, an Orange leader (Napoleon is a famous example of one) would identify the objective but *allow the subordinate the accountability of figuring out how to do it*. This requires the subordinate (if they are smart) to ask for input from others about the best way to achieve the desired outcome. It is the acknowledgment that *none of us is as smart as all of us (including the leaders)* that makes this very powerful.



- **MERITOCRACY** – This is the greatest innovation of the Orange concept: the idea that anyone can rise through the ranks from mailroom to CEO if they have the merit to do so. This instantly broadens the potential talent pool and (theoretically, at least) encourages each individual to strive upward in their career.

Modern Human Resources, with its wide spectrum of employee-focused activities like training and development, succession planning, performance reviews, incentive systems, and talent management, are based upon the concept of individual merit.



GREEN ORGANIZATIONS

A purely Green organization has difficulty transitioning from the theoretical to the actual because it is based on the empowerment of the members and is highly sensitive to people's feelings.

Orange's achievement-oriented structure replaces Amber's view of absolute right or wrong with a more practical 'what does and what doesn't work' perspective. However, a 'Greenie' would argue that is too simplistic because there is more to life than just success or failure. All perspectives deserve equal respect and fairness, equality, harmony, and cooperation are of paramount importance.

Pure 'Greenies' are uncomfortable with the power and hierarchy of Orange believing that inequality will always flow from this condition and the only remedy is a 'classless', flat organization where everyone has an equal vote making relationships more important than outcomes.

"Let's have all workers own the company in equal shares and make all decisions by consensus with nobody holding a leadership position."⁴

In today's world, this Green philosophy is held very strongly by academics, non-profits, social workers, and community activists. (In the 1960s, so-called Hippy Communes, where all members were of equal status and shared everything, were supposed to transform our Vietnam War culture into global peace and harmony. The hippies of the 1960s have become the elder statesmen in today's push toward Green thinking.)



⁴ Reinventing Organizations, Frederic Laloux, 2014, pp.31-32

ORGANIZATIONAL COLOR SUMMARY

	Current Examples	Key Breakthroughs
RED Organization Chief must constantly exercise power to keep troops in line. Fear keeps the org together. Effective in ad hoc emergencies and thrive in chaotic environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized crime families Street gangs Tribal communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Division of labor Command authority
AMBER Organizations Formal roles within a hierarchical pyramid using command and control (what and how). Stability is valued – future is repetition of the past. “If it’s not broken, don’t fix it.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catholic church Military Most government agencies Public schools Many older, family owned businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal roles create stable and scalable command and control structures Processes allow long-term planning. (“Just keep doing what works forever and we’ll be fine”)
ORANGE Organizations Goal is to beat competition, achieve profit and growth through innovation. Management by objectives – command and control on what, freedom on the how.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many prospering companies of any size Charter schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation Accountability Meritocracy
GREEN Organizations Within the classic pyramid structure, focus on culture and empowerment to achieve extraordinary employee motivation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture driven organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben & Jerries Southwest Airlines Families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowerment of individuals Values-driven culture Much consensus seeking for decisions
TEAL Organizations ??	Zappo’s (attempting it in 2015)	

A SITUATIONAL REVIEW

Look at these situations and determine their most likely organizational placement and explain why.

Situation	Color	Reasoning
“Sorry. It’s just not our policy to grant leave for that reason.”		
The business owner decided on a whim to act.		
Our yacht club has been around for 100 years and has a very rich tradition and history.		
“If we can hit our sales goals, each will get an extra bonus!”		.
“No bonus’ this year: everyone gets the same 2.5% raise as long as their performance was acceptable.”		
“If our team hits our goals, we’ll all get rewards.”		

Situation	Color	Reasoning
"Sorry. It's just not our policy to grant leave for that reason."	Amber	Security lies in policies instead of situational thinking or risking a decision.
The business owner decided on a whim to act.	Red	Anytime an authority figure can act alone on a whim, it's a Red organization.
Our yacht club has been around for 100 years and has a very rich tradition and history.	(Probably) Amber	"Around for 100 years, very rich tradition and history" means there are engrained rituals, customs, and practices handed down that haven't (and won't) change for the next 100 years. Also, being a yacht club suggests a strong affiliation with the Navy – an Amber organization.
"If we can hit our sales goals, each will get an extra bonus"	Orange	The meritocracy of rewarding individual achievement is Orange.
"No bonus' this year: everyone gets the same 2.5% raise as long as their performance was acceptable."	Amber	No individualism or merit – all treated the same with a fixed outcome and no 'rocking the boat' trying to reward any standouts.
"If our team hits our goals, we'll get team rewards."	Green	The idea of team over individual rewards.

THE LAST CENTURY OF WESTERN ORGANIZATIONAL THINKING

I think it is our nature as human beings to look around periodically when the daily grind is unusually wearing on us and ask, “Can we be more efficient in that process?”, “Can we provide similar or greater value differently”, “Is the way we have always done it the way we *should always be* doing it?”, or simply, “Honestly! Is *this* the best we can do?”

It is during those moments of reflection over the past century when breakthroughs in the world of business leadership and organizational structure reshaped (or at least made us stop and think about) what we were doing. It is useful to stop for a moment and look back at where we have been.

Some of the highlights of the last one hundred years that come to mind include:

- Henry Ford organized the previously chaotic automobile building process into an **assembly line** in 1913 with this logistical insight⁵:
 - Place the tools and the men in the sequence of the operation so that each component part shall travel the least possible distance while in the process of finishing.
 - Use work slides or some other form of carrier so that when a workman completes his operation, he drops the part always in the same place—which place must always be the most convenient place to his hand—and if possible have gravity carry the part to the next workman for his own.
 - Use sliding assembling lines by which the parts to be assembled are delivered at convenient distances.¹
- The accidental discoveries from the **Hawthorne Project** (1924-1932)⁶ revealed that when workers feel they are seen as feeling and thinking human beings by management instead as simply cogs in the great machinery of production, productivity will increase with worker morale.

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assembly_line

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawthorne_effect

- Douglas McGregor introduced his **Theory X & Theory Y** types of Management in 1951 trying to explain how different management styles will elicit different results from employees.
- In 1982, we were searching for excellence (“**In Search of Excellence**”⁷) as we tried to apply lessons from America’s Best run companies to our own.
- Maybe the organizational structure was wrong, so we tried “**Reengineering the Corporation**”⁸ in 1993.
- In the next year, Peter Senge’s 5th Discipline showed us how to create a **learning organization**⁹ so we would not continue to repeat past mistakes.
- Later, we learned why some companies just can’t improve: “**Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don’t**” was the rage in 2001.¹⁰
- We wanted to improve quality and speed with a martial arts approach in 2004¹¹ with **Six Sigma** tactics and earning achievement belts of different colors.

Now we are going to pull selected features from Orange and Green organizations to create a new hybrid, the **TEAL Organization**.

⁷ http://www.amazon.com/In-Search-Excellence-Lessons-Americas/dp/006045153X/ref=pd_sim_14_1?ie=UTF8&refRID=1AF7H8F87N5Y01VK6BN1

⁸ <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/reengineering-the-corporation-michael-hammer/1102260954?ean=9780066621128>

⁹ http://www.amazon.com/Fifth-Discipline-Practice-Learning-Organization/dp/0385260954/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1434403857&sr=1-3&keywords=the+fifth+discipline

¹⁰ <http://www.leadershipnow.com/leadershop/2099-6.html>

¹¹ http://www.amazon.com/The-Lean-Sigma-Pocket-Toolbook/dp/0071441190/ref=pd_sim_14_5?ie=UTF8&refRID=0RWW2C5MC9N1RKSHEWF9

THE TEAL HYBRID ORGANIZATION

By now it should be evident that a *totally* Green Organization would be a formula for disaster if all major decisions must be made by consensus, there were no rank (or some being 'more equal' than others) among the members, and feelings, not accomplishments, were of paramount virtue.

However, there are elements of the Green, employee focused organization that *could blend* with an Orange – Achievement orientation to create a hybrid of greater energy, creativity, and growth if selectively chosen and judiciously applied in the appropriate situations. (After all, we did it at our bank over a decade ago and the very profitable Southwest Airlines still has a traditional structural pyramid that makes stockholders happy but famously allows broad employee latitude in many operational tasks.¹²⁾



From this point forward, we will address the course title and let you decide whether it is feasible or a fantasy to introduce a Teal culture into an engineering company.

¹² The Southwest Airlines Way, <http://www.amazon.com/Southwest-Airlines-Jody-Hoffer-Gittell/dp/0071458271>

THE TRAITS OF A TEAL ORGANIZATION

Before moving any farther into this topic, it will be useful to stop and discuss clearly what a Teal organization is and is not before we look at potential applications of it within an established engineering firm or culture.

Broadly speaking, a Teal organization is:

- built around employee *self-management* based on peer relationships with no need for a hierarchy or group consensus to make a decision (This is where I see an elite group of specialists cross-trained who have a formal command structure but are free to act as the situation requires to accomplish the previously identified objective.)
- ‘*wholeness*’ of the individual that means more than valuing logic, rationality, and objectivity but also the human being within that may value intuition and emotion
- *evolutionary* allowing the future to reveal itself based on the purpose of the organization and the success of the employees working toward that purpose instead of trying to force the future into a pre-determined schedule with stated objectives and a hard-dollar budget.



A Teal organization is not:

- a warm circle around a campfire where everyone sings ‘Kumbaya’ and deludes themselves with naïve optimism about the future
- about building consensus before anything happens
- as chaotic in practice as it may sound to someone who has only experienced a rigid pyramid, Orange organizational structure.

A simple way to look at it would be to consider a smart production manager who comes out of his office high above and takes time to talk to the people down on the assembly line for their thoughts on why there are production problems. Instead of issuing edicts from high above (the traditional command and control method), he knows that the people intimately involved with the problem probably have an idea of what is causing it and asks them for their thoughts on what led to it. (“All of us are smarter than any one of us.”)

PREPARING YOU

If the expression “You only get one chance to make a good first impression” is true, then you will only get one good chance to introduce Teal practices into your department free of any past “flavor-of-the-month” failure baggage. If you do not prepare well and try it again in a year, you will be reminded by the doubters around you that since it failed before, why wouldn’t it again?

Although there is no guarantee you will be successful at any time trying to introduce ‘radical’ (in the eyes of some) change to an established culture, your chances will be much better if you will consider a few things.

EXECUTIVE BUY-IN

As I looked back at my experience with the bank while writing this course, I realize that we did have the two essential elements necessary for our experiment to have a chance of success. (Note that I said “have a chance” because there certainly is no guarantee you will succeed even if they are there.)

Those elements were:

- **The support of top leadership in word and deed.** (Although we did not have the very highest leadership in the bank supporting us – they weren’t even aware of what we were doing – we did have the highest leadership *in our part of the bank* which was sufficient for our needs at the time.)

Examples of this are:

- When things go wrong, they do not conduct a search for the guilty. Instead, they expect you to track back upstream to discover *what led to the problem*. They assume that people want to do the right things and try to discover if there was an organizational flaw that may have been the cause. (Did they rely on an outdated company reference source? Where they ever trained to do it correctly? There are many other possibilities we will discuss later in a systematic performance analysis chart on page 48.)

- They model the behavior they expect from their direct reports and let it be known they expect it to ripple downward through the management chain. (Again, at the bank, the EVP began each staff meeting by going around the table asking each VP what his or her department had done since their last meeting to develop their people. He expected them to ask that same question in their staff meetings with their people. Obviously anyone with a hope for a bright future in the bank would not reply “nothing” in more than one meeting.)
- **Ownership of the concept** means a trust in its potential and in those working to bring it into practice. While it is easy to allow things to evolve when everything is going well, it is equally important to have enough trust to resist the temptation to re-engage the command and control Orange model when times get tough. It is during the trouble times when more heads working toward a solution may be better than just a few. Again, “none of us is as smart as all of us.”

Warning: Research indicates that trying to implement Teal practices *without at least the support of the chief of his/her division* indicates it would be wasting time. These practices are so contrary to what they are used to it may seem threatening or foolhardy which is not conducive to your successful career!¹³

HUMAN RESOURCES BUY-IN



Having established that a Teal culture may be difficult to introduce company-wide in a traditional command and control Amber (a long established family firm) or Orange (a growing business) engineering firm, we will talk about some activities that could be implemented on a smaller departmental scale if you had the blessing of your supervisor and your Human Resources Department.

¹³ Reinventing Organizations, page 238

It is critical to the success of your prospective attempts to implement any Teal practices that you view the function of HR as one that *protects the company from harm by providing and enforcing an administrative structure that governs the consistent, fair, and legal treatment of employees* and engage their support of your efforts.

We are talking about employee performance reviews, disciplinary procedures, succession planning, as well as principle involvement in hiring, firing, promoting, and demoting as required. It is easy to understand how any non-standard practice that you want to introduce could get their warning flags flying since there are so many government guidelines and regulations with which they must deal daily.

The suggestions that we make here will be presented in a manner that will make it easy for you to show HR that nothing will be contrary to their charge to protect the company and that employee morale and productivity may increase while absenteeism, 'internal squabbles', and turnover (at least in your area) may decrease. (In short, you can make their life easier if they will let you.)

TRUST IS HISTORIC

This course assumes that you want to implement as much of a Teal culture as possible within your organization. If correct, your employees, your peers, and anyone who interacts with your department will be exposed to change in some degree.

Also, human nature being what it is, there is probably no one who senses the big picture potential for improvement in morale and productivity as strongly as you do. Therefore, too much optimism and outward excitement initially may cause some hesitation on their part while they wait for you to go back to 'acting normally' like you always have. *Don't let that discourage you.* Expect it and realize that you must build trust in them that you really do know what you are doing and they stand to benefit greatly if they will allow themselves to glimpse the potential future that you are trying to show them.

Remember, trust is historic and can only be built upon a series of events in which they learn more about you. You can ask for their trust but from their perspective, it will remain a 'wait-and-see' attitude until you have spent some time together.

LOOKING INWARD FIRST

Look around you and think about the people – especially the leaders whether officially by title or unofficially by social behavior - which you believe are viewed as trust worthy by others. Next, take a moment and list at least three behaviors or traits they exhibit which you feel contribute to their being trustworthy. Finally, beside each behavior, estimate how long you have observed it. The point here reinforces the previous topic that trust is historic and takes a while to establish.

In addition to the behaviors or traits you have listed, there are some which are more subtle but still very important when creating a reputation that would encourage cultural stakeholders to give you a chance at innovation. These are not achieved overnight but are well worth the time it takes to establish them.

- **You must be “competent+ (plus)” in the eyes of your supervisor/employer.**

Your supervisor – *who must be on your side if you want to introduce any Teal aspects to your department* – must think you are competent in something *in addition to* the specific skills required for your current role.



We say in addition because the skills required for the role you are in have defined the way the role has always been performed. If you want to convince your boss trying something new could be successful, you'll have to convince him that you have more skills than just those required for the existing job. And those additional skills could be critical in assuring success in the department's new look or in helping him or her do their job. (Remember, making it easier for the boss to do his or her job can make it easier for them to allow you to introduce Teal aspects.)

It may be specialized knowledge about your firm's business or a particular field of interest that is useful for the business such as in-depth knowledge about computers, a photography hobby, writing the newsletter for your church or volunteer organization, or an ease in public speaking although your job description may not involve any of those right now.

For example, if your boss can count on you to write or make suggestions for a report he or she must submit, then you are competent in their eyes even though writing reports may not be what the company currently pays you to do. And they may be more willing to let you try a few new practices.

However, if your specialty were an ability to name every number one country song and the artist in the last 10 years, there would not be much value in that from a business perspective unless your employer was in the music business.



Stop for a moment and list the specialties you have that can be used to ease the implementation of some Teal concepts either directly or indirectly. (These can also be interests such as checking data, teaching others to do things, a joy in meeting new people, or planning events that you never considered as specialties.)

How can you make these specialties useful in the implementation of your plan?

If you do not have any specialties now, what work-related interests (see above) do you have that you can develop into specialties?

How and when will you start developing them?

- **You must be able to build alliances with others.**

Eventually, your Teal efforts will require either the cooperation of others or their 'non-interference' when possible. Therefore, you must focus on being as helpful to others as possible without consciously thinking about "what is in it for me to do this?"

If you can develop an honest attitude of unhesitating service to others, you will begin leveraging your efforts into greater results than you could have achieved alone *while building a history of trust with them.*



One easy way to develop that service attitude is by asking yourself as you look around, “How can I make it easier for them to do (or get) what they are doing (or need)? Easier to get the information they need; easier to get the results they need; easier to contact my department or my company?”

This is not about “networking” which usually amounts to a group of contacts who rely on each other for information sharing or help. An alliance, as we use it here, is about offering a hand to others when possible because at some point, someone will offer a hand to you.

Some people call this “paying it forward” and the premise is that if someone does something nice for you, after a sincere thank-you to them, consider doing good deeds unexpectedly for others as the payment. This investment in those around you will reap unexpected benefits when you least expect them (and probably most need them.) Of course, this premise assumes that you believe life is ultimately fair and that eventually everyone ends up where they deserve to be. This also assumes you believe there is a power greater than us that “keeps score” of our actions and eventually settles the balance sheet of life.

Think about other departments with whom you must interact as you do your work. What opportunities exist for improving the communication and workflows between you? What work problems are there within your department that your supervisor may allow you to analyze for possible solutions? (Even if your leader does not have any for you to look at, the fact that you asked can work wonders for your Teal plans.) What value would there be in people seeing you as a very valuable contributor to making their work life a little easier?

If you can help others see you as helpful and interested in their success, too, as you search for your own, you will learn the critical habit of building alliances that will become more essential as you move up in the organization.



Think about this...

What alliances have you developed so far in your workplace by being as helpful as possible?

What alliances have you developed so far in your life outside of work by being as helpful as possible?

Who are others with whom you can build an alliance by being as helpful as possible?

- **You must develop the ability to not inflict wounds on yourself or have “qualifiers” mentioned when people describe you.**

An Associated Press article in January 2007 (*“2 in 5 supervisors don’t keep their word, FSU study finds”* by Brent Kallestad) reported these results of a survey from the Florida State University’s Business School that are classic examples of self-inflicted wounds:

- 39% of workers said their supervisors failed to keep promises
- 37% said their supervisor failed to give credit when due
- 31% said their supervisor gave them the “silent treatment” in the past year
- 27% said their supervisor made negative comments about them to other employees or management
- 23% said their supervisor blamed others to cover up mistakes or to minimize embarrassment.
- 4% said the supervisor invaded their privacy

In every case, the action of the supervisor diminished the level of trust between him or her and their employees and IT DID NOT HAVE TO HAPPEN. All of these are examples of self-inflicted wounds.



In addition, how many people do you know with special skills or talents that always come with a qualifier statement? For example, “he is our best project engineer but, unfortunately, he is also such a jerk that no one else on the team can stand him.” Or maybe, “she is always so positive and upbeat that it almost makes you forget you can’t tell her any secrets that you don’t want spread around.”

These qualifiers are always self-inflicted and guaranteed to limit the success of the individual.



Think about

What qualifiers do you think are associated with you?

How can they limit your success?

What will you do about them?

If you are having trouble coming up with some, ask a few of your close friends after first explaining to them that you are trying to identify and eliminate any traits that may hold you back.

Caution – do not ask them if you are not capable of dealing with the response honestly without argument! If you start to argue with them, you can forget ever hearing about anything useful from them in the future.

PREPARING THE ENVIRONMENT

Let's pause for a moment and think again about the advice that *you only get one chance to make a good first impression*. Also, most human beings dislike change because it requires them to break out of their comfortable routines. And if they are doing well enough to get by in those routines, then making an effort to rock that boat without a good reason will not happen easily.

That is why we spent time earlier helping you prepare yourself for what is to come. If you expect them to change, it is important that you first change into becoming the best leader that you can. The reason is simple: **you have nothing else to motivate them to change (more money, promotions, better working conditions, closer parking, etc.) except the power of your leadership skills!** As we said earlier, studies have shown that employees are more inclined to stay with (or leave) their leader, not their employer.

This next section of the course will introduce you to environmental aspects that must be addressed before you begin the incremental change into a Teal-acting department.

INCREASE EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

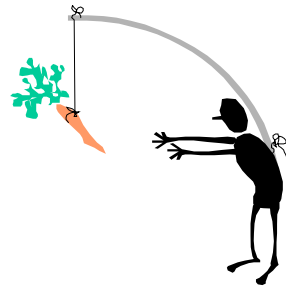
The essence of a Teal organization (page 18) is built around self-management by employees *who require high morale: i.e., they must want to become all they can be in the midst of this supportive culture.*

However, employee motivation starts with the quality of its leadership. So, if you want to increase employee motivation, once again, we will need to look at you first before showing you how to look at them. Please have patience as we go through this, the reason will become apparent shortly.

So, what is “Motivation”?

“To provide with an incentive; move to action; impel.”

--The American Heritage Dictionary, 3rd Edition



Ask yourself a few questions:

“What incentive do I have to work for my employer?”

(If you are not sure why you work for your employer instead of doing the same job for someone else, and are not clear about it in speech or action, you may not be ready to implement any changes in the department’s culture. An incentive to work there means you find value in staying and want to develop a career. You DO NOT WANT TO CONVEY A SENSE OF REVOLUTION AGAINST THE BAD OLD WAYS; your Teal changes must be POSITIVE EVOLUTION as improvement upon current practices.

Your employees need to follow someone with strong convictions about the value of working for this employer through this cultural evolution. If they don’t see you demonstrate clearly and convincingly the behaviors you value, your attempt at an ever-improving evolutionary culture may quickly turn into a mood of revolutionary anarchy. That condition is definitely NOT a career enhancer!)

What incentive does each of your employees have to work for your employer?

(The better you understand the workplace from your employees perspective, the better you will understand their potential for self-motivation in your Teal culture. It may be necessary to simply ask them during a departmental meeting that simple question.)

What incentive does each of your employees have to work for you, personally, as opposed to someone else within your organization?

(Ask yourself and be as honest as you can. Or, if you are brave and have trusted friends, ask them, "Why do you think someone would want to work for me?" Assure them you want an objective answer because you're trying to improve yourself. Also, if you don't hear everything you want to, remember – you did ask the question!)

Why are we asking you these questions?

(You must know your strengths and weaknesses first before you try to lead others into major changes. This way, you can work on improving your strengths and minimizing your weaknesses.)

Many surveys have shown that most employees do not stay with (or leave) their employers, they stay with (or leave) their supervisors. In the case of a cultural change, consider the situation as whether they will follow and embrace the changes you are introducing: they won't see it as coming from the organization.)

Please take a few minutes to answer these additional questions we have for you and your employees.

Complete these sentences based on your current work situation.

"LIFE WOULD BE GREAT IF MY EMPLOYEES WOULD ONLY....."

YOUR STATEMENT	PROBABLE ANSWERS
"Complete this sentence, <i>"Life in our department would be great if our employees will only..."</i> "	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Learn to think for themselves2. Show up for work3. Get here on time4. Show some initiative5. Etc., etc. (you get the idea)

Please put your answers here and set it aside while you complete the next activities.

YOUR STATEMENT "Complete this sentence, <i>"Life in our department would be great if our employees will only..."</i> "	
--	--

Then please fill this out next for **yourself**.

“WHEN THE BEST BOSS I EVER HAD DID THIS (specify what it was they did), IT HAD THIS IMPACT ON ME AND MY WORK (specify the impact)”

When The Best Boss I Ever Had Did This...	...It Had This Impact On Me...	...And It Had This Impact On My Work.
Told me what she wanted in clear and measurable terms and left me alone to do it.	I worked with much more confidence because I knew exactly what she expected. I did not have to worry by hoping I was doing it right.	I accomplished more because I knew exactly what was expected. I did not waste time asking if it were right or doing rework.
Showed me he trusted me.	I did my best to please him.	I was the top performer in my department.

Now give the same one to your employees and ask them to bring it with their answers to meet with you.

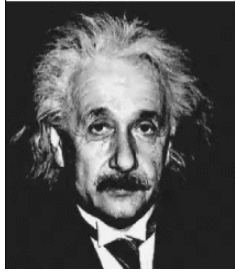
When The Best Boss I Ever Had Did This...	...It Had This Impact On Me...	...And It Had This Impact On My Work.

What relationship do you see between how you want your department employees to act with you and the way you acted with the best boss you ever had? *(This should help you realize that the way the best boss you ever had treated you had a great impact on your motivation and work product.)*

Why do we ask this question at this point in the course? *(It is to help you realize that your behavior as a leader has a major influence on your employees' actions and the potential success of your Teal transformation.)*

What can YOU start doing differently RIGHT NOW that can help you get what you want from your employees' behavior? *(Ask those same questions above to your employees and ask for their honest answers. They will be telling you EXACTLY how to get the best performance out of them. That can be a foundation of your Teal activities.)*

Albert Einstein said once (paraphrased), *“Insanity is doing things the way you always have and expecting different results.”*

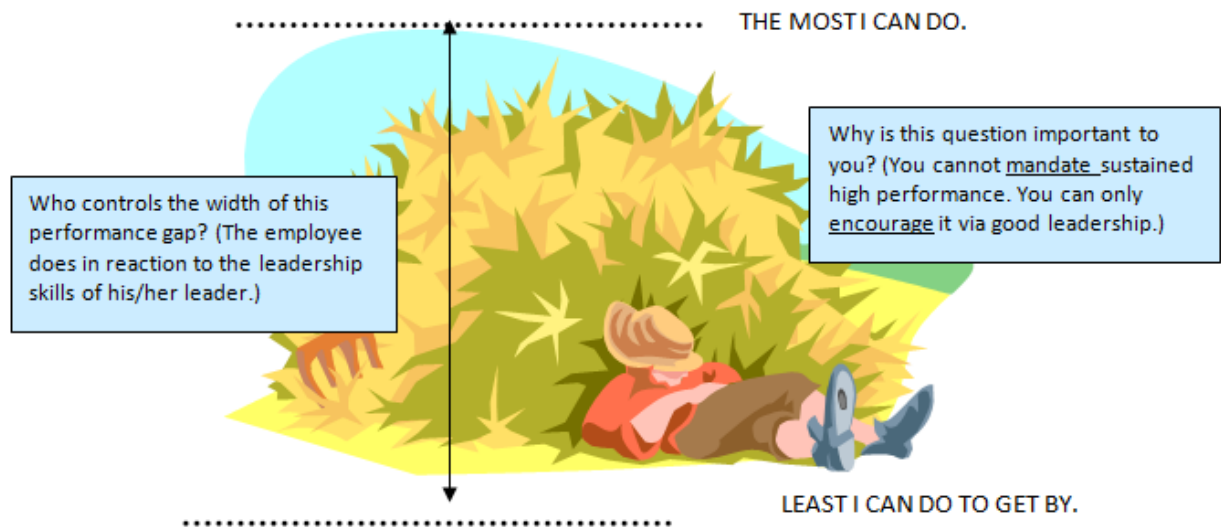


How does his statement apply to your preparation to lead the change into a Teal organization?? *(You cannot expect to change the results of your behavior without changing the behavior itself.)*

THINK ABOUT THIS: When you were in school, did you know what was the *least you could do to get by* and not get in trouble at home? How did you discover this? Did your parents tell you specifically what scores they wanted to see or was it less objective and something like, “We want to see a good report card” leaving it up to you to determine what you thought a ‘good report card’ looked like? Did you prefer to hear a specific number or something vague allowing you some negotiating room if necessary when the cards actually came out?



WHO DETERMINED WHETHER YOU DID THE LEAST YOU COULD DO TO GET BY OR THE MOST YOU COULD DO?



*“What is the difference in contribution between a top-performer and a below average performer at the same pay-grade?” (Answer =100%+) “What is the difference in pay?” (Answer = Between 5-10%)**

-1998 American Compensation Association “Attracting and Retaining Critical Talent Conference” A survey of 2,000 managers.

What Does This Possibly Mean? (It means there must be something more than just pay motivating top performers if their contribution – productivity – is over 100% more than below average performers but they only make 5-10% more salary.)



Think about this...

QUESTION: If people were paid 10% more, would they provide 10% more productivity?

If you think so, how long would they sustain that increased productivity?

When in your career has your work productivity increased with an increase in pay

AND STAYED AT THAT HIGHER LEVEL?

We will build these basic questions about productivity and morale into a measurable performance system for a Teal organization a little later. We are still building the foundation.

FIVE COMPONENTS OF MOTIVATION

If you want to motivate someone to improve performance over a period of time, these are the essential elements that you must make sure are present *in the mind of the employee*.

1. **Tell me what you expect of me** in *measurable* terms of quality, quantity, and time (or **Q, Q, T**) that reduce the risk of my confusion and help me clearly understand the desired outcome.



2. **Give me a chance to perform** (and learn from my mistakes, too.)
3. **Let me know how I am doing as I go along...** (Do you remember the report cards you got in school every reporting period? You did not have to wait until the end of the year to learn if you had passed or failed the grade.)



4. **Give me help and guidance when I need it.**

(However, do not hover over me or make me feel stupid for asking.)



5. **Reward me** with pay or praise when I succeed.

(Recognition is a powerful motivator. A wise leader finds out what kinds of recognition are important for his or her employees and makes an effort to reward them with something that has meaning to them when they achieve great things. We will show you how to determine an employee's key rewards a little later.)



#1. TELLING EMPLOYEES WHAT YOU EXPECT

The first element of motivation is to define your expectations so clearly there is no possibility that your employee does not understand what you want. As simple and obvious as that may sound, there is a lot more involved that many leaders – even with the best of intentions – overlook resulting in employee performance falling short of desired goals. Even when the employee really wants to get it right for their boss!

Let's look first at the values associated with having measurable goals.



What value do you think there is in having measurable goals?

(Specific measurables – in terms of QQT – make it easy to monitor progress toward their achievement.)

- What are some sources of stress in your work life? *(How about vague expectations regarding some of your work products?)*
- What are some measurable goals in your work life?
- What are some sources of stress in your home life?
- What are some measurable goals in your home life? *(Maybe weight and exercise numbers you try to maintain?)*



Do you think there are significant differences between **work pressure** and **work stress**? If so, how would you describe them?

(Many times work stress comes from “undefined” sources or vague expectations. For example, if your boss tells you to complete a financial proposal within a week, but you do not know what he expects in it or what it should look like, you will be stressed trying to meet his vague expectations. Even after you turn it in, you still worry because you do not know whether he will like it.

However, if you have done many financial proposals for him in the past, you still may feel some work tension and job pressure until you finish. However, once you turn it in, you are relieved because it is finished and you know you did a good job.)

List some activities associated with your job that you wish were defined more clearly regarding what your leader expects you to do. How does this lack of clarification affect you and your work?

Some job expectations that seem vague to me...	...have this impact on my productivity

Now that you have built some trust with your employees, ask them to fill out a similar one. Review your responses and theirs and use this course to help you clarify their job expectations. If you have done a good job of defining expectations, you should see an immediate increase in morale because you are showing genuine interest in their situations. And as their hesitation recedes, confidence grows, morale increases, **and productivity increases!**

(Also ask your boss for some clarity in his/her job expectations of you so your morale can improve, too. As employee morale increases, they work more confidently, and become more able to self-manage, the early signs of a Teal environment – see page 18 - can begin to emerge.)

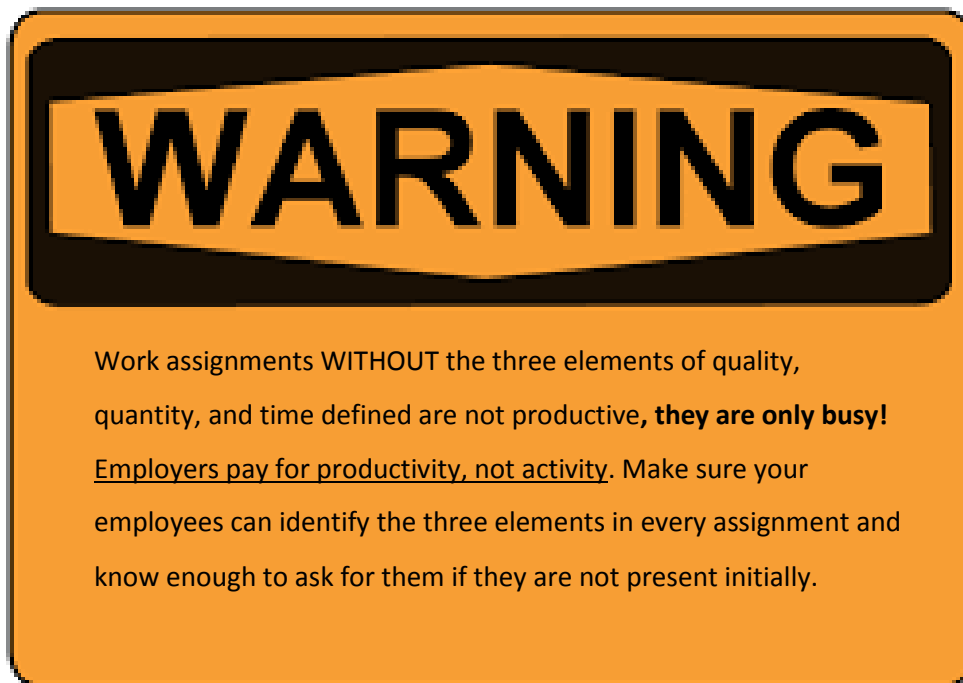
Let's look at some specific activities in your work life with expectations that you feel are clearly defined in terms of quality ("how good"), quantity ("how many"), and time ("finished by when").

Describe an activity associated with your job that <u>is clearly defined</u> and contains "quantity, quality, and time" components.		
The Quality component is:	The Quantity component is:	The Time component is:

How does **this clear definition** of what your leader expects affect your personal satisfaction and your work performance?

How does your work performance and personal satisfaction regarding this clearly defined task compare with the vague job expectations you identified on the previous page that are not defined as clearly?

Ask your employees to complete a similar chart of their jobs. Then analyze their performance outcomes comparing these activities with the ones they listed earlier that they thought were vague. Can you see any differences? (There should be clear improvements in performance with more clearly defined expectations.)



#2 GIVE ME A CHANCE TO PERFORM

In theory, this is very easy to do. **JUST GET AWAY FROM THEM AND LEAVE THEM ALONE!**

Many people, however, find this hard to do in practice. First, make sure you are satisfied that:

- They can do the job to the level you expect.
- They are willing to do it.
- You have clearly defined your expectations in terms of **quality, quantity, and time (QQT)**.
- They understand your expectations because you have asked them to tell you *in their own words* what you want. (Be careful here that you do not offend them by implying you do not believe they understood you. Say something like, *"I want to check to make sure I did a good job of explaining what I want. What do you think I was trying to say?"*)
- You have reminded yourself that the desired outcome is more important than *how they do it!* (Resist the temptation to insist they do it the way you would. Give them a chance to put their "stamp of ownership" on it.)
- They have adequate resources to accomplish the task.
- You have convinced yourself to *give them the chance to fail so they can learn*. For many people, a trial-and-error approach (called 'experimental' by others) is the best way to learn. As a leader, you must find a balance between allowing them that opportunity to learn by failing yet not let them fail so badly it neither harms their career *nor yours!*



#3 LET ME KNOW HOW I AM DOING AS I GO ALONG

It is essential there is a way for the employee to get feedback on his or her performance as they go along. Ideally, the method should be something where the leader does not have to keep telling them.



For example, if you were a production employee and had to produce **25 items** an hour with **zero defects** (remember **quality, quantity, and time**), would you prefer to learn that you were under performing by reading an instrument on the machinery or having your boss tell you?

Or, when you were in grade school, was it easier performance by keeping track of your test homework grades as you went along or would to get nothing back and wait until the end of to see how you did?



to manage your scores and it have been better the grading period

The more your employee can self-discover his or her performance results and make corrections as needed without your intervention, the more reliable and motivated they will become. (Naturally, you need to be aware of the ongoing production because you are ultimately responsible for the business unit and need to step in before disaster occurs. However, as long as the performance is above minimum standards, we recommend you not look over the shoulder of the employee unless it is to praise them.)

The only way employees can monitor their on-going performance is if their leaders provide a mechanism to do that just like you had in grade school.



Look at your employees' work environment and ask yourself, "How could they tell *at any given time* how they are doing *in every aspect of their expected performance* without me having to tell them"?

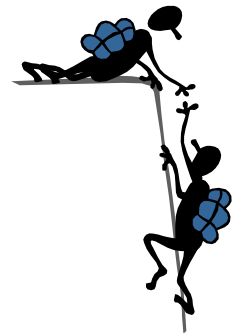
If there is no apparent method, then they cannot self-monitor themselves! It is very important to consider the terms *every aspect of their performance*. You pay the employee to do the entire job – not just part of it. Therefore, you must not be satisfied with measuring only the easily

observed (objective) behaviors such as calls taken per hour but must also measure the harder-to-define (subjective) behaviors such as customer service.

That is a major problem for many leaders but not for those taking this course. We will show you how to do it later.

#4 GIVE ME HELP AND GUIDANCE WHEN I NEED IT

There are several ways you can provide help and guidance to employees without eliminating their professional development opportunities. These will take a little time but are worth the effort. Consider these:



- *Take time to help them understand the “why” of something and let them figure out the “how” for themselves.* This gives them a chance to explore their imagination, display their initiative, and maybe find a new way to do something. An additional advantage is helping them discover a problem-solving process that works for them. This is more important than making them dependent on you for answers.
- *Make sure they have adequate resources, and then ask what effort they made to find the answer before coming to you.* ‘Resources’ can be reference books, on-line glossaries or tutorials, procedure manuals, training materials, etc.

When they learn your first question to them is “what did you do to find the answer”, and their answer is, “I came to you”, they will discover that you expect them to be problem solvers, not *problem passers*.

- *A good way of providing guidance while helping them to grow is by doing a role reversal when they ask for help.* Try asking, “If someone were not here to answer your question, what would you do? What options for action do you have? What are the risks associated with each? If your first attempt did not work, then what?”

Your intent here is to get them thinking of themselves as “empowered” to solve their own problems as long as it does not violate any company rules or policies. The more they discover they are capable of finding their own solutions, the less dependent they are on their leaders or peers.

#5 REWARD ME WITH PAY OR PRAISE WHEN I SUCCEED

People love to be recognized! It does not have to be an expensive recognition! A simple pat on the back with a sincere, “Nice Job” from you can mean the world to a hard-working, diligent, and reliable employee.



Here are some effective *and inexpensive* ways to provide pay or praise



for your employee. (The cost is not always most important to the employee. An inexpensive departmental birthday party often means so much to employees and their work team. Everybody likes to take a break from work and have some fun.)

- A \$10-20 gift certificate for a restaurant, a store, or for personal services such as haircut, nails, or car detailing
- An ‘employee-of-the-month’ picture on the wall next to a plaque.
- Public recognition of their achievement at the next departmental gathering
- An inexpensive 1st place trophy that can rotate among employees for placement beside their workstations for top productivity that month

An Internet search can provide many titles of books containing hundreds of great suggestions for inexpensive and effective ways to motivate employees.

WHAT WOULD MOTIVATE YOUR EMPLOYEES?

“WHEN YOUR EMPLOYEES GET WHAT THEY WANT, YOU’LL
GET WHAT YOU WANT!”

---Zig Ziglar, (Late) Motivational speaker

Here is another radical idea. Consider Zig Ziglar’s statement above, hand out some 3”x5” cards, and ask your employees what you could give them that would have the most value for them.

Tell them to keep in mind that you cannot hand out spot bonuses, private parking spaces, etc. (The author received comments like these from his employees: “A chance to learn more about what you do”, “a chance to lead some departmental meetings”, “public speaking opportunities”, “help me develop my career.” Nearly everything they mentioned did not cost money!)

While they are doing that, ask the same question about yourself. Compare the answers from you and your employees. Are you surprised?

What do <u>your employees</u> want in a work situation?	Does it cost money?	What do <u>you</u> want in a work situation?	Does it cost money?

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GIVING THEM THE FREE ITEMS TODAY?

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GETTING THE FREE ITEMS TODAY?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO GIVE THEM THE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT FREE?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO GET THE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT FREE?

DEFINING “HARD” AND “SOFT” MEASURABLES

Now that we understand the connection between clearly-defined expectations and morale, let’s look at how we can put objective measurements on nearly everything you expect from your employees’ performance. Remember, the more clearly your expectations are defined, the more confident they can work WITH LESS SUPERVISION while moving you toward a Teal environment.

Although many job expectations are sufficiently defined that employees can work confidently toward them, there are many that are critical yet difficult to measure objectively. Here are a few typical job expectations that are critical, often wrapped up in broader categories, frequently mentioned yet hard to measure objectively:

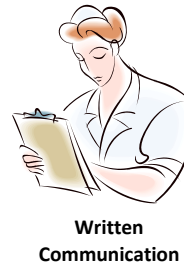
- Teamwork
- Pride in Work
- Customer service
- Communications Skills

When all is said and done about job expectations, it always boils down to the two kinds of measurables in the workplace:

- **“Hard”** measurables which are commonly associated with tangible items or specific behaviors such as processed documents, lines of programming code produced, project deadlines, or the speed of a pitcher’s fastball.
- **“Soft”** measurables, which are just as important but less tangible, are typically attitudes or non-specific behaviors like customer service, teamwork, oral communications, or professionalism.

Regardless of whether we are talking about hard or soft skills, the elements of QUALITY, QUANTITY, and TIME are critical in each case and can be measured with a little creativity.

How can you put a measurement on these topics?



1. Identify the **few key desirable behavioral traits** that demonstrate the topic. For example, if you wanted to measure “PRIDE IN WORK”, you first identify **behavioral traits** that indicate they have pride in their work.
 - a. There are no spelling errors.
 - b. It is always on time or before.
 - c. She always uses the proper format for the report.
 - d. There are no smudges or “white outs” on the form.
 - e. Her data is always accurate.
2. Establish a scale with a range of values for use with each trait. [This is a *Likert Scale*.]
 - 1 = I never see this
 - 2 = I sometimes see this (Make sure you and your employees agree on what ‘sometimes’ means)
 - 3 = I always see this
 - 0 = Does not apply
3. Then create a scale that converts the average of the trait scale to your performance assessment system.

Joan Smith's <i>Pride in Work</i> Evaluation	Scores
There are no spelling errors. (A behavioral trait)	3
It is always on time or before. (A behavioral trait)	2*
She always uses the proper format for the report. (A behavioral trait)	2*
There are no smudges or “white outs” on the form. (A behavioral trait)	3
Her data is always accurate. (A behavioral trait)	2*
Average score for the observation period	12/5= 2.4
* A wise leader will have documentation of the times when the employee did anything that would result in a less than perfect score because they will certainly ask about it.	

The XYZ Corporation's Employee Performance Scale

Performance scale ranges from 1.0 – 3.0:

1. < 2.0 requires probation
2. 2.0 – 2.3 = Satisfactory performance with lowest merit increase

3. $>2.3 - 2.5$ = Above satisfactory performance with medium merit increase
4. >2.5 = Outstanding performance and maximum merit increase

We have turned the previously vague “Pride in Work” requirement into a defensible, objective measurement. (‘Defensible’ is a very important concept with HR. They will be happy to see this!)

Now let's consider this soft measurement process for a potential Teal department. If you can get your employees comfortable with the concept of evaluating each other on some parts of the annual review process, you will gain several major results on the way to becoming Teal:

- When employees see they are being rated by their peers *using an instrument they helped to develop*, they become more accountable meeting their self-defined expectations.
- As they become more accustomed to providing input into their work processes, they will want other opportunities for input providing you the chance to introduce more and more Teal (here is a review of the Teal traits from page 18)
 - Built around *self-management* based on peer relationships with no need for a hierarchy or group consensus to make a decision
 - 'Wholeness' of the individual that means more than valuing logic, rationality, and objectivity but also the human being within that may value intuition and emotion
 - *Evolutionary* allowing the future to reveal itself based on the purpose of the organization and the success of the employees working toward that purpose instead of trying to force the future into a pre-determined schedule with stated objectives and a hard-dollar budget.



Review question: Why would you want to include your department employees in developing a performance scale for use on the annual performance assessment? (If they help develop the scoring system that you will use on them, they are more inclined to trust it.)

What risks are there in doing this? (They may say, "That's your job, boss. We do not want to!" The leader can counter this by saying, "Would you rather have some say in the way you are evaluated or just take a chance on what I come up with?" They will usually want to participate if that is the alternative. Or they may want to use standards that are too low. It is up to the leader to make sure the expectations cause them to stretch their efforts.)

Practice with your department in defining typically vague expectations with a list of behavioral observations such as "teamwork" like we have on the next page. Simply tell them what behavioral observations are by using 'Joan Smith's Pride in Work' example from page 43.

Then ask them to define some “Teamwork” traits that they would be willing to be judged on by their departmental peers on your organization’s annual performance assessment. (Again, make sure HR understands this BEFORE you take it to your employees.)

“TEAM WORK” traits that you want to see may be: (samples)

- Demonstrates willingness to help others when finished with own work without being asked.
- Demonstrates willingness to help others with less experience or confidence.
- Demonstrates willingness to give credit to others when praise is given.
- Demonstrates willingness to carry his/her fair share of the workload (and more at times if asked).
- “Positive outlook” because he/she always tries to say something, friendly or encouraging and never participates in gossip or negative comments about other employees.

The word ‘demonstrates’ and ‘saying something friendly’ are observable behaviors.

Do you think these are realistic traits?

What traits would work in your work place?

An example of how to obtain employee scores on this survey is on the next page.

Performance Assessment sample using a Likert Scale

After showing this to HR to insure compatibility with your existing review process, use it as an example for your employees of the way they would rate each other in the categories allowing peer input.

“John Smith is due for a performance assessment of his last 12 months of work. Part of **our company’s annual** Performance Assessment form requires an assessment of **TEAMWORK**. I need your help in determining his effectiveness in this portion. Please rate him based on your experience with him during this past assessment period and send it to me by (date).”

Please rate these situations from a 1-10 using this rating.	
1 = I <u>never</u> see that trait 2-3 See it <u>rarely</u> 4-7 See it <u>about half the time</u> 8-9 See it <u>very often</u> 10 = I <u>always</u> see that trait X = I do not know well enough for an opinion.	
(Use your own definitions for “rarely”, “half the time”, and “very often”).	
The trait we are looking for...	Your rating #
Willingness to help others when finished with own work without being asked.	
Willingness to help others with less experience or confidence.	
Willingness to give credit to others when praise is given	
Willingness to carry his/her fair share of the workload (and more at times if asked).	
“Positive outlook” because he/she always tries to say something, friendly or encouraging and never participates in gossip or negative comments about other employees.	

When you get the replies, average the scores and assign a value according to the system you have developed **with your employees**. (Use the ‘XYZ Corporation’s Employee Performance Scale’ guidelines on page 43 as a refresher.)

An additional note: do not worry about how they define “rarely”, “half the time”, and “very often”. The numerical score is more important than the actual definition. For example, as long as they select as number from 4-7 for “about half the time”, we really do not care how they verbally define it!

PERFORMANCE PROBLEM ANALYSIS FLOWCHART

Earlier on page 19, we talked about the need for executive buy-in for your experiment and a willingness to look for *what led to a problem* instead of a traditional 'search for the guilty'.

It's now time to introduce this flowchart that will help you work back upstream from the problem to discover what may have led to the employee's error. It is a series of questions that will help you isolate the source of the employee's performance problem. Use this series to make sure you have eliminated any possible reason why your employee does not perform. (Don't hesitate to share it with HR; they will be happy to see it.)

Before you begin
Ask yourself, "Is this issue worth pursuing?"



Question: How do you know if it is worth pursuing?

(If it interferes with productive work, it is worth pursuing! If it is only a nuisance or aggravation, but does not interfere with work, it may be best to leave it alone.)

If worth pursuing, go to STEP #1. If not, you are done! Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is "**sufficiently solved**." (This means it is not worth the time, effort, or expense to "fix it better".)

STEP #1

Ask yourself, "Are my expectations clear in terms of Q, Q, T??"



#1 Question: What do you ask your employee here?

("I want to make sure I did a good job of explaining what I want. Please tell me what you think that is in terms of quality, quantity, and time.")



If your expectations are clear, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

STEP #2
Ask yourself, "Are the resources adequate?"



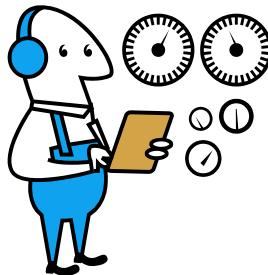
#2 Question: What do you ask your employee here?

("Do you have everything you need to do what I expect?")



If they have everything they need to do the job, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

STEP #3
Ask yourself, "Do they get fast and frequent feedback on their performance?"



#3 Question: What do you ask your employee here?

("How do you know how you are doing?")



If they can monitor their progress so they can tell how they are doing, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

STEP #4
Ask yourself, "Does the desired performance seem punishing?"
(Hint: What do you usually do if they finish early and **others have not finished yet?**)



#4 Question: What do you ask your employee (or yourself) about the situation here?

(If their "reward" for finishing early is you give them the work the slower people have not finished, you will soon have *no one* finishing early.)

You must praise the ones who finish early, let them know you documented their file that they finished ahead of the others, and ask if they will help the slower ones.

This way they do not feel that the slackers are getting away with anything)



If you are inadvertently punishing their positive behavior, what should you do? If you think you are not, go on to the next step.

STEP #5

Ask yourself, "Is poor performance rewarded somehow?" (Hint: What do you usually do if **they have not finished yet** but others have?)



#5 Question:

What do you ask your employee (or yourself) about the situation here?

(This is the opposite of above. If they are behind, let them know you documented their file that they were behind and you asked a faster worker to help pick up their slack.

This way, they realize they are not getting away with anything.)



If you are inadvertently rewarding poor performance, what should you do? If not, go on to the next step.

STEP #6

Ask yourself, "Is there any penalty for not doing it right?"



#6 Question: What do you ask your employee (or yourself) about the situation here?

("Is there any penalty for not doing it right?" If there were no penalty, why would they stop doing it?)



If there is a penalty, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

STEP #7

Ask yourself, "Is their non-performance a genuine skill deficiency?"



#7 Question:

What do you ask your employee (or yourself) about the situation here?

(Can they not do it or can they do it but just do not want to do it?)

#7A Question:

Have they ever done this in the past? (If so, give them practice to refresh their skills)

If they can do it but do not want to, jump to Step #10.



If it is a genuine skills deficiency, go on to the next step. If not sure, what should you do?

STEP #8

Ask yourself, "Can the task be made easier?"

If it can be done easier, do it. If not, go to the next step.

**#8 Question:**

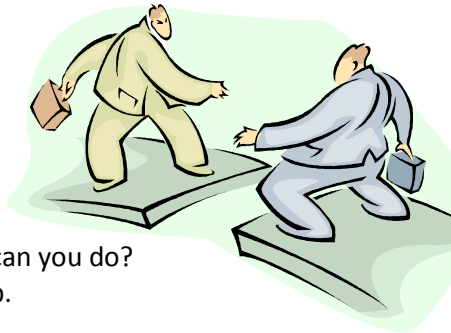
What do you ask your employee here?

("Can you think of any easier way you can do this?")

**STEP #9**

Ask yourself, "Are there any other obstacles?"

If there are other obstacles, what can you do?
If there are not, go to the next step.

**#9 Question:**

What do you ask your employee here?

("Can you think of anything keeping you from doing this?")

**STEP #10**

Ask yourself, "Does the person have the potential to change?"

Question: What do you ask your employee here?

("Do you have any plans to change your behavior?")

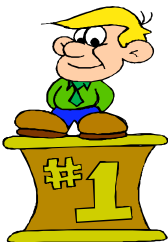




If they have the potential and desire to change, train them to the desired skill level. If they are not interested in changing, then encourage them to find a better job fit somewhere else: i.e., replace them.

Have you noticed that every step, except #10, is a factor controlled by management? Doesn't that mean there is a 90% probability that an employee's performance problem is caused by something controlled by management?

WHAT TALENT IS AVAILABLE?

Your plans for a successful Teal conversion rest with your employees. Take some time to assess each one and develop a chart with your thoughts on how you can maximize their participation in your new organization.

SUPER STARS	AVERAGE STARS	FALLING STARS
	 (Remember, this “average” group can move either way. It depends on your leadership skills!)	
Get them involved with as much planning and decision making as possible	Build their confidence by increasing responsibilities.	Consider revising how you look at your ‘Falling Stars’ performance by using the flow chart we just went through. There may be organizational reasons they are not performing to your standards. Also, focus on any embers of positive behavior that may be smoldering that you can coach back into flames. They may respond positively and pull themselves up out of this category.
Delegate extensively AND DON'T MICRO-MANAGE!	Give frequent and accurate performance feedback.	
Encourage them to teach others when possible.	Encourage them to ask others they look up to (your super stars) for help when they need it.	
Help them develop themselves with presentation, speaking, and writing courses.	Teach them how to set small goals initially and gradually make the goals bigger or more aggressive.	
Let them fill in for you while you are out. (Individually or share your tasks among them.)	Catch them doing something right and praise it.	
Challenge them with goals “above and beyond” normal expectations.	WHAT ELSE?	
Celebrate their successes with them.		
Frequently tell them how proud you are of their development.		
Spend time with them asking for their thoughts on departmental challenges.		
Promote them (if they are seeking promotion). Do not hang on to them just because they make your life easy!		

DEVELOPING YOUR AVAILABLE TALENT

The Teal organization gradually emerges as self-motivated employees increasingly understand what needs to get done and take steps to do it with minimal direction from their leaders. An effective means to speed that cultural emergence is if their leader has a solid understanding of delegation and empowerment. Nothing can develop an employee faster than giving them a specific assignment and the EMPOWERMENT NECESSARY TO COMPLETE IT.

There are many management topics that will teach you about coping in a world of rapid change, managing productivity, tips on goal setting, and the need for dividing the existing work among employees via delegation. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that a shared workload gets accomplished quicker with less wear-and-tear on each participant.

However, there aren't as many resources, though, that will help a manager (or "manager wannabe") understand the strategy of delegation that attempts to match the required work tasks with the available talent for maximum results of productivity. And, taking that view of delegation a step farther, the *empowerment* of employees to do the tasks also provides an opportunity for higher quality of results, the employee's development for the future and the chance for them to do bigger and broader tasks leading to career advancement.

Empowerment can create an employee mindset of "*I GET to do this*" resulting in increased productivity instead of "*I HAVE to do this*" usually producing minimal results – i.e., "what's the least I can do to get by" – associated with delegation.



Unfortunately, many view the concept of empowerment as a term coined to make people feel good about their assignment but really adds no value or specific meaning to the task at hand. Consequently, for many then, delegating and "empowering" are interchangeable: it just means getting someone else to do what you want them to do.

This section will help you understand there is a BIG difference between delegation and empowerment that goes way beyond feel-good concepts that can take you a long way toward becoming a Teal entity. Also, you will see us repeat some concepts previously covered for two reasons: repetition improves retention and to show you these concepts can be applied in a variety of situations.

IS IT EMPOWERMENT OR DELEGATING?

THINK ABOUT THIS: When you were in grade school, did you know the *least you could do to get by* and not get in trouble at home? How did you discover this?



Who determines whether you do the least you can do to get by or the most you can do? (Look back at the performance gap graphic on page 31.)

We mention this voluntary performance concept because that is a key part of empowerment. It creates an opportunity for the employee to decide how much above the least-they-can-do-to-get-by level they want to perform. The employee feels they “get the chance” to perform the task and are driven to perform by something *within them* regardless if the task is something seen as undesirable.

Empowerment requires the manager to know the employee well enough to know that something within this task will appeal to them because it contains the opportunity to learn something new, to use a unique skill or knowledge, or demonstrate a valuable competence such as managing a small project, creative writing, public speaking, etc. *In other words, something not typically associated with their existing job that they would like doing.* (This is a good time to go back to the “Best Boss” exercise on page 30 to focus narrowly on what has helped them perform at a high level in the past.)

The success of the task completion and recognition from the leader (and maybe their peers) is the intrinsic reward. Evidence from many studies indicates that empowered employees are more productive, satisfied, innovative, and create higher quality products and services than do employees who are not empowered to act. (And this is exactly the kind of employees who populate a Teal department!)

WHAT DELEGATING MEANS

Basically, delegating is breaking a large task down into components and assigning their completion to others because the time available for completion or the sheer size of the project requires more than one person's skills, knowledge, or involvement. This is how the work within organizations gets done.

We still call it delegation even if the manager offers an incentive to complete the task because the motivation to act is coming from outside of the employee, not from within them. None of the internal motivators of empowerment is present and the employee may feel they have to do something rather than getting to do it. It is more of a *pushing* effort from the manager to the employee while empowerment is akin to a *pulling by the employee* to get the chance to perform.

Advantages of Effective Delegation

There are certain advantages associated with delegation when done correctly. We explain the 'how' of delegation later; right now, we'll talk about the 'why'.

1. Time – It can increase the discretionary time available for the manager.
2. Workforce Development – It provides a hands-on laboratory for subordinates to learn and practice new skills.
3. Trust Development – This is an excellent way to show employees how much they are trusted.
4. Morale – Giving employees a chance to develop their skills and trusting them to do a good job can boost their morale and strengthen their commitment to the manager and the employer.
5. Decision making improves – The work of the department gets done by the employees, not the manager. Therefore, the closer the decision making gets to the actual work being done means better decisions can come from increased knowledge about the situation.

6. Productivity – More people working together to accomplish a common goal can mean a leap in productivity because the integration and scheduling of work can funnel through a single source of authority and delegation which is closer to the work.

Why Some Do Not Delegate

There can be as many reasons why managers do not delegate as there are managers in a given organization. Also, even if a manager wants to delegate some of the available tasks, there must be some competent employees to whom those tasks can be given. (We will cover the “WHO” and “HOW” of effective delegation later in this course.)

Even though there are specific advantages to delegating (see the previous section) and there are competent subordinates available, many people still do not for reasons such as:

1. Their View of Subordinates

In the 1960s, a well-known organizational theory thinker, Douglas McGregor, of the MIT Sloan School of Management developed his **Theory X & Theory Y**¹⁴ concept and suggested that the management culture of many organizations favored one approach or the other.

A “Theory X” manager, he stated, has a negative view of employees assuming they are lazy, untrustworthy, and incapable of assuming any responsibility. He or she thinks all prospective employees are only out for themselves and the sole purpose of the employee’s interest in the job is money.

¹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_McGregor

Their counterpart, a “Theory Y” manager, looks at employees differently. He sees them as being trustworthy, responsible for accomplishing their own work objectives, and capable of assuming high levels of motivation.

Many people interpret Theory Y as a positive set of assumptions about workers and that a close reading of *The Human Side of Enterprise*, the book from which this theory comes, reveals that McGregor simply argues for managers to be open to a more positive view of workers and the possibilities that it creates.

He based his work on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs¹⁵, grouped the hierarchy into “lower order” (Theory X) needs and “higher order” (Theory Y) needs, and suggested that management could use either set of needs to motivate employees.

The discipline of Organizational Development has grown a great deal since he published that work. We now recognize many variables between the two X-Y extremes but this classic still serves as a useful beginning about manager/mentor/developer approaches to their employees/trainees.

2. Personal Insecurities

Some managers fear they would lose the rewards and recognition associated with successful task completion if they shared the tasks with someone else. They feel they have spent many years “paying their dues” getting to their current positions and have learned many “trade secrets” that they are unwilling to share with others.

Also, they may not be very adept at defining measurable expectations (another reason we talked about them earlier) which makes it difficult for subordinates to achieve success if their managers cannot define what that success looks like.

¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs

Past experience with subordinates having difficulty with the manager's vague, incomplete, or inconsistent expectations may have led to uncomfortable confrontations as the assigned tasks missed schedules or failed to meet expectations. (Of course, the managers would never consider they had anything to do with the problems!) So now their attitude is, "if you want it done right, you have to do it yourself!"

3. A Need for Control

Some people just cannot let go of control even if they are ordered to do so. It is reasonable to consider that many managers with a strong need for control may subconsciously provide insufficient direction or project latitude so as to insure failure and prove their point that "only they can do the job right!" It is an example of a self-fulfilling prophecy¹⁶. (Many times, it is these very same managers who complain that they can never get a day off or take a vacation because they can't trust anyone else to "get it right".)

What Empowerment Means

"Empowerment" became a very popular word in the late 1980s business world. Unfortunately, it was used so broadly in management topics with any employee-related practice that it became a meaningless cliché. Even today, if a student of this course were to mention it to their employer, there is a strong possibility they would hear, "Oh, we tried that long ago and it was another one of those fads that didn't offer anything substantial."

This is a classic example of the phrase "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" because it sounds like such a simple concept that everyone immediately assumed they understood it. So when they tried to apply what they think it meant, the result was very likely much less



¹⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-fulfilling_prophecy

than they expected and they blamed the concept (naturally), never their lack of understanding it.

The concept of empowering someone means the subject (the person being empowered) has a sense of these five components:

- **PERSONAL COMPETENCE**
- **PERSONAL CHOICES**
- **HAVING AN IMPACT ON THEIR SURROUNDINGS**
- **SEEING VALUE IN WHAT THEY ARE DOING**
- **SECURITY**

We will develop each of these components sufficiently to allow the student the best chance to create an environment of empowerment in their world.

Risks and Rewards of Empowering Employees

If the benefits of empowering employees are so positive, why doesn't it happen more often?

The answer will become obvious after we explore the elements of empowerment a little farther.

Meanwhile, please consider that empowering someone requires these actions from the authority figure:

1. Giving someone the responsibility and authority to act independently ("Here's the outcome I want. I'll allow you this much latitude and authority to figure out how to get that outcome.")
2. Giving up a measure of control if the other is to act with confidence and independently.
3. A willingness to allow the empowered person to fail. (We mean enough failure to provide a learning experience but not so catastrophically that the employer or employee is at financial, physical, or career risk.)
4. There must be sufficient planning involved beforehand to define the parameters within which the empowered employee can act independently. (*"You can spend up to \$X on this project and make decisions up to this specific threshold of budget, delivery date, maximum number of participants, etc."*)

5. A willingness to accept an outcome that may be satisfactory but different from what was expected.
(When the manager says, “Oh, I never expected THAT” but is willing to accept it.)
6. A willingness to allow someone else to get the credit for a successful project.
7. An understanding this is not a zero-sum situation: i.e., the more responsibility and authority to act that I give to you DOES NOT MEAN that I have proportionally less of each.
8. If something goes wrong, not to blame the employee but to examine first if the authority figure may have contributed to it through: (remember the performance problem flow chart on page 48)
 - a. Providing inadequate resources or directions
 - b. Failure to define clearly expectations
 - c. Failure to define clearly the limits of authority and responsibility
 - d. Or take the blame entirely and use it as a learning experience for the employee and the authority figure

It is evident from these eight actions that managers who focus more on control of their employees than developing them will have great difficulty adapting to the concept of empowerment.



THINK ABOUT THIS

When you have received tasks from your manager, how many of the eight actions above do you think were present? What makes you think so?

If you are currently a manager, how many of these eight actions are part of your typical assignments to employees?

How satisfied are you with the typical results of those assignments?

Do you see any correlation between the average outcome of those assignments and the number of those eight actions you typically include?

Reviewing Motivation

Since the heart of the Teal organization is a self-motivated employee, it is appropriate to review the motivation element briefly again. It is evident that empowering a subordinate with an assigned task requires a subordinate who is willing – and capable - to take it on. So if there is no guarantee of success, what elements must be present to create an environment in which an employee would be willing to assume the task and work in an attitude of commitment (“doing all I can to be successful”) rather than compliance doing the least they can do to get by.

Once again, what is “Motivation”? Essentially, it is the unspoken answer people hear when they ask themselves **“Why would I want to do that”**, or **“What’s in it for me?”** If their internal answer gives them a good reason to act, they will. If not, they will not.

The unspoken answers to internal questions are typically something like this:

Situation	Internal Question	Internal Answer and Action (the motivation)
Seeing new clothes for sale at the mall	<i>“Why would I want to spend that much for a suit?”</i>	“Because it will make me look so good!” and buy it or “I need the money for something else that I want more” and not buy it.
Your boss asks for volunteers to work late	<i>“Why would I want to do that?”</i>	“Because I want to get off early next week to see my child’s game” and volunteer or “I don’t like him/her – why should I help?” and not volunteer.
You see a charity asking for donations	<i>“Why would I want to donate to that?”</i>	“Because it makes me feel good to help others” and donate or “Nobody helped me when I needed it” and do not donate.
You see a potential problem coming up at work that no one else sees.	<i>“Why would I want to tell the boss about this?”</i>	“Because I like my boss and this is a good place to work” and tell someone or “If my boss and this company doesn’t care about me, why should I care about them?” and stay quiet.
What have you seen recently in your work?	<i>What would be the question?</i>	What are the choices of actions?

There can be as many reasons why people are motivated to act (or not act) as there are people. Some of the more common reasons include:

- I *materially* gain from it (money or property)
- I *emotionally* gain from it (it makes me feel good)
- I *spiritually* gain from it (it heartens my soul)
- I *psychologically* gain from it (enhances my reputation or self-image)

If you are planning to empower someone to complete an assignment, ask yourself first “what’s in it for them to do it?” Then use that answer as part of your presentation of the assignment.

Personal Competence

The foundation for empowerment from the *subject's viewpoint* is they must be able to say confidently, **"I AM CAPABLE OF THIS!"** The foundation from the *manager's viewpoint* is *"what do I need to provide so they will feel capable of doing it?"*

The easiest way to explain this is to use a work example. Suppose you know that your department will be updating some of its drafting equipment in nine months. This project is very important from a business perspective (we must maintain productivity) but not very large in terms of expenses, materials, and scheduling. You know that you could easily handle it along with your other duties as the department manager but you see it as an excellent opportunity to develop project management skills in Logan Grant, one of your high-potential employees. Since you have just completed this 'Creating a Teal Engineering Culture' course, you realize a critical component of empowering someone is *they must feel they are capable of doing it*.

Now the question becomes, *"What can I do to help Logan believe she is capable of managing that project?"* Some possibilities could include:

- Send her to a Project Management Introductory class to help her get a feel for the 'big picture' of the project and understand its component parts
- Send her to a Negotiating Skills class so she can learn how to deal effectively with vendors and any other stakeholders in the project
- Send her to a Meeting Management Skills class so she will learn how to hold effective meetings as the project moves along
- Send her to a Presentation Skills class so she will learn how to put together and make effective presentations to groups – especially the executives if you are trying to groom her for more responsibility.
- Spend time teaching her your employer's budgeting process so she understands where the money came from to purchase the equipment and what accounts are included in the on-going operations

- Suggest she work with the training department and the equipment vendor to develop and schedule any training that maybe required insuring a smooth transition from the old equipment to the new.

What else would you do in your organization to help Logan become capable of managing this project for you?

Personal Choices

This is as much about the manager's ability to maintain a "hands-off" approach on project planning and execution as it is about Logan's desire to put her own stamp of ownership on it.

The manager's obligation to maintain a hands-off approach assumes these four conditions exist as a minimum:

1. **The expected project outcomes are clearly defined in measurable terms of quality, quantity, and time.** (The greater the potential for ambiguity means the greater the risk of failure

Suppose the project is about replacing 10 old drafting workstations with 10 new ones and training the users on the new equipment and software. Since the workstations are much smaller than the older ones resulting in a smaller footprint per workstation, you also want to reconfigure the department layout into one that is more traffic-friendly and will also allow you to add some storage.

Some of your clearly defined measurable expectations may be something like these.

The project completion date is 5:00 PM, Friday, October 15 of this year [this is a time specification].

'Completion' means:

1. As of the completion date & time, all new equipment and software has been installed, tested, and certified by the vendor and the PM as ready for the next business day.

2. All [a quantity spec] users are 100% proficient [a quality specification] in the skills they must have to complete their work assignments on the new equipment/software
3. There is 0% drop in productivity [quantity] during the transition that can be attributed to the project
4. There are \$0 cost overruns (quantity) unless tied to an approved (quality) change order
5. There is a minimum of 50 cubic feet (quantity) of new storage available in the department
6. There are no 90° corners (a specific measurable) in the new traffic flow for ease of moving future equipment.

If those are the clearly-defined expectations, then it is Logan's decision about:

- How to apply the skills learned in the various training classes to the execution of the project
- How and when to schedule the training of the users
- When to schedule project meetings, what to discuss, and who to invite
- Working with the layout designer to decide where the storage should be and what it looks like.
(Will it be one 50 c.f. space, five 10 c.f. spaces, ten 5 c.f. spaces or some other combination?)

It is essential that you as the manager remember that, *although her way of doing it may not be just like you would have, you must be satisfied with the outcome if the results meet your requirements.*



(Besides, there is always the possibility she may discover a better way of doing something. That can only make you look good, too, because you allowed her the opportunity to discover it!)

Your job as the manager is to specify WHAT you want done (using quality, quantity, and time terms) and to EMPOWER the employee to decide HOW TO DO IT.

2. The employee has expressed confidence in their capability of performing.

If you tell her about the project and then send her to the training classes mentioned on page 62, she will know what questions to ask in class as she looks ahead to using the skills on the job. After each class, spend some time asking her what topics were covered in class that she expects to encounter

on the project. This way, she is seeing herself in the future role and knows she has received some preparation for it.

You do not have to ask specifically, “do you feel confident in your ability to do this?” Her comments about the classes and the learning that occurred will convey all you need to know.

3. The manager and employee have agreed upon a monitoring process.

It is essential that you both realize that although she is the project manager, you as the department manager are ultimately responsible for the success of the project because it was your decision to select her to do the job.

Since you are ultimately responsible, it is reasonable that you would require some feedback process that would allow you to monitor the progress without standing over her shoulder and micro-managing each step.

Take time to identify and put in place various methods of monitoring the project from a distance well before the assignment starts. This may be regular activity reports, being copied on communications to team members, vendors, and stakeholders, and receiving copies of minutes from project meetings.

Working together with her to set this up before the project begins provides several benefits:

- She knows you are still watching although from a distance. This helps to keep her focused on the tasks at hand.
- This is a tacit agreement saying to her, “As long as you keep me informed via our agreed methods, I’ll stay at a distance and allow you to run it as you see fit.”
- You are assuring her of the latitude to make decisions and act within the boundaries you have established without interference from you. When things work well, she gets the credit. When they do not work so well, she also gets the credit and must take steps to resolve the problem.
- You both understand the purpose of the particular monitoring method and (may) have worked together to devise a method to collect the desired data. This collaboration reinforces her feeling of being competent.

4. The manager has identified a “safety net” that will prevent catastrophic outcomes

Even though you as the department manager are ultimately responsible for the outcome of the project, it is essential that you allow Logan sufficient latitude to explore new opportunities, to try different methods, and to follow her developing instincts when dealing with project issues. As a rookie project manager, there will be many times when she does something differently than you would have, in a sequence that’s different from what you would have done, or in a way that is completely wrong for the situation.

Although it may be tempting to jump in and correct as soon as you see what is happening, it is also important to remember how people learn. For many of us, the trial-and-error approach provides the best learning experience (have you ever touched a “wet paint” sign to see if the paint is still wet?) This is why we put training wheels on bicycles and insist that our children wear helmets and, in some cases, elbow and knee pads in case they fall off.



The trick here is for the manager to establish some ‘safety net’ conditions for the project that will allow enough latitude for Logan to fall, maybe get bruised a little, but not sustain any serious injury to her career, your career, or to the employer.

As an example, suppose you are monitoring the schedule. You know that you could allow it to slip as much as 2 weeks and still recover with a little bit of focused effort on your part. However, you also realize that a little embarrassment is a good teacher so you are willing to set a slippage safety net of one week before you call Logan in to discuss the problems. Since you and she know you have given her as much preparation to manage the project as could be reasonably be expected, and that you have kept your hands out of things, it would be a little uncomfortable for her to explain that there are schedule problems, where they came from, and why they happened.

From a teaching standpoint, let me assure you that students making **new** mistakes as they learn are a sure sign of progress. It is when they keep repeating the old ones that learning stops.

So when you have a meeting with Logan about problems that have come up, be sure you always ask, **“What do you think LED TO THE PROBLEM?”** Phrasing it that way reinforces the cause-and-effect relationship inherent in all problems and forces her to look back upstream to the problem’s source. She should realize that she cannot do things the way she always did and expect different results.

Never ask, **“What did you do wrong?”** because that always leads to excuse making and little learning takes place. People become so caught up in avoiding blame that the conversation quickly deteriorates into finger-pointing and responsibility avoidance.



Having an Impact on Their Surroundings

This is very self-explanatory and does not require much explanation here. Basically, it means the empowered employee wants to feel their project will make a difference in their surroundings. “Making a difference” doesn’t always mean the same thing for everyone. It may mean leaving a legacy by initiating a new procedure or practice. Someone else may think making a difference means how you have touched the lives of others. A bottom-line oriented person may think it means a financial gain, getting a bonus, or establishing a new product or market.

Do not assume that the employee shares your view of what it means to make a difference. It would be wise to hear their definition before the project starts because you can use it as a booster during times when the project hits a rough patch and they are feeling a little less confident. “Don’t forget, you’re blazing a path into new territory when you get this project finished and implemented” can be a powerful motivational tool for an employee that defines ‘impact on their surroundings’ as leaving a legacy for others to follow.

Seeing Value in What They Are Doing

This is very similar to the previous topic and simply means they don't want to feel as if they are wasting time on something meaningless or that they do not appreciate. The value of most projects are self-evident to those in authority who authorize it but may not be as clear to those assigned to it. Spending some time with the designated project manager explaining the value of the effort assures a greater chance of total buy-in by the PM.

A Sense of Security

Security as it relates to empowerment is about the employee feeling secure in the assignment. In other words, it's about the extent of the trust that exists between the manager and the employee in areas like these:

- **"Can I trust you to allow me to work without standing over me and/or second-guessing my decisions?"**
- **"Can I trust you enough to be consistent with the latitude you have given me?"** In other words, do not say, "Choose whatever you think is the best choice" today and then tomorrow follow up asking, "Shouldn't you have selected A instead of B?"
- **"Can I trust you to keep things I tell you in confidence as confidential?"**
- **"Can I trust you to stand up for me if problems arise and the executives are concerned?"**
- **"Can I trust you to make sure people who are supposed to deal with me such as project stakeholders or vendors come to me and don't do end-runs around me getting to you?"**
- **"Can I trust that you'll give me the credit I have earned on a successful completion of this project?"**
- **What other issues of trust can you think of?**

Burn this statement about trust into your memory chip! People have to learn they can trust you before they will. Always try to make it as easy as possible for them to do that.

Trust is historic. People have to learn through experience they can trust you.

Empowered Delegating – The Best of Both Worlds

If **delegating** means we can do more by spreading the available work among competent others and **empowerment** means they have an inner drive to do the best they can on the assignment, then combining the two concepts should give us the best possible situation. Now that we have defined delegation and empowerment, we will look at things to consider about deciding when to delegate, to whom should you delegate, and how to do it effectively.

When to Delegate

Obviously, a smart manager does not just arbitrarily assign tasks to randomly selected employees; there must be some rational planning involved first as they consider these five factors. (Note: these factors apply equally to work teams or individuals.)

Empowered delegation only occurs when there are positive responses to each of these questions:

1. Do they have the necessary training or experience to act effectively?

In many cases, the employees are closer to the work than are their managers. Therefore, they probably know more about the details of the work, the daily issues, constraints, and opportunities than do the managers. There should be a high probability they meet this criteria for delegation.

2. To what extent is their commitment to success critical to the project?

Look back on page 54 when we talked about where people work within a performance gap. The more that their commitment to success is vital (the “most they can do” side of the performance gap), the more they must be included in the decision-making process. This helps them develop a

sense of ownership in the outcome and they will work well above the “least-I-can-do-to-get-by” level.

Obviously, the more people who are involved in decision-making means more time is spent reaching that decision *but it also means* that less time is spent in execution after a decision is reached and less rework is necessary. The net gain can easily work in favor of project progress if a decision can be reached by all concerned quickly.

3. How will this assignment contribute to the development of the employees?

Take time to show the employees that working on this task will help them increase their value to the organization by learning new skills and getting a chance to demonstrate competencies beyond their existing assignment.

Note: It is important that delegation be seen by the employees as a normal part of the work that we do routinely and not just when the boss gets backed up and is under some pressure. If that’s the case, it will be seen as just dumping excess work resulting in a “least-I-can-do-to-get-by” employee attitude that may include some rework, clock-watching, and minimal enthusiasm.

The sense of commitment from employees and the associated high quality and productivity only comes as they view the opportunity as “the most I can do” because there is something in it for them in terms of skills development and possible career growth.

4. Do we share common values and perspectives?

Maximum productivity and efficiency only occurs when all involved share a common work ethic, similar values, a clear understanding of the project’s expectations and its associated responsibilities and distribution of authority.

5. Is there enough time available to do a decent job of delegating?

Look back to the preparation for our sample employee, Logan, that we discussed beginning on page 62.

To Whom Should You Delegate?

Basically, these critical questions must be considered as a minimum as you decide on the delegate(s) whether it is an individual or a team:

1. Do we have the talent available that can be developed to perform successfully?

“Development of the talent” means:

- A. considering the performance level required for successful task execution
- B. analyzing the existing skills of the potential delegates
- C. determining if adequate training is available to close the gap between the skill level they will need and the level they have currently
- D. deciding if there is sufficient time and money available for the training necessary

2. What will become of their current responsibilities?

- A. If the new assignment will take all of their time for the duration of the project, what happens to their current work?
 - a. Do you give it to someone else? If so, to whom? How do you know they can do it? Can they do their existing work and this work, too? Does this increased work load include additional pay, rewards, or benefits? (Think about the performance gap on page 54 and if you want the least-they-can-do-to-get-by or their best performance.)
 - b. Do you put it on hold? If so, for how long? What determines how long it can be set aside?
- B. If the new assignment will take part of their time, what part of their existing work do they set aside? If a conflict arises about there being time enough to only perform one task, do they work on the existing job or the temporary project? What are the rules for deciding on what gets done?

3. What potential new assignment could be waiting with the successful completion of this project?

If the project works out well, it is reasonable for the delegate to assume that some career enhancement opportunities may open up either immediately or in the near future. Make sure you have identified what the potential rewards of success may be before initiating the project and make sure you follow through afterwards

Delegating Effectively

Once you have identified to whom you will delegate the tasks, the next step is to make sure the assignment is as successful as it can be. These guidelines will help you make sure that happens.

1. Clearly define the “must haves” for success before they begin. Every project has its share of details that are “must have” as well as those which are “would be nice to have.” As we mentioned earlier, focus on the WHAT YOU MUST HAVE in terms of quality, quantity, and time and let your person control the HOW to do it. We separate the must haves from the would-be-nice-to-have because mixing them all together may dilute the sense of priorities in the eyes of some with minimal experience. Don’t add to their anxiety on the front end of the project.

If you have helped them prepare for this opportunity and give them periodic feedback on how they are doing, there is a strong likelihood that you will get everything you want in the outcome.

2. Clearly define the boundaries and expectations of the delegation. Take plenty of time thinking about this before you make the delegation assignment because the more times you have to go back to them with another restriction you forgot to mention, the greater the loss of their enthusiasm and the effectiveness of the development opportunity for them.

Typical boundaries would include:

- a. Project completion date and interim milestones
- b. Budget and spending authorization level (if appropriate)
- c. Reporting structures of individuals if this is a team
- d. Documentation requirements (what reports, who gets them, and how often)
- e. Approval or authorization requirements
- f. Organizational ethical standards and policies
- g. What else would be appropriate in your organization?

Typical expectations would include:

- a. Regular update meetings with superiors
- b. Resolving conflicts within the team

- c. Making recommendations for action when issue is beyond the authority of the delegate.
(For example, if we must choose between 3 software packages for purchase on a part of this project, you expect the PM to make a recommendation for the desired one and not to just drop data about the three products on your desk and say, “Here boss – pick the one you think we need.”)
 - d. You model the desired behavior you want to see in your team mates on the project
 - e. What else would be appropriate in your organization?
3. Determine the level of delegation before you begin. There are five levels of increasing initiative that you can permit in a delegation situation. Also, you can change the level as the project unfolds but you must be aware of the consequences if you do.

If you go up the scale toward allowing more initiative and discretion based on their performance, you will see increased morale and performance because of their greater self-confidence. They will see this as a gesture of increased trust from you and will (generally) do everything they can to preserve it and earn even more.



If you start higher in the scale and move downward reducing the amount of initiative and discretion you will permit, you will diminish their morale and enthusiasm for the project. They will see it as a reduction of trust in them and have difficulty maintaining self-confidence.

The five levels of delegation are:

1. Wait to be told what to do
 2. Ask what you are to do
 3. Make recommendations for action but take none until authorized to do so
 4. Take action and report immediately what you have done
 5. Take action as needed and report routinely
4. Allow participation in the delegation of assignments. Let the delegate participate as much as possible in the selection of team members or assignment of tasks within the project. This increases their sense of ownership in the process which builds morale and self-confidence.

5. Match the responsibility with the authority to accomplish what you will allow them to do. (Look back at the five levels of delegation.)
6. Make sure they and you work through the organizational structure. When reporting up to you or you are communicating down to them, make sure communication goes through the chain of command. This also goes for people outside of the project. Insist that any communication with the PM from outside of the project goes through you instead of directly to them unless you have defined that specifically. (See #2 above – Boundaries and Expectations – where you many have agreed the vendors can talk directly to the delegate with a written summary of the conversation to you.)
7. Make sure there is adequate support and resources available for the delegated assignment. In addition to the obvious ‘resources’ criteria, make sure the delegate gets credit publically and blame privately. Give them as much publicity as you can.
8. Focus their accountability on results, not intentions. This ties back to the clearly defined outcome requirements in terms of quality, quantity, and time. Be as encouraging as possible with them about their intentions but also make it clear that you are expecting concrete results.
9. Delegate routinely – not just when the work backs up. Remember, the two reasons for delegation are to spread the workload so more gets done in the same amount of time and the *development of your employees*. If they see that delegation only happens when your work gets backed up, they will view the assignment as a burden, not an opportunity and their performance will reflect that perception.
10. Avoid upward delegation from the subordinates. There may be times when the delegate attempts to shift the responsibility back up to you. The level of delegation you have selected (#3 in this section) will determine how much of the responsibility you should accept. Remember to match their responsibilities with the level of delegation.
11. Clarify consequences and rewards before the project begins. Define what the delegate can expect in terms of consequences and rewards as much as possible before the project begins. Attempting to do

it on the fly as the project evolves will give the impression that you haven't thought this through very much beforehand and will have a negative impact on their morale, confidence, and productivity.

TEAL PRACTICES WHEN YOU'RE READY

Finally we are at the point where we try to wrap this entire course up into something useful on your job long after earning your PDH credits. This was written for use as a guidebook for someone like you with the imagination, energy, self-confidence, and sufficient faith in human beings to believe the workplace can be someplace people will say “they **get to** work there”, not “**have to** work there”.

I've tried to boil all of this down into a concise couple of pages that I know engineers would prefer to have available. So after seventy-plus pages in dialogue, graphics, and 'complete-the-statement' exercises, here is a suggested sequence that should get you off to a good start.

First, make sure you have developed a strong, credible, and trustworthy relationship with:

- Your leaders, your peers, and your employees (look back at page 22)
- other departments with whom you interact
- ***and especially the HR department***

Next, consider implementing these Teal practices that we described. (Maybe not all at once, take your time. You want to get it right the first time.)

1. Obtain executive buy-in. Maybe not at the very top but at least as high in your division as you can go. (Look back at page 19)
2. Obtain HR buy-in to the extent they're willing to allow your unorthodox interactions with your employees such as:
 - a. Discovering what would motivate your employees (page 41)
 - b. Allowing employees to evaluate each other on some parts of the annual performance reviews (page 45)
 - c. Using a performance problem flowchart to get to the source of problems (page 48)
3. Become a teacher for your employees and share some of the content you got here by:
 - a. Introducing the QQT elements of any assigned task so they understand it well enough to:
 - i. realize they are judged and paid by their productivity, not just activity

- ii. ask for the three elements defined when receiving tasks from you in case it is not immediately clear
(Hint: The more you teach it, the better you will understand it.)
 - b. Teach them how to define “soft” job requirements using specific behavioral traits and work as a group to assign Likert Scale scoring to those traits (page 43)
 - c. Teach them how to use the performance problem analysis flowchart (page 48) to identify the source of any performance challenges they may be having. If they can identify them and bring them to you, it empowers them greatly.
 - d. Introduce some of the same introspection topics that you used. These can help their self-awareness and improve overall self-image (22)
 - e. Use the ‘complete-the-statement’ tools such as ‘Best Boss’ (page 30), vague job expectations (page 35), and ‘what can I give you’ (page 41)
 - f. Explore delegation and empowerment opportunities with all of them because you’re trying to grow a team of all-stars (page 52).
4. Read and re-read frequently the entire section about delegation and empowerment (starting page 54) because that will be a big part of your success in creating a Teal environment.

If you can implement these basic practices for at least three months, you will be well on your way to creating a Teal culture in your organization. It will not be long until you are implementing new practices developed from your experience and peers will be coming to you for advice on how to get their employees as productive as yours.