Leading Teams:
Opportunities and Challenges

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Stanford
April 2, 2015
What Brought Us Here?

• Interested in:
  – Conflict and how to resolve it
  – Implementing strategies for avoiding conflict
  – Understanding what makes great collaborations and teams successful
  – Sharing those elements that contribute to successful participation in and leadership of collaborations and multidisciplinary research teams
Diversity of Cultures
Physicians vs Basic Scientists

• Need for immediate action vs avoiding a rush to judgment
• Adherence to standards of practice vs encouragement to challenge existing paradigms
• Respect for hierarchy and expert authority vs encouragement to critique accepted wisdom
• Errors as mortal threats vs inevitable manifestations of the creative process
• Application of scientific knowledge vs discovery of...
• Focus on unique vs focus on common
• Uncontrollable studies vs controllable studies
• Commitment to the physician's oath vs commitment to the search for truth
• Suits and ties vs jeans and t-shirts
• Perceptions and frames of reference

Part of a Great Team

When you ask people about what it is like being part of a great team, what is most striking is the meaningfulness of the experience. People talk about being part of something larger than themselves, of being connected, of being generative. It becomes quite clear that, for many, their experiences as part of truly great teams stand out as singular periods of life lived to the fullest. Some spend the rest of their lives looking for ways to recapture that spirit.

Morning Session

• What is a Team?
• Stages of Team Development
• Critical Elements:
  – Trust, Vision, Setting expectations
• What gets in the way?
  – Conflict and Productive Collision
  – Barriers to Speaking Up
• Identifying Strengths
What is a Scientific Research Team? 
......think of it as a continuum.....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Interaction and Integration</strong></td>
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**Investigator-initiated research**
Investigator works on a scientific problem – largely on his or her own.

**Research Collaboration**
- Group works on a scientific problem, each bringing some expertise to the problem.
- Each member works on a separate part, which are integrated at the end.
- The interaction of the lead investigators varies from limited to frequent with regard to data sharing or brainstorming.

**Integrated Research Team**
- Team works on a research problem with each member bringing specific expertise to the table.
- There are regular meetings and discussions of the team’s overall goals, objectives of the individuals on the team, data sharing, and next steps.
- One person takes the lead while other members have key leadership roles in achieving the goal.
Collaboration Introduces Threats

- Group-Identity
  - Independent
  - Self-Identity

- Status
- Power
- Autonomy

High Interaction and Integration
Multiple Interdependent Leaders
Dr. Bench and Dr. Klinik

CASE STUDY
Discussion

• Trust

• Vision

• Expectations
Model of Team Development

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing
- Adjourning
  and
- Transforming

Bruce Tuckman, 1965, 1977
Model of Team Development

- Adjourning and Transforming
- Forming
- Norming
- Performing

**Threats:**
- Power
- Status
- Autonomy

**Challenges:**
- trust, personality styles, style under stress, style in conflict, competition for power, autonomy, status, language, culture, and poor listening

Bruce Tuckman, 1965, 1977
Storming

“We felt we had built up a better understanding by clarifying, justifying and arguing.”

Braken and Oughton, Trans Inst Br Geogr, 2006
Trust
Types of Trust

• *Calculus based trust* – built on calculations of the relative rewards for trusting or losses for not trusting

• *Identity based trust* – built on an assumption of perceived compatibility of values, common goals, emotional/intellectual connection

• *Competence based trust* – built on the confidence in people’s skills and abilities, allowing them to make decisions and train others
Trust and Risk Taking

“Intellectual egos may be fragile and within our group we...felt that we were taking risks.”

“It was important to be able to expose disciplinary ignorance, acknowledge weaknesses, and build on strengths.”

Braken and Oughton, Trans Inst Br Geogr, 2006
Trust
Trust and the Team

• Trust goes hand-in-hand with your scientific confidence in the results generated by your:
  – Postdoc, Fellow, Collaborator, Colleagues, etc...

• If trust is never established or damaged once formed...confidence will slip

• The relationship itself drives your perception of other’s technical and intellectual abilities
Vision
Developing a Shared Vision

• Everyone can describe the “big picture”
• Each team member can state his/her research goal and how it relates to the “bigger picture”
• Have the group discuss each members accomplishments and challenges in achieving the goal – and how they relate to the overall mission
• Instill ownership of roles and responsibility for attaining goals
• Team accepts responsibility and accountability for both accomplishments and failures – without blaming.
Leaders Set Clear Expectations

Provides a scaffold for building deeper trust
There are no secrets or surprises and there is a strong platform for discussion

• Communication
• Regular Meetings with Clear Agendas
• Conduct of Investigation, Research…
• Authorship
• Technical Support
• Career Development
• Evaluation Criteria, etc….  

Photo by mark goble (Flickr: 2005-07-18 17-32-30) [CC BY 2.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)], via Wikimedia Commons
Setting Expectations:
The “Welcome To My Team” Letter

Provides a scaffold for building deeper trust

• What I expect of you
• What you can expect of me
• What to do if we disagree
Prenuptials for Scientists: Collaborative Research Agreements

Categories to cover

• Goals and Vision of the Collaboration
  o Including...when is the project/collaboration “over”?  
• Who Will Do What?
  o Expectations, responsibility and accountability
• Authorship, Credit
  o Criteria, attribution, public comment, media, IP
• Contingencies and Communicating
  o What if ...? and Rules of engagement
• Conflict of Interest
  o How will you ID conflicts? And resolve them?
All Teams Face Obstacles

Different paradigmatic or operating assumptions

FRAMES - Stereotypes that privilege one way of knowing and doing over others

Lack of recognition of others’ expertise

Institutional disincentives

Mistrust

Lack of process skills

Conflict, misunderstanding & dismissal of others’ views
Imagine you have just formed a new team....

• How would you begin to build trust?
  – How would you work to sustain it over time?
• What steps would you take to develop a shared vision?
  – Initially? One year from now?
  – Who will be involved?
• What process would you use to start setting expectations?
  – How will they be communicated?
  – How would team members hold each other accountable?
• What other conversations do you need to have or decisions do you need to make as a group initially?
Communicating

• Who is Leading? Co-Leading?
• When are we meeting? How frequently?
• Format of meetings and expectations
• Accountability – what if someone doesn’t deliver?
• Logistics – who is responsible?
• Decision making – how? Who is involved?
• Sharing information throughout the team
• Getting input from all team members
• Scientific Management
• Project management
Productive Collision

“A process by which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.”

Productive Collision

Contain Conflict

Foster Disagreement
Two Types of Conflict

What is *cognitive* conflict?

- Disagreement about ideas and approaches
- Issue-focused, not personal
- Characteristic of high performing groups

What is *affective* conflict?

- Personal antagonism fueled by differences of opinion
- Shifts ideas from the focus to the person
- Fosters defensiveness
- Destructive to group performance and cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assuming that there is a right answer, and that you have it</td>
<td>Assuming that many people have pieces of the answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combative: participants attempt to prove the other side wrong</td>
<td>Collaborative: participants work together toward common understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About winning</td>
<td>About exploring common ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to find flaws and make counter-arguments</td>
<td>Listening to understand, find meaning and agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defending our own assumptions as truth</td>
<td>Revealing our assumptions for reevaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing two sides of an issue</td>
<td>Seeing all sides of an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defending one's own views against those of others</td>
<td>Admitting that others' thinking can improve one's own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching for flaws and weaknesses in others' positions</td>
<td>Searching for strengths and value in others' positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By creating a winner and a loser, discouraging further discussion</td>
<td>Keeping the topic even after the discussion formally ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking a conclusion or vote that ratifies your position</td>
<td>Discovering new options, not seeking closure</td>
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</tbody>
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from *Leading through Conflict: How Successful Leaders Transform Differences into Opportunities* by Mark Gerzon
Barriers to Speaking Up

• In a word: self-preservation
• While it’s obvious why employees fear bringing up certain issues, we found the innate protective instinct so powerful that it also inhibited speech that clearly would have been intended to help the organization.
• In our interviews, the perceived risks of speaking up felt very personal and immediate to employees, whereas the possible future benefit to the organization from sharing their ideas was uncertain. So people often instinctively played it safe by keeping quiet. Their frequent conclusion seemed to be, “When in doubt, keep your mouth shut.”

Why Employees Are Afraid to Speak
By J. Detert and A. Edmondson, HBR 2007
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Why Employees Are Afraid to Speak
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Psychological Safety

• Principles for open and honest discussion:
  – All input is valuable
  – Any team-member can challenge an assertion
  – Any team member can raise an issue or concern
  – Every team-member is allowed to express his attitudes, desires and needs
  – No speaker should be prevented from expressing himself
  – All team-members agree to participate actively when they have the information to do so

Adapted from The Ideal Speech Situation - Jürgen Habermas
Encouraging Others to Speak Up

• Explicitly invite ideas
• Acknowledge input (does not mean it needs to be implemented)
• Ask those who have not spoken yet for thoughts
• Dispel myths that reinforce silence
  – Open exchange of ideas is valued
  – Respectful challenges to ideas, assertions are expected
  – Reward people for speaking up
• The organization needs ideas, feedback and suggestions so they can improve

Adapted from Why Employees Are Afraid to Speak by J. Detert and A. Edmondson, HBR 2007
Afternoon Session

• Leadership
• Diversity
• Synthesis
• Language
• Power
• Difficult Conversations
• Organizational Trust and Communication
There is No Formula for the Perfect Leader

Leadership

- Self-awareness
- Awareness about that around you
- Shared responsibility for success
- Accountability for issues and problems
- Mentoring others
- Managing up and across
- Difficult conversations
- Speaking up, challenging ideas
- Giving your best everyday
- Serving as a role model
Motivating Team Identity

**Essential Work**
- Division Priorities and Objectives

**Passions**
- Tasks that Engage the Mind and Spirit

**Strengths**
- Competencies and Expertise

**The Sweet Spot**
- Where personal strengths and passions align with essential work in a setting which provides opportunities for challenge and growth.
- Where individuals are the most valued and their contributions most valuable.

**Maximize the Value of each Individual:**
Aim to increase the overlap among these three circles, while keeping in mind the changing contents within each circle.
Why Focus On Strengths?

• To come to understand more about ourselves and each other
• So we can operate in a way that capitalizes on our collective strengths
Strengths

• What strengths do you bring to the table?
  – Share one or two of your greatest strengths with the group
  – Tell a (short) story about how a strength contributed to a successful outcome
Video Case Study

DIVERSITY AND A TECH TEAM

Facial Recognition and HP
Diversity and a Tech Team

• Technology development is for “everyone”
• If tech teams aren’t diverse, innovation is at risk
• Diverse perspectives are critical
• Diversifying tech teams makes stronger products as well as strategies to recruit diverse techies

Facial Recognition and HP
Table/Group Discussion

• What different dimensions of diversity are you aware of at work?

• How might diversity present a challenge to effective cognitive group functioning?
Managing Diversity: Scientific and Individual Differences

• Styles – expressions and interactions
• Norms – communication, assertiveness
• Values – principles, what matters
• Cognitive framework – how the world is seen

When group members share common goals and values cultural diversity leads to better outcomes regarding group cohesiveness and group performance
Creating and Maintaining Highly Integrated Teams

• Interpersonal skills:
  – Social sensitivity / Emotional Intelligence
  – Emotional engagement
    • Fuels creativity and collaboration

• For multinational teams language, custom, and power difference can get in the way
  – Every team member should share in the responsibilities, decision-making, and communication of the group

Synthesis

“...the integration of diverse research in order to increase the generality and applicability of the results of that scientific research.”

“Synthesis occurs both within and across disciplines and professional sectors and is therefore not captured entirely by the term interdisciplinary research.”

Hampton and Parker (2011); Hackett et al. (2008); Carpenter et al. (2009); Hackett and Parker (2011);
Synthesis

- *Face-to-face interaction* is vital to successful synthesis
- Increases the production of peer-reviewed publications
- Synthesis-center members participating in geographically distributed teams contributed to further productivity
- Multi-institutional collaboration was associated with increased productivity
- Participation in synthesis groups enhanced scientist visibility, willingness to collaborate, and positively impacted careers

Hampton and Parker (2011); Hackett et al. (2008); Carpenter et al. (2009); Hackett and Parker (2011);
Diversity of Cultures
Physicians vs Basic Scientists

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Problem Solving

• A diverse group is more effective at solving problems than a homogenous group
• Random selection of intelligent participants from a diverse group results in teams that can outperform a team of “best”-performers

• *Identity diverse teams are more likely to run into challenges with communication, have more conflict, and take longer to build trust*

More Women: Smarter Teams

“There is little correlation between a group’s collective intelligence and the IQs of its individual members. But if a group includes more women, its collective intelligence rises.”

Woolley and Malone, HBR, June 2011
Mixed Gender Scientific Teams

• Produced research articles considered to be of higher impact than those comprised of a single gender
  – Mixed gender teams received 34% more citations than publications produced by single gender teams

• Promoting diversity:
  – Enhances inclusion and fairness
  – May also lead to increased quality science

Ethnic co-Authorship

• 2.5 M scientific papers from 1985 – 2008
• Persons of similar ethnicity co-authored more frequently than would be predicted
• Greater homophily is associated with publications in low impact journals and low citation rate
• Higher diversity is associated with publication in higher impact journals with a higher rate of citation
• Diversity of author ethnicity, locations, and reference lists were shown to contribute to greater scientific accomplishment

Collaborating with People Like Me: Ethnic co-Authorship Within the US
Freeman and Huang, NBER Working Paper 19905 (2014)
What Would You Do?

Case Study:

*Wasting Powerful Expertise*
Language

“...what is key to effective research is the development of awareness of language differences and of the time needed to ensure that experts from different disciplines develop a common understanding. It is also vital for practitioners to develop ‘active listening’ to work in conjunction with careful use of language.”

Braken and Oughton, Trans Inst Br Geogr, 2006
Are You an Active Listener?

• Pay Attention
  – Look at the person you are talking to and wipe all other thoughts out of your mind

• Show That You're Listening
  – Nod, smile, ‘uh-huh’, etc...

• Check-in to be sure you are understanding
  – Paraphrase, summarize what they’ve told you, ask clarifying questions

• Do not Judge
  – Don’t interrupt before they finish their thought

• Respond Appropriately
  – Be open and honest, demonstrate respect
Language: what about words?

• We tend not to questions words with which we are already familiar
  – energy, beam, fine, wave, cast, base, dynamic ...

• Words can have an everyday meaning as well as a discipline specific meaning
  – risk, scatter, balanced, polar, fitness, adoption …
“risk”
What did you say?

Image: Microsoft clip art

Women Often Use Powerless Language

“I would just like to say that I may not know as much as some of the communication experts out there, but I feel that women undermine their credibility time and time again by using minimizing language.”

Forbes (2011) - Do You Sabotage Yourself by Using Weak Language?
Women Often Use Powerless Language

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Speech Style: Powerful vs. Powerless

• *Powerless includes*: hesitations, hedges, disclaimers, tag questions (don’t you think?)

• *Powerful*: is devoid of these elements

• Studies were performed to evaluate status conferral to individual leaders in the context of independent and interdependent work

• Results:
  – Individuals using powerful language were conferred more status when task interdependence in the group was low
  – Use of powerless language resulted in more status conferral when task interdependence was high
  – In high interdependence groups – more weight was placed on communality than on agency

Basic Elements of Power

• Personal Characteristics
  – language, skills, charisma, work ethic, values
• Performance
  – product, results, accomplishments
• Reputation
  – view/perception from the outside
• Allies/Networks
  – Relationships
• Position
  – title, role, responsibilities, authority, resources, ability to reward/punish
• Information
  – knowledge
Google Chairman Gets Called Out by His Own Employee for Interrupting a Female Panelist at SXSW

By Amanda Marcotte

“Google Chairman Eric Schmidt is a brilliant businessman and a certified billionaire nine times over, but he doesn’t appear to have a clue about gender equality or women in technology.

That much was obvious Monday when Schmidt repeatedly talked over and interrupted fellow South by Southwest panelist U.S. Chief Technology Officer Megan Smith during a discussion about -- you guessed it -- gender equality in technology.”

http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2015/03/17/eric_schmidt_at_sxsw_google_chairman_called_out_for_interrupting_female.html
How can you put the difficult issues on the table for discussion?
Difficult Conversations....

Difficult conversations challenge something about the way we see ourselves or the way we want to be seen.

“We don’t see things as they are, we see them as we are.”

- Anais Nin
Each difficult conversation is really three

• The “what happened?” conversation
  – truth, intentions, and blame

• The “feelings” conversation
  – an intrinsic part of difficult conversations

• The “identity” conversation
  – Am I competent? Am I a good person? Am I worthy of recognition for my efforts?

From: Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss what Matters Most (2010)
By: Stone, Patton, Heen of the Harvard Negotiation Project
Approaching the Conversation

• Battle of Messages
  – Persuading the other person, in an attempt to get your way

• Learning Conversation
  – Understand what happened from the other’s point of view, explain your perspective, figure out how to move forward
The “What Happened?” Conversation:

The situation is more complex than either side can see

A Battle of Messages

• I know all I need to know to understand what happened
  – Persuade them I’m right

• I know what they intended
  – They are wrong

• It’s all their/my fault
  – Get them to admit blame/take responsibility for making amends

Learning Conversation

• Each side brings perspective to the table
  – Explore each other’s stories

• I know my intentions, not theirs
  – What impact has this had on both sides?

• We have both probably contributed to this situation
  – How do our actions interact to create this result?

From: Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss what Matters Most (2010)
By: Stone, Patton, Heen of the Harvard Negotiation Project
The “Feelings” Conversation: the situation is emotionally charged

Battle of Messages
- Feelings are irrelevant
- They are not important to share
- How I am feeling is their fault
  - Avoid talking about feelings

Learning Conversation
- Feelings are at the heart of the situation
- They are complex
- I may have to work to understand mine
  - Address feelings on both sides without judgment or attribution
  - Acknowledge feelings before problem solving

From: Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss what Matters Most (2010)
By: Stone, Patton, Heen of the Harvard Negotiation Project
The “Identity” Conversation:
the situation threatens our identity

Battle of Messages
• I’m competent/incompetent, good/bad, likeable/unlikable
• There is no in between
  – Protect the all/none image of self

Learning Conversation
• There may be a lot at stake psychologically for both sides
• Each person is complex
• No one is perfect
  – Understand the identity issues on the line for each side
  – Maintain better balance through understanding the complex self-image

From: Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss what Matters Most (2010)
By: Stone, Patton, Heen of the Harvard Negotiation Project
The Difficult Conversation

• Step 1: Define the purpose of the conversation
  – Think strategically

• Step 2: Make your purpose clear
  – Start from the third story: explore both sides

• Step 3: Understand the other’s perspective
  – Acknowledge feeling

• Step 4: Problem Solving
  – Plan for moving forward: Identify options/set standards
Battle of Messages
vs
A Learning Conversation
Case Study

DISCUSSION WITH CHRIS
Difficult Conversation Exercise

• Discuss the two possible approaches to the conversation:
  – A Battle of Messages or
  – Learning Conversation

• What are the major elements of the conversation from each side
Team Dynamics

“It’s not the science you need to worry about, it’s the team dynamics”
ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST AND COMMUNICATION
Is there a Gorilla in the Room?

Awareness
Organizational Trust

• Trust between the team and the organization
• Also referred to as “presumptive trust”
• Provides platform for:
  – Effective Communication
  – Sharing Vision
  – Implementing Change
  – Managing Conflict

Kramer and Lewicki, 2006
Organizational Trust: Three Elements

• Identity-based trust
  – Shared institutional identity

• Role-based trust
  – Focused on the roles people play in the organization
  – Trust of the role as opposed to the individual

• Rule-based trust
  – Codifies norms of conduct
  – Sets expectations for behavior based on shared understanding

Kramer and Lewicki, 2006
Procedural Justice: One Pillar of Trust

• Perception that procedures by which decisions are made are fair
• Four dimensions
  – Formal decision making rules
  – Quality of treatment people receive under those rules
  – Fairness of decision-making by one’s supervisor
  – Quality of treatment by the supervisor
Judging Fairness

• Four criteria are used:
  – Consistency: like cases treated alike
  – Unbiased: those implementing procedures should be impartial and objective
  – Participation: those impacted by a decision should have a voice in the process
  – Transparency: open procedures, no secrecy or deception, clear unbiased criteria
Tenure Review for Collaborative Scientist

CASE STUDY
Group Discussion

• What is happening with trust at the organizational level?
• What vision and messages are being communicated by leadership?
• How do the various aspects of power manifest themselves and impact the situation?
• What must an organization do to both encourage, support, and reward highly integrated research teams?
Model of Team Development

- **Forming**
  - Review, recognition, reward of the team members

- **Storming**
  - Assuring policies, criteria, procedures are in place to support the team’s functioning

- **Norming**
  - Power, Buy-in, Support, Trust, Autonomy, Relationship between PI and Leadership, Organizational Self-Awareness (team vs its relationship with organization)

- **Performing**
  - Top Down Support Required

Bruce Tuckman, 1965, 1977
The Learning Organization

- The basic rationale for such organizations is that in situations of rapid change only those that are flexible, adaptive and productive will excel. For this to happen, it is argued, organizations need to ‘discover how to tap people’s commitment and capacity to learn at all levels’.

Collective Learning

- Asking questions
- Sharing information
- Seeking help
- Experimenting with unproven actions
- Talking about and learning from mistakes
- Seeking and offering feedback

A. Edmondson
Build and Maintain Trust

• Develop scaffolds for establishing trust
• Written agreements serve as scaffolds
  – Prenuptial agreements
  – TT offer letters or pre-tenure agreements
  – Team review agreements
• Develop policies that support collaboration
• Provide support
  – Training and education about the policies
  – How they will be implemented
  – Information dissemination about criteria about
  – What to do if there is disagreement (ADR)
• Institutional self-awareness
Leadership

• Self-awareness
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• Shared responsibility for success
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Thank-you

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