EXECUTIVE TEAM LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP: IMPROVING TEAM DYNAMICS AND PERFORMANCE

Most executives are members of several teams that are made up of peers from a variety of functions across their businesses. Senior management teams, commercial teams, research teams, product teams, or teams formed around a specific initiative are common examples in today's business landscape.   At the senior executive level, these *cross-functional peer-to-peer teams* are often charged with developing and driving implementation of the company's strategic direction or governance.   They are tasked with solving the large problems and making the weighty decisions for their companies.

THE SOFT STUFF CAN BE HARDER THAN YOU THINK

Many cross-functional peer-to-peer teams find problem solving and decision making difficult. While the Vice President of Engineering, for example, is typically well equipped to provide clear direction and produce compelling and analytically sound decisions, his or her skills are usually functionally bound and mostly authority based. When these persuasive and knowledgeable functional advocates come together to shape or govern the strategic direction of their companies, they can find their skills inadequate. The *collaborative* leadership skills required in the peer-to-peer environment are often inconsistent with *functional* leadership.

Collaborative communications, problem solving and decision making skills are relatively rare among senior executives. As a result, executive leadership teams often under perform. The Vice President of Marketing who successfully creates and captures customer value is likely to have considerable functional leadership skills; passion, purpose, analytical prowess and charismatic evangelism. But these skills are of limited value in senior peer-to-peer environments where trust, empathy, active listening, conflict resolution, and collaborative decision-making are the important elements of successful team dynamics and team performance.

WORKSHOPS THAT REALLY WORK

For almost twenty years, *Business Navigation Group* has worked with executive teams to increase performance through the development of custom-designed team leadership workshops. The teams have been in large Fortune 50 companies, small early stage entrepreneurships, trade associations, professional services firms, investment partnerships and non profit organizations. Team members have been culturally and generationally diverse, globally dispersed and single country specific. From this array of experiences, we have developed a standard facilitated workshop that addresses the skill

needs common to most executive leadership teams. This workshop provides an efficient, effective and more rapid deployment alternative for many companies.

Below is a description and agenda for our half-day facilitated workshop for improving executive team dynamics and performance.

*Business Navigation Group'*s Half-Day Workshop for Executive Leadership Teams delivers the core skills most executive leadership teams need to improve communications, problem solving and decision making performance. Our work begins before the workshop; before your executives walk into the workshop, *Business Navigation Group* assesses their current state of team dynamics.

DYNAMICS CAN MAKE ... OR BREAK ... THE TEAM

Team dynamics describe both the effectiveness of a team's *communications* and its *inter-personal* skills. A team's dynamics are its personality. High performance teams have dynamics that include these behaviors and characteristics:

- Humor is frequently evident and often used to deliver difficult messages
- Communications are multi-directional and solution oriented
- Information is freely sought and openly shared
- Open-ended questioning is used frequently
- Quiet members' opinions are regularly sought
- Members actively listen to each other
- Paradoxical communications are displayed and supported
- Discussions with "centers" are more frequent than discussions with "sides"
- Members infrequently display tense or hostile body language
- Members are fully engaged
- Trust statements are used during team discussions
- All members are accorded respect
- Members actively seek full understanding using a variety of stakeholder positions
- Members rely upon a variety of previously agreed upon processes for conflict resolution

KNOW THYSELF ... AND OTHERS

Of course, a team is made up of individuals. And, each individual brings a different temperament and skill set to the team's dynamics. *Business Navigation Group* uses two assessment tools — *before the workshop begins* — to help a team understand its collective personality and direct the team's resources more efficiently during the workshop itself.

In this **Assessment Phase**, *Business Navigation Group* first administers and reviews the team's Jung Typology Profiles. Jung Profiles provide a wealth of information about the approach or style an individual uses in his/her interactions with others. The Jung Profile also offers insights about how we process, sort and use information. When the Jung Profiles are understood, they provide a team with a clearer understanding of its dynamics.

From the Jung Profiles, team members are often able to see why their team and its members:

- can't seem to make decisions
- have different understandings of team goals
- don't listen to each other very well
- always seem to be in conflict
- have different and sometimes conflicting leadership styles
- can't seem to perform at higher levels
- have values that are not aligned

The second pre-workshop assessment tool *Business Navigation Group* uses is a short, anonymous survey that identifies what qualities team members think high performing teams have, and what they believe to be their own team strengths and weaknesses. In addition to the survey, *Business Navigation Group* conducts confidential phone interviews with each team member in order to gain more insight into the challenges facing the team.

During the conduct of the workshop, both the Jung Profiles and the results from the survey and interviews are assembled (without attribution) and presented to the team. These provide powerful tools for self-assessment. They also assist teams in zeroing in on real problem areas. As a result *Business Navigation Group* workshops maximize senior leadership team time and resources.

PUTTING UNDERSTANDING TO WORK

The **Skill Development Phase** begins with the conduct of the workshop itself. During the first half of the workshop, teams will review their individual and team Jung Profiles. Following this, teams review the survey results about team strengths and weaknesses. These presentations most often generate significant discussion among team members and produce important "aha" moments. This self-awareness readies teams for the skill development to follow.

Below are screen shots from actual client workshops that illustrate these portions of a *Business Navigation Group* workshop:

Team Jung Profile Presentation

How we implement processed information

Making decisions based on logic and reasoning → **Making decisions based on values**

Thinking (T) ←→ Feeling (F)

Examples of Thinking Activities:
• research a product using Consumer Reports
• doing the "Right Thing" whether one wants to or not
• choosing not to buy another blue shirt because we already have three
• establishing guidelines for performing tasks

Examples of Intuitive Activities:
• deciding to buy something because we like it
• refraining from telling someone how we feel because it ma...
• turning down a job be... like the work environm...
• moving to be closer t... care about

TT...T.. + f F FF

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So Who Are We?

...er	Extravert (E) vs. Introvert (I)	Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N)	Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F)	Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P)
	EE	NN	F	JJ
..n	E	n	f	J
..ly	i	N	t	j
..a	I	NN	t	JJ
	EE	N	T	J

More Than Meets the Eye?

Team Member	Extravert (E) vs. Introvert (I)	Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N)	Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F)	Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P)
..a	EE	NN	F	JJ
..tin	E	n	f	J
..rly	i	N	t	j
..ela	I	NN	t	JJ
..k	EE	N	T	J
..en	E	N	t	JJ
..ki	i	S	f	J

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ISTJ		
Introvert... Sensing with Thinking	Sensing with Feeling	iNtuitio... with Fee...
ISTP Introverted Thinking with Sensing	**ISFP** [1] Introverted Feeling with Sensing	**INFP** Introvert... Feeling with iNtui...
ESTP Extraverted Sensing with Thinking	**ESFP** Extraverted Sensing with Feeling	**ENFP** Extraver... iNtuitio... with Fee...
ESTJ [2] Extraverted Thinking with Sensing	**ESFJ** Extraverted Feeling with Sensing	**ENFJ** Extraver... Feeling with iNtui...

ENFJs — Trine, Kristin

• Instructors of others
• Tremendous charisma
• Have power to manipulate and often do by virtue of their excellent interpersonal skills
• Usually not meant as manipulation
• Believe in their dreams
• See themselves as helpers and enablers
• Global learners; big picture

"The first shall be last"

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Creating Agreement and Shared Purpose

Win
• Quiet Influencing
• Listening and influencing
• Convincing with logic/inspiring
• Addressing/mitigating concerns

• Customer focus
• Value focus
• Negotiation (external)

Team Survey Presentation

How We Work Together

What Makes a Successful Team

o Tolerance
o Trust**
o Competence
o Motivation
o Cohesion
o Specialization
o Respect**

Success

BUSINESS NAVIGATION GROUP

How We Work Together...

Team Strengths	Team Weaknesses
Customer focus	Lack of feedback
Common mission	Lack of disagreement
Strong work ethic	Lack of trust
Get the job done	Inability to admit mistakes
Organizational knowledge	Not everyone pulls weight
Competency	Lack of effective communication
Dedicated	Cannot adjust to change
Committed	Task focused
Specialized	Individually focused
Belief in our cause/passionate	Impatient
Hardworking	Stubborn
Thorough	Arrogant
Professional	Territorial
Experienced	Staff in more than one location
Independent	Lack of respect
Moral/ethical	Dishonest

vs. Tolerance or Cooperation

After this portion of the Workshop, the remaining time is spent developing effective communications skills and learning collaborative problem solving and decision making techniques. The communications skills are built using a variety of self-assessments and exercises in emotional intelligence, empathy, active listening, constructive feedback,

stakeholder analysis and critical thinking. After these skills are presented and practiced, collaborative problem solving and decision making is tackled.

Like the preceding portions of the workshop, this one uses exercises, facilitated self-discovery and self-assessment to teach tools and techniques that have application post-workshop. Teams spend this portion of the workshop learning and manipulating tools and techniques for active listening, critical thinking, conflict resolution, problem solving and collaborative decision making. One of the tools presented is the *Multidimensional Decision Making Tool ™*. This is a collaborative decision making and prioritization tool that has been used by *Business Navigation Group* clients for more than a decade. It was recently peer-reviewed by post-secondary educators of management and organizational behavior and was accepted for publication by the Eastern Academy of Management (a regional affiliate of the Academy of Management—an organization of more than 17,000 university scholars, researchers and practitioners in management).

The workshop ends with each team member's development of a personal action plan for continued skill practice and peer coaching.

MAKING IT STICK

The final or **Post Workshop Phase** begins about one week to 10 days after the workshop concludes. Team members are sent a post-workshop survey to track what was learned and how the new skills are being incorporated into the team's on-going activities. Results are collected and given back to the team (without attribution) and skills reinforcement is provided where needed.

Each participant in a *Business Navigation Group* Executive Team Leadership Workshop receives a customized *Participant's Workbook* that includes all presentation materials, exercises, assessments, tools and techniques, as well as the team member's individual Jung Typology Profile and survey results.

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Below is the agenda for the *Half-Day Workshop for Executive Leadership Teams*. **Full-Day** versions of this workshop are available for teams with additional skill requirements in conflict resolution, change management, global or virtual teaming, or specific cultural, generational or other diversity challenges.

Executive Team Leadership Half-Day Workshop

Agenda

Introduction
- Why are we here; what's the agenda; what will I learn

Self-Awareness
- Jung Typology Profiles (individual assessment and group dynamics)
- Team Survey Results
- Emotional intelligence and empathy self-assessments to understand individual readiness for communications skills development
- Leadership self-assessments to develop awareness and accommodation of focus and style differences
- Critical and creative thinking exercises to understand individual readiness for collaboration skills development

Building Skills for Effective Communications and Collaboration
- Dialogue and active listening techniques: exercises in small groups
  - Reframing, summarization and validation
  - BICA: a tool for effectively communicating difficult subjects
  - Advocacy Teams: a tool for dispute resolution
  - Voices in Dialogue: techniques for centered communications

- Problem solving and decision making
  - Creative and critical thinking: an introduction to the physiological inhibitors to good decision making
  - Opposite thinking: a technique for problem statement and reframing
  - Targets and Hats: tools for stakeholder analysis
  - Causal flow diagramming: a tool for influence analysis
  - Multidimensional decision making: a tool for collaborative problem solving, decision making and outcome prioritization

Roundup
- What did I learn and where do we go from here?
- How to use the Participants Workbook
- Discussion of the formation of peer coaching teams and follow up