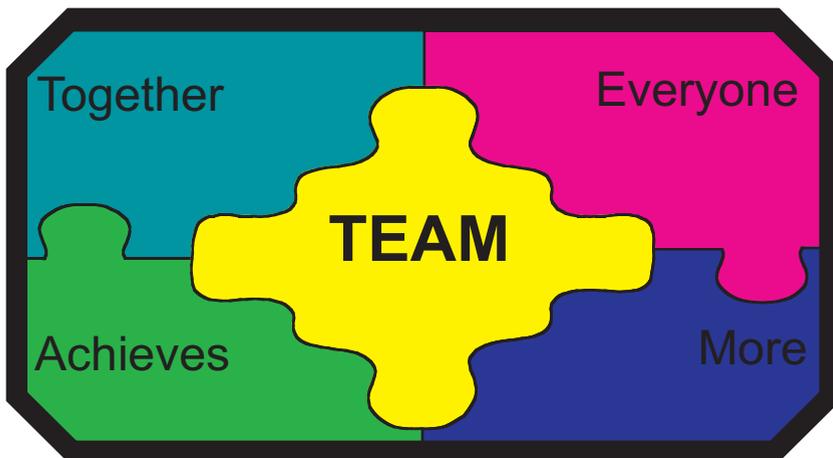


Part One: Teams and Team Management



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WHY WORK AS A TEAM?

Teamwork Styles

Working as a team is a challenging task. It is helpful to have a basic understanding of what can happen when groups of people work together. The information is especially useful if you are the team facilitator.

Understanding teamwork styles helps you recognize where people are coming from, avoid potential conflicts that can hinder the progress of your team, and keep your team "on task".

Understanding "teamwork styles" also helps you concentrate more on the task at hand - improving milk quality - than spending valuable meeting time resolving personal issues.

Teams are made up of many people with different backgrounds. This diversity makes the team strong and flexible. When working as a team, members relate to each other in a variety of ways.

	THINKER (reflective)	DOER (Discuss work openly)
TASK-ORIENTED (focus on job)	ANALYZER	DRIVER
PEOPLE-ORIENTED (focus on relationships)	AFFILIATOR	ENTHUSIAST

Some people are task-oriented (focus on the job to be done) while others are people-oriented (focus on relationships with other members). Some members are thinkers (reflective about their work) while others are doers (discuss their work openly). All members have all of these skills. They are both task-oriented and people-oriented as well as thinkers and doers. However, each member has a preference for the way they interact. This combination is what makes each team and team members unique.

Cooperation Means Success

The part of Milk Money that participants like the best is working cooperatively as a team.

A group effort makes it easier to accomplish your milk quality goals, the structure keeps everyone on task, and program enthusiasm is contagious.

In the Milk Quality Pilot Program, herds on Wisconsin farms with milk quality teams had better results than herds without teams.

Teamwork is divisible and equally dependent. The work can be divided into separate tasks. Yet at the same time, one task depends on another.

Each team member brings different knowledge and skills to the discussion. This improves the potential for success through these new untapped resources. In other words, "none of us is as smart as all of us."

DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEAMS

One dairy producer commented:
 "Sitting at the kitchen table discussing issues...we all look at the same thing and everyone's opinion is a little different because of our backgrounds. I learned so much. We all did."

Teams provide a place for all members to be heard. Past program participants agreed that Milk Quality Teams open new lines of communication and encourage group decisions. Overall, working as a team makes everyone aware of what affects the bottom line.

What is your Teamwork Style?

- Do you like to like to interact with people?
- Is "getting things done" most important for you?
- Do you like to focus on getting the job done?
- Are well-structured jobs more appealing to you?
- Do you like your job to be stable and predictable?
- Are you more interested in the job to be done rather than the people you work with?

TEAM INTERAC-TION STYLE	CHARACTERISTICS	POSSIBLE STRENGTHS	POSSIBLE WEAKNESSES
DRIVER	Take charge person Get things done attitude Focuses on results	Efficient Determined Decisive	Dominating Critical Impatient
ENTHUSIAST	Expresses opinions and emotions easily Prefers interaction with people	Personable Stimulating Enthusiastic Innovative	Opinionated Undependable Reactionary
ANALYZER	Prefers organization Responses well-thought out Likes structure, specific project and activities	Orderly Industrious Persistent Methodical	Indecisive Uncommunicative Critical
AFFILIATOR	Likes good relationships Seeks stability and predictability Sees larger picture	Cooperative Supportive Dependable Helpful	Conforms Uncommitted Masks true feelings

The Steps of Teamwork

Your milk quality team will go through several steps. Some steps are repeated more than once. A successful team takes ownership of the project. They recognize that contributions from all team members will lead to a better solution than any individual working alone. An effective team accepts the strengths and weaknesses of all its members, but chooses to capitalize on each team member's strength. Members realize that everyone's contributions are important to the project. Together your milk quality team can reach your goals.

Team Development

1. Get Acquainted

Teams work better if members know each other. Spend some time at the first meeting getting acquainted. Informal discussions before the meeting begins are helpful. It is important that each person speaks at least once at the first meeting. This makes it easier to communicate in the future. Have each team member introduce themselves and explain why it is that they are involved in this project.

2. Explain The Project

Following the introductions, the team facilitator will explain the project and how it works. For the project to move forward, all team members must have a clear understanding of the farm situation to be able to help develop the project goals.

3. Planning Your Milk Quality Program

In planning your program, your milk quality team will identify the milk quality priorities and goals for your farm. An action plan will be developed from these priorities and goals. In the action plan, the team will identify "what needs to be done" and "who will be responsible."

4. Implement the Project

Put simply, follow the action plan! This is the step that gets the work done and leads to improving milk quality on your farm.

Tips for Good Team Decision Making

Learn to Listen

Listen to what others have to say.

More progress is made by not only listening, but actually hearing what others have to say.

Everyone is Important

Everyone's contribution to a meeting is important. When people feel their contribution is important, they tend to think/speak more carefully, listen more alertly, and act more sensibly.

Information versus Advocacy

Information presented as a point of view is more beneficial than when a team member advocates for their position. Advocacy sets up a debate format that leads to "winners" and "losers" when the final decision is made. All decisions should serve the best interest of the entire team.

No Turf

When turf issues are minimized, the team can work together more effectively.

Take Time

How long it takes to make a decision is based on how long it takes to carefully discuss the issue. Time is related to how long it takes to make sure that all team members feel invested in the decision.

Do the Basics First

There is a mindset that meetings are not real work and are not taken seriously. Consequently, people arrive late, leave early, and spend most of their time preoccupied with other issues. Here are a few basic rules that help reduce poor attitudes:

- **Start on Time.** Always start at the scheduled time. It will set a precedent, and "late-comers" will change their behavior.
- **Have an Agenda.** An agenda helps the meeting stay on task and reduces side issues that are related but not relevant to solving the current problem. If issues come up that are not directly related to the items on the agenda put them in a "parking lot" to be discussed at a future scheduled time.
- **End on Time.** This eliminates "early-leavers". It creates a mindset of the exact amount of time that you have to accomplish tasks on the agenda. Remember - time is money!

Focus on Action

Often nothing gets accomplished once the meeting is over. The decisions made at the meeting must be converted to action steps. In other words, the meeting is not just the time when decisions are made - it is also the time to determine "who" will do "what" to meet established objectives. No one should leave a meeting not knowing what will happen next.

Remember Important Information

Meetings are often scheduled to be held in a comfortable place - away from the information that is important for making decisions. To eliminate postponing critical decisions that will delay the project, all information needs to be available at the meeting. Without it, valuable time is wasted. Remember - time is money!

Create Trust

When at meetings, people simply don't say what they think. Sometimes this is because one person dominates the conversation, or the facilitator does not encourage participation from everyone, or people don't feel safe saying what is on their mind. It is the responsibility of the facilitator to create a place where everyone's voice is heard and respected.

Practice, Practice, Practice!

Practice makes perfect. Conducting a well-run, productive meeting takes practice. So learn from your mistakes - remember what works, and what doesn't. Make a commitment to do better.

The Difference between the Team Leader and the Team Facilitator

In the case of on-farm management teams, **team leaders** are typically the farm owner/manager. They are the ones who sanction and sponsor the event. They ask for the Milk Money Team, they okay the team process, select the team members and decide when to end the team. It is their goals that must be identified and addressed. The team exists for the leader's benefit.

The **team facilitator's** purpose is to direct the process of exploration, discussion and consensus building so that the leader's priority goals are addressed and the recommended action plans are established. The facilitator may play several roles depending on the task at hand and the nature of the team environment, including establishing ground rules, coaching, and clarifying expectations of team members. The ultimate facilitation goal is for the team to form a shared purpose and vision which directs formation of the consensus action plan(s).

- **Team Leaders:**

- Often the farm owner/manager, i.e. the CEO
- It is their team
- It is their goals that must be identified and addressed
- Select the team members
- Select the team facilitator
- Arrange for and host the meetings

- **Team Facilitators**

- Make sure the Leader's priority goals are identified and communicated to the team
- Direct team discussion towards Leader's goals
- Facilitate development of an action plan to address goals
- Encourage and assure full participation of all team members
- Promote mutual understanding
- Foster inclusive solutions