Teams: Session 4

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From earlier...

- Leadership is...
- Teams are Humans Connecting: Personization and Psych Safety
- Team Basics: Hackman & Team Framework
- Perspective Taking & Perspective Getting

Diversity, Conflict, and Emotions

- Diversity & Conflict Go Hand-in-Hand
- Managing Conflict through Managing Our Emotions
- Productive Reasoning
Leadership at MIT

Leadership is the **process** of solving problems that won’t be otherwise handled in the existing system.
...there is no evidence of lone inventors performing better in any part of the distribution...In fact, the difference across the four categories is significantly larger for the higher quantiles, indicating that lone inventors are particularly disadvantaged when attempting to achieve breakthroughs. (p.50)
"It is possible to conceive conflict as not a wasteful outbreak of incompatibilities, but a normal process by which socially valuable difference register themselves for the enrichment of all concerned.

There are three ways of dealing with difference: domination, compromise, and integration. By domination only one side gets what it wants; by compromise neither side gets what it wants; by integration we find a way by which both sides may get what they wish.

All polishing is done by friction."

Mary Parker Follett
1868-1933
1. Diversity is the key to innovation and growth
2. Diversity can create conflict and reduce team effectiveness
3. Managing conflict is challenging because:
   • We avoid it
   • When conflict surfaces, we are often sabotaged by our emotional responses
The Plot

- We are all “…feeling machines who think,” and our decisions and reactions are heavily influenced by that emotional state.
- Understanding our emotions and those of others (perspective taking/getting), along with managing them is critical to resolving conflict.
- Resolving conflict requires productive reasoning.

Be increasingly objective about your subjective experience, and that of others.
Emotions: What Do We Know?

1. Physiological responses to our environment producing distinct sensations (i.e. joy, stress, calm, anxiety, etc.)

2. Our cognitive processes associate various concepts with these sensations
   - Nervous, scared, excited, happy

3. The source of these emotions is hotly debated
   - Hard wired by evolution or learned from birth?
Emotions: What Do We Know?

- Irrespective of their origin, emotional responses are based on our unique histories
  - Brain tries to predict what's needed in a moment
  - Utilize statistical learning – unconscious, repeated patterns

- Your emotional state can significantly influence your evaluations and decisions

- The emotions you experience may not suggest the most functional response to the situation at hand. (Lisa Feldman Barrett)
It appears that the answer is yes in at least some contexts

- Deliberate, controlled breathing has been shown to calm anxiety
- Progressive muscle relaxation can reduce stress
- Expressive writing about disturbing events can reduce emotional distress
- Growing evidence that mindfulness and meditation can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression

Better knowledge of self (and emotions) shows greater efficiency in emotional regulation

But, it also appears that these take time to cultivate
The perception of disagreements among group members about the content of their decisions and involves differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions tends to lead to better decisions and productive outcomes.

Task Conflict

The perception of disagreements among group members about the content of their decisions and involves differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions tends to lead to worse decisions and counterproductive outcomes.

Types of Conflict

Relational Conflict

The perception of interpersonal incompatibility and typically includes tension, annoyance, and animosity among group members. Tends to lead to worse decisions and counterproductive outcomes.

Task Conflict

Tends to lead to better decisions and productive outcomes.
HOW DO WE MAINTAIN TASK CONFLICT WITHOUT DESCENDING INTO RELATIONAL TROUBLE?
Keep on the **Task Side** of Conflict: Setting the Stage

- **Set shared targets**

- **Don’t minimize difference, embrace multi-culturalism and emphasize benefits for both majority and minority groups**
  
  See Galinsky et al. (2015)

- **Engage in perspective taking and getting**
Keep on the **Task Side of Conflict:** In the Moment

- **Voice the Emotion**
  - We are all human with different histories and thus different emotions
  - Those emotions happen automatically, unconsciously
  - How you react to those emotions is what matters

- **Understand that Emotions Can Effect Processing**
  - Don't grocery shop when hungry

- **Re-Affirm Shared Targets**
  - "We are all here to complete the project."

- **Use Productive Reasoning to Resolve Conflict**
Productive Reasoning

Using your cool, conscious processing capabilities to offset and update your automatic, emotional responses

Chris Argyris

MIT Leadership Center
The step-by-step reasoning process helps you to remain objective and, when working or challenging others, reach a shared conclusion without conflict.
How to Use the Ladder of Inference

When you reason from facts to a conclusion, you’re “climbing a ladder of inference,” whether you’re doing this consciously or not.

You can use each rung to question the stages of your decision making.

- Observing Reality
- Selecting Reality
- Interpreting Reality
- Making Assumptions
- Forming Conclusions
- Adopting Beliefs
- Taking Action

Wherever you are in your decision-making process, STOP!
It's time to consider your reasoning.

1. Making Assumptions.
2. Interpreting Reality.
4. Observing Reality.

Question the choices you made to get here.
WHAT were you thinking and WHY?
Work your way down the ladder, analyzing your thought process at each rung.

- Why have I chosen this course of action?
- Taking Action.
- What beliefs led to this action?
- Adopting Beliefs.
- Why did I draw this conclusion?
- Forming Conclusions.
- What am I assuming, and why?
- Making Assumptions.
- Why have I understood the situation this way?
- Interpreting Reality.
- What facts have I chosen to use and why?
- Selecting Reality.
- What are the real facts that I should be using?

When you've reached the bottom of the ladder, you know which facts you can rely on.

5. Now work your way back up the ladder, using the right facts, to reach the right conclusion!
Let's Try Using the Ladder of Inference Example?
Make the Subjective Objective
Use Productive Reasoning

Happy Teaming