 Toolbox

Title : Character traits and teamworking

Exercice Code: SLINSUP005

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| Category: | Size: | Duration: | Language: |
| 8.Situational Awareness  6.Problem Solving Strategy | Small group | 3 hours | English |

# Purpose/Aims:

How to manage a multicultural team and difficulties that can arise in terms of group dynamics and cohesion

How to build confidence and promote exchanges that are necessary to group cohesion and achieve common goals

How to implement schemes likely to promote exchanges and understanding

# Description:

The globalization of economy has led to dislocations within socio-cultural relations.

It has brought about changes in Human Resources management in direct connection with the problematic of managing multicultural teams.

The setting up of programs allowing the development of intercultural learning in order to improve better understanding of others through their culture, representations, beliefs and values help to maintain a positive environment and the group cohesion necessary to achieve common goals.

In the light of this, it could be interesting and constructive to reflect deeply on the notion of “teamwork”. It raises questions about the definition of hierarchy and its meaning, the concept of integration within a team and the acceptance of others with their differences, beliefs, values, representations…

Working within a multicultural team should lead to compromises acceptable by everyone.

To do this, we need to reflect about: teamwork, integration in a team and the acceptance of hierarchy.

*Suggested exercise*:

You have just joined a logistic support team within an international aid organization. You are going to work within a multicultural team which will be responsible for organizing the supply of food.

The tasks that will be entrusted to you require working within a unified and supportive hierarchical team and ignoring your prejudice, stereotypes…

 Toolbox

*Phase 1: “Character Traits”*

Through a role play, participants should give the other team members character traits depending on their presumed nationality, highlighting the concepts of understanding and harmony.

For instance: can I get on with him or her?

How are the French perceived by the Swedes, English or German?

*The objectives from the exchanges that will be established:*

To be able to work on prejudice and stereotypes; To be able to establish a dialogue from elements defined individually; To be able to set up thinking processes to enable people to get to know each other and understand their differences; To be able to understand the system of meaning of a culture in order to anticipate conflict situations; to be able to understand how people behave and the meaning of their actions.

*Phase 2: Focus on the notion of “teamwork” and hierarchy. “Blason activity”.*

Starting from the questions “What is teamwork?” and “What is “hierarchy?” brainstorm about these two notions using the following questions:

* How to define them?
* What are the benefits and drawbacks?
* What are the positive and negative aspects? What are the limits?
* What conditions are conducive to:
* teamwork
* the acceptance of hierarchy
* What attitudes and behaviour are conducive to:
* teamwork
* the acceptance of hierarchy

This game helps develop communication among participants. It should enable people to make proposals to overcome drawbacks and therefore improve teamwork and hierarchy acceptance.

*The objectives are:*

Working on one’s own limits in a team environment. Being able to show that diversity and cultural differences are a source of richness, provided that we share a common objective.

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# Materials:

A3 sheets of paper, Flip chart and markers

# Methods:

For the exercise « character traits »: time for individual reflection and group discussion.

For the activity « Le Blason »: work in sub-group including individual reflection and group discussion.

# Advice for Trainer:

* Trainers will have to pay attention to exchanges and interactions between participants. They will make sure that participants work on the concepts of prejudice, stereotype, representation, value…Notions that can be an obstacle to the process of accepting the other and his or her differences.
* Trainers must pay attention to what comes from the objective and the emotional and help participants to clarify things using questions such as: “On what basis are you saying that?” Or “Which factual information or concrete elements allow you to say that?”….
* To prevent conflict situations, the trainer will make sure to identify gaps in opinions and representations resulting from cultural differences.

# Source/Literature:

Insup‘s experience

# Handouts:

* Exercice « Le Blason » PDF DOCUMENT

(you have to use the results of activities of « phase 2 » to obtain your Blason, this is a summary you can « draw » by yourself)

* PowerPoint « Teamwork » PDF DOCUMENT

(what are the necessary competences and the way to obtain them in order to be able to work in a performing team : try to built them)

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