



NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

THE FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

2017 FALL REGION MEETINGS

Absence of Trust

Dysfunctional Team

- Conceal weaknesses and mistakes
- Hesitate to ask for help or offer constructive criticism
- Hold grudges
- Dread meetings
- Find reasons to avoid spending time together

Healthy Team

- Admit weaknesses and mistakes
- Ask for help
- Accept questions and input about their areas of responsibilities
- Give the benefit of the doubt
- Focus on results, not politics
- Offer and accept apologies without hesitation
- Look forward to meetings and other opportunities to work together

Fear of Conflict

Dysfunctional Team

- Team meetings are boring
- Politics and personal attacks are permitted
- Ignore controversial topics
- Waste time posturing and managing personal risk

Healthy Team

- Have lively, interesting meetings
- Extract and exploit the ideals of all team members
- Solve real problems quickly
- Minimize politics
- Put critical topics on the table for discussion

Lack of Commitment

Dysfunctional Team

- Watches windows of opportunity close due to excessive analysis and unnecessary delay
- Breeds lack of confidence and fear of failure
- Revisits discussions and decisions again and again
- Encourages second-guessing among team members

Healthy Team

- Creates clarity around direction and priorities
- Aligns the entire team around common objectives
- Develops an ability to learn from mistakes
- Takes advantage of opportunities in a timely manner
- Moves forward without hesitation
- Changes direction without hesitation or guilt

Avoidance of Accountability

Dysfunctional Team

- Creates resentment among team members who have different standards of performance
- Encourages mediocrity
- Misses deadlines and meetings
- Places an undue burden on the team leaders

Healthy Team

- Ensures that poor performers feel pressure to improve
- Identifies potential problems quickly by questioning one another's approaches without hesitation
- Establishes respect among team members who are held to the same high standards
- Avoids excessive bureaucracy around performance management and corrosive actions

Inattention to Results

Dysfunctional Team

- Stagnates/fails to grow
- Rarely succeeds
- Loses achievement-oriented employees
- Encourages team members to focus on their own careers and individual goals
- Is easily distracted

Healthy Team

- Retains achievement-oriented employees
- Minimizes individualistic behavior
- Enjoys success and suffers failures acutely
- Benefits from individuals who sacrifice their own goals/interests for the good of the team
- Avoids distractions

The Positive Approach

1. Trust one another.
2. Engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas.
3. Commit to decisions and plans of actions.
4. Hold one another accountable for delivering against those plans.
5. Focus on the achievement of collective results