

What's News

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ARE PROJECT TEAMS A GUARANTEE FOR BURNOUT?

So much of the work of organizations now gets done in project teams. It makes a lot of sense to organize around the talent and the task not the “org chart”. For some people this has already become their regular job. And there in lies the rub, at least in part.

Not so very long ago people would occasionally be on a project team for a few months and then go back to their “regular job” for a few years. Now these project teams are the most important work of the organization. Enterprise wide software implementations, product launches, work transformation projects are more the rule than the exception. Sometimes if an individual is talented enough *and* cursed enough they will be on several teams at the same time.

The problem is we don't actually know how to manage these amorphous monsters without frying the team members. You see, with a project that's “never been done before” by your organization, people don't really know how to measure how long or even what it will take to get it done. However, a Vice President will still have a completion date tied to his bonus as if your organization really did know how to do these things.

Problem #1. It's not just “scope creep”. These projects turn over a lot of “organizational rocks” and you just never know what you're going to find. The messes that are found create delays and multiply the time the project will take. Often deadlines are connected to money more than reality.

Problem #2. Being on a project team requires a whole different set of skills than functioning in the regular parts of the organization. Change causes conflict and if



these projects are worth their salt they will cause tons of change. So EVERY TEAM MEMBER needs to have the conflict resolution skills we use to expect only from our elite managers. You can't work conflict in these project teams in traditional ways involving each sides' hierarchy, because there isn't the time! There is too much conflict, involving too many people, all the time, to use the traditional means of conflict resolution.

Problem #3. Pacing and burnout. Since the work of the project grows as you figure out what it is, but the VP's deadline stays the same, tragedy often ensues. A traditional manager when faced with this dilemma will do what most managers do when caught in a short-term time crunch; make your people work more hours. However, the problem isn't short term. So the burnout cycle begins. What you actually have to do is start functioning at higher and higher levels, not work more and more hours. This will require, what is, for many traditional managers, counter intuitive measures. You actually have to give the team more training and development to get them to higher levels of functioning, right when you think you can afford the time the least. You have to get them off line to cause accelerations rather that work people further into the burn cycle, which causes deceleration (though it gives the illusion of making progress). You have to closely monitor when to send people home, when to force them to take breaks, when to force them to take days off. These measures require discipline and insight beyond the average skilled manager. The alternative is to have people who leave the team when you can least afford it. Turnover or burnout of talent is the ultimate cost of not managing the above.

In the best selling "Power of Full Engagement", Loehr and Schwartz do a great job of pointing to the lunacy of expecting individuals to perform at extraordinary levels *while* burning them out.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Get all team members trained in conflict resolution, managing change and team dynamics *at a minimum*.
2. Make people take breaks, vacations, comp time, etc.
3. Check to make sure people are eating right, sleeping enough (and well), exercising and getting enough family and down time. Don't forget you have to be a role model for all of the above.
4. As a project wears on increase, don't decrease, the amount of training for team members. They need to function at higher and higher levels...too many hours prevent that from happening.
5. If people are answering emails during meetings, the decline **has** begun, you are already in trouble,

We have had some real success with projects we are supporting currently. Call if we can help.



New Courses for 2005 Announced

We're putting together our 2005 calendar. Currently Women Moving Forward and the Women's Leadership Retreat has been scheduled for:

Women Moving Forward

February 1-3, 2005

June 7-9, 2005

October 18-20, 2005

All to be held in Lonetree, Colorado

Women's Leadership Retreat

May 2-4, 2005 To be held in Vail, Colorado

If you are interested in attending or referring someone, give us a call or email us. Women Moving Forwards are filling up fast so the sooner the better!

John and Susan featured in Dr. Phil Newsletter

John and Susan are featured in the June Dr. Phil Newsletter article which talks about being in a successful dual career marriage.

If you are interested in getting a copy of the article you can log on to the Dr. Phil website.

Organization Man Meets Organization Woman

November 9-11, 2004

A chance for men and women to have a conversation about working together. You will deal with the real issues that keep these work relationships stuck. This is our primary gender & diversity course. To register call or email us.

Congratulations Are In Order.....

To Ann Cote on her promotion to Director of Quality Systems for Kimberly Clark Global.

To Jennifer Searles and her husband on the birth of their daughter, Jayna Catherine Searles who was born on April 7th and was 8 lbs. 14oz and 21.5 inches long!

To Wayne Cesario on being promoted to Claims Director, Western Heritage Insurance.

To Kathryn Aiken on her graduation from Kellogg Business School with her MBA

NOTE: Jewish Women International has scheduled the 2nd Annual International Conference on Domestic Abuse in the Jewish Community for March 20-23, 2005 in Washington D.C.



If you are interested in attending you can contact them at www.jwicaltoaction.org or call 1-800-343-2823.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

2004 Courses

WOMEN MOVING FORWARD	June 8-10	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000
MANAGING CORPORATE CHANGE	August 10-12	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000
PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS	August 17-19	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000
WOMEN MOVING FORWARD	September 7-9	Santiago, Chile	\$3,200
WOMEN MOVING FORWARD	September 28-30	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000
ACHIEVING COMMITMENT	October 12-14	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000
WOMEN MOVING FORWARD	October 19-21	Toronto, Canada	\$3,200
ORGANIZATION MAN MEETS ORGANIZATION WOMAN	November 9-11	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000

2005 Courses

WOMEN MOVING FORWARD	February 1-3	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP RETREAT	May 2-4	Vail, Colorado	\$4,200
WOMEN MOVING FORWARD	June 7-9	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000
WOMEN MOVING FORWARD	October 18-20	Lonetree, CO	\$3,000

***To register for any course, retreat, or conference, contact our office.
We also accept MasterCard & Visa***

There is a \$500 discount when two or more people attend the same \$3,000+ workshop from The same company and location.

You must register together and attend together

All prices are subject to change. No refunds are given.

