Teamwork vs. Individual Responsibility

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Abstract: This paper shows the value of working in groups versus working individually, and talks about the sophisticated areas of having successful results.

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When an individual is interviewed, oftentimes he is asked if he works well individually or with a team. Many work well in solidarity, but it seems more business firms stress the importance that a job candidate be team player. Interviewers expect the prospective employee to say he is a team player. By referring to several academic sources, it is suggested that teamwork is the best approach for an organization or business. This paper aims to compare teamwork and individual responsibility in a business setting. This includes a holistic look at individual responsibility and teamwork to determine what makes a team more effective. It includes also the characteristics of skilled managers, and a conceptual framework that shows the distinction between the individual, the team, and the organizational level in terms of responsibility.

According to De Leede, Individual Responsibility can be defined as a concept that is often used without defining its meaning (204). This means that personal or individual responsibility is acting or responding to life's opportunity and challenges effectively instead of waiting positively for luck or other people to make choices for you. Accepting individual responsibility is sometimes hard and sometimes easy, but without individual responsibility, success is almost impossible. Because of the importance of individual responsibility, individuals may have successful teams if they have the ability to take the responsibility. "Team members need to recognize that their individual satisfaction, reputations, and success depend ultimately on the success of the team" (Mendelsohn 24). This means that individuals have powerful impact on the success of their teams. Thus, successful individuals would result in an effective and infallible team. However, each team number should be given his or her significance inside the team, and the team leader should show that significance. "When team members feel that their share of responsibility is less, and that other people are available to do the task, they become less motivated to put forth the required effort" (Alnuaimi 210). Therefore, the feeling of the responsibility would result in more motivation.

Many people argue that working as teams is the best way to achieve the goals of organizations. "A team can be defined as a social system of three or more people, which is embedded in an organization, whose members perceive themselves as such and are perceived as members by others identity, and who collaborate on a common task"(Hoegl, Gemuenden 436). In the definition of teamwork, it is important to emphasize the definition of a team. This definition would clarify that teams are aiming to achieve one target together. About the team size, three people or more can be considered as a team based on what the previous citation said. However, there are some people suggested not to have too many people in one team to avoid the negative impacts. According to Alnuaimi, a few clarifications for the relationship between group size and loafing have been advanced, including the weakening impact, which proposes that as groups get to be larger, the visibility of their exertion declines and observing of people's yield gets to be more harder, resulting in a loss of inspiration to perform (210). This means that having a big number of people in one group would influence that effort of the group members, and it would be also harder for their manager to control them perfectly. Therefore, an appropriate number of people in one group would be useful to achieve the common goal for the whole group. It would also enable the manager of that group to control his or her group.

According to Hughes and Jones, is teamwork can be differentiated from any other group of people by the following: They (1) have a shared collective identity, (2) have common goals, (3) are interdependent in terms of their assigned tasks or outcomes, (4) have distinctive roles within the team, and (5) are part of a larger organizational context that influences their work and that they in turn can influence (54). Thus, those characteristics would produce a special team, and that would assist to fulfill the team goal.

According to Thomas and Hans, teamwork influences results in an investigation of the relationships between team autonomy, individual autonomy; social influence within teams show that team autonomy is positively associated with individual autonomy, which is neither moderated by the team's ability to make the employee feel responsible nor by team support. Team autonomy is positively associated with facilitative social influence such as team reward, team support (78). This means that making team members feel that they are in charge of the team tasks would impact them positively. Thus, team autonomy would influence its members positively and that would help the team to succeed. In addition, According to Gwynne, and Gobble, "one of the characteristics that play a positive role in team's collective intelligence is the ability of the group to work together (8).

Therefore, the ability of working together would influence teams and assist them to get better results.

Because of team leaders, the level of quality can differ between teams, thus affecting team development. Teams become well-developed when they have effective leaders that continue to encourage them to work harder but treat them as human beings. For instance, according to Hughes and Jones, "like anything else, teamwork skills are not likely to emerge spontaneously; they must be intentionally developed. Therefore, faculty members need to commit to the development of teamwork skills by going out of their way to teach students what it means to be an effective teammate, asking students to practice working in teams, and offering feedback about the development of students' teamwork skills" (60-61).

There have been significant studies and researches published which have examined the link between productivity and teamwork. An effective team can fulfill the wanted target, if it has time to work toward the

assigned goals (Stanley 11). Therefore, effective teams are able to do their tasks easily and accurately than any normal performance team if they have enough time for a task to be done, and this teams obviously would have skillful managers who lead them effectively. "A high-performance team can accomplish remarkable feats. Maximizing the creative energy generated by a powerful team takes a skilled manager. By utilizing a few guidelines, a team manager can motivate the best and the brightest employees to work as a team" (Stanley 10). Professional managers can be the reason of consisting those brilliant teams. They would lead them to achieve their teams' aims with less effort and in a short time, and below I listed some characteristics of those managers. "When setting up a team, the manager must make the goal clear to all members. It is important to remember the best and brightest have been gathered together for the purpose of making a better decision for the organization (Stanley 11). Stanley, a writer with 17 years of management experience, suggests that intelligent managers possess the following characteristics:

- Self-belief,
- Ability to communicate,
- Belief in teamwork,
- In control but not overbearing,
- Results-focused,
- Ability to help others,
- Enormous courage alone with integrity (11).

According to De Leede, Nijhof, and Fisscher, a conceptual framework (bellow) shows the distinction between the individual, the team, and the organizational level in terms of responsibility. It shows specifically the importance of a collective mind for having responsibility at the team level. "A collective mind makes it possible to

attribute responsibility to a team"(209). "An important idea with self-managing teams is that only those teams with a collective mind can carry responsibilities"(209). "On the individual level, the qualifications, identification and motivation of the team members should be sufficient to enable a collective mind to emerge" (209).
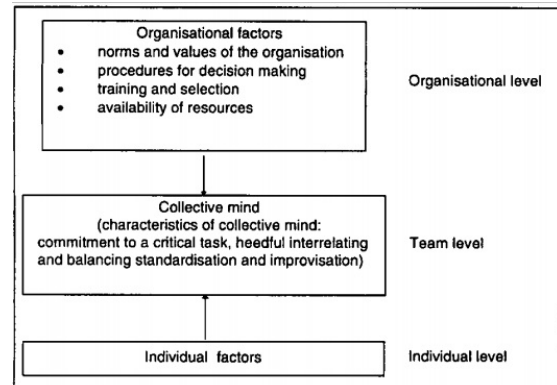
Last but not least, there are some strategies that would increase the quality and the performance of a team to achieve its goals. "Team performance can be defined as the extent to which a team is able to meet established quality and cost and time objectives "(Hoegl, Gemuenden 438). "Teamwork quality is a treasure for the quality of collaboration in teams and consists of six facets: communication, coordination, balance of member contributions, mutual support, effort, and cohesion" (Hoegl and Gemuenden 439).

There is absolutely no doubt that organizations and groups function most effectively on teamwork identity. The importance of teamwork cannot be denied in the modern corporations. Teamwork is a quality, which is partially inherent in the individuals, and part of it has to be enhanced and taught by the mentors that offer a different perspective based on their experience at different stages in their professional career. The ability to effective work as a team player in a team setting, in a professional setting, is considered a marketable quality for the individual while it simultaneously benefits the organization as well.

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