Build a Better Team -
Five+ Key Suggestions - Ver. 11

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Many thoughts, many people, many teams

- There are probably many ways to build a great team
- Probably each Team is different, and so, the way you build YOUR Team should be different.
- At least in some ways



A quote

Ask, and it shall be given you;
seek, and ye shall find;
knock, and it shall be opened
unto you.

That is (for us today): There are many ways to build a great team. Lots of advice is out there. Go get it.



Some things to start

- Decide Building a Great Team is a Goal
- Let the Team a “way of working” that supports that (Scrum?)
- Identify Team Goals
- Great Players
- Challenging Mission
- Team vs Individuals
- Ask them to commit



My Top Five+ Today

- Decide Building a Much Better Team is a Goal
- Make it a Game (aka pick a way of working)
- Kaizen. It's a journey.
    - Song: "We can't stop, we won't stop"
- Real Team
- Ask them to commit
- Extra: Measurable Goals



A few more things to start

- It’s not all on you
- Chemistry
- Learn from others!



3 Key Ideas

- Kaizen Culture
- Learning!
- Minimize procrastination

- Yogi Berra: “When you come to a fork in the road, take it.”



First challenge

- Do we even think about building great teams?
- Clearly if you are on this webinar, you have that thought. But, do we and our organizations — do we think this way enough?
- I chose this webinar because I think the answer is usually “NO”. Or “not enough.”



Scrum and Great Teams

- Scrum was invented as a method to (help) build great teams
- Panacea? Silver-bullet? No!
- But Scrum can be key in building a great team (Ex: new product development team).
- Hyperproductivity: Scrum is built to help a team become hyper-productive (5x to 10x).



Scrum and Great Teams

- What if you/they don't want to do the impossible? (5x and 10x feels to many as "impossible")
- OK, go for 100% or 50% or even 25%.
- And then you'll see, once you get there, that everything can still be better. So, go for more.



A game of winning or learning

- The game helps build the Team
- Scrum is a game
- You win, that build confidence
- Or: You learn (that's what happens if the score was not good enough)
- It is necessary to lose, some.



Goals

- “If you don't set goals, you can't regret not reaching them.” Yogi Berra
- So, set some Product Goals (3-5 measurable things).
- Set Team Goals (a bunch of things)



Team Goal

In my opinion, this should include the following….

- it needs to be fun. Higher happiness. (This suggests “balance”.)
- sustainable pace (40 hours?)
- higher velocity: double in 6 months?
- less stress
- more innovation
- more business value
- higher quality
- we are more honest
- “I don’t mind failing, I mind not trying.” Michael Jordan



Next: Great Players

"What made you a great manager?" "Great players."

So, get and build great players who will play together.



Great Players - 2

- Yes, this includes “skill set” or “talent”. The right knowledge.
- But it also includes other things:
  - character
  - team-player
  - grit
  - soul
  - communication
- You can build all of these things, but probably don’t start from nothing.



Two ways:

Two contradictory ideas:

- The best players do not cost that much more (but can be demanding in a good way)

- If you pick the right younger, inexperienced players, you can be in for a great ride!



Challenge Two

- Get a great set of work (vision, mission) that is challenging.
- The energy to become a great team does not organize until it recognizes the challenge.
- Then the energy has something to organize around.
- If the mission is challenging — they will see they need to do it together!



Challenge Three

- They each are different unique individuals. At the same time, they are a Team, a single entity.
- A paradox that you must handle.



Grant Hill (famous basketball player)

“Every team I was on over my four years at Duke, he coached differently.”

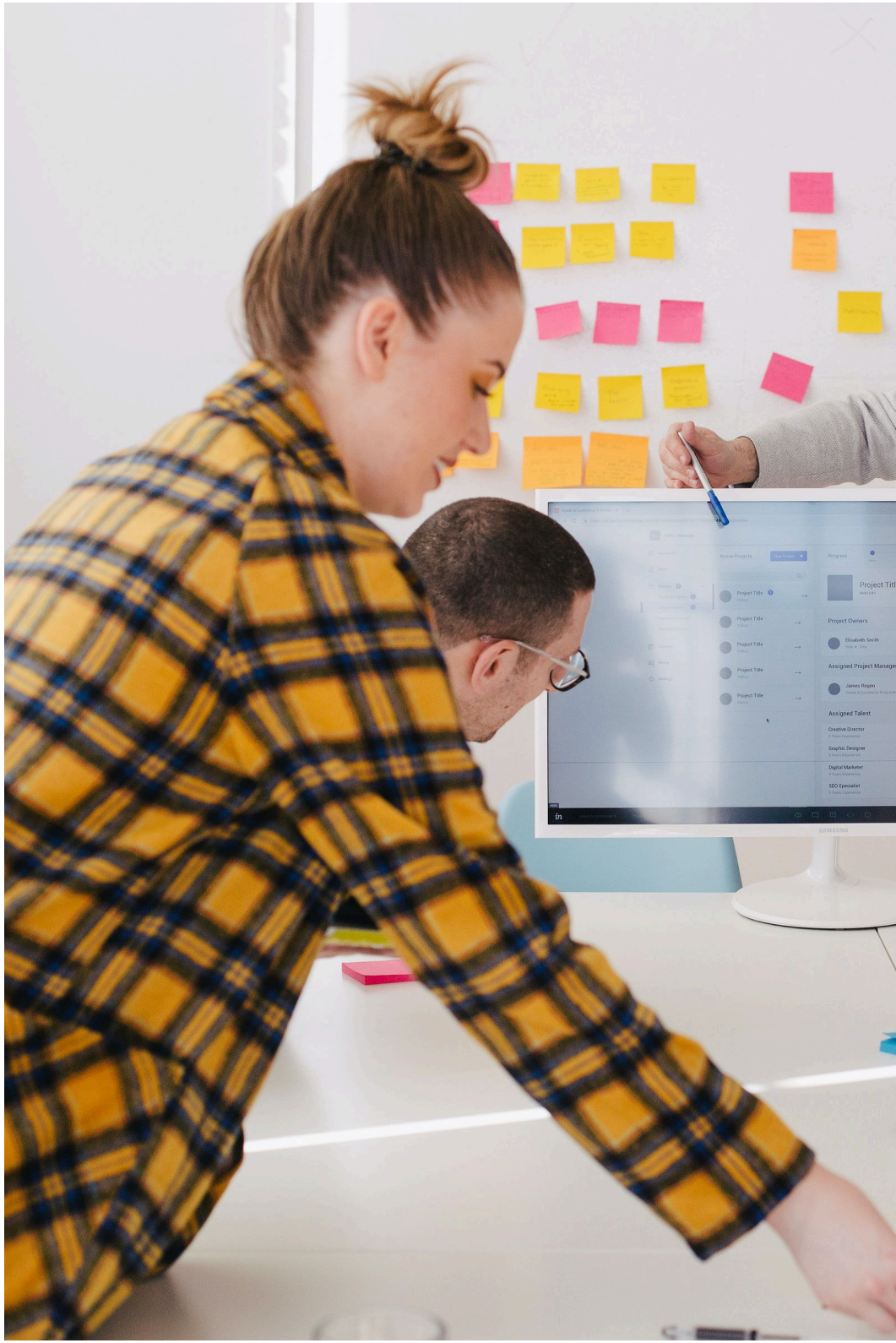
- Speaking of Coach K



Challenge Four

- Ask them if they want to be a great team, and if they want to accomplish the challenging mission.

- They will never become a great team if they do not choose to do so. (Yes, of course, more than just choice.)



Reality - 1

"If people don't want to come out to the ballpark, nobody's gonna stop them." Yogi Berra

It's not clear how much it takes to keep them FROM becoming a great team. Maybe it's one person.

But certainly, you cannot force random people to become a great team. They (probably each in their own way) must decide they want to become a great team.



Reality - 2

And they decide (usually) because they care about the mission or the customers or both.

You do not have all the power to make it happen.

You have the power to ask.

You have the influence to add people to or subtract people from the Team.

You can support the Team.



A word about Chemistry

- We talk about Chemistry between people.
- If two have Bad Blood, you may have to remove one from the Team.
- You can try to work through it, and I think the mission is key.
- If they both (a two-person problem) care about the mission and the challenge, and they can fix their differences, then they will fix their differences.



More on Chemistry

- Your psychological tricks won't make much difference. Your honesty might.
- Equally, sometimes they can't fix the problem.
- If you keep trying, you are only delaying success for the rest of the Team.
- You can add a person or subtract a person.



5 FUNDAMENTALS

- Small number
- Complementary skills
  - Technical or functional expertise
  - Problem solving and decision-making
  - Interpersonal skills
- Common purpose, common set of specific performance goals
- Commonly agreed work approach
- Mutually accountable

"The Wisdom Of Teams" by Katzenbach and Smith

One Idea

- Impediment List.
- AKA Kaizen Culture of continuous improvement.
- I suck
  We suck
  They suck.
- Always be fixing one impediment.



Second Idea

- Decide your 18 domains of learning (for these people and product and situation).
- Learn together.
- Share knowledge
- “Everybody knows everything”



Third Idea

- Think a little bit
- ACT! (as effectively as you can)
- Learn from the action.
- Rinse and Repeat

- Similar to:
  - Transparency
  - Inspect
  - Adapt



“Now for something completely different”



Hot Teams

- ☑ First, they were totally dedicated to achieving the end result.
- ☑ Second, they faced down a slightly ridiculous deadline.
- ☑ Third, the group was irreverent and nonhierarchical.
- ☑ Fourth, the team was well-rounded and respectful of its diversity.
- ☑ Fifth, they worked in an open, eclectic space optimal for flexibility, group work, and brainstorming.
- ☑ Finally, the group felt empowered to go get whatever

else it needed.

Tom Kelly, 2001, GM of IDEO

IDEO is a firm famous for innovation.

Re-written

1. Full time. Want to accomplish the mission.

2. Challenging deadline is needed!

3. Start with a limited structure (bare framework) (“actual” and mental) in the group. Freedom to adapt as needed.

4. Enough skill sets. Diverse viewpoints about the problem and mission. (To a point.)

5. The “Space” makes a difference. See “The concept of Ba” by Nonaka.

6. Whatever it takes. They do whatever it takes. (Ok, no felonies, but they draw outside the boundaries.)



Now for something ELSE completely different



Navy SEALS

They are in teams.
Maybe a bit larger than we recommend for our kind of work.
Admiral McRaven was once the leader of the SEALS and later of Special Ops more broadly.



Adm. McRaven: My 10 Life Lessons From SEAL Training

Lesson No. 1: If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.

"If you make your bed every morning you will have accomplished the first task of the day," said, noting that he had to have a perfectly made bed as a SEAL.

Lesson No. 2: If you want to change the world, find someone to help you paddle.

"You can't change the world alone — you will need some help — and to truly get from your starting point to your destination takes friends, colleagues, the good will of strangers and a strong coxswain to guide them.

Lesson No. 3: If you want to change the world, measure a person by the size of their heart, not the size of their flippers.

"SEAL training was a great equalizer. Nothing mattered but your will to succeed. Not your color, not your ethnic background, not your education and not your social status."

Lesson No. 4: If you want to change the world get over being a sugar cookie and keep moving forward.

"Sometimes no matter how well you prepare or how well you perform you still end up as a sugar cookie. It's just the way life is sometimes."

Lesson No. 5: "If you want to change the world, don't be afraid of the circuses.

The circus was a form of SEAL punishment for failing to meet physical standards during training. It consisted of two hours of extra calisthenics.

"The pain of the circuses built inner strength – built physical resiliency," said McRaven, "Life is filled with circuses. You will fail. You will likely fail often. It will be painful. It will be discouraging. At times it will test you to your very core."

Lesson No. 6: If you want to change the world sometimes you have to slide down the obstacle head first.

McRaven said that a SEAL student broke an obstacle course record when he became the first person to take it on head-first. "It was a dangerous move — seemingly foolish, and fraught with risk. It only took him half (the) time."

Lesson No. 7: If you want to change the world, don't back down from the sharks.

"There are a lot of sharks in the world. If you hope to complete the swim you will have to deal with them."

Lesson No. 8: If you want to change the world, you must be your very best in the darkest moment.

"Every SEAL knows that under the keel, at the darkest moment of the mission — is the time when you must be calm, composed — when all your tactical skills, your physical power and all your inner strength must be brought to bear."

Lesson No. 9: If you want to change the world, start singing when you're up to your neck in mud.

During Hell Week in the SEALs, students spend hours neck deep in bone-chilling cold mud. But one student started singing and then they all sang along, helping them get through the ordeal.

Lesson No. 10: If you want to change the world don't ever, ever ring the bell.

This lesson refers to the brass bell in the center of training camp. If a student rings the bell, he can leave the SEALs.

McRaven said, "Ring the bell and you no longer have to do the runs, the obstacle course, and you no longer have to endure the hardships of training. Just ring the bell." In other words, don't ever quit.

Grant Hill's summary of Coach K - 1

- Set the bar high (strive to be the best you can be)
- hard-work ethic
- close relationships; trust
- setting shared goals
- sacrificing (for the Team)



Grant Hill's summary of Coach K - 2

- giving of yourself
- winning with humility; losing with dignity
- turning a negative into a positive
- being part of something bigger than yourself
- enjoying the journey



You survived in the dark forest! Now what?



What's your biggest take-away?

- What puzzles you?
- What do you want to act on?
- What's got you thinking?



References:

“Leading with the Heart” by Mike Krzyzewski

“Make Your Bed” by Admiral William McRaven (Ret.)

“The Wisdom of Teams” by Katzenbach & Smith

Contact

- www.leanagiletraining.com for webinars, workshops, courses, blog posts, access to video, etc.
- More info: https://www.linkedin.com/in/joelittle/
- jhlittle@leanagiletraining.com
- 704-376-8881

