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1

Unit

# Team building



## Lead-in

- 1 Are there any great team leaders in ancient or modern times that you admire? Tell their stories and analyze the reasons for their success.
- 2 Suppose you were a team leader in a company. What would you do to build a productive team?

## Text A

# Team-building philosophies that promote effective leadership and goodwill

David Brooks Holstein

**equation** *n.* a problem or situation with many different parts that must all be considered together (多种因素的) 综合体

**scrutiny** *n.* careful and thorough examination of sb./sth. 仔细的审视

**astute** *adj.* very clever and quick at seeing what to do in a particular situation, especially how to get an advantage 敏锐的

- 1 Although this topic has been documented and debated throughout the history of written and spoken language, the parts that make up a successful team remain relevant and subjective to this day. What makes a team function and operate successfully is an equation that is open to interpretation, question, and scrutiny. However, the perfect recipe for success ultimately lies within the mind of the leader, the one who openly appoints the right people to accomplish a mission, an objective, or a goal.
- 2 It's safe to say the manner and mindset in which I construct teams is through astute observation, lessons learned, and an interpersonal intuition that can only be strengthened through experience. In this post, I'll give you five practical tips, based upon my personal philosophy, to build a successful team. This framework is designed to help your business achieve its unique goals while fostering an energized and productive work environment.

### It's about the "who," not the "how."

- 3 The secret to my company's success over the years is developing a team with the common fundamentals of business ethics, passion for the industry, proper education, and the mindset of a dedicated lifelong learner. Although historical practices and methods are often excellent guidelines, we must rely on those who are hungry for quantified and tested information and their proper implementation.
- 4 Drawing from the experiences I've had with a business development coach, I was exposed to modern management and team-building theories that are still used by our organization today. Valuable insights have helped us do a better job of establishing personal attributes, interests, experience and educational backgrounds and tailoring them to the needs and interests of the organization. This has led us to bring on a diverse team of professionals from a variety of industries, who complement our team's skills.

### Take stock of effective communication.

- 5 With 87% of employees believing effective internal communication isn't taking place in the workplace, finding new ways to listen and be heard is constantly top of mind.
- 6 There are two words that describe how my team deals with communication: "open" and "often." In order to build a successful team, understand that business and personal ethics are crucial to future success. Being honest, while remaining respectful, will work wonders for how your team responds to praise, constructive criticism, redirection, and unforeseen challenges.
- 7 Since actions speak louder than words, it's also important to remain congruent in how you communicate, whether with your partners, vendors, lenders, or even the person who accidentally wanders in the office from having the wrong address! Treating others with respect and empathy is a huge motivational example, and a fantastic way to live.

### Excellent work and execution deserve to be rewarded.

- 8 Your team members deserve to be compensated for their hard work, outside of their standard salaries. This simple action not only keeps morale high but also creates a sense of equilibrium by rewarding the team for the time invested in completing a project

**fundamentals** *n.* the most important ideas, rules, etc. that sth. is based on  
基本原则, 基础

**business ethics** a set of moral principles and values that guide business decision-making and behavior  
商业道德

**internal communication** the process of exchanging information within an organization to fulfill legal requirements, promote employee interests, and keep all employees up to date with events  
内部沟通

**unforeseen** *adj.* not anticipated or expected  
不可预见的

**congruent** *adj.* similar to or in agreement with sth.  
一致的

**vendor** *n.* sb. who is selling sth.  
销售商

**empathy** *n.* the ability to understand another person's feelings, experience, etc.  
同情, 共情

**compensate** *v.* to pay sb. money in exchange for work done, for sth. lost or damaged, or for some inconvenience  
补偿

**equilibrium** *n.* a state of balance, especially between opposing forces or influences  
平衡, 均衡

**capital gains** profits that you make by selling stocks, property, or possessions  
资本收益

**general partner** a member of a partnership who shares its profits and must pay its debts if it goes bankrupt  
普通合伙人

**incentive** *n.* sth. that encourages you to work harder, start new activities, etc.  
激励

**trickle down** to start at the top of a system, organization, etc. and spread to all of it  
向下渗透, 逐渐影响

**introspection** *n.* the careful examination of your own thoughts, feelings, and reasons for behaving in a particular way  
内省, 反省

**synergy** *n.* the extra energy, power, success, etc. that is achieved by two or more people or companies working together, instead of on their own  
协同作用

**continuity** *n.* the state of continuing for a period of time, without problems, interruptions, or changes  
连续(性), 持续(性)

or goal. In other words, it's only fair.

- 9 In the real estate development industry, and more specifically within our organization, we utilize the “distribution waterfall” model. The model allocates investment returns or capital gains among participants of a group or pooled investments. As the general partner and equity source, we normally receive a proportionately larger amount of the total profits from the original investment, so these funds are further allocated and distributed amongst our team.
- 10 Another great way to reward hard work is through equity participation. Our team has the ability to co-invest in our projects to reap the financial benefits which come from the success of the projects. This incentive structure transforms lives while evolving skills and the work ethic in the process.

### **Personal development at the top trickles down.**

- 11 An organization is the sum of its parts, and that starts at the top. Showing up and putting my best foot forward for my team is vital to how we operate. This isn't coming from an egotistical point of view, but rather as a practical observation of how human beings are motivated. How can I expect my team to operate at the highest potential if I'm not doing the same?
- 12 Thirty minutes a day for thought and reflection does wonders for how I approach interactions and tackle projects with my team. By entering a state of introspection, I'm able to examine how my thoughts and actions could be positively or negatively affecting those I work with. If I'm constantly finding ways to operate at a high level, I find the expectations and respect from my colleagues help develop the synergy that fosters positive growth, productivity and, most importantly, creativity.

### **Empathy goes a long way.**

- 13 A recent study from the Center for Creative Leadership analyzed data from over 6,700 employees in almost 40 countries. Findings showed that leaders rated as empathetic by their teams were rated as high performers by their bosses. For anyone seeking to gain the trust and respect of a team, take note.
- 14 Offering a space for empathy is critical to long-term success and continuity. We all remember what it was like to make a

confident decision and then have it fall flat on its face. Mistakes, misjudgments, and even failures must be embraced as learning experience. Putting yourself in the place of your employees or partners allows for teachable moments and the development of trust. When you put the interests of your team first, you're able to serve your partners in a way that promotes goodwill while meeting and exceeding expectations.

- 15 Building, developing, and maintaining a team is a special and constantly evolving process, and the valuable lessons taken from experience, introspection, and personal growth can be transferred into tremendous success if channeled properly. Whether you're dealing with how to manage the workplace or you simply want to expand your influence, finding the right leadership style to build your team is a highly integral process. The path to effective leadership begins, or continues, here. Just be sure to enjoy the journey to success with those you lead.

**channel** v. to direct money, feelings, ideas, etc. toward a particular thing or purpose  
引导

**integral** adj. forming a necessary part of sth.  
不可缺少的

## Notes

1. **With 87% of employees believing effective internal communication isn't taking place in the workplace, finding new ways to listen and be heard is constantly top of mind.**

In the part "With 87% of employees believing effective internal communication isn't taking place in the workplace," the pattern "with+noun+present participle" is used to explain the reason why "finding new ways to listen and be heard is constantly top of mind." This pattern is a type of absolute construction, which is an independent grammatical structure functioning to provide additional information in a sentence.

2. **"distribution waterfall" model**

The "distribution waterfall" model sets a systematic profit-sharing process in private equity funds. It works as a structured method for allocating profits or returns from an investment among different stakeholders, typically the general partner and limited partners. The capital of limited partners is managed by the general partner. The general partner contributes a relatively small proportion of the total investment, and profits are allocated to the general partner only after limited partners have received the agreed returns on their investments.

# Understanding the text

## 1 Decide whether the following statements are true (T), false (F), or not given (NG) according to the text.

- \_\_\_ 1. The leader plays a key role in making a team function and operate successfully, as he or she is the one who openly appoints the right people to accomplish a mission, an objective, or a goal.
- \_\_\_ 2. A company can easily achieve success by solely relying on historical practices and methods.
- \_\_\_ 3. Business development coaches often use philosophical methods to engage their learners, whether they are aware of it or not.
- \_\_\_ 4. Few employees do not believe that effective internal communication is taking place in the workplace.
- \_\_\_ 5. It's only fair to reward a team for the time invested in completing a project or goal.
- \_\_\_ 6. Entering a state of introspection can help the leader avoid exerting a negative influence on his or her team.
- \_\_\_ 7. Mistakes, misjudgments, and failures must be avoided in a team.

## 2 Discuss the following questions.

- 1. According to the author, what is the secret to his company's success?
- 2. How do you understand the meaning of "open" and "often" in Para. 6?
- 3. Why is it important to reward hard work? What methods does the author use to reward hard work?
- 4. Why is offering a space for empathy important for long-term success and continuity?
- 5. Many people think that members of great teams always agree with one another, but that is not the case. Conflicts in a team are nearly unavoidable. Do you think it is always bad to have conflicts in a team? How can team leaders resolve conflicts properly?



# Language work

## 1 Match the phrases with their meanings.

1. lie within	A. to examine a situation carefully
2. bring on	B. to exist or remain within a defined area or domain
3. take stock of	C. to help sb. improve or make progress
4. do wonders for	D. to have a very good effect on sb./sth.
5. fall flat on sth.'s face	E. to fail completely, usually in an embarrassing way

## 2 Complete the following sentences with the proper form of the phrases from the above exercise.

1. Teachers should \_\_\_\_\_ their students and help them obtain a sense of fulfillment.
2. Effective marketing strategies can \_\_\_\_\_ a business, bringing in new customers and boosting sales.
3. Still it's useful to \_\_\_\_\_ the roadblocks in order to develop an effective strategy for moving forward.
4. The solutions to all life problems \_\_\_\_\_ your grasp. All you need to do is trust yourself.
5. A poorly executed marketing campaign can \_\_\_\_\_, resulting in minimal customer engagement and limited sales growth.

## 3 Translate the following expressions into Chinese.

1. an interpersonal intuition
2. an energized work environment
3. a dedicated lifelong learner
4. quantified and tested information
5. constructive criticism
6. pooled investments
7. equity participation
8. an egotistical point of view

## Reading strategy

### Identifying the sources of information

It is crucial for readers to critically identify the sources of information in business texts, as the sources determine credibility. However, with the infinite amount of biased, misleading, and even incorrect information available on the Internet, it can be difficult to decipher what is true and accurate and what is not. To determine the credibility of a piece of information, consider the following criteria:

Criterion	Description
The author's qualifications	Check the author's credentials and expertise in the field. Is he or she qualified to speak on the subject?
The publication sources	Examine where the information is published. Reputable sources include peer-reviewed journals, established news outlets, government websites, and academic institutions.
Timeliness and accuracy	Ensure that the information is up to date and accurate. Outdated or inaccurate information can lead to misinformed decisions.

Let's explore whether the sources of information are reliable in Text A. Look at the following examples:

- ◎ In this post, I'll give you five practical tips, based upon my personal philosophy, to build a successful team.

The tips concerning how to build a successful team mainly come from the author's experience. David Brooks Holstein is the founder and managing member of several companies. Furthermore, he is a Forbes Business Council Blog contributor, and the Forbes Business Council is an invitation-only community for successful business owners and leaders. Hence, the author is considered trustworthy as he has extensive expertise in building a successful team.

- ◎ A recent study from the Center for Creative Leadership analyzed data from over 6,700 employees in almost 40 countries. Findings showed that ...

The Center for Creative Leadership is a top-ranked, global, nonprofit provider of leadership development. Over the past 50 years, it has worked with organizations of all sizes from around the world. Therefore, it is a trustworthy and credible source of information.

## Text B

# Diversity in fast-growing Slack

Davey Alba

- 1 A mere five months after it released its first diversity report, the trendy workplace chat purveyor Slack published new data about its employee demographics today. According to its own numbers, the company has made improvements, including setting the bar for the industry in terms of two measures: It employs the highest percentage of female engineers (and women in general) and Black engineers compared with other tech companies.
- 2 It's important to note, though, that even with those measures, Slack doesn't lead by much—and it may not be a fair comparison against other tech giants because the company is still so small. Most of all, the data shows that, like the rest of tech companies, Slack's workforce is still overwhelmingly white and male. It could do better by putting people from ethnic minorities into leadership positions and retaining female managers at the company. But Slack is at least conscious of the fact that it should work hard now to achieve shifts in its diversity while it is still small and growing fast.
- 3 “Not a lot of small, private companies are reporting this data—and most larger, established companies report on diversity once a year,” said Anne Toth, vice president of people and policy at Slack. “But we thought it was useful to do that in light of our rapid growth. We wanted to tackle this issue at an earlier stage in our development as a company.”

### **Diversity by the numbers**

- 4 How fast, exactly, did Slack grow? When it last reported its diversity and inclusion data in September, the company said it employed 250 people. Today, it says it has over 350 employees worldwide, including workers from Canada, Ireland, and Australia.
- 5 The company's newly released diversity report includes only 290 or so employees surveyed in December, however. Of those nearly 300 folks, there are 44 percent women—up from 39 percent a few months ago and above the industry average of 29 percent. But with more than half of the total U.S. population consisting of women, Slack could clearly do better.

- 6 Meanwhile, while the company claims 43 percent of its managers are female, that's slightly down from last year, when the company boasted that 45 percent of its managers were women. But the company has also hired more female engineers than any other tech company and increased the ratio compared with a few months ago: Its U.S. workforce now includes 28 percent women engineers, up 10 percentage points from 18 percent in mid-2015—also leading the industry.
- 7 But when it comes to the minority population at the company, Slack's numbers still look pretty dismal. Its workforce now includes 20 percent Asians, 4.1 percent Hispanics, 3.4 percent Blacks, and 2.4 percent Middle Easterners—pretty much the same makeup as last year, though this time the company has more visibility into different races, because it only revealed the metrics for Caucasians, Blacks, and Asians in its last report. Notably, the proportion of African Americans at the company actually has dropped to 3.4 percent, compared with 4 percent a few months ago. But at least the proportion of Black engineers at the company is now 7.8 percent, which is industry-leading.

#### **Growing with diversity**

- 8 All of this tells the same old story: Slack has a long way to go. The company recognizes this, and says it wants to make an effort. One of its goals is to hire people from ethnic minorities into leadership positions at the company; right now, there are none. Slack is one of the tech companies applying the Rooney Rule to its recruiting process as it hires for more senior-level roles, which means it will interview at least one person from an underrepresented minority for every executive position. It also wants to hire a woman or a person from an ethnic minority onto its board of directors. But Slack could do even more: It could set goals and hiring targets and focus on retaining and promoting the talent already inside the company.
- 9 The company is at least aware that now is the time to make big, meaningful strides in diversity: before it grows into something too big to change.

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1. **purveyor** *n.*

a business that supplies goods, services, or information 承办商, 供应者

2. **board of directors**

the group of people who have been elected to manage a company by those holding shares in the company 董事会

# Understanding the text

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Answer the following questions.

1. What major improvements has Slack made five months after it released its first diversity report?
2. What is the proportion of Slack's female employees according to the newly released diversity report? What was the number a few months ago?
3. How has the proportion of African Americans changed compared with a few months ago?
4. Why does Slack apply the Rooney Rule to its recruiting process?
5. Many multinational corporations adopt the diversity recruiting strategy nowadays. How do you understand the importance of this strategy?

## Language work

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**1** Translate the following sentences into English by using the proper form of the words and expressions in parentheses.

1. 我们应促进各国人民相知相亲，尊重世界文明多样性。(diversity)

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2. 中方将根据当前形势为跨境人员往来提供更多便利。(in light of)

---

3. 经过几十年的发展，人民币呈现出蓬勃生机，国际知名度不断提高。(visibility)

---

4. 地方政府注意到，新产品品牌的建立可以显著刺激农业经济的增长。(notably)

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5. 中国在可再生能源生产上取得重大进展，使能源结构得到改善。(stride)

---

**2** Decide which of the words given in the box below would best complete the passage if inserted in the corresponding blanks. The words can be used ONCE ONLY.

A. additional	B. affect	C. aptly
D. assimilate	E. circulation	F. closely
G. consistent	H. enthusiasm	I. identify
J. impact	K. penalty	L. reward
M. simplifying	N. suspending	O. vulnerable

Some performance evaluations require supervisors to take action. Employees who receive very favorable evaluations may deserve some type of recognition or even a promotion. If supervisors do not acknowledge such outstanding performance, the employees may either lose their 1 \_\_\_\_\_ and reduce their effort or search for a new job at a firm that will 2 \_\_\_\_\_ them for high performance. Supervisors should acknowledge high performance so that the employees will continue to perform well in the future.

Employees who receive unfavorable evaluations must also be given attention. Supervisors must 3 \_\_\_\_\_ the reasons for poor performance. Some reasons, such as an illness, may have a temporary adverse 4 \_\_\_\_\_ on performance and can be corrected. Other reasons, such as a bad attitude, may not be temporary. When supervisors give employees unfavorable evaluations, they must decide whether to take any 5 \_\_\_\_\_ actions. If the employees are unaware of their own deficiencies, the unfavorable evaluations can pinpoint the deficiencies that they must correct. In this case, supervisors may simply need to monitor the employees 6 \_\_\_\_\_ and ensure that the deficiencies are corrected.

If the employees are already aware of their deficiencies before the evaluation period, however, they may be unable or unwilling to correct them. This situation is more serious, and supervisors may need to take action. The action should be 7 \_\_\_\_\_ with the firm's guidelines and may include reassigning the employees to new jobs, 8 \_\_\_\_\_ them temporarily, or firing them. A supervisor's action toward a poorly performing worker can 9 \_\_\_\_\_ the attitudes of other employees. If no 10 \_\_\_\_\_ is imposed on an employee for poor performance, other employees may react by reducing their productivity as well.