

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAMS

Challenges & Recommendations

Challenge	Recommendation
<p>1. Communication: Different members of team may take different data or messages back to their departments</p>	<p>1. Discuss and decide within the team what information may be disclosed to others and what data is still “working knowledge only” for the team members.</p>
<p>2. Goal Ambiguity: Team members may have different perceptions of what the team is supposed to accomplish</p>	<p>2. Give the team the framework of what must be accomplished and let the team help set the goals. The team should translate the goals into specific performance objectives and milestones, and review these on a regular basis to adjust for changes, make sure objectives are being met, make corrections when objectives are not being met.</p>
<p>3. Confusion about team’s authority and/or empowerment: Frustrations overall can turn to irritation and conflict among team members when there is a lack of clarity on the team’s ability to make decisions and implement those decisions.</p>	<p>3. Ensure clear expectations when the team is formed, as to what decisions (a) are the sole responsibility of the team; (b) will be made collectively by the team and management; (c) will be made by management with the team’s input; and (d) will be made by management without the team’s input.</p>
<p>4. Size of Team: When a team is too large, efficiencies and effectiveness are challenged. Decisions take too long since everyone’s input must be heard. The ability to collaborate becomes strained, and clear communication becomes more difficult.</p>	<p>4. Create sub-teams to work on various performance objectives, so that the collective goal can be achieved. Create a core team of 5-8 members to collect the work of the sub-teams, combine the parts of the whole, ask questions, and present back to the larger body to ensure all the parts fit and the necessary details are covered.</p>
<p>5. Reporting Relationships and Rewards: Team members are often taken away from their “real jobs” and feel their contributions to the team are not reflected in their appraisals. Team members may be from all levels of the organization, at different pay levels, and feel their contributions will not be equally rewarded.</p>	<p>5. Provide the team leader’s input to managers writing performance appraisals. Provide recognition or a bonus to all team members based on the team’s success.</p>

References:

Parker, .M. (2003). Cross-functional teams: Working with allies, enemies, and other strangers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Various texts, readings and experiences of instructor.