UNIT 2

WORK IN TEAM ENVIRONMENT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you are expected to:

• Understand team role and scope in a workplace

• Identify own role and responsibility within team

• Work as a team member

• Learn important factor that helps to identify require responsibility within team

• Understand elements of team role in the workplace

INTRODUCTION

A team environment is essential to a workplace. A team is defined by its composition, culture, and goals. It is made up of people with complementary skills who have common goals. Ever watched a good basketball team in action? It seems like a well-oiled machine, with team members making complex moves in perfect synchronicity without even looking at each other. How do they accomplish that?

To find out, it is important to look at the team environment, which is the milieu in which the team operates. This is comprised of three elements: the composition of the team, the culture of the team, and the goals of the team. The composition of the team is the people and skills that comprise the team, the culture is the shared values of the team, and the goals of the team are the overarching aims that the team is trying to accomplish. Each of these contributes to the definition of team and the ways in which a team can be effective.

DESCRIBE TEAM ROLE AND SCOPE

The team roles consist of three categories: action-oriented roles, which include shaper, implementer and completer/finisher roles; people-oriented roles, which include coordinator, team worker and resource investigator roles; and thought-oriented roles, which include plant, monitor-evaluator and specialist roles. Teams formed on the basis of Belbin's categories are effective in achieving their objectives because there are no overlapping roles or missing qualities in the team.

Developing Team Objectives

Every team needs to be driven by a deeply rooted sense of mission- shared team goals that are seen as more important than individual agendas. It is these team objectives that bind a team together and keep it cohesive even when obstacles or internal disagreements arise. Taking time upfront to ensure everyone understands the mission and agrees on how it will be achieved can pay off with enhanced productivity later on.

Every organization has mission statements, vision statements, corporate, department and individual goals. These are usually blended together to ensure that everyone in the organization is moving in the same direction. If the goals are not compatible, groups or individuals in the company start pulling in different directions and the overall progress of the company is affected.

As a team leader, you communicate the objectives that the team needs to achieve on a daily basis. Then you coach them to accomplish them. Ensuring that these daily objectives are achieved is part of a long term plan and essential to being an effective leader.

When the goals of the company, team and the individual are focused in the same direction, they are more likely to be achieved. When everyone is moving in the same direction it is more satisfying and productive.

Team Role and Responsibility

To effectively manage a team you need to have a clear understanding of the roles people play as members of the team. There are a number of different theories that have been developed which categories the different types of roles and personalities people display. Team behavior and performance is a reflection of its members.

Thus, a key input into the functioning and behavior of any team is the team's composition, which refers to the characteristics and attributes of the individuals who make up the team as well as how those characteristics and attributes are distributed within the team.

Once the goal is set, the next step is to determine how you will get there and what role each person will play. In this step it is important that all team members have the same understanding of what is to be achieved and who is responsible for achieving it.

Develop a Team Plan and the Member's Roles

Developing a team plan sets a clear direction for the team. As part of this process you need to define the role that each team member will play. This shows each person how they can contribute to achieving the goal. In this process it is important to develop clear areas of responsibility, provide adequate resources and ensure that each person is accountable for their actions.

To effectively manage a team you need to have a clear understanding of the roles people play as members of the team. There are a number of different theories that have been developed which categories the different types of roles and personalities people display. The Belbin test was developed to specifically identify the different types of roles team members prefer. The Belbin test identifies the following roles that individuals adopt when working in teams:

Shaper

Shapers attempt to apply a shape to the team and are very focused on taking positive action.

Plant

Plants are individuals who originate new ideas and provide unique solutions to problems.

Co-coordinator

Co-coordinators like to consult with their colleagues when making decisions and encourage co-operative team work.

Monitor Evaluator

Monitor Evaluators identify the pros and cons of each decision and like to ensure that they have all the facts before making decisions.

Resource Investigator

Resource Investigators are very good at finding the necessary information required for a decision. They also are very good at networking with other teams and organizations.

Implementer

Implementers are focused on practical solutions and will do what is required to achieve the desired outcome.

Team Worker

Team Workers are the team diplomats. They encourage team unity and attempt to diffuse potentially damaging interpersonal conflicts.

Specialist

Specialists provide in depth **knowledge** about a service or product. They are often technically minded individuals.

Completer-Finisher

Completer-Finishers ensure that tasks are completed. They pay attention to detail and are very good at organizing meetings and keeping the team on schedule.

Each of the different roles has their own unique strengths and weaknesses that they bring to team work. Understanding these strengths and weaknesses can assist in developing a balanced team of people. It will also assist with the recognition of potential problems that may arise. Understanding the roles that people naturally tend to take will help to decide the responsibilities of each team member.

Identifying Team Tasks

Once you have decided what you want to achieve and who will fill what roles in the team, you must itemize the tasks that need to be completed. It is a good idea to involve the team in this so everyone has some input and understanding of what is involved. The overall process for this is as follows:

1.   State the goal to be addressed
2.   List the tasks required to achieve that goal

KEY WORD

Knowledge is a familiarity, awareness, or understanding of someone or something, such as facts, information, descriptions, or skills, which is acquired through experience or education by perceiving, discovering, or learning.

3. Group similar tasks under one heading (for example, inventory control)

4. Determine the resources needed to complete each task

5. Define the role, responsibility, authority and accountability for each task

6. Allocate team roles to the appropriate people.

S M A R T is a common acronym used to describe setting goals or objectives. Briefly SMART goals are: **S** Specific and clear. The objective is identified

M Measurable. There is some form of measurement built in.

A Achievable. The team has the capacity to achieve it.

R Realistic. The **goal** must be within the capabilities of the team.

T Time related. There is a defined time frame to achieve the goal.

Responsibility, Accountability and Authority

After the roles have been allocated, the next step is to ensure that everyone knows what they can and can't do. They need to understand their role in terms of their:

• Responsibility, what tasks they must do

• Accountability, what results they must achieve

• Authority, how much power they have to achieve the goals

Clearly identifying these levels is critical to the success of the team and is a reflection of your effectiveness as a leader.

Ensure that a person's role is suited to their skills and that their level of authority is equal to their levels of responsibility and accountability. Dissatisfaction can quickly develop if a person has high levels of responsibility with little authority to get the job done.

Team Parameter

Build Parameters provide you with flexible means of sharing settings and a convenient way of passing settings into the build. Build parameters are name-value pairs, defined by a user or provided by Team City, which can be used in a build.

There are three types of build parameters:

- Environment variables (defined using "env." prefix) are passed into the spawned build process as environment
- System properties (defined using "system." prefix) are passed into the build scripts of the supported runners as build-tool specific variables
- Configuration parameters (no prefix) are not passed into the build and are only meant to share settings within a build configuration.

They are the primary means for customizing a build configuration which is based on a template or uses a meta-runner.

- Individual research
- Statistics and reports from other organizations
- Producing reports from data collected in the workplace
- Translating data from diaries and note-books
- Interviews with colleagues/customers

In a team, the shaper role is performed by people who are dynamic and relish challenges.

- Effective teamwork creates its own set of characteristics that makes it possible to see the cohesion in a group.
- Monitor-evaluators lack the energy to motivate other team members and are deemed to be slow in decision making.
- A team is only effective when the members understand their roles and responsibilities within the group, and endeavor to execute them effectively.

Team working environment include coordination, which in work teams composed of two or more people provide better outcomes while aligning it to the team tasks and objectives. Team members allow potential coalition formation and hidden communication to take place.

IDENTIFY OWN ROLE AND RESPON-SIBILITY WITHIN TEAM

A **team** is only effective when the members understand their roles and responsibilities within the group, and endeavor to execute them effectively. Each member is assigned a part of the task based on his role within the group and his level of expertise.

KEY WORD

Team is a group of individuals - humans, horses, or oxen, for example - working together to achieve their goal.

Every workplace will have written procedures that list the organizations daily operating requirements. It is likely your workplace will have procedures or policies for legislated compliance requirements related to:

- access and equity
- anti-discrimination
- ethical standards
- OHS
- employment agreements
- industrial awards
- industry and workplace codes of practice

It is essential that both the business and people working within the business, operate within the legislated requirements. In addition to legislated requirements the business may have many other written plans, procedures or workplace instructions.

These may include:

- Organizational values and behaviors
- Work procedures and quality assurance manuals
- Business and performance plans
- Goals, objectives, plans, systems and processes
- Quality and continuous improvement

So what do the legislated and other workplace plans and procedures mean to you? As a person who wants to participate effectively in your workplace, it means that you actively cooperate and demonstrate appropriate workplace attitudes and behavior that allow the workplace to meet compliance and work policy requirement.

Role of Individual in a Team

The individuals play an important role in the functioning of the organization. The members of an organization must be induced, coerced or forced to participate in it. People participate in the organizations when they are going to gain something out of them. For example the desire for remuneration in cash or kind, prestige, the desire to show the skills

already acquired etc. represent some of the motives of the people in participating in organizations. People tend to identify themselves with the organization in which they participate. There is a close affinity between people's motives on the one hand and their identification with the organization on the other. The degree of their identification with the organization depends on the nature and intensity of the motives for participating in them. The individual's identification with the organization is stronger if a number of individual needs are satisfied in it, the organization goals are perceived as shared, the prestige of the organization is perceived to be the greater, there is greater frequency of interaction in the organization and there is less competition within the organization.

The individual motives play an important role in the fulfillment of organization goals. People cannot work in organization without any motives, purposes or thinking. They do not work in an automatically or mechanically or in impulsive manner. The success of an organization depends not only on the proper coordination and cooperation of its members but also on the cooperation of others. The others must also be made to contribute to the smooth functioning of the organization. The success of a library depends on its readers etc. An organization is said to have attained **equilibrium** when it is able to maintain the continued contribution of all its participants –members and others by providing them various kinds of inducements to work for its success. Equilibrium may be achieved at various levels. It may change over time. The scope of the organization's activities may remain constant or may grow or diminish at another level.

KEY WORD

Equilibrium in several sciences, is the condition of a system in which all competing influences are balanced.

Roles, Responsibilities of Other Team Members

Here, we will discuss the different roles of team members in an organization.

Roles of Team Members

Every organization encourages a team environment. Teams help each other succeed to accomplish the company's goals. Team members provide their expertise on different projects and duties. Each team has specific roles and are typically structured in a functional way. Enterprises create structural charts that clearly define the types of roles within departments. In a functional structure, it's designed by hierarchy. Hierarchy is when the roles of each group are ranked one above another based on responsibility.

Most of the organizations consist of the following roles:

- **Executive officers:** These are the highest ranking roles within the organizational structure. They manage all departments and makes the final company decisions. They're pretty much at the top of the functional structure.

- **Research and development team:** This group (also called R&D) consists of team members who focus on researching whatever product the company has decided to work on. After research, they go into development to produce the product.

- **Operations and production team:** Once the product comes from research and development, it's then passed along for production. The operations and production team takes the designs and input from research and assemble the product.

- **Sales and marketing team:** The sales and marketing team basically takes the product to the customer. They take the product from operations and production and then work with their team members to sell and advertise to their target market.

- **Accounting and finance team:** Once the sales are completed, the accounting and finance team calculate the monthly, quarterly, and yearly totals.

Responsibilities of the Team Members

The company pays each employee to perform a specific duty or action. Each team has a responsibility to the entire company. Let us look at those now:

- **Executive officers:** The officers or leaders of the organization are responsible for keeping the ship afloat. They work with all of the teams to create synergy and hold them accountable.

- **Research and development team:** This team has the responsibility of being innovative and keeping up with the latest trends and developments in whatever field the company is in. For example, tech companies like Apple have to stay innovative and creative for consumers to care about their products. Their R&D team is responsible for researching the market and developing new technologies to stay ahead of their competition. This explains their constant cell phone battle between Android phones.

- **Operations and production team:** The operations and production team are responsible for bringing the product to life. They receive the product's vision from the research team and then they use the team's expertise to bring the product into its finished stage.

Elements of Team Role in the Workplace

Team role can be an important part of an effective workplace. An efficient team can be trained as a group, help each other maximize their job performance, and help to make an inviting and productive atmosphere for new team members. Certain elements of team role in the workplace should be in place for your company to benefit from group organization.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an important element to any team. Members of the team bring in their own experiences and level of expertise to a project to help create an effective finished product. To collaborate effectively the team must be able to communicate and share ideas, and there also needs to be a feeling of respect in place for each team member's contribution.

Conflict Resolution

After a team has started working together there can be conflict, the online Reference for Business. Some people feel their ideas are not being heard, and others feel that their ideas should always be part of the team's solution. There could also be a struggle for leadership of the group that can threaten to diminish the group's effectiveness.

The element of **conflict resolution** within a team means leaving room for everyone's contributions, developing the ability to listen to all ideas and creating a method of consensus that is used to develop a solution the team can agree on expertise to bring the product into its finished stage.

KEY WORD

Conflict resolution is conceptualized as the methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict and retribution.

Reporting Relationship within Team

One workplace reporting relationship that used to be fairly rare is older workers reporting to younger managers. This is a growing phenomenon and will become more prevalent, at least until the younger boomers stop working in any form. As boomers transition from leader and top expert roles to new roles that allow the next generations to move up the ladder, we'll see what traditionally have been unconventional structures.

Relationships within Team and External to Team

When you form a team at a small business, it is helpful to assign roles to the members so that all tasks are covered. One of those roles should be external liaison. This member not only participates in team meetings, but also communicates with groups and individuals outside the team. This vital role ensures that the team has the support of the company, and it helps the team have an impact on other teams.

Finding outside Resources

According to Dr. Meredith Belbin, a prominent researcher on teamwork, teams need a resource investigator. This person seeks outside resources that can help the team with its work. This prevents teams from becoming too focused on their own abilities and resources and expands the amount of information the team has at its disposal.

Liaison between Teams

Your team may need to work with other teams. This requires a liaison who conveys the team's findings and questions to another group and gathers that group's input. This member may attend meetings of both groups. An example of this is when a marketing team consults a sales team to make sure that target sales goals are feasible in a marketing plan. The team member assigned to communicate with the sales team retrieves this information.

Liaison with Management

Your team may need to report to management. You don't have to take up meeting time to do this. Assign a member to meet with management and make the report. This person can bring management feedback to the next team meeting. This process ties your teamwork to management goals and values and prevents wasting time on projects or directions management will not approve. The team member who speaks with managers can relay vital management input that may alter the team's approach to solving problems.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- A team is only effective when the members understand their roles and responsibilities within the group, and endeavor to execute them effectively.
- One team member should be assigned to seek resources, information and contacts that can benefit the team in its work.

Communicating with the Press

If the team produces a project or makes a decision that management accepts, this can become material for release to media outlets. The team member charged with communicating with entities outside the team may take on the role of expert in presenting the team's work to the press. This can be through press releases or press conferences. This member summarizes and presents the team's work in a way that makes the story newsworthy.

Definition of a Team

Management research has found more than 100 models of how teams function, and there are a slew of definitions for what constitutes a 'team.' Booz and Co. partner Jon Katzenbach and McKinsey partner Douglas K. Smith provided one of the most commonly-used definitions of a 'team' in their 1993 book, The Wisdom of Teams: 'A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they are mutually accountable.'

Team working environment include coordination, which in work teams composed of two or more people provide better outcomes while aligning it to the team tasks and objectives. Team members allow potential coalition formation and hidden communication to take place. Team members engage in a variety of interdependent activities such as working with shared tasks inputs, processes, goals and reward distributions.

WORK AS A TEAM MEMBER

Working on teams can be rewarding, but at times it can be difficult and downright frustrating. If there are poor communicators on your team, you may often feel left in the dark, confused or misunderstood. To create a successful team, effective communication methods are necessary for both team members and leaders. Even though some people understand their communication skills need improving, many are not certain how to improve them.

Honest and Straightforward

A good team member is up front. He/she doesn't play games, or lead others on. You can count on a good team member to tell you what's what, regardless of whether it is good news or bad news.

Shares the Work Pressure

A good team member does his or her fair share of the work. There is a sense of equity and fairness in the good team member. A sense of equity is critically important for team members' collective motivation.

Reliable

The good team member can be counted on. She or he meets deadlines and is on time.

Fair

A good team member takes appropriate credit, but would never think of taking credit for someone else's work.

Complements Others' Skills

An important characteristic of effective work teams is the shared capacity. Every member has areas of strength and some weak spots. A good team member provides some unique skills and/or knowledge that move the team forward.

Good Communication Skills

Teamwork is social, so good team members need to be skilled, and tactful, communicators.

Positive Attitude

No one would ever follow a pessimistic leader, and the same goes for team members. A positive, "can-do" attitude is critical for the good team member.

Don't Blame Others

People in your group lose respect for you if you're constantly blaming others for not meeting deadlines. You're not fooling anyone; people know who isn't pulling his weight in a group. Pointing the finger will only make you look cowardly. Group members understand if you have a heavy workload and weren't able to meet a deadline. Saying something like, "I'm really sorry, but I'll get it to you by the end of today." will earn you a lot more respect than trying to make it seem like it's everyone else's fault that you missed your deadline.

Support Group Member's Ideas

If a teammate suggests something, always consider it – even if it's the silliest idea you've ever heard! Considering the group's ideas shows you're interested in other people's ideas, not just your own. And this makes you a good team member. After all, nobody likes a know-it-all.

No Self-importance

It's one thing to rejoice in your successes with the group, but don't acts like a superstar. Doing this will make others regret your personal successes and may create tension within the group. You don't have to brag to let people know you've done a good job, people will already know. Have faith that people will recognize when good work is being done and that they'll let you know how well you're doing. Your response? Something like "Thanks that means a lot." is enough.

Listen Actively

Look at the person who's speaking to you, nod, ask probing questions and acknowledge what's said by paraphrasing points that have been made. If you're unclear about something that's been said, ask for more information to clear up any confusion before moving on. Effective communication is a vital part of any team, so the value of good listening skills shouldn't be underestimated.

Get Involved

Share suggestions, ideas, solutions and proposals with your team members. Take the time to help your fellow teammates, no matter the request. You can guarantee there will be a time in the future when you'll need some help or advice. And if you've helped them in past, they'll be more than happy to lend a helping hand.

WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH COLLEAGUES

Develop working relationships with colleagues, within your own organization and within other organizations that are productive in terms of supporting and delivering your work and that of the overall organization. 'Colleagues' are any people you are expected to work with, whether they are at a similar position or in other positions, including your manager. Listed below are the main generic 'skills' that need to be applied in developing productive working relationships with colleagues?

- Communicating
- Managing conflict

DID YOU KNOW?

A team leader is someone who provides guidance, instruction, direction and leadership to a group of other individuals (the team) for the purpose of achieving a key result or group of aligned results.

PROGRESS CHECK

1. Write the importance of a team.
2. What qualities should a team member consist? Discuss.

- Empathizing
- Networking
- Information management
- Leading by example
- Valuing and supporting others
- Involving others
- Providing feedback
- Obtaining feedback
- Stress management
- Prioritizing

WORK IN SOCIALLY DIVERSE ENVIRONMENT

Skills and knowledge is required to be culturally aware when serving customers and working with colleagues from diverse backgrounds. It requires the ability to communicate with people of different social and cultural backgrounds with respect and sensitivity and address cross-cultural misunderstandings. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicized wording in the performance criteria is detailed below.

Cultural differences may relate to:	race language special needs disabilities family structure gender age Sexual preference.

Attempts to overcome language barriers may include:	meet, greet and farewell customers give simple directions give simple instructions answer simple enquiries prepare for, serve and assist customers describe goods and services.
Outside organizations may include:	interpreter services diplomatic services local cultural organisations appropriate government agencies educational institutions disability advocacy groups.
Possible cultural differences and needs may include:	language spoken forms of address levels of formality or informality varied cultural interpretation of non-verbal behavior work ethics personal grooming, including dress and hygiene habits family and social obligations and status observance of special religious, feasts or other celebratory days customs, beliefs and values Product preferences.