

The Teamwork Experts?

By Jan Bynum

Teamwork sounds easy for the HR team. After all, they're the "people" department who should know everything there is to know about teamwork. Right?

But teamwork isn't that easy. It takes a lot of work, and it can't be taken for granted. Will there be friction? Yes. Will there be confrontation? Yes. Will there be teamwork? Yes. It can and should become the culture of any ministry, starting with HR.



So what is teamwork? It's work being done by several associates, each doing a part but all subordinating personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole. Intellectually, teamwork is easy to conceive, but emotionally, it's a challenge.

I was recently reminded that HR is just as vulnerable as other teams to the pitfalls surrounding functional teamwork. We'd let ourselves get caught up with the daily activities of providing advice and giving counsel, and began to take our team members for granted. We failed to maintain open, honest communication with each other, going around the problems instead of confronting the issues, and things began to fester.

It finally hit me: my department is a prime example of a "dysfunctional" team. How could we possibly coach others in how to build strong teams when we were falling short ourselves? I believe HR must set the pace, modeling a strong team. It's clearly our responsibility to first develop our team, before helping others develop theirs.

Teamwork isn't all that easy, but it's certainly worthwhile and a very powerful way to accomplish significant work. When HR is functioning as a strong team, others can see teamwork in action.

Matthew 5:16 says, "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." HR must "let its light shine" as a team for others to observe and emulate.

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Dysfunctional Teams

By Jan Bynum

In his book, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, Patrick Lencioni teaches about teamwork through a story about a company struggling to build a team.

It describes the dysfunctions that must be overcome and how to work toward overcoming them: absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results. Once these are removed, the path is clear for optimum teamwork.



When HR was failing in the area of teamwork, this book was an excellent guide for teaching the "teachers," so to speak. If HR was to model great teamwork and create a culture of teamwork throughout the organization, then this was the book for us. Once we understood the basic dysfunctions of teamwork, we've been able to tackle the issues and remove some of the barriers.

This book is a "must read" for HR departments struggling as a team, and an important resource for all HR people.

A One-Stop Resource for HR Operations

By Ronald F. Smedley

THE MOST COMPLETE "ONE STOP" VOLUME I've found for all levels of HR issues within ministry and business alike is *Human Resources*, by Richard G. Renckly. Renckly's emphasis is on the daily HR operations as well as analyzing people problems that can occur within an organization. What I enjoy is its practicality in using examples and approaches based upon true-to-life work situations. This is one volume well worth having in the HR library.

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