

The Bushfire Situation

You are on assignment at the Australian office of a multi-national firm in Melbourne, Victoria. It has been a long, dry summer in Melbourne, and you look forward to escaping the 39°C (102°F) heat of the city for the weekend. You and your group have taken up an offer to use a vacation home owned by an associate. It is located in the scenic Dandenong Ranges, 35 kilometers (22 miles) east of Melbourne.

Scattered throughout the Dandenongs are small villages—with markets, restaurants, and picnic areas—set among pockets of forests and natural terrain with sparsely canopied trees such as mountain ashes, giant fern, gum, and eucalyptus.* The under-canopy brush of grass, shrubs, and fallen debris decomposes slowly due to the dry conditions. These features, with a higher elevation and generally cooler weather, have made the ranges a popular attraction.

Though there have been reports of bushfires, none have been in the immediate vicinity of your destination. You therefore leave early on Saturday and enjoy a pleasant drive through Ferntree Gully, heading toward the township of Sassafras. A couple of minutes after passing east through the township, you take a right-hand turn off the main route onto Warwick Farm Road, a narrow bush-flanked gravel road. You proceed past several lanes leading to homes set among the trees. Nearly a kilometer (0.6 miles) later you come to a junction and turn left down Warwick Road. After a steep descent through gum trees for about 150 meters (164 yards), the road ends at a well-maintained, steel-roofed, wooden house where you will be staying. The



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Salvaged Items	STEP 1 Individual Rank	STEP 2 Team Rank	STEP 3 Experts' Rank
Aluminum Ladder (10 ft. [3 m])			
3 Sets of Snorkels, Flippers and Masks			
3 Plastic Buckets			

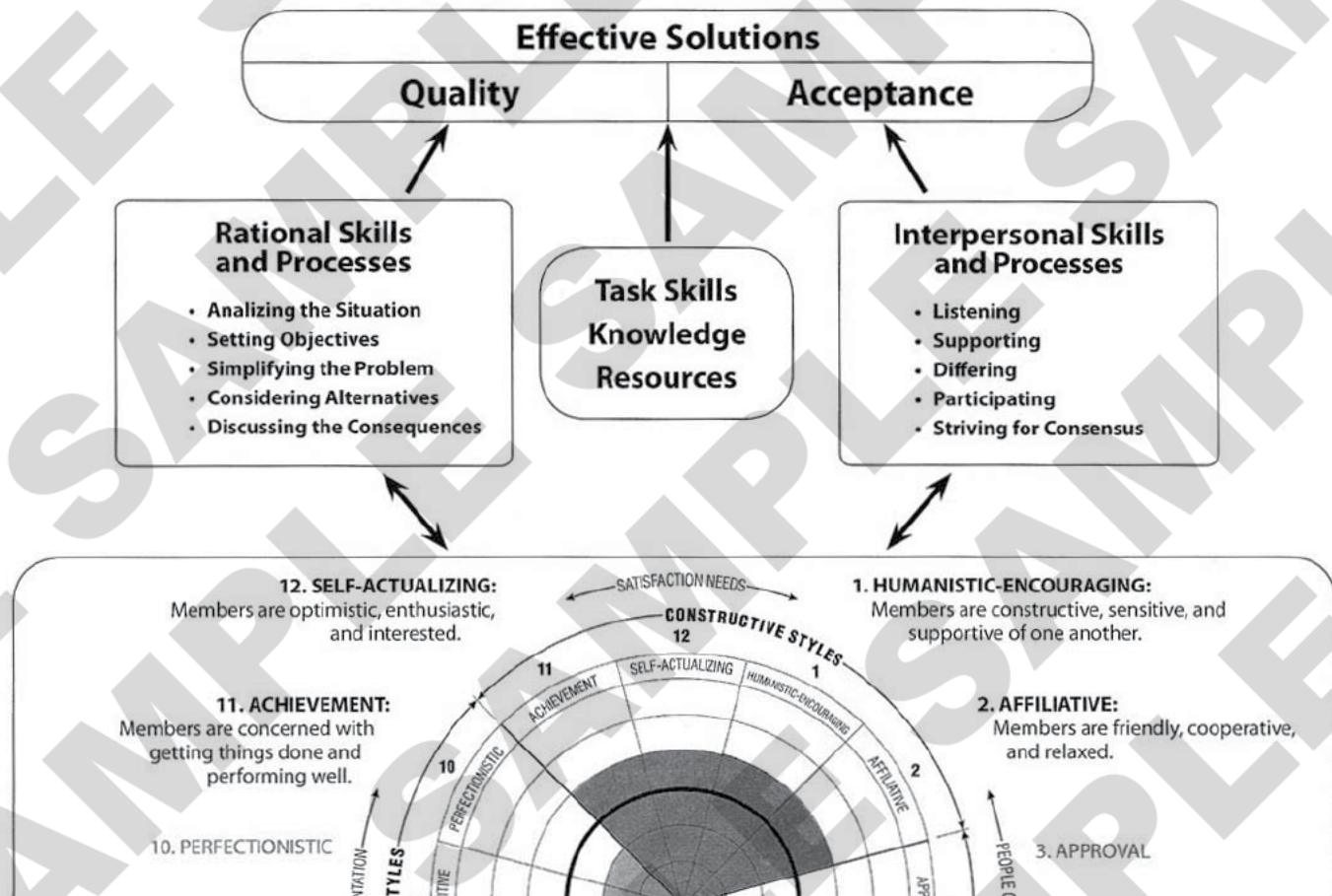


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Synergistic Problem-Solving Model

Synergy occurs when the interactive efforts of two or more people have a greater impact than the sum of their independent efforts. Synergistic problem solving is achieved when groups maximize their use of available resources, knowledge, and task skills by exhibiting constructive (as opposed to defensive) interaction styles. It is further promoted when members approach problems in a rational, interpersonally supportive manner.* The outcome is an effective solution—one that is both accepted by members and of higher quality than their individual solutions.



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