Getting The Most Out Of Teams

SUE BINGHAM AND DOMINIC GOURLEY (HS AUSTRALIA) TALK ABOUT DEBRIEFING GROUPS AND WORKING WITH TEAMS.

Do a shared activitiy and then Group Styles Inventory®.
A shared activity could be one of our Survival Simulations, a project meeting or working on solving a problem. The only prerequisite is that team members are in the same place, at the same time, doing the same task. The GSI should be completed immediately after the activity. The participants are describing how they were feeling, what they were thinking during the activity, the behaviors that they saw occurring during that activity and how effective the group was at problem-solving.

The synergistic problem solving equation.
Effective solution equals **quality** times **acceptance**. Teams can use that as a frame where they explore what are the **quality** aspects of the decision, that means the rational processes (task-orientation) e.g. did we cover all of the facts? Have we explored options? Did we question assumptions? Have we done a critical analysis? You multiply that by the other side, which is **acceptance**, or the interpersonal processes (people-orientation) e.g. How clear was the communication, how collaborative was the interaction within the team, did everybody have an equal voice? Were people respectful of each other's views and opinions? Were you able to discuss all aspects of this problem freely? It's only when you have equal effort on both sides of that equation, that you get the multiplying effect. That gives you the most effective solution.

Actively listening.
In some teams, team members are just patiently waiting for their turn to speak or thinking about what they will say next and not listening. Or nobody's listening to anybody because they're so busy talking over each other. We need to listen. It doesn't mean we have to accept it (that would be passive behavior). I think what people do want is to feel that they've been listened to. Then they're actually OK if the decision doesn't go their way, they will feel as though they've been part of a consensus decision making process. Its also important to engage with people who are perhaps not quite so forthcoming and say, is there something that you'd like to contribute? We haven't heard from you yet. (Circumplex - Humanistic-Encouraging and Affiliative).
Also, the contribution of every individual is important, because it doesn't matter what role that person has in an organization, the idea might be something that nobody else has thought about.

Own your opinion.
It's important to own your opinion. Some will put their idea forward and then they will undermine their own idea by saying what would I know? You know, I'm not an expert in this particular field. They don't stand there and own it.

Not judging too early.
Teams often accept or dismiss ideas instantly without exploring. They may go with the first idea that's thrown out because they don't want to disagree (e.g. if it's the boss). But its critical to look at all the options as a team before deciding.

SWOT.
It can be helpful to do a SWOT analysis on every option.
What are the Strengths of it? What are the Weaknesses of it? What are the Opportunities? What are the Threats?

Listen to the full podcast episode here