

HEAD START®



Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community

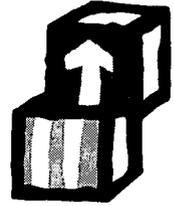
Cultivating Successful Management Teams



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau



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Photograph provided courtesy of Fairfax County Department of Family Services, Office for Children, Head Start Program, Fairfax, Virginia.

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Preface

Journal Notes of a New Early Childhood Development Manager

A year has passed since I took over the Early Childhood Development manager position at Kuumba Family and Community Services, Inc. Imagine going into an agency with a new Head Start director and starting from scratch. Luckily, the management staff had the skills needed to do their jobs well. What they were missing was the team mind-set.

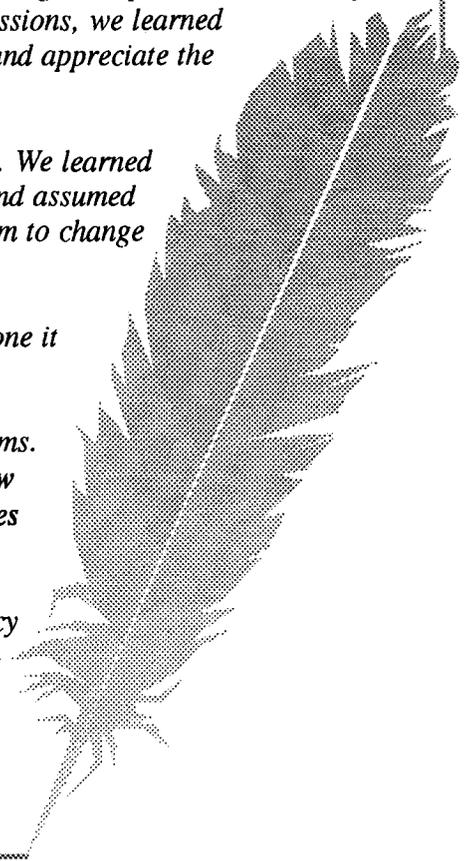
A year ago, Velma, the new Head Start director, and I walked into this situation and found a collection of individuals working independently. There was no leadership to guide them; there were no clear goals and objectives; self-assessment and staff appraisals did not exist; and communication systems were fragmented, with the grapevine operating as the major source of information for most staff and parents. I felt nervous about the task that lay ahead. I was having second thoughts about accepting the position when Velma reminded me, "You don't have to do it all yourself. You have a team to work with." "What a novel idea," I thought to myself. "A team."

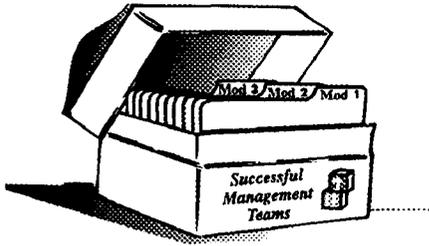
Velma, the other management staff members, and I quickly began our work: to build a team that shares in the decision making and the workload. We held regular meetings several times each week for the first few months. Each manager then initiated regular meetings with his or her staff. Communication improved as information was shared and everyone knew what needed to be done each week. Next, we conducted a training assessment. As a result, we developed a plan to provide coordinated training that addressed the issues highlighted in the assessment, and we instituted ongoing team training to help build relationships among team members, staff, and policy groups. During these training sessions, we learned what was important to each team member, which helped us understand and appreciate the diversity of our staff.

*After relationships were strengthened, the team process flowed naturally. We learned to face conflicts and resolve them together. The team set its own goals and assumed complete accountability for achieving them. We were committed as a team to change things, using the slogan **Everyday Excellence**.*

Our agency has come a long way during this year. We could not have done it without the team process. I am proud of the growth that we have seen in both staff and parents. Their new feelings of empowerment are helping create new leadership in our Head Start centers and home-based programs. What I hear at team meetings these days is, "How can we improve? How can we serve families better? What can we change to make the processes flow more smoothly?" I hope we never stop asking these questions!

(These journal notes are composites from a coordinated child care agency in central Florida and a community action Head Start program in southwestern North Carolina.)





Effective management teams establish frameworks that guide quality Head Start programs. Historically, Head Start has been a leader in comprehensive and interdisciplinary approaches to working with children and families. Implicit in this is the *team* approach, with *service integration* as a goal. Management teams play crucial roles in maintaining sound management systems and processes that support integrated, comprehensive services.

The team management approach helps Head Start programs provide the comprehensive services that meet the goals described in the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*. Well-trained management teams support quality services by creating internal systems such as fiscal management, planning, communicating, record keeping, reporting, training and staff development, program self-assessment, and monitoring.

In addition, skilled management teams develop team processes that achieve program goals, and they apply strategies that strengthen their relationships with one another, other program staff, and policy groups.

Cultivating Successful Management Teams supports the development of productive management teams in Head Start that:

- Bring together *diverse groups* of people
- Unite around a common *purpose*
- Work together *cooperatively*
- Achieve the highest *quality results*

This guide is designed to help management teams enhance their professional skills and experiences as they administer Head Start programs. Team process skills can and should be used on many levels, but the primary focus of this guide is on management teams that direct programs.

By practicing team management skills, leaders will model for Head Start staff and families how to collaborate, use diverse expertise, resolve differences, and build skills.

Overview

Purpose

This technical guide strengthens the knowledge and skills of participants so they can effectively use a team approach to manage Head Start programs. This guide promotes the concept that effective management systems and team process skills are important tools that allow management teams to operate comprehensive, integrated, and collaborative Head Start programs.

Successful Head Start management teams use the diverse knowledge and expertise of each member to turn challenges into opportunities. The cultural and linguistic diversity in families, organizational structures and designs, program options, and geographical areas served all contribute to the challenges of an effective team approach to management. Productive management teams are able to turn challenges into opportunities by valuing, celebrating, respecting, and using the diverse skills of team members to accomplish common program goals.

The *Head Start Program Performance Standards* make it clear that each local program has autonomy in designing its own Head Start organizational structure. At the same time, there are distinct expectations for quality services. Resourceful programs are able to link team management to their organizational structure and create an environment that produces the quality results that Head Start expects. These results include:

- Strategic planning that reflects the strength, needs, and concerns of families and communities
- Strong communication systems that allow team members to share timely information regularly with each other, policy groups, program staff, and parents
- Collaborative relationships with policy groups, program staff, parents, and communities
- Self-assessment and ongoing monitoring to ensure that program goals and objectives are being met

This guide provides opportunities for participants to refine their team management skills and abilities, which are important in planning, implementing, and evaluating Head Start services.

Introduction

Outcomes

After completing this guide, participants will meet the following outcomes:

- Recognize the strengths, dynamics, and challenges that result from each team's uniqueness
- Work as a team to develop management systems guided by the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*
- Create and maintain quality relationships
- Assess management team practices and evaluate the results
- Model effective team practices when working with other policy-making bodies, program teams, staff, and the broader Head Start community

Audience

This guide is for management teams that direct Head Start programs on a day-to-day basis. The teams may vary in size and membership, but most often include the Head Start director, managers of key services, content specialists, site or area managers, and other key administrative personnel. Management teams may at times find it necessary to consult and work with the Head Start executive director, Policy Council chair, and Board chair. The training activities in this guide are most effective when used with a full management team. The activities and skills can be used with other Head Start teams.

Performance Standards

The *Head Start Program Performance Standards* require that programs provide comprehensive, integrated services to children and families within their communities. A team management approach establishes the necessary framework, systems, and procedures for planning, record keeping, reporting, communicating, training, assessing, and monitoring that provide the foundation for delivering effective services.

Organization

This guide, *Cultivating Successful Management Teams*, contains the following modules:

- **Module 1: *Recognizing Our Diverse and Dynamic Nature***

This module increases participants' understanding of effective management teams, their characteristics, and practices. Participants learn how the management systems and procedures required by the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* provide the common purpose that binds the team, and how the diversity among team members contributes to the dynamics that produce quality outcomes.

- **Module 2: *Strengthening Our Cooperative Relationships***

This module emphasizes the team skills needed to work together cooperatively. It addresses the process of teamwork and provides tools that participants can use to analyze how they interact with other team members. In addition, participants examine how their team communicates with its members to fully accomplish program goals and practice joint accountability.

- **Module 3: *Implementing the Team Approach***

This module focuses on skills needed to implement effective team management. Participants practice working collaboratively with policy groups, program staff, and parents to effectively guide day-to-day operations. Participants also apply strategies for resolving problems that develop within the team and review methods to continuously improve how the team functions and collaborates with key partners.

Each module includes *Outcomes*, *Key Concepts*, and *Background Information*. The module *Outcomes* sections are based on the guide *Outcomes*. Each activity is designed to achieve one of the module outcomes.

The *Key Concepts* section summarizes the main ideas in each module. These concepts are discussed more explicitly in the *Background Information* section of each module. The trainer may choose to present the *Background Information* section as a minilecture, handout, or overhead in coaching or workshop sessions.

The *Next Steps* section includes activities for the management team to use with all other teams that participate in delivering quality comprehensive services.

The *Resources* section at the end of the guide lists additional materials that should be consulted for further information on the module topics.

Appendix A, *Appendix B*, and *Appendix C* contain information on decision making and conflict management and an example of a team assessment tool, respectively.

Introduction

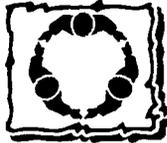
Definition of Icons

Coaching



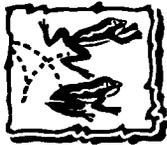
A training strategy that fosters the development of skills through tailored instruction, demonstrations, practice, and feedback. The activities are written for a coach to work closely with one to three participants.

Workshop



A facilitated group training strategy that fosters the development of skills through activities that build on learning through group interaction. These activities are written for up to twenty-five participants working in small or large groups with one or two trainers.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice



These are additional activities assigned by the trainer immediately following the completion of the module to help participants review key information, practice skills, and examine their progress toward expected outcomes of the module.

Continuing Professional Development



These are follow-up activities for the program to support continued staff development in the regular use of the skills addressed in a particular training guide. The activities include:

- (1) Opportunities for the participant to continue building on the skills learned in the training
 - (2) Ways to identify new skills and knowledge needed to expand and/or complement these skills through opportunities in such areas as higher education, credentialing, or community educational programs
-

Introduction

At A Glance

Module	Activity	Time	Materials
<i>Module 1: Recognizing Our Diverse and Dynamic Nature</i>	(W) Activity 1-1: What Makes an Effective Team?	90 minutes	<i>Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams</i> Chart paper, markers, and tape A variety of picture and symbol stickers 5" x 8" index cards (nine for each participant)
	(W) Activity 1-2: What Is Team Management for Us?	Session 1: 50 minutes Session 2: 90 minutes	<i>Handout 2: Our Team</i> <i>Handout 3: Head Start Management Systems</i> Chart paper, markers, and tape 5" x 8" index cards (four for each participant) Markers (one for each participant)
	(W) Activity 1-3: Understanding Team Stages	90 minutes	<i>Handout 4: Team Growth Stages</i> Chart paper and markers Scissors and glue sticks Plain paper Magazines

Introduction

Module	Activity	Time	Materials
<i>Module 1: Recognizing Our Diverse and Dynamic Nature (Continued)</i>	(C) Activity 1-4: How Do We Function as a Team?	Session 1: 60 minutes	<i>Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams</i> <i>Handout 5: My Contribution to the Team</i>
		Session 2: 45 minutes	Plain paper, markers, and chart paper <i>Handout 6: Continuum of Team Function</i>
<i>Module 2: Strengthening Our Cooperative Relationships</i>	(W) Activity 2-1: Designing a Code of Conduct: R.O.P.E.S.	90 minutes	<i>Appendix A: Team Decision Making</i> Chart paper and markers 4" x 6" (or larger) index cards
	(W) Activity 2-2: Appreciating Differences in Team Work Styles	120 minutes	<i>Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?</i> Chart paper, markers, and tape
	(W) Activity 2-3: Team Member Cooperative Support	Session 1: 60 minutes Session 2: 60 minutes	Chart paper, markers, and tape <i>Handout 8: Team Sharing/Support Worksheet</i>
	(C) Activity 2-4: Working Cooperatively	60 minutes	<i>Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?</i> <i>Handout 9: Working in a Cooperative Mode</i> Paper and pens

Introduction

Module	Activity	Time	Materials
<i>Module 2: Strengthening Our Cooperative Relationships (Continued)</i>	(W) Activity 2-5: Making Meetings Matter	90 minutes	<i>Handout 10: Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings</i> <i>Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter</i> <i>Appendix A: Team Decision Making</i> Chart paper, markers, and tape
	(C) Activity 2-6: Running Interactive Meetings	60 minutes	<i>Handout 10: Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings</i> <i>Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter</i> <i>Appendix A: Team Decision Making</i> Paper and pens
<i>Module 3: Implementing the Team Approach</i>	(W) Activity 3-1: Taking Responsibility for Team Success	Session 1: 60 minutes Session 2: 30 minutes	Chart paper, markers, and tape Two Lego structures Lego pieces Prelabeled 3" x 5" index cards

Introduction

Module	Activity	Time	Materials
<p><i>Module 3: Implementing the Team Approach (Continued)</i></p>	<p>(W) Activity 3-2: Solving Problems Together as a Management Team</p>	<p>120 minutes</p>	<p><i>Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges</i></p> <p><i>Handout 13: Problem Wheel</i></p> <p>Markers and scissors</p> <p>3" x 5" index cards</p> <p>Several packages of 3" x 5" self-stick notes</p> <p>Sheets of poster board</p> <p>Chart paper with problem wheel, job titles of stakeholders, and names of team members</p> <p>Individual sheets of chart paper, each labeled with the job title of a stakeholder</p>
	<p>(C) Activity 3-3: Problem Solving: What Would You Do?</p>	<p>60 minutes</p>	<p><i>Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges</i></p> <p><i>Handout 14: What Would You Do?</i></p> <p>Copies of the <i>Background Information</i> section in <i>Module 1: Recognizing Our Diverse and Dynamic Nature</i> and <i>Module 2: Strengthening Our Cooperative Relationships</i></p>

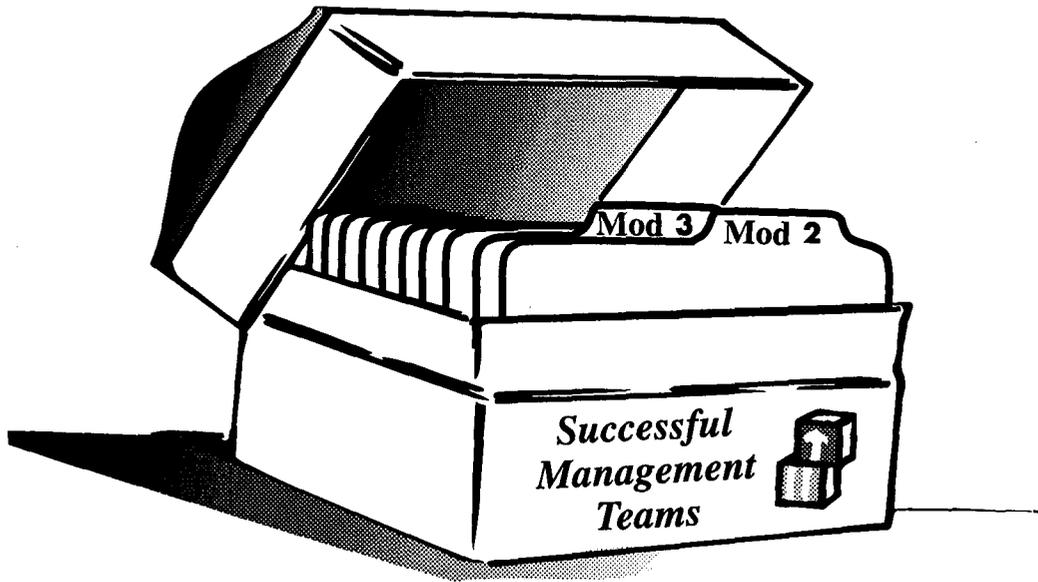
Introduction

Module	Activity	Time	Materials
<p><i>Module 3: Implementing the Team Approach (Continued)</i></p>	<p>(W) Activity 3-4: Team History</p>	<p>60 minutes</p>	<p><i>Handout 15: Team History Sample</i></p> <p><i>Handout 16: Our Team History</i></p> <p><i>Handout 17: Team Coat of Arms—Instruction Sheet</i></p> <p><i>Handout 18: Continuous Improvement Tools</i></p> <p>Markers, stickers, colored paper, scissors, glue stick, and tape</p> <p>Several large sheets of white poster board</p>

C = Coaching Activities

W = Workshop Activities





Mod 1

“Effective management of Head Start programs depends, in large measure, on the capacity of key managers to work as a team.”

*– David J. Lett, Regional Administrator,
Region III, U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services, Administration
for Children and Families*



Recognizing Our Diverse and Dynamic Nature

Outcomes

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Identify the essential practices of effective team management
- Recognize how the personal skills, strengths, and expertise of diverse team members contribute to managing their Head Start program
- Explore the stages of growth that management teams typically experience
- Evaluate the team management approach in their program

Key Concepts

- A team approach is a productive management model for Head Start programs to use to provide comprehensive services. Since each program has unique needs, each program must identify the best organizational structure and methods for implementing team management.
- Highly functioning management teams share some key practices. Understanding these practices promotes team effectiveness and contributes to the team management approach in Head Start.
- Productive management teams consist of diverse individuals who bring their perceptions, talents, experiences, cultures, ideas, and expertise to a Head Start program.
- A group typically goes through several stages of development to become a team. Understanding these stages prepares members for the challenges involved with working together and successfully managing how their program achieves its goals. The stages of team development include forming, storming, norming, and performing.

Background Information

The framework for quality, comprehensive Head Start services begins with the day-to-day approach that programs use to manage. Historically, teams have been a key part of Head Start. The Head Start community clearly understands that its agencies and communities support families and children best when team skills are used. Moreover, the management systems and procedures that operate effectively, comprehensively, coordinated, and collaborative programs require a team approach to management. The process for developing this approach

Module 1

starts with a clear understanding of the practices and competencies that promote successful management teams, as well as a recognition of the diverse and dynamic nature of teams.

Team Approach to Management

Head Start programs have widely different characteristics and organizational and management structures. Some are small, others are large. Some are urban, some are rural, others are suburban or metropolitan. Some are nonprofit agencies, others are school systems, tribal nations, or government entities. Some are grantees, others are delegate agencies, and some are both grantees and delegate agencies. Regardless of the differences, every program must provide quality, comprehensive services to children and families. To do this, every program must look at its capacity, purpose, and structure to determine the best management approach for meeting the overall goal of providing quality services. A team approach to management complements Head Start's comprehensive and integrated focus.

There are several benefits to a team approach to management. A team approach:

- Creates a collective focus on the purpose of the organization
- Integrates the work of staff and parents with different perspectives and skills
- Generates innovative ideas and solutions by bringing together diverse viewpoints and information
- Promotes a holistic approach to services

These benefits allow staff members and parents to enhance the quality of services by working cohesively as a team, rather than working separately as individuals.

Role of the Management Team

The management team in a Head Start program is defined by the local program. It may be made up of content experts and administrators or it may include area managers or center directors. Some management teams may include clerical and administrative support staff; others may not.

Head Start management teams serve an important purpose within programs. Their members represent the various perspectives, teams, and values within the organization. Their work helps set the stage for effective performance. Management team members, along with policy groups, make key decisions about strategy, priorities, resource allocation, and organization of programs.

The main responsibilities of a management team include:¹

- Establishing direction and strategy
- Allocating resources
- Making programwide decisions
- Ensuring that the budget supports the program's decisions
- Monitoring program operations and team outcomes
- Ensuring that corrective action takes place
- Overseeing service delivery by other teams
- Ensuring that program design meets the needs of families and communities [and the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*]

Management Systems

There are several management systems that enable management teams to meet their responsibilities. They are part of the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* and support each program's ongoing and organized approach to the delivery of quality services. These management systems are:

- **Program planning.** An ongoing process of assessing community strengths and needs, developing long-range goals and short-range objectives for program services, and developing written plans for implementing the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*.
- **Communication.** An ongoing system for exchanging accurate and timely information among all groups in the program and the general community throughout the year.
- **Record keeping.** A system for collecting, accessing, and using data to provide up-to-date information for managing the implementation of quality services.
- **Reporting.** A process for generating periodic reports on financial status and program operations to monitor and manage program services and to inform others of the program's progress.

¹Susan Albers Mohrman and Allan M. Mohrman, Jr., *Designing and Leading Team-Based Organizations—A Workbook for Organizational Self-Design* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997), pp. 3-9 to 3-12.

Module 1

- **Ongoing monitoring.** Procedures for the ongoing review of program operations to ensure that the program is moving toward accomplishing its goals and objectives and meeting federal regulations.
- **Program self-assessment.** An annual process to determine a program's effectiveness and progress in meeting its goals and objectives and implementing federal regulations.
- **Human resources.** A system for managing and supporting staff that includes an organizational structure to support program objectives; methods for recruiting and selecting well-qualified staff who possess the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to provide comprehensive services; and ongoing staff development opportunities to support staff in their professional development.
- **Fiscal management.** A system for managing a program's finances. This includes developing and approving the program's budget, monitoring and reporting expenditures, maintaining budget accountability, and ensuring that all federal regulations regarding finances are met and that the budget supports the implementation of program services.

Essential Team Practices

Understanding the role of a management team starts with team members' recognizing who they are as a collective group, what common goals they want to achieve, and how each member is unique. Essential practices that all effective teams should exhibit include:²

- Creating an atmosphere for open communication and acceptance of others' perspectives
- Giving open and honest feedback
- Articulating clearly defined purposes and goals
- Using good communication skills
- Resolving disagreements
- Clarifying the decision-making process
- Paying attention to facts and feelings

²Adapted from Douglas McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), pp. 232–235.

- Delegating clear assignments
- Sharing leadership
- Continuously evaluating team progress and function

In addition, to do its job well, a management team should be manageable in size and should create ways for individuals not on the team to make contributions.

Diversity of Team Members

How can a management team foster these characteristics and practices? By building on the diversity of its members and paying attention to the team's growth and development.

Head Start management teams are diverse. They include persons who come from a variety of backgrounds with valuable insight and skills to bring to the team. However, bringing together diverse and gifted people is a challenge that requires careful attention. To call forth the optimum contributions of each party in the team, leaders need to encourage all members to fully use their life experiences and professional expertise.

Stages of Team Growth

Management teams are dynamic. They continually evolve and grow. Each team member changes every day. Events that affect individuals will have an effect on the team interaction and performance.

Most teams go through four recognizable stages. These stages are not always in sequence and teams can return to stages they have already experienced as new challenges occur or new members are added. Forming, storming, norming, and performing³ are commonly used names for these stages.

Team stages are similar to human growth and development, in which we develop key skills, knowledge, and understanding as we move through each development stage. Like the phases of human development, teams can move forward by applying what they have learned during previous stages.

Forming

Forming, which resembles infancy, is the orientation stage. It occurs when a team is first created or new members are added. Forming also takes place when there is a major shift in a program and any changes in requirements or regulations are introduced. Even in Head Start programs that have been functioning since the mid-1960s, there is time for

³Based on Bruce W. Tuckman, "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups," *Psychological Bulletin* 63, no. 6 (1965): 384-399.

Module 1

forming. For example, parent groups are formed each year. In relationships among team members, this is the period when understanding begins to develop as orientation takes place and members learn the rules, procedures, and practices of the group.

Storming

Storming, which can be compared to adolescence, is the conflict stage. It happens when the members contribute their individual ideas and opinions and there are differences—this is part of the diversity that will eventually make a team strong. Team members may strike out verbally at the team leadership or withdraw from team meetings. However, once team members establish a process for resolving conflict, storming can make possible creative conflict that helps team members develop and enhances leadership. Some Head Start leaders may be frightened by conflict and feel unprepared to deal with the differences among team members and the effect of conflict on the team climate. It is important to recognize this fear and not allow it to block any creativity that the storming stage can produce. Team members need reassurance that storming is natural and need not hurt the team effort.

During this stage, it is important for the team leader to help improve the comfort level of the members by resolving issues of power and authority—for example, by reminding the team to respect and accept all contributions. The team leader should work with the team to develop incremental agreements and decisions. Members should be encouraged to take on more responsibilities.

Norming

Norming, which can be compared to young adulthood, is the collaboration or cooperation stage. Teams need rules, codes of conduct, and ethical principles that their members agree upon. In interpersonal relationships, this is a time for cohesion. During this stage there is regular communication among team members and a sense of team spirit. This is the period when team members begin to help each other achieve, rather than compete with one another.

Performing

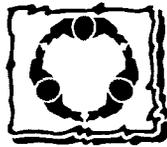
Performing, which is sometimes compared to mature adulthood, is the productive stage where team members consistently work together cooperatively to achieve the team's goals and objectives, invest time to build relationships among members, and use effective strategies to manage conflict. It is a time of strong interdependence among the members. Members of the team experience respect and appreciation from other members. Challenges become opportunities for discovering new options. Problems are addressed and become the creative soil for new ideas to take root. High-performing work teams strive to remain in this performing mode. Even the strongest management teams in Head Start, however, do not remain here all the time.

Synergy

Synergy is the kind of energy that induces a positive and open group spirit within the team. To achieve synergy, all team members contribute actively without holding back. Everyone is involved in some way, using his or her own special skills and talents for the achievement and success of the team as a whole. The team benefits from individual contributions by combining them to meet shared goals. A collective sense of commitment to the team develops.

High-performing teams achieve synergy. Synergy occurs when the whole becomes greater than the sum of the individual parts. Synergy adds significant value to the team as people contribute ideas, values, expertise, and experiences. Persons in a group who experience synergy often feel valued, energized, and committed. The benefits of synergy are new ideas and actions that produce results.

Activity 1-1: **What Makes an Effective Team?**



Purpose: Participants will describe the practices of effective teams. They will compare their criteria for strong team management with those of other members of their team.

Materials:

Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams

Chart paper, markers, and tape

A variety of picture and symbol stickers

5" x 8" index cards (nine for each participant)

Introduce Activity

1. Explain to participants that in this activity they will describe some essential practices they feel are needed in a team environment for members to work effectively, feel supported, and participate fully in the team management process.

Identify Essential Qualities and Challenges

2. Distribute nine cards to each person along with picture and symbol stickers. Ask participants to write on six cards an essential quality they feel they need for the Head Start management team to work. The stickers will be used to decorate the cards to represent the qualities. Then, on the three remaining cards, have them list a challenge that they feel makes it difficult to be a part of this team.

Emphasize that they should be creative in designing their cards. Allow 10 minutes for the activity.

Working in Pairs, Choose Essentials and Distractions

3. Next ask participants to work in pairs. Have each pair choose from the combined twelve quality cards five quality cards that they feel are essential for the team. Then, ask the pair to select from their six combined challenge cards three challenge cards that they feel would detract from their team participation. Recommend that

Module 1

Working in Small Groups, Select Essential Qualities and Challenges

Working as One Group, Identify Essential Qualities and Challenges

Distribute Handout and Discuss Team Essentials

participants choose a partner with whom they do not always work. Allow 5 minutes for this task.

4. Have participants form groups of three to six individuals. Give each group 5 minutes to select seven quality cards and three challenge cards on which they all agree.
5. Assemble all the participants. Facilitate a discussion for them to agree on ten quality cards and five challenge cards. Allow at least 15 minutes for this activity.

Using the qualities and challenges the group identifies on the cards, lead a discussion to list team practices and behaviors that participants would like team members to use. The final list of fifteen cards can be displayed in a visible location, perhaps on a bulletin board in the place where the team meets.

6. Distribute *Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams*. Discuss the essential practices listed on the handout.
 - Create an atmosphere for open communication and acceptance of others' perspectives
 - Give open and honest feedback
 - Articulate clearly defined purposes and goals
 - Use good communication skills
 - Resolve disagreements
 - Clarify the decision-making process
 - Pay attention to facts and feelings
 - Delegate clear assignments
 - Share leadership
 - Continuously evaluate team progress and function

Ask participants if they want to add other practices to their list.

Close Activity

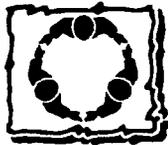
7. Use the following questions to close the session:

- *What kind of team atmosphere should be established? Why is this so important?*
- *What can we do to promote honest, skillful discussions?*
- *Why are disagreements important in effective teams? How are they effectively managed?*
- *Are we satisfied that these practices are essential for our management team?*

Summarize by noting that in this activity:

- *Each person had a chance to express an opinion.*
- *Team members had an opportunity to negotiate and practice one of the primary styles of decision making, such as building consensus.*
- *The team had a chance to see that its needs compare favorably to what all high-functioning teams need.*

Activity 1-2: What Is Team Management for Us?



Purpose: Participants will analyze the team management approach currently used in their Head Start programs. They will review the management systems in their programs and examine the diverse composition of their teams.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

- This workshop can be conducted in two sessions on different days. *Session 1* focuses on identifying the team management approach in the participants' program as well as examining the fiscal and management systems that support an effective team approach. In *Session 2*, participants analyze the composition of their team.
- In addition, the size of the small groups during the breakout activities will depend on the number of individuals participating in the training. For small management teams, we recommend two groups of at least three people each.

Module 1

Session 1

Materials:

Handout 2: Our Team

Handout 3: Head Start Management Systems

Chart paper, markers, and tape

Introduce Activity

1. Begin by discussing how the team approach to management allows programs to provide the comprehensive services required in Head Start. State that every local program has a unique structure and its own method for implementing a team approach to management. Explain that in this activity participants will explore the team approach in their program structure by looking at the composition of the management team and the management systems that help their program operate.

Identify Teams in Program

2. Distribute *Handout 2: Our Team* and ask each person to think about the different teams with which they interact and write the names in the circles. One example to start participants thinking may be *Policy Council* or *Policy Committee*. Other responses may include:
 - Home-based and center staff teams
 - Parents, children, and other significant family members
 - Community agency/collaboration teams
 - Governance teams, including the Board and Policy Council
 - Grantee agency interoffice/interprogram teams
 - Advisory/ad hoc teams

Discuss Team Management

3. Reproduce *Handout 2* on chart paper. Ask participants to call out their ideas and write them in the circles. Consolidate the answers and discuss the relationships between the management team and the other teams on the list. Fill in words representing these relationships on the web. Discuss how the role of the management team is different from the other teams. Refer to the *Background Information* to emphasize the following roles of a management team:
 - Establishing direction and strategy
 - Allocating resources
 - Making programwide decisions
 - Ensuring that the budget supports the program's decisions
 - Monitoring program operations and team outcomes
 - Ensuring that corrective action takes place

Review Head Start Management Systems

- Overseeing service delivery by other teams
 - Ensuring that program design meets the needs of families, communities, and the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*
4. Distribute *Handout 3: Head Start Management Systems*. Discuss with participants management systems within a program that encourage effective team management. Refer to *Background Information* to guide the discussion. Emphasize the following interrelated systems:
- **Program planning.** An ongoing process of assessing community strengths and needs, developing long-range goals and short-range objectives for program services, and developing written plans for implementing the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*.
 - **Communication.** An ongoing system for exchanging accurate and timely information among all groups in the program and the general community throughout the year.
 - **Record keeping.** A system for collecting, accessing, and using data to provide up-to-date information for managing the implementation of quality services.
 - **Reporting.** A process for generating periodic reports on final status and program operations to monitor and manage program services and to inform others of the program's progress.
 - **Ongoing monitoring.** Procedures for the ongoing review of program operations to ensure that the program is moving toward accomplishing its goals and objectives and meeting federal regulations.
 - **Program self-assessment.** An annual process to determine a program's effectiveness and progress in meeting its goals and objectives and implementing federal regulations.
 - **Human resources.** A system for managing and supporting staff that includes an organizational structure to support program objectives; methods for recruiting and selecting well-qualified staff who possess the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to provide comprehensive services; and ongoing staff development opportunities to support staff in their professional development.

Module 1

- **Fiscal management.** A system for managing a program's finances. This includes developing and approving the program's budget, monitoring and reporting expenditures, maintaining budget accountability, and ensuring that all federal regulations regarding finances are met and that the budget supports the implementation of program services.

5. Ask participants the following question:

- *What do you think are the greatest benefits of a team approach to management?*

Possible responses:

- Service integration
- Better services to children and families
- Comprehensive services that require management systems that operate adequately with teamwork and team accountability

Session 2

Materials

- 5" x 8" index cards (four for each participant)
- Markers (one for each participant)

Introduce Activity

1. Review key elements of the team approach from *Session 1*. Explain that this session will focus on the composition of the management team.

Discuss Management Team

2. Distribute index cards and markers to each participant. Ask participants to respond to the following questions:
 - *Who currently is on our management team?*
 - *What cultural experiences and perspectives are represented by our team? How do these diverse experiences and perspectives enhance the team's effectiveness and strengths? (Consider work, education, and other life experiences.)*
 - *What skills and expertise do our members bring to the team?*
 - *What effective behaviors do individual members demonstrate?*
 - *What skills, talents, expertise, or values do we still need on the team?*

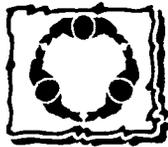
Share Responses in Groups

Identify Challenges of Team Approach

Close Activity

3. Have participants separate into small discussion groups of two or three. Ask them to share their responses with the other group members. After 15 minutes, regroup and ask a volunteer from each small group to summarize the discussion. When all groups have presented, review the similarities and differences among the groups.
4. Ask participants to consider how their current team practices help them fulfill their role as a management team and establish the management systems described in the performance standards. Discuss what they feel are the challenges of using a team approach to management and what they think are some solutions. List their comments on chart paper, with challenges in one column and solutions in the other column.
5. Summarize the session by emphasizing that using a team approach:
 - *Creates a collective focus on a common purpose*
 - *Generates innovative ideas and solutions by bringing together diverse viewpoints and information*
 - *Promotes a holistic approach to services*

Activity 1-3: Understanding Team Stages



Purpose: Participants will examine the stages of development that teams typically experience. They will identify strategies for managing each stage.

Materials:

Handout 4: Team Growth Stages
Chart paper and markers
Scissors and glue sticks
Plain paper
Magazines

Module 1

Trainer Preparation Notes:

- Prepare a personal collage of each stage to show as examples.
- Prelabel chart paper with the following questions:
 1. *What strategies or behaviors help move a team through the stages?*
 2. *Why do teams move back and forth between stages?*
 3. *What are the biggest challenges of storming? What are some solutions?*
 4. *Why is it important to recognize the stages?*

Introduce Activity

1. Distribute *Handout 4: Team Growth Stages*. Use the *Background Information* and the handout to explain to participants that teams are dynamic and that they change constantly. There are four recognizable stages that teams go through. These stages are not in sequence, and teams can return to stages they have already experienced as new challenges occur or new members are added. Explain to participants that they will explore what they already know about team development, the behaviors that characterize each stage, strategies for managing each stage, and how understanding team development can lead to a high-performing team that achieves synergy. Refer to the *Background Information* section to review the discussion on synergy.

Discuss Team Stages

2. Have participants review *Handout 4: Team Growth Stages*. Discuss each stage and ask participants for examples of some behaviors that team members may exhibit during each stage. Note that the duration and intensity of each stage varies from team to team. Sometimes, for example, performing may take place after 2 weeks; in other situations it may take several months.

Describe Stages Visually

3. Explain to participants that one way to examine the stages of team growth and development is through artistic expression. State that as we experience these stages, we may draw pictures or other visual images that capture our feelings and reactions during each stage. Show your personal collage as an example. Review each stage and tell how the images represent your understanding of each stage.

Distribute Supplies

4. Distribute supplies. Make sure each participant has scissors, a glue stick, markers, chart paper, plain paper, and several magazines to use. Ask participants to create a collage of the stages on a sheet of chart paper. They can cut out pictures from the magazines and glue them to the chart paper or they can draw their own pictures.

Explain Collages

5. After 15 minutes, ask each participant to explain his or her collage and how it symbolizes each stage. Ask participants the following questions for discussion:
 - *What strategies or behaviors help move a team through the stages?*
 - *Why do teams move back and forth between stages?*
 - *What are the biggest challenges that can occur with storming? What are some solutions?*
 - *Why is it important to recognize the stages?*

Lead Final Discussion

6. Lead the participants in a discussion of how building an awareness of these stages can help team members move on to achieve synergy. Explain that synergy occurs when the total contribution of a team becomes greater than the individual contributions of its members. Ask these final questions:
 - *What are some of the benefits of synergy in a management team?*
 - *How do we know we have reached total synergy within a team?*

Close this activity by stating that Head Start expects synergy from its management teams. Team members who experience synergy will feel valued, energized, and committed to a quality program. Further explain the relationship between the stages of growth and synergy. Members who understand the stages of growth will have more realistic expectations for themselves and others. The team will be better prepared to provide support to its members and to find the best approach to achieve synergy.

Module 1

Activity 1–4: How Do We Function as a Team?



Purpose: Participants will analyze the team approach in their own program team. They will recognize the team practices needed to provide comprehensive services. They will also examine where they are on the continuum of team function.

Session 1

Materials:

Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams

Handout 5: My Contribution to the Team

Plain paper, markers, and chart paper

Introduce Activity

1. Explain to participants that in this activity they will review some essential practices needed in a team environment. Ask participants to write down five essential practices they feel are needed for members to work effectively, feel supported, and participate fully in the team management process. Ask participants to think of personal steps they would have to take to promote these practices.

Discuss Effective Team Practices

2. Give each participant a copy of *Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams*. Discuss the items on the list. Ask participants to compare the items on the handout with their own descriptions. Note that there are essential practices that all effective teams should exhibit.

Review Skills and Expertise

3. Using the *Background Information*, talk with participants about how they can foster effective team practices within the team. Emphasize how a strong team can build on the diverse skills of its members.
4. Distribute *Handout 5: My Contribution to the Team*. Have participants complete the worksheet. Review the skills and expertise they bring to the management team and discuss how they can help the team fulfill its responsibilities in:
 - Establishing direction and strategy
 - Allocating resources
 - Making programwide decisions
 - Ensuring that the budget supports the program's decisions
 - Monitoring program operations and team outcomes
 - Ensuring that corrective action takes place

- Overseeing service delivery by other teams
 - Ensuring that a program's design meets the needs of families, communities, and the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*
5. Request that participants keep a journal for a week to observe how the skills and expertise of other team members can foster successful team management.

Session 2

Materials

Handout 6: Continuum of Team Function

Introduce Activity

1. Reconvene participants in a week. Begin this session by stating that the primary goals of a successful Head Start management team are to provide quality services and an effective work environment for its members. Explain that being a high-performing team does not mean that every decision is a *team* decision that needs endless meetings and dialogues—it does mean, however, that every member trusts the other and that the decisions each member makes support the other team members. Further explain that there are several approaches to team decision making—for example, the method of building consensus. The type of approach used to make a decision may depend on the diversity of team members' perspectives, the type of problem the management team is facing, and the urgency with which reaching a decision and taking action are needed.

Discuss Continuum

2. Give each participant a copy of *Handout 6: Continuum of Team Function*. Explain that the continuum goes from a collection of individuals, to a group, to a team, and finally to a high-performance team. Emphasize how a team approach to management helps provide the comprehensive services required in the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*. Go over the following concepts from the continuum:
- *A collection of individuals may work in the same setting but the individuals measure their own success independently and do not collaborate.*
 - *A high-performance team works together and depends on all members for success.*
 - *Most management teams work somewhere in the middle of the continuum, between a group and a team.*
 - *Some teams have one or two members who operate at a different level than the rest.*

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Place Management Team on Continuum

3. Ask all participants to share their thoughts about *Handout 6*. Reinforce the idea that it is a graphic representation of team development that applies to Head Start management teams. Ask participants to indicate a response to the following statement by placing an X somewhere on the continuum line:

At this time I feel our management team is....

4. Using *Handout 6*, help each participant develop examples of when the team has functioned at the level of a:
 - Collection of individuals
 - Group
 - Team
 - High-performance team

Close Activity

5. Invite each person to share his or her reflections on how the management team is functioning and the challenges of using a team approach. Work with participants to develop solutions to the challenges. Ask participants:
 - *Based on where our team is on the continuum, what can I do on a daily basis to model effective team practices?*

**Next Steps:
Ideas to Extend
Practice**



Participants working independently or with other staff can build on the skills developed through this guide by completing activities such as the ones in this section. Some of the activities can contribute to the participants' professional development plan.

- **Recognize individual contributions and the benefits of diversity.** It is important for participants to be able to explain their own personal contributions to the management team as well as recognize the benefits of the diverse skills, experiences, and talents that others bring to the program.

Distribute *Handout 5: My Contribution to the Team* to participants. They can complete the handout by listing events in their lives that have contributed to their work on the management team. Have participants select three of the most important events in each of the four categories (life, culture, work, and education). Working together with no more than two other team members, participants should take turns sharing their selections. As partners, participants then take time to point out the gifts or strengths that they recognize in one another. Emphasize to participants that it is the uniqueness of each team member that provides the wealth for the team.

- **Develop a team resource list.**⁴ Ask participants to work together to create a team resource list to draw upon the expertise and talents of various team members. Encourage team members to look to one another for support. Suggest that they designate different team members as resource persons for specific topics, such as technology, conflict resolution, community outreach, music, or language. These members should be designated based on their interests, experiences, and skills.
- **Work with other teams.** Have participants use *Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams* to assess other teams in the Head Start program. Suggest that they set aside time to evaluate how those teams display the practices on the list.

Ask participants to use *Handout 5: My Contribution to the Team* during meetings with other service teams and policy groups. They should have team members complete the handout on their own and

⁴Roger Neugebauer, *Does Your Team Work? Ideas for Bringing Your Staff Together* (Redmond, WA: Child Care Information Exchange, 1997), pp. 12–13.

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make copies for the rest of the team. They should then discuss the process with other teams and ask if the members learned anything new about another member. In addition, they should discuss how what they learned can help the team in its work with children and families.

Handout 1: Essential Practices of Effective Teams

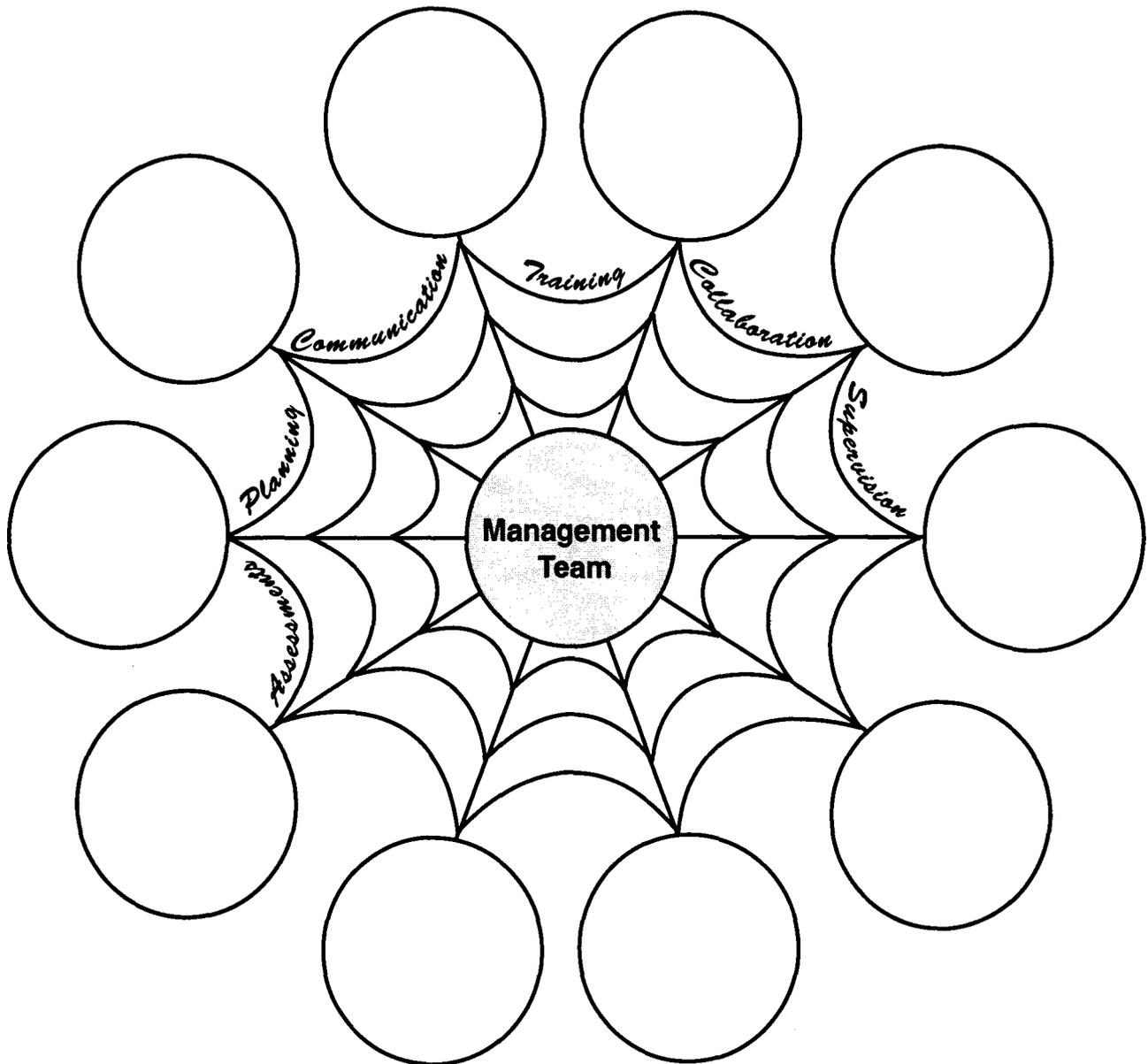
- ✧ Create an atmosphere for open communication and acceptance of others' perspectives
- ✧ Give open and honest feedback
- ✧ Articulate clearly defined purposes and goals
- ✧ Use good communication skills
- ✧ Resolve disagreements
- ✧ Clarify the decision-making process
- ✧ Pay attention to facts and feelings
- ✧ Delegate clear assignments
- ✧ Share leadership
- ✧ Continuously evaluate team progress and function

Adapted from Douglas McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), pp. 232–235.

Handout 2: Our Team

A Team Approach Supports Others

The circle in the center represents the management team. The remaining circles represent the other teams in your Head Start program and in your community. The webs indicate the management system through which support and effectiveness are achieved. As you think of the teams in your program, think also about how the management team interacts with them. In addition, think about the activities you do to meet the program's purpose.

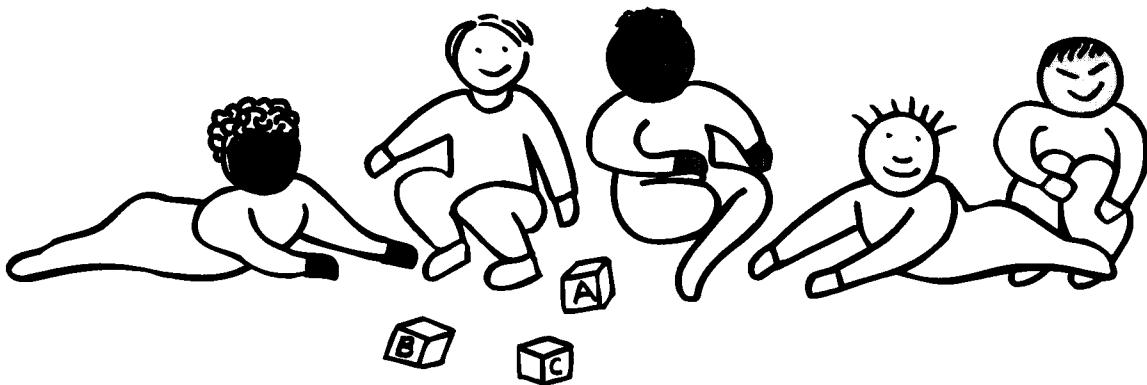


Handout 3: Head Start Management Systems

- **Program planning.** An ongoing process of assessing community strengths and needs, developing long-range goals and short-range objectives for program services, and developing written plans for implementing the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*.
- **Communication.** An ongoing system for exchanging accurate and timely information among all groups in the program and the general community throughout the year.
- **Record keeping.** A system for collecting, accessing, and using data to provide up-to-date information for managing the implementation of quality services.
- **Reporting.** A process for generating periodic reports on financial status and program operations to monitor and manage program services and to inform others of the program's progress.
- **Ongoing monitoring.** Procedures for the ongoing review of program operations to ensure that the program is moving toward accomplishing its goals and objectives and meeting federal regulations.
- **Program self-assessment.** An annual process to determine a program's effectiveness and progress in meeting its goals and objectives and implementing federal regulations.
- **Human resources.** A system for managing and supporting staff that includes an organizational structure to support program objectives; methods for recruiting and selecting well-qualified staff who possess the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to provide comprehensive services; and ongoing staff development opportunities to support staff in their professional development.
- **Fiscal management.** A system for managing a program's finances. This includes developing and approving the program's budget, monitoring and reporting expenditures, maintaining budget accountability, and ensuring that all federal regulations regarding finances are met and that the budget supports the implementation of program services.



Handout 4: Team Growth Stages



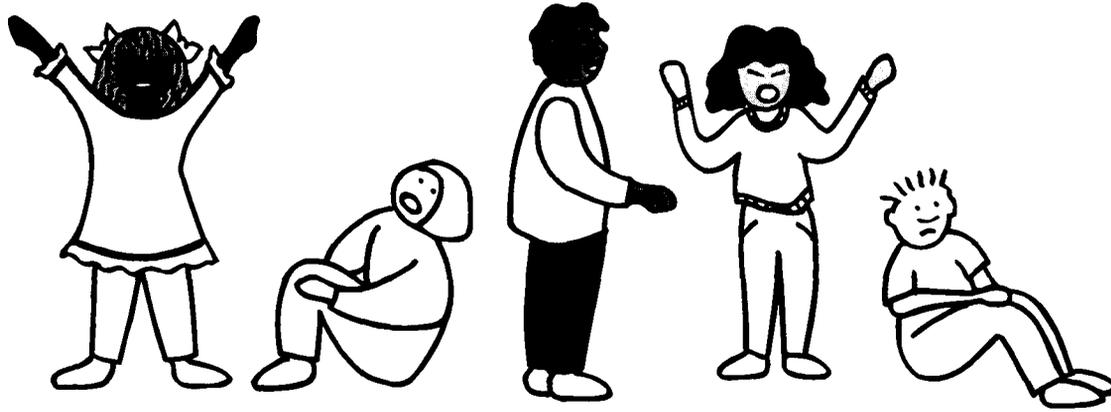
Forming

Forming, which resembles infancy, is the orientation stage. It occurs when a team is first created or new members are added. Forming also takes place when there is a major shift in a program and any changes in requirements or regulations are introduced. Even in Head Start programs that have been functioning since the mid-1960s, there is time for forming. For example, parent groups are formed each year. In relationships among team members, this is the period when members learn the rules, procedures, and practices of the group.

Tips for Managing the Forming Stage:

- ☞ Help members get to know each other.
- ☞ Provide the clear direction, purpose, and information the team needs to get started.
- ☞ Involve members in developing plans, clarifying roles, and establishing ways of working together.

Handout 4: Team Growth Stages (continued)



Storming

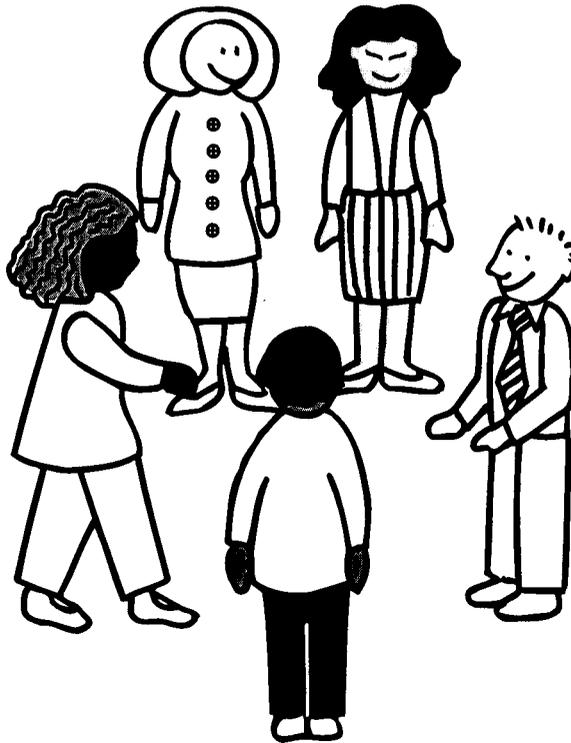
Storming, which can be compared to adolescence, is the conflict stage. It happens when the members contribute their own ideas and opinions—this is the diversity that will eventually make a team strong. Team members may strike out verbally at team leaders or withdraw from team meetings.

Once team members establish a process for resolving conflict, storming can make possible creative conflict that helps team members develop and enhances leadership. Some Head Start leaders may be frightened by conflict and feel unprepared to deal with the differences among team members and the effect of conflict on the team climate. It is important to recognize this fear but not allow it to block any creativity that the storming stage can produce. Team members need reassurance that storming is natural and need not hurt the team effort. It does require honest attention and respectful responses.

Tips for Managing the Storming Stage:

- ☞ Resolve issues of power and authority. Do not let one person quash others' ideas and contributions.
- ☞ Develop ground rules and agreements about how decisions are made and who should be able to make them.
- ☞ Adapt leadership roles to allow team members to become more independent.

Handout 4: Team Growth Stages (continued)



Norming

Norming, which can be compared to young adulthood, is the collaboration or cooperation stage. Teams need rules, codes of conduct, and ethical principles that their members agree upon. In interpersonal relationships, this is a time for cohesion. During this stage there is regular communication among team members and a sense of team spirit. This is the period when team members help each other achieve, rather than compete with one another.

Tips for Managing the Norming Stage:

- Use team members' skills, knowledge, and experience.
- Encourage members to respect each other.
- Set up processes and procedures that allow members to get involved and work collaboratively.

Handout 4: Team Growth Stages (continued)



Performing

Performing, which is sometimes compared to mature adulthood, is the productive stage when team members consistently work together cooperatively to achieve the team's goals and objectives, invest time to build relationships among members, and use effective strategies to manage conflict. It is a time of strong interdependence between the members. Members of the team receive respect and appreciation from other members. Challenges become opportunities for discovering new options. Problems are addressed and become the creative soil for new ideas to take root. High-performing work teams strive to remain in this performing mode.

Tips for Managing the Performing Stage:

- ⇒ Update the team's methods and procedures to support collaboration.
- ⇒ Develop strategies for managing change.
- ⇒ Monitor work progress and celebrate achievement.

Based on Bruce W. Tuckman, "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups," *Psychological Bulletin* 63, no. 6 (1965): 384-399.

Handout 5: My Contribution to the Team

My Experiences and Our Team

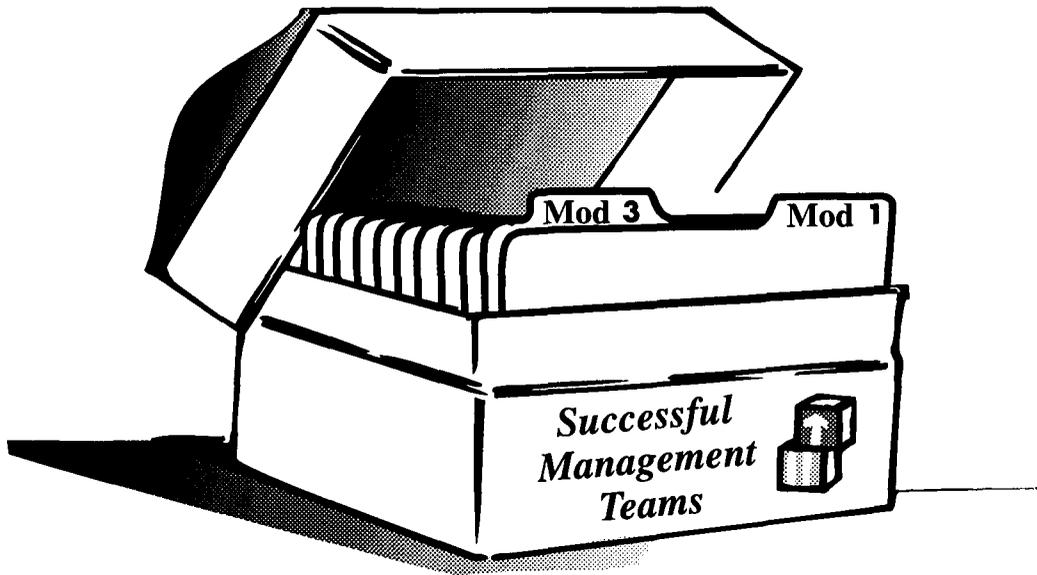
What do I bring from my experience and personal history?

We all come to Head Start with different backgrounds, work experiences, educational training, and cultures.

Use this worksheet to write down what you have experienced in the four areas listed along the left side of the page. Then write down how this contributes to your work on the management team.

	Experiences	Contributions to Management Team
My life		
My culture		
My work		
My education		

After you have written down several ideas in each area, put an X next to three that may be the most important to you or that others may not know about you.



Mod 2

“Managing as a team . . . means being willing to accept . . . leadership responsibilities, being more concerned with the interests of the team than with your own interests, and being able to be open and caring in your relationships with other team members.”

*-Roger Neugebauer, Does Your Team Work?
Reprint Collection #10, Child Care Information Exchange,
page 10*



Strengthening Our Cooperative Relationships

Outcomes

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Use team process techniques that enhance cooperation and trust among members
- Practice working effectively during team meetings

Key Concepts

- Effective management teams are able to establish a team process that supports open feedback and encourages members to take responsibility for conveying their own needs. When team members reach a level of mutual understanding and trust, they can work more effectively and identify, address, and resolve interpersonal issues.
- Productive management teams use a variety of cooperative techniques to identify and achieve goals. These techniques develop trust and commitment in team members to make them feel valued and acknowledged for their contributions.
- Highly functioning management teams understand that much of the work they do, and many of the decisions they make, take place in meetings. They consequently structure meetings for optimal interaction.

Background Information

Developing strong management teams requires team members to focus on what they do (such as the management tasks they perform to achieve program goals) and how they do it (including their relationships with one another, other Head Start teams, program staff, policy groups, and the broader Head Start community). Management teams play key roles in supporting the solid cooperative relationships among team members that are necessary to successfully running daily Head Start operations. Cooperation is the process that team members use to work together to gain mutual benefits and to achieve common goals. Not only do management teams draw upon the skills and resources of their members for this mutual cooperation, but they also use a variety of techniques to maintain a delicate balance of respect, communication, and trust that bonds a team together.

This module focuses on skills that build strong, cohesive teams whose members work cooperatively. Members of strong management teams recognize the critical role of open and honest communication and they

Module 2

understand how the team benefits from the diverse work styles of all team members. They value listening to others and are able to welcome differences of opinion. Effective management teams recognize the creative contributions made by individuals with different viewpoints.

Recognizing Team Strengths

How do management teams cultivate strong relationships among team members that can withstand challenges? They institute a working process that encourages performing cooperatively. They recognize team talents and strengths. They celebrate milestones. They set aside time in weekly and monthly schedules for processing how the team is functioning. And they regularly ask key questions such as, *How productive are the dynamics among team members? Do team members listen to one another? Does everyone participate and do all team members feel they are contributing? How do team members support one another?* Paying attention to the ongoing task of team building takes time and requires open sharing and communication.

Adopting Effective Communication Skills

Information sharing is one of the primary functions of a team. It involves speaking, listening, building rapport, and acknowledging what is said by others.¹

Listening may be the most important skill for team management. Although listening is the communication form we use more than any other, it is also the form of communication that we are taught the least about. Listening is key to understanding the feelings and thoughts of team members. Learning to be a good listener can be difficult. In a Head Start management team, listening and sharing are crucial communication skills.

If listening is important for understanding how other team members feel, sharing feelings and expressing viewpoints is equally vital. Building rapport in interactions with team members, however, requires sensitivity.

Developing and using strong communication systems requires a commitment from the Head Start director and all members of a management team to maintain an atmosphere that encourages open and honest team interaction. Trust is built when team members are comfortable with sharing information as well as sharing their opinions and feelings. (See *Communicating with Parents* from the Training Guides from the Head Start Learning Community series for activities on developing effective team listening and sharing skills.)

¹Neil Katz and John Lawyer, *Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 1985), p. 19.

Using Cooperative Techniques

Productive management teams use a variety of cooperative techniques to reinforce working together. These techniques include:

- Establishing a code of conduct
- Understanding work styles
- Sharing and supporting team goals
- Clarifying the decision-making process

Code of Conduct

One of the most effective means of keeping quality in team relationships is to develop and live by a code of conduct, or rules for behavior. Each member of the team should be involved in the development of such a code. It is not handed down from the leadership.

A code of conduct helps team members *define what is acceptable and what is not acceptable*,² such as agreeing upon how they will behave toward one another, what system of communication they will use, and when they will meet.

Team management requires a climate where team members can take risks and deal with conflict through open and constructive feedback. When team members work in this manner, honesty is essential. Each team member should be able to articulate his or her needs and standards in a way that is clearly understood by the others. When this takes place all members of the team can then focus on the task of managing.

As management team members establish and follow codes of conduct, they can understand others' perspectives and use management strategies that give full attention to team interactions.

Personal Work Styles

Another method for building cooperative relationships is to identify and recognize that members have different styles and preferences in their approach to work as well as to problem solving. Identifying work style differences allows participants to understand and articulate their feelings about certain events and their reactions to other people's behaviors. These styles are not prescriptive, but descriptive. They allow people to better introduce themselves to others and explain concepts for others to understand more fully.

The following four types of work styles³ are not meant to be used to categorize and pigeonhole a worker because no single style can fully describe a human being. In fact, all individuals have traits from all

²Fran Rees, *Teamwork from Start to Finish: 10 Steps to Results* (San Francisco: Pfeiffer, 1997), p. 86.

³Adapted from Otto Kroeger and Janet M. Thuesen, *Type Talk: The 16 Personality Types That Determine How We Live, Love, and Work* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1988), pp. 49–122.

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categories. However, the four styles can help explain differing responses to a single event.

Step-by-Steppers

Team members with a *step-by-stepper* work style perform well with specific tasks and clear deadlines. These individuals prefer to work on one project at a time, finish it, and then move on to the next project. Typically, they need to come to closure on one item before moving on. Step-by-steppers like to get to decision making quickly. They are extremely organized and deliberate in their thinking and in their work. They are detailed planners, yet they love to complete a project!

These Head Start team members will be sure that meetings are run effectively, with responsibilities assigned. As members of the management team, they will help ensure that programs plan realistic goals and deadlines that clearly match the performance standards. When working with service delivery areas, they will see to it that decisions are made quickly.

Innovators

Innovators, as members of a management team, would like to look at a situation from all perspectives. Although adaptable to the changing environment and challenges of the Head Start community, innovators make decisions slowly. They are usually interested in the overall, long-term impact of any new procedures, policies, or events that are planned for the program. The work preference for these members is freedom and flexibility, which means they can bring new, creative, and energizing ideas for getting community support or parental involvement to the team. They also worry about how well other members are coordinating and integrating plans and services with one another. Innovators think of the big picture and have the ability to see and think about the future. They have the ability to inspire others and can play the important role of telling the Head Start story to the community.

Analyzers

Analyzers on a management team may appear to be more concerned with being fair than with considering others' feelings. They have the ability to think and process feedback in a rational, logical order. Analyzers respond to others' thoughts and opinions quickly. When planning for activities or program changes, analyzers want to be sure the written procedures are objective and concise, leaving no room for misinterpretation. They possess the skills to interpret data and critically evaluate program changes so that families and children can receive thoroughly integrated services.

Harmonizers

Several members of a management team will probably be *harmonizers*. These individuals want everyone on the team to feel comfortable and positive about themselves and their contributions. Harmonizers like to please others. They are loyal and dependable. They are often asked to

do tedious work and rarely say no to a request. In the Head Start environment, they are very sensitive and will be first to notice when someone is left out or seems to be feeling bad. Harmonizers may become caretakers of others and fail to take care of themselves. Other team members can get frustrated with them because they may appear weak and easily manipulated. Head Start needs harmonizers to recognize and respond to the many different intellectual, physical, and emotional needs of the children and families that the programs serve.

As members of the team begin to understand these basic styles, they can explain to one another why they respond in certain ways. Knowledge, skills, and experience are only part of what makes an individual unique. Although individuals are fully capable of adjusting their behavior, certain preferences remain. Understanding these preferences increases the behaviors that lead to trust and respect.

Cooperative Mode

As Head Start management teams consistently apply team skills, honest and open interaction increases. A sense of trust is created and sharing occurs at a much higher level. This is called the *cooperative mode*. The behaviors of the team members are the success indicators. At this level, members feel energized and empowered, and they are fully engaged in the work of the team. Rather than being grounded in competition, the team is motivated by the desire for cooperation. When operating in the cooperative mode, all management team members are performing their duties at a quality level and sharing information and support with others so that they can also perform at this level.

There are seven criteria of the cooperative mode. These criteria are used to guide the interaction of team members and the overall team. They are:

- **No power plays.** No member of the team coerces another member by position or emotional manipulation to do something he or she basically does not want to do.
- **No rescues.** Team members do not become caretakers of one another. They do not do for someone what that person can do for himself or herself. All people carry their fair share of the load.
- **No secrets or lies.** Team members do not withhold or misrepresent their feelings, motives, or position. All that needs to be said is said, avoiding incomplete interactions. Members of a cooperative team do not have to guess what others are thinking.

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- **Give lots of endorsements.** Individuals cannot be overpraised if they are always striving to improve and learn. Endorsements include agreements, acknowledgments, empathy, and congratulations.
- **Check out concerns.** There is often a grain of truth in most fears and misgivings. Concerns can be checked out by asking for feedback and information. For example, one team member may ask another, *When you endorsed two other members of our team and left me out, I felt unappreciated. Was that your intention?*
- **Discuss resentments.** Like concerns, feelings of resentment should be shared, but only if the other person agrees to listen. It is an opportunity to let go of hurt by merely telling the person your feelings. The recipient need not respond. For example, one team member may say to another, *I resent that you got paid for that meeting and I had to volunteer my time.*
- **Maintain strict confidentiality.** By establishing a clear commitment to confidentiality concerning opinions and feelings, team members can create an environment in which total honesty can occur and the highest quality decisions can be made.

Using an Interactive Approach and Team Decision Making

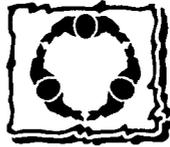
Regular contact in the Head Start program, center, or elsewhere is a necessity for teams. Management team members spend a lot of time in meetings making important decisions. Some team meetings may result in creative and effective use of time and talents, whereas others may waste time and result in frustrations. Strong management teams use several techniques to facilitate effective meetings.

One technique is the interactive approach, which is designed to organize meetings to maximize team interaction. As part of this approach, team members encourage and expect different points of view. They understand the importance of members expressing conflicting opinions and they invite discussion of all perspectives before making a decision. They also practice team decision making. They understand that decisions made with the collective input of all team members are better decisions and are more likely to meet the needs of the children and families served by Head Start, as well as promote enthusiasm and involvement in the team management process. (See *Partners in Decision Making* from the Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community series for more information about building strong teams or partners in relationship to the roles and contributions of team members, managing conflict, and consensus decision making.)

Building cooperative relationships is an ongoing challenge. It is also very rewarding. Congruency between what Head Start stands for and

the way Head Start management teams operate is imperative. The practice of effective cooperative skills will result in positive outcomes throughout the program. It is important to build quality relationships; results will clearly follow.

**Activity 2-1:
Designing a
Code of
Conduct:
R.O.P.E.S.**



Purpose: Participants will develop a code of conduct for team meeting interactions. In the process, team members will recognize practices and behaviors that enhance communication and mutual respect.

Materials:

Appendix A: Team Decision Making
Chart paper and markers
4" x 6" (or larger) index cards

Trainer Preparation Notes:

- This activity involves developing a code of conduct for the management team. Therefore, the person in the role of facilitator or trainer should be someone outside of the team who is respected by all members of the team. It is important that the trainer/facilitator have expertise in group dynamics and process skills, including consensus decision making. Read *Appendix A: Team Decision Making* before the session.
- Identify a large area on the wall in the training room where several charts can be posted. When the code of conduct is completed, keep it posted in the common meeting room so the team can refer to it periodically.

Introduce Activity

1. Begin by stating that to function as a team, members need to have practices and procedures that guide how they work together. Explain that as members of the management team, it is important for them to establish clear personal boundaries and standards. Ask participants to think of a bundle of sticks, which usually falls apart when the wind blows or when it is dropped. However, if a rope binds the bundle together, it can withstand any type of wind. The code of conduct established by the team is the rope that holds it together.

Tell participants that individuals contribute best to a team when they know they are valued and understood. To have individual needs met by the team, the individual must make those needs

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known and ask for support from team members. Asserting oneself in this way is necessary for establishing clear personal boundaries. In the following activity participants will work together to develop a code of conduct to which everyone can commit.

Brainstorm Ways to Represent Personal Needs

2. Write the letter R on the chart paper. Ask participants to brainstorm words beginning with R that represent what they feel they need to work effectively. As participants call out words, write them down.

R - responsibility, respect, rules, regulation

After the brainstorming has ended, review the list. If there are any items that need further elaboration, ask the group to explain why those items were included on the list. *Why do you need that?*

Repeat the same process with O, P, E, and S. An example may look like this:

R - responsibility, respect, rules, regulation

O - opportunity, optimism, oversight

P - people, perspective, patience, performance standards

E - energy, ethics, enthusiasm

S - sensitivity, sense of humor, serendipity, standards

Discuss Themes Represented by Words

3. Now ask for words starting with other letters to add to the list. When brainstorming has ended, ask the group, *Is there anything else you feel you need to be an effective member of this team?*

After identifying additional items, ask the group to look for themes. Try to come up with four groups of themes. Label these themes to use in the next step.

Work in Groups to Describe Needs

4. Divide participants into four groups to write short statements about what participants will need in an assigned thematic area. For example, one group may be assigned the theme of *how to communicate*; another group, *scheduling team meetings*.

Distribute chart paper to each group. Have participants work in groups to brainstorm all the possible barriers, problems, and misunderstandings that could possibly erode trust in their management team. Ask them to record their responses on the chart paper.

Develop Code of Conduct

5. Tell the groups that they will be developing guidelines for a code of conduct in their given theme. Ask the groups to discuss each item on their lists and, within their group, reach consensus about each item. They should ask themselves if each item should be part of the code of conduct that governs how the team interacts. Those items that are agreed upon by everyone in the group are placed on a *primary* list. The items considered valuable by some but not all of the group members are placed on a *secondary* list.

To assist participants, provide them with a copy of *Appendix A: Team Decision Making*. Work with participants to clarify any questions.

While groups are working with their lists, distribute 4" x 6" (or larger) index cards. Ask each group to write guidelines on the index cards that address the issues on their *primary* list. Tell them to condense these guidelines to short clear statements. Give them a target of 10 statements or fewer in which to address their theme area.

6. After 20 minutes, ask the groups to form a semicircle facing a wall. Ask for a volunteer to post each group's statements on the wall and read the statements to the whole group. When all the groups have posted and reported their statements, ask the participants to review the charts for overlapping or contradictory statements. Ask if anyone has objections or misgivings about any of the statements or if clarification is needed. Explain that the group must reach consensus about each statement that will become part of the team's code of conduct. Allow enough time to discuss, question, clarify, and negotiate issues. Rewrite or rephrase issues that the groups want changed.

As the whole group looks at the revised list of statements, ask each person in turn to make a brief statement to explain their commitment to the code. Use the following questions to discuss how team members will respond when a code is violated:

- *What team procedure will we use when a code is violated?*
- *Do we talk to the person first?*
- *Do we address it at the next meeting?*
- *At what point will we need some outside help?*

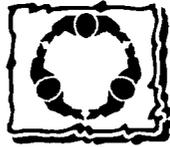
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Close Activity

7. Summarize the session. Emphasize the following points:

- *A code of conduct is one of the most effective means of maintaining quality relationships among team members.*
- *It is important that all team members are involved in developing the code so that each team member is able to articulate his or her boundaries and standards in a way that is clearly understood by the others.*

Activity 2-2: Appreciating Differences in Team Work Styles



Purpose: Participants will identify their own approach to work. They will recognize the contributions that others bring to the team.

Materials:

Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?
Chart paper, markers, and tape

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Prior to the session, prepare chart paper with the following title and questions:

Work Styles

1. *What skills and strengths do you bring to the management team?*
2. *What are your biggest challenges as part of a team?*
3. *What do you need from others to do your job? Why?*

Introduce Activity

1. Distribute *Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?* Refer to the *Background Information* and the handout to describe the characteristics of each work style. As an option, you may also use the *Personal Work Styles* section from the *Background Information* as a handout for participants. Explain that everyone has different work style preferences when he or she has a problem to solve or a difficult situation to handle.

Discuss Work Styles

2. Ask participants to review *Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?* Ask participants to determine which style best fits them.

Select Work Style Preferences

3. Ask participants to select their own work style preference. Read the list of four work styles from *Handout 7* and ask participants to raise their hands as you call out their work style preference. Then point to four places in the room for each work style group to assemble as a team. After groups assemble their own work style teams, ask them to discuss the three work style questions you prepared on chart paper. Instruct the groups to select a person to report on their discussions to the large group.

Discuss Benefits of Each Work Style

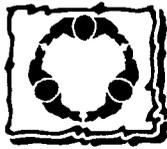
4. Lead the participants in a discussion of the benefits and contributions of each work style. Ask the following final questions (you may want to chart responses):
 - *In what way can your Head Start management team benefit from the contributions of each work style?*
 - *What kind of team challenges/situations in your programs really need the variety of skills and approaches these different work styles bring?*

Close Activity

5. End this activity by stating that it is also important to remember that although everyone has his or her own specialty and preference, everyone uses other work styles at different times.

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Activity 2-3: Team Member Cooperative Support



Purpose: Participants will discuss working as a team in a cooperative mode. They will develop team techniques. They will also discover how they support each other.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

- This activity can be presented in two sessions. *Session 1* focuses on the characteristics of working cooperatively and requires chart paper pre-labeled with the following:

Criteria of the cooperative mode include:

- No power plays
- No rescues
- No secrets or lies
- Give lots of endorsements
- Check out concerns
- Discuss resentments
- Maintain strict confidentiality

- *Session 2* is written for a Head Start program management team that has a history of working together.

Participants will work in pairs to interview one another until each participant has interviewed all individuals in the class. The activity should maintain a fast pace, allowing no more than a few minutes for each member of a pair to conduct an interview.

Session 1

Introduce Activity

Materials

Chart paper, markers, and tape

1. Begin by discussing how important it is for Head Start management team members to work together cooperatively. Explain that this activity will focus on what the members already know about the characteristics, practices, and behaviors of working cooperatively. Refer to the *Background Information* section to describe the cooperative mode and its seven criteria.
2. Using the pre-labeled chart paper with the seven criteria of the cooperative mode, ask participants to offer examples to illustrate the following criteria:

- No power plays
- No rescues
- No secrets or lies
- Give lots of endorsements
- Check out concerns
- Discuss resentments
- Maintain strict confidentiality

Identify Team Practices

3. Ask participants to work in groups of three or four. Give each group several sheets of chart paper, markers, and tape. Next, have groups examine the seven criteria and identify team techniques that will support working in a cooperative mode.

4. Have each group share and discuss its techniques. As each group presents, list its techniques on chart paper. Discuss how these techniques address the seven criteria of the cooperative mode.

Close Session

5. Note that participants developed cooperative techniques by using what they already know about working together. Close the session by reinforcing the following points:

- *Teams that work together cooperatively share a sense of trust.*
- *In the cooperative mode, all team members perform their duties at a high quality level, share information, and support one another so that everyone can work at that level.*
- *The behaviors among team members in the cooperative mode are success indicators.*
- *Applying the techniques developed in this session with other Head Start teams will help build quality relationships throughout the program.*

Session 2

Materials

Handout 8: Team Sharing/Support Worksheet

Introduce Activity

1. Review the practices developed by the team members for working in a cooperative mode. Explain that this session will focus on how they support one another and work cooperatively.

Distribute and Review

2. Distribute *Handout 8: Team Sharing/Support Worksheet*. Ask participants to read questions 2, 3, and 4 on the handout. Explain that they will put their name and position on the top of the sheet and list the team members' names in the boxes along the left side. Tell them that the next step is to jot down a few key phrases for each

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team member in the second column entitled, *What are the ways in which you have supported me?*

Provide Further Explanation

3. State that each member will interview the other team members and complete the worksheet. Team members should read the comments in Column 1 and ask their partner the questions from Columns 2, 3, and 4. The partners should respond to each question while the interviewers take notes. The partners then switch roles and the interviewee who first answered the questions becomes the interviewer and asks the same questions. Participants should continue the rotation until all team members have talked to one another.

Close Activity

4. Close the activity by discussing the benefits of supporting team members as they perform their tasks and strive to achieve the goals set by the management team. Have participants respond to the following questions:
 - *What were your general reactions to this activity? What were the benefits? What were the challenges?*
 - *What insights and qualities of others did you discover as you discussed individual support and partnerships with other members?*
 - *What did you learn about other team members regarding individual team interactions and support for one another?*
 - *What benefits might be lost if this kind of activity is not done within a management team? Why?*

Activity 2–4: Working Cooperatively



Purpose: Participants will discuss working as a team in a cooperative mode. They will develop strategies that address the seven criteria.

Materials:

Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?

Handout 9: Working in a Cooperative Mode

Paper and pens

Introduce Activity

1. Give each participant a copy of *Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?* Refer to the *Background Information* section and the handout to describe the characteristics of each work style. Explain to participants that everyone has a different work style preference when he or she has a problem to solve or difficult situation to handle.

Review and Select Work Style Preference

2. Have participants review the handout. Work with each participant to determine which style best fits them.

Use the following questions to discuss with participants the benefits of understanding work styles:

- *What skills and strengths does your work style bring to your management team?*
- *What are your biggest challenges as part of the team?*
- *What do you need from others to do your job? Why?*

Note that although each participant has a work style preference, he or she will use other work styles at different times.

Discuss Cooperative Mode

3. Tell participants that understanding work styles is one of the first steps to working in a cooperative mode. Explain how important it is for Head Start management team members to work together cooperatively. Describe the cooperative mode and its seven criteria:
 - **No power plays.** No member of the team coerces another member by position or emotional manipulation to do something he or she basically does not want to do.
 - **No rescues.** Team members do not become caretakers of one another. They do not do for someone what that person can do for himself or herself. All people carry their fair share of the load.
 - **No secrets or lies.** Team members do not withhold or misrepresent their feelings, motives, or position. All that needs to be said is said, avoiding incomplete interactions. Members of a cooperative team do not have to guess what others are thinking.
 - **Give lots of endorsements.** Individuals cannot overpraise if they always strive to improve and learn. Endorsements include agreements, acknowledgments, empathy, and congratulations.

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- **Check out concerns.** There is often a grain of truth in most fears and misgivings. Concerns can be checked out by asking for feedback and information. For example, one team member may ask another, *When you endorsed two other members of our team and left me out, I felt unappreciated. Was that your intention?*
- **Discuss resentments.** Like concerns, feelings of resentment should be shared, but only if the other person agrees to listen. It is an opportunity to let go of hurt by merely telling the person your feelings. The recipient need not respond. For example, one team member may say to another, *I resent that you got paid for that meeting and I had to volunteer my time.*
- **Maintain strict confidentiality.** By establishing a clear commitment to confidentiality concerning opinions and feelings, team members can create an environment in which total honesty can occur and the highest quality decisions can be made.

Identify Behaviors

4. Give each participant a copy of *Handout 9: Working in a Cooperative Mode*. Work with participants to develop appropriate behaviors that they can use to address the seven criteria.

Monitor Behavior and Communication

5. Encourage participants to monitor their behavior, as well as their communication with other team members, for the next 2 weeks. Ask participants to take notes when they use each of the strategies for working in a cooperative mode.

Schedule Follow-Up Meetings

6. Schedule meetings with the participants to review their experiences.

Activity 2–5: Making Meetings Matter



Purpose: Participants will assess their team meetings and the way they interact with other team members. They will apply techniques for increasing the effectiveness of their meetings.

Materials:

Handout 10: Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings

Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter

Appendix A: Team Decision Making

Chart paper, markers, and tape

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Before the session, arrange the chairs in the room in a semi-circle facing a large wall area. If possible, all participants should be able to see one another. Hang several pieces of blank chart paper on the wall. Number each piece of paper consecutively.

Use a Metaphor to Represent the Team

1. Ask participants to consider their team in terms of a team metaphor such as a sports team, a United Nations peacekeeping team, a team of horses drawing a carriage, a team of chefs in the White House, or any other graphic representation that could characterize their team. Ask that they use their metaphor to draw a picture of how they see the team functioning. For those who may be uncomfortable with drawing, give the option of creating a picture with words.

Discuss Metaphors

2. When the team metaphors are complete, have participants work in pairs to share their images and to describe how team meetings are played out within their pictures. After 5 minutes, ask for volunteers to share a unique or amusing metaphor for team meetings. If the group is having fun with this concept, ask for a volunteer to draw a representation of team meetings with input from the whole group.

Compare Metaphors to Team Meetings

3. With the group in a semicircle, tell participants to select one metaphor that will serve as an illustration for how meetings are generally run. Then ask individuals to write down three observations of things that can typically happen in management team meetings. Ask them to share their three items while writing on the chart paper the exact meaning of what the speaker is saying. Add new sheets of paper as necessary during this activity.

Identify Concerns at Meeting

4. Ask participants to brainstorm ways to address any concerns or challenges raised about the team meetings. It might be appropriate to refer to the code of conduct that was agreed on as a result of *Activity 2-1* of this module. On the next piece of posted chart paper write *Meeting Concerns to Address*. List the exact meaning of the concerns, checking to make sure the speaker's meaning is clearly understood. When the brainstorming ends, tell the group that they are about to have a team meeting for the purpose of addressing the concerns just listed.

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Discuss Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings

5. Distribute *Handout 10: Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings*. Review the steps as a group. Tell the group that there are two roles that need to be filled to use this method: the recorder and the facilitator. Both roles require attention and objectivity. Neither the recorder nor the facilitator can be an active contributor to the meeting unless one requests and receives permission from the meeting participants to temporarily step out of his or her role. Furthermore, the recorder does not participate in the discussion except to ask for clarification of a point. State that you will take either the facilitator or the recorder role, and a volunteer from the group can take the other role.

Practice Using an Interactive Approach at a Meeting

6. Using the handout questions for guidance, clarify the roles of recorder, facilitator, and meeting participants and the steps for conducting the meeting. Ask if there is consensus to conduct this meeting using an interactive approach. Tell participants that they can refer to their copy of *Appendix A: Team Decision Making* for further guidance on what consensus is. If everyone agrees, proceed to the next step. If not, the group must redesign the steps or parts of the structured approach that it disagrees with and continue with the activity using its own guidelines.

The facilitator opens the meeting by saying that the purpose of the meeting is to look for creative solutions for the meeting concerns that were listed on the chart paper in Step 4. The meeting should last about 20 minutes. It is not necessary to make decisions about changes at this meeting; it is only necessary to generate alternatives for the issues. However, if the group is ready to make decisions about changes, that can also be accomplished. At this point, ask if everyone understands and agrees on the purpose of the meeting. The recorder should write down the purpose of the meeting as well as any questions or objections raised.

The meeting should continue until all concerns have been addressed or until 20 minutes have passed. At the end of the meeting, the facilitator summarizes what was accomplished and states what the team decided to do next about the issues discussed. At this point, lead the group in a debriefing session and ask these questions:

- *How was this process of conducting a meeting different from how we usually run our team meetings?*
- *What parts of this approach are better or more productive than our usual approach?*

- *How did the facilitator handle discord during the meeting, such as interruptions, monopolizing the discussion, or lack of involvement? If the recorder misinterpreted something that was said, how did the group handle it?*
- *What steps did we follow to reach consensus? How did we ensure that everyone had an opportunity to voice his or her opinions and contribute to the process?*
- *Thinking back to our original metaphor for how we conduct our meetings, can we come up with a new metaphor for how we conduct meetings using parts of the structured approach?*

Close Activity

7. Conclude this activity by distributing *Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter* and summarizing with the following points:
 - *Effective management teams make decisions collaboratively.*
 - *Team meetings offer a forum for bringing together the diverse work styles of the members to generate innovative solutions and ideas for continuous improvement.*
 - *A method for management teams to use to make decisions is consensus. Members feel that they have invested in the decision and outcome when they reach consensus.*

Activity 2–6: Running Interactive Meetings



Purpose: Participants will assess their team management meetings and the way they interact with other team members. They will review techniques for increasing their effectiveness on the team.

Materials:

Handout 10: Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings
Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter
Appendix A: Team Decision Making
Paper and pens

Portray Team Meetings

1. Ask participants to describe or draw on a piece of paper a metaphor for how the management team functions during meetings. A team metaphor can be a sports team, a team of horses pulling a carriage, or a team of chefs in the White House. When the team metaphors are complete, discuss with participants how the metaphors symbolize the way the team management meetings are run.

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Review Team Decision Making

2. Give each participant a copy of *Appendix A: Team Decision Making* and allow participants time to review the handout. Review the process for using consensus to make decisions. Emphasize the benefits of team decision making.

Review Interactive Approach

3. Distribute *Handout 10: Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings*. Work with participants to clarify the roles of the recorder, facilitator, and meeting participants, as well as the steps for conducting a meeting.

Ask participants to think of a recent meeting that they attended. Use the following questions to discuss their own experiences with meetings:

- *How is the interactive process of conducting a meeting different from the way meetings you have attended were run?*
- *What parts of this interactive approach are more productive than the approach you have experienced in the past?*
- *What were some of the challenges in making decisions as a team? What strategies and techniques would you suggest to your team to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to voice his or her opinions and to contribute to the process?*
- *What steps should a team follow to reach agreement? How can a team ensure that everyone has an opportunity to voice his or her opinion and contribute to the process?*

Work with Peer Partner

4. After the discussion, ask participants to select a peer partner from the management team to work with for the next 2 weeks. Also ask participants to volunteer for the role of the team meeting facilitator for the next four meetings. During those meetings, they should ask their peer partner to observe their behavior, complete *Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter*, and provide feedback on areas needing improvement.

Discuss Observation Feedback

5. Reconvene in a month, discuss with participants their experience working with a peer partner, and review their peer partner's feedback from observing the team meeting.

Work with participants to develop improvement strategies and a time line for implementing and evaluating those strategies.

***Next Steps:
Ideas to Extend
Practice***



Participants working independently or with other staff can build on the skills developed in this module by completing activities such as those listed below. Some activities contribute to the participants' professional development plan.

- Strong links between team members do not happen automatically. They develop because team members take the time and make the commitment to develop their relationships with one another. Quality relationships involve taking time to talk with and better understand the people around us. To cultivate strong relations within the team, members need to assess the program systems that support working cooperatively. Have participants quickly evaluate their team support skills using *Appendix C: Quick Check of Team Member Skills*. Ask them to select a peer manager to work with to develop strategies for improving the team areas that need more attention.
- Record a team meeting on videotape. Have participants use *Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter* to assess the meeting. Play the videotape and have team members record what they see. Ask team members to work together to determine their success in running meetings and to develop strategies for encouraging constructive team behaviors during meetings.



Handout 7: What Is My Work Style?

Step-by-Stepper:

- Can I finish this project before I begin another?
- What has already been completed?
- What is the plan and who is going to do what? What is the deadline?
- Can we just go ahead and make a final decision on this?

Innovator:

- What are all the different ways to approach this?
- How much flexibility do I have?
- How do these elements relate to each other?
- What does all this information mean?
- Can we try something different this time?

Analyzer:

- What are the positive and negative effects of each idea?
- Will that be fair to everyone? Is that how we have treated this in every case?
- What could happen if we do nothing? What will be the impact?
- How can we rank each option before we make a decision?

Harmonizer:

- How important is it for me to win acceptance on all my ideas?
- What personal beliefs and principles are represented in these options?
- How will everyone affected feel about the final decision?
- Will everyone be comfortable with the new plan?

Handout 8: Team Sharing/Support Worksheet

My name and area of expertise or position: _____

Colleague's name	1. What are the ways in which you have supported me?	2. How do you see your area of expertise or position connecting or interacting with my area?	3. How will you partner and support me?	4. What do you need from me to accomplish that support and partnership?
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

Handout 9: Working in a Cooperative Mode

For each attribute of the cooperative mode, list the behaviors that are best suited to address that attribute.

Attribute	Behaviors
No power plays	
No rescues	
No secrets or lies	
Give lots of endorsements	
Check out concerns	
Discuss resentments	
Maintain strict confidentiality	

Handout 10: Using an Interactive Approach to Run Meetings

Approach	Steps
Structure of meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Select a facilitator and a recorder who will not be contributing to the goals or discussion during the meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Have facilitator provide objective guidance to make sure the meeting stays on task and all participants maintain mutual respect for one another. <input type="checkbox"/> Approve ground rules and code of conduct that govern the meeting as a team. <input type="checkbox"/> Use a semicircle seating format so all participants can see one another as well as the chart paper where the recorder is taking notes. Before the meeting begins, the recorder uses an empty wall and tapes up blank sheets of chart paper that are numbered consecutively. The facilitator arranges the meeting environment. The seating arrangement is conducive to inviting a free exchange of ideas, since there are no seats of power in a semicircle. <input type="checkbox"/> Have facilitator and team leader develop agenda. <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute prepared agenda.
Process for running meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator and recorder help meeting participants gather, clarify, and record all the ideas, pieces of information, and questions raised. <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator monitors communication inhibitors and interruptions, such as personal attacks, dominance, or manipulation by a team leader or team member and ramblings that need to be shortened or clarified. <input type="checkbox"/> Recorder captures the goals, time lines, and person responsible for each decision or item agreed upon. Taking care of these facilitative duties frees all the meeting participants to fully contribute.
Benefits of interactive approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitators and recorders who are neutral can devote themselves to the very important functions of meeting facilitation. They can effectively keep the process moving and accurately record the discussions. <input type="checkbox"/> The process prevents facilitator and recorder from becoming invested in the goals or outcomes of the meeting, which can cause participants to feel that their voice has been lost when there is a difference of opinion with the person conducting the meeting or taking the notes. <input type="checkbox"/> The management team does not have to have a specific person facilitate and record every team meeting. Someone on the team can take the role on a rotating basis, or can exchange with another team in a different part of the agency—your team agrees to facilitate and record their meetings if their team agrees to facilitate and record your meetings.

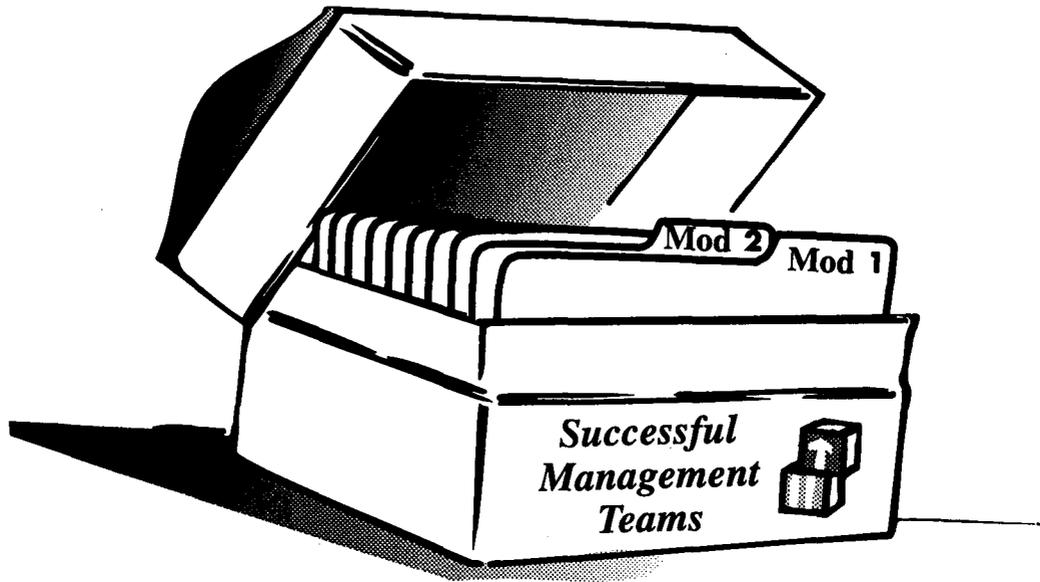
Handout 11: Ways for Making Meetings Matter

Rank yourself and your team on how well you perform these tasks.

1 low (don't do this well) 2 3 4 5 high (do this well)

- ___ 1. **Have a reason to meet.** It is not enough to meet *just because we have always met*. There are seven important reasons for having a meeting:
 - Sharing information
 - Collecting ideas
 - Planning action
 - Solving problems
 - Making decisions
 - Implementing new plans and goals
 - Providing feedback
- ___ 2. **Be prepared.** Be clear about the agenda and have your work ready to share. Make certain the appropriate people are present.
- ___ 3. **Check in.** Give each participant who desires it time to make a brief statement expressing how he or she is feeling. This technique can be used at the beginning of a meeting or to get the reactions of individuals to a *challenging* discussion.
- ___ 4. **Be fully attentive and participate.** If it is important to be at the meeting, it is important to remain active in the discussion. Using meeting time to catch up on paperwork, sort files, or read memos can communicate a detachment you may not intend to convey.
- ___ 5. **Assume a positive intent.** Assume everyone present shares the mission of the group, desires to contribute in positive ways, and intends to support one another. A positive attitude is one of the most important ingredients in a successful meeting.
- ___ 6. **Listen for understanding and speak for clarity.** Listen first to understand what is meant. Listen to words and observe feelings expressed through body language. Ask questions until you fully understand. Clearly articulate your ideas, insight, response, or critique.
- ___ 7. **Remain charge neutral.** Charge neutral means remaining calm and clear in your tone and physical presence. No matter what you feel, do not allow emotions to cloud your interaction. You can communicate a lot of information when calm.
- ___ 8. **Strive for team decision making.** Seek to understand all points of view and make a decision that all members can live with and will support when the meeting is over. One method of team decision making is building consensus. Teams fully discuss problems, understand perspectives, and work to reach the best team solution possible.
- ___ 9. **Get closure.** Do not move from a topic until everyone present understands the next step. Be clear about issues and decisions, such as the next meeting date.
- ___ 10. **Critique briefly.** Discuss what went well and what can be done to make the next meeting more effective.





Mod 3

"You cannot build a house without occasionally stepping back to see if all the workers' efforts are resulting in a solid . . . product. Likewise, you cannot build a team without periodically monitoring to determine if progress is being made."

*-Roger Neugebauer, Does Your Team Work?
Reprint Collection #10, Child Care Information Exchange,
page 13*



Implementing the Team Approach

Outcomes

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate how to work collaboratively—through a team approach—with other key partners such as policy groups, program teams, other staff, and parents to achieve program goals
- Develop strategies for managing the responsibilities of team members as well as the roles and responsibilities of other staff and policy groups
- Monitor how the team functions when working with other key partners as they mutually strive for quality service through the process of continuous improvement

Key Concepts

- It is important for management teams to use the team approach to supervise and work with other teams, staff members, policy groups, and parents to achieve program goals and quality results.
- Management teams must use both formal and informal tools to monitor how their team is functioning.
- Head Start is a learning organization that seeks to continuously improve.

Background Information

A cooperative Head Start environment is one in which program leaders, managers, staff, and parents work together to achieve common goals through a team approach. As the management team implements the team approach, it integrates the expertise of all content area experts, policy groups, and other key partners to provide quality service. Effective management teams use their skills to include the participation of others, organize roles and responsibilities, and communicate continuously as they work together to solve problems.

Using Team Management Skills

The skills necessary for management teams to motivate, communicate, and encourage others to take responsibility in getting the work done include:

- Providing ongoing feedback
- Supervising the work process
- Monitoring team progress

Module 3

Maintaining Team Skills and Program Success

Head Start programs are social systems. As management teams work with different parts of the program, their efforts are interrelated. When they use the team management skills to improve specific parts of the program, other parts are also affected. It is the responsibility of the management team to assure that all teams within the program are connected. (See *Participating in the Management Process* from the Train-in Guides for the Head Start Learning Community series and *Module 1* of this guide for more information.)

Working with others is an essential part of the team approach. The management team must collaborate with all other program teams or key partners such as center staff, home-based staff, policy groups, family services, community partners, and the administrative support team to successfully achieve program goals. (See *Partners in Decision Making* from the Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community series for more details on ongoing partnerships and building partnerships with parents.) Management teams apply the skills listed above as they work with others to continuously achieve program goals and meet the needs of children and families.

Applying Team Skills

An example of how management teams use these skills to guide program success is the program's self-assessment process. This process is structured so that the management team communicates data, exchanges feedback with other key players, coordinates and plans goals and action steps with the team, supervises the work process of others, assists in analyzing data, and, finally, monitors the implementation of program goals and the team's overall progress. The management team also uses these skills to monitor the quality of the work as well as the process.

Taking Responsibility through Ongoing Feedback

Successful, results-oriented management teams take responsibility for managing ongoing challenges and solving daily operational problems. They do this by integrating the responsibilities of staff and content-area specialists, parents, policy groups, and other key partners. The skill that allows management teams to work successfully and communicate effectively with others is continuous feedback. Often this type of feedback requires specific examples to help others understand the desired results.

As productive management teams use the team approach to establish direction and strategy, they set the direction as a two-way communication process, including the perspective of other teams and groups. They use feedback for a variety of reasons. One primary reason is to ensure that key partners and policy groups know:

- The direction in which their program is headed
- The program's goals and priorities
- The program's strategies
- The plans or action steps the program will take
- How program results are measured

A second key reason management teams use continuous feedback is to obtain information from program staff and parents. In *Head Start*, program staff and parents often have knowledge that is vital to the development of these strategies, plans, and goals. Program staff and parents generally have first-hand knowledge of:

- Families, children, and communities
- Daily breakdowns in program operations
- Community needs, issues, and resources

Through ongoing feedback, management teams work with and integrate the expertise and responsibilities of several program content areas. They also make recommendations to facilitate the team process. Commitment to the overall program direction set by the management team is more likely to occur if program staff, key partners, and policy groups participate in the decision-making process and if their perspectives and contributions are included in the development and implementation of program goals.

Supervising Work Process

Supervising the process is another tool that strong management teams use in implementing the team approach. They delegate work, assign responsibilities, set schedules and deadlines, measure performance, and provide structured training. As management teams supervise the work process, problems or challenges that occur may be caused by individual members of the management team; a breakdown in the team process; isolated incidents, events, or procedural issues; or in some cases the team leader or the meeting facilitator. Because teamwork is primarily interactive, problem situations inevitably occur to upset the collaborative, cooperative environment needed for a productive team. Challenging, disruptive behaviors and negative events and bad news have the potential to undermine or block team progress.

It is critical that team members clearly and carefully identify and diagnose problems—whether they are operational/procedural or individual behavioral issues. They must use the team approach to select comprehensive and appropriate solutions for handling their team challenges and problems.

Module 3

Handling Disruptive Behaviors

Sometimes negative, disruptive behaviors affect the team's success or prevent success in achieving its goals. The facilitator can handle these behaviors by reminding team members of the code of conduct (which calls for respecting others), by stating the importance of respecting different work styles, and, finally, by emphasizing the importance of team diversity (*Module 1*). The management team must continue to focus on meeting its goals and on practicing the team approach.

Solving Problems for Team Effectiveness

A management team faces challenges when problems or incidents occur in the program. The management team must address and solve these problems effectively. In these situations the team must include the following basic steps in the problem-solving process:

- **State the problem**
- **Gather** facts, feelings, and opinions concerning the problem
- **Identify and evaluate** solutions
- **Decide** on solutions through consensus building
- **Implement** solutions and **monitor** progress and improvements

For example, the parents of a Head Start program are complaining about several new teachers at one of the centers. The problem-solving steps the management team would follow are:

- Work with parents and the Early Childhood Development team to assess the problem
- Gather facts through observation and feedback
- Collaborate with parents and the Early Childhood Development team to identify, evaluate, and select solutions such as additional supervision of new teachers, peer coaching by lead teachers, and observation and feedback by supervisors
- Develop a system for implementing solutions and monitor improvement in performance

For further information on problem-solving steps and conflict management refer to *Appendix B: Conflict Management Techniques*.

Monitoring Team Progress for Continuous Improvement

Head Start programs are learning organizations. Therefore, they continuously monitor progress in a variety of ways. Successful management teams assess their progress using formal and informal tools. Management teams learn from their experiences in the past as well as in the present. As they reflect on past events and experiences, it is important that they evaluate how well team members worked together

and achieved program goals and how well the overall management team collaborated with key partners in the program.

Ongoing team monitoring and improvement are necessary team management skills as well as critical steps for program success. The management team considers improvement to be a continuous process of monitoring goal achievement, program change, and the quality of services to children and families. These outcomes can be the results of implementing the skills of the team and the strategies of the team approach.

Using Various Continuous Improvement Tools

There are a variety of tools and methods to evaluate management team effectiveness. The results of goal achievement and team dynamics can be evaluated by a single strategy or a combination of the following tools.

Evaluating Past Events

One formal method of monitoring team effectiveness is for all members, including management team staff, parents, policy groups, and other key partners, to collectively *create a team history*. Team members can educate one another on important goals achieved, challenges and issues, positive or negative changes, and success stories over a specific period of time. Members can determine which events or strategies had a positive or negative effect on the program.

Examining Results

Another method is to *examine team effectiveness through skilled facilitative discussion*. This technique examines whether goals and positive results are being achieved effectively. Skilled facilitative discussion is an engaging team-level meeting that is led by a designated facilitator. This discussion requires a recorder and typically has specific, guided questions.

Management teams should ask, *What are the visible differences that show in the program? What is happening in the classrooms or curriculum? What improvements are occurring in record keeping and tracking of children and family data? What about family involvement? What are the effects of the changes made to address inclusion of children with disabilities in the program?* It can be motivating and exciting for management team members to see how the team approach makes a difference and achieves program goals, not only in one area but throughout the program, to improve the lives of children and families. That is when the efforts of the management team and others truly make a difference—when visible, ongoing improvements occur.

Module 3

Monitoring Team Rating Scales

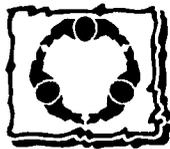
A third method is to use a *team rating scale* several times during the year to measure program goal achievement, identify problem areas and program success, and monitor team interaction. A team rating scale is a written survey filled out by team members that generates a valid, objectively derived basis for monitoring team effectiveness. This method measures the overall results of the management team's efforts and program goals and plans. It is a brief checklist that can be used as an effective monitoring tool. Rating scales and brief inventories can provide the management team with the necessary language to discuss continued development and goal achievement.

Another important method to monitor team performance is to informally review and discuss the goals and program plans that were developed by the team. Management teams can review the goals that were successfully implemented and can determine program accomplishments that helped improve services to children and families.

Other methods to monitor team performance might include parent satisfaction surveys, comparisons of behavioral descriptions from team members' performance reviews or a supervisor's written comments to improve an individual team member's performance, and observations by outside consultants.

As a final strategy, the team members should also determine how they are functioning together as they work toward accomplishing desired results. They should ask themselves, *How productively are we working with other teams and policy groups?* Successful Head Start management teams use the necessary skills and problem-solving strategies to implement the team approach. They continue to monitor and achieve program goals, meet ongoing challenges, and make continuous improvements.

Activity 3-1: Taking Responsibility for Team Success



Purpose: Participants will recognize and discuss how the management team works with others and how the team manages the responsibilities of other team members to achieve program success.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

- *Session 1* is used to discuss how teams work and to give participants an opportunity to work as a team. *Session 2* gives participants a chance to discuss how their own management team works together and with other teams.
- This activity uses Legos. Depending on the size of your group and what you choose to build, the number of sets, colors, sizes, and shapes may vary. Before the session, list on a sheet of chart paper goals for building two Lego structures:
 - *Use Legos to build a classroom.*
 - *Use Legos to build a playground.*

Use Lego pieces to build a classroom and a playground to show participants. During the activity, teams will negotiate which structure to build and will build the structure selected.

- Label 3" x 5" index cards with the titles of the teams in your program. For example, some of the teams in this activity might be:
 - *Center Staff and Home-Based Staff*
 - *Community Partners*
 - *Policy Council*
 - *Management Team*
 - *Board of Directors*
 - *Administrative Support Team*

- Write the following on chart paper to use in *Session 1*, Step 5:

Wrap-Up

- *Describe how you worked with others to successfully build your Lego structure. What went well?*
- *What kinds of responsibilities do you feel you needed to get the job done? What do you think were the most important?*
- *What were the challenges? Why? How do you think you managed them?*
- *How does the process you used for this activity compare with the current approach you use to work with other teams, key partners, and policy groups within your program?*
- *What have you learned from this activity about the team approach when managing responsibilities of the management team and others?*

Module 3

Session 1

Materials

Chart paper, markers, and tape
Two Lego structures
Lego pieces
Prelabeled 3" x 5" index cards

Introduce Activity

1. Begin this activity by using the *Background Information* and the sections on *Using Team Management Skills* and *Maintaining Team Skills and Program Success* to discuss the importance as well as the process for taking responsibility for key partners.

Lead a brief introductory discussion so that participants can identify the other teams they work with most often within their program. Ask the following question: *What have you learned from your experiences of collaborating with other teams and helping to manage the responsibilities of other team members or key partners?*

Form Teams

2. Ask participants to form teams of two or three people. Assign each team a specific team title that you have labeled on the index cards prior to the session. Give each team the labeled index card with its assigned title. Tell participants that all the teams will work together to build one Lego structure. Explain that those on the management team have the added responsibility of overseeing the process to ensure that the structure is assembled properly.

Select Task and Distribute Lego Pieces

3. Show participants the goals for building two Lego structures listed on the chart paper. Give individual teams 5 minutes to discuss the goal they want to pursue.

Assemble all the individual teams, telling them that they need to work together as one team to select one of the structures to build: either a classroom or playground. When the team has agreed on the structure to build, distribute the Legos for the structure selected.

Build Selected Lego Structure

4. All team members work together to build the Lego structure according to the model. Ask those on the management team to keep in mind how they are handling their responsibility for the overall management of the task they are completing.

Lead Final Discussion and Close Session

5. Remind participants that it takes all team members, key partners, and policy groups within a program to successfully build and achieve results. As participants finish, post the wrap-up questions that you prepared earlier. Lead a discussion of these questions to conclude the activity.

Session 2

Introduce Activity

1. Review key points from the *Background Information* through the sections that discuss *Using Team Management Skills*, *Maintaining Team Skills and Program Success*, *Applying Team Skills*, and *Taking Responsibility through Ongoing Feedback*. Explain to participants that this session will focus on their individual management teams and how they handle the responsibilities of their own management team as well as the responsibilities of key partners and policy groups as decisions are made and tasks are accomplished.

Discuss Continuous Feedback

2. Ask participants to reflect on how they communicate with other team members, staff, parents, key partners, and policy groups and make recommendations to facilitate the team process.

Lead Discussion

3. Ask the following questions to lead a discussion on the collaborative approach and managing team responsibilities:
 - *How do you get feedback and gain involvement from the Policy Council and Board?*
 - *What strategies seem to work the best? How do you know? How about those that do not work very well?*
 - *How do you pass on information to program staff, parents, volunteers, and other key partners?*
 - *What new formal and informal approaches do you think you might try?*

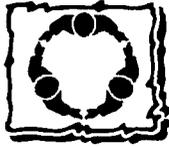
Close Session

4. Close the session by summarizing the importance of continuous feedback. Emphasize the following points:
 - *Continuous feedback helps management teams participate in a two-way communication process. Through this process, they both provide information to and obtain information from program staff, policy groups, and parents.*
 - *Ongoing supportive feedback enables team members and key partners to share constructive and positive information in a clear way. Constructive feedback is critical for continuous improvement in services to children and families as well as program operations.*

Module 3

- *Commitment to the overall program direction set by the management team is more likely to occur if program staff, policy groups, and other key partners feel their perspectives, recommendations, and involvement are included in the team process.*

**Activity 3-2:
Solving
Problems
Together as a
Management Team**



Purpose: Participants will develop strategies for solving problems by using team management skills and by working cooperatively through a problem-solving process.

Materials:

Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges

Handout 13: Problem Wheel

Markers and scissors

3"x 5" index cards

Several packages of 3"x 5" self-stick notes

Sheets of poster board

Chart paper with problem wheel, job titles of stakeholders, and names of team members

Individual sheets of chart paper, each labeled with the job title of a stakeholder

Trainer Preparation Notes

- Reproduce *Handout 13: Problem Wheel* on chart paper.
- Put the titles for the following positions on chart paper (one name at the top of each page):
 - *Executive Director*
 - *Board Chair*
 - *Parent*
 - *Agency Lawyer*
 - *Bus Driver*
 - *Family Services Specialist*
- Prepare six 3" x 5" index cards, putting one of the following titles on each card:
 - *Executive Director*
 - *Board Chair*
 - *Parent*
 - *Agency Lawyer*
 - *Bus Driver*
 - *Family Services Specialist*
- Review *Appendix B: Conflict Management Techniques*.

Introduce Activity

1. Refer to the *Background Information* sections that address *Supervising Work Process* and *Solving Problems for Team Effectiveness*. Discuss with participants the challenges that management teams face and the management skills and problem-solving steps used to solve these problems.

Explain Steps in Problem-Solving and Management Skills

2. Explain to participants that they will now look at an example of how the management team cooperates and works with other team members, staff, key partners, and policy groups to solve a problem. Distribute *Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges*. Review the following problem-solving steps:
 - **State the problem**
 - **Gather** facts, feelings, and opinions concerning the problem
 - **Identify and evaluate** solutions
 - **Decide** on solutions through consensus building
 - **Implement** solutions and **monitor** progress and improvements

Explain Problem-Solving Technique

3. Tell participants that you are going to describe a technique to use in problem solving that ensures that all team members are involved in the process. To apply this technique, describe the following problem:

Recently, at the Pocomoke Head Start Program, during a Policy Council meeting, a mother informed the members that at her most recent center meeting a parent stated that she was angry about the school bus accident that occurred last week because her child had to be hospitalized. She recognized that the bus driver followed all proper procedures for emergency situations. However, the parent was considering suing the program. The Policy Council communicated this to the management team. The management team must now address this problem and decide what steps to take to investigate the situation.

Distribute *Handout 13: Problem Wheel* and refer to the chart paper with the problem wheel.¹ State that the wheel on the handout was prepared for the transportation problem you described. It includes the names of the individuals on the problem-solving team who have been assembled to solve the problem. It also includes the titles of the stakeholders, individuals who are directly involved with the problem, and other individuals who are involved in making decisions to address the problem. Explain how to prepare a problem wheel:

¹Adapted from Peter Senge, Art Kleiner, Charlotte Roberts, Richard Ross, and Byron Smith, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1994), pp. 273-74.

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1. Draw an 18-inch circle on poster board.
2. Draw an oval in the center of the circle and write a phrase in it to describe the problem. For the above example, the description of the problem is **Transportation Accident**.
3. Divide the wheel into sections (pieces of a pie) and write the name of each member of the problem-solving team in a separate section. For the above example, the names of the team members are **Bill, Hakim, Joe, Yu-Lim, Maria, and Andre**.
4. Write the job title of each stakeholder on a separate 3" x 5" index card and place the cards around the wheel. For the above example, the job titles are **Executive Director, Board Chair, Parent, Agency Lawyer, Bus Driver, and Family Services Specialist**.
5. Write the job titles of the stakeholders on chart paper—one title for each stakeholder—and post the chart paper on the wall.
6. Give each member of the problem-solving team a package of 3" x 5" self-stick notes so that he or she can write comments for each stakeholder.
7. Discuss each step in the problem-solving process from the perspective of each stakeholder. Team members sit around the wheel and go through each of the five steps in the problem-solving process. They take turns moving the wheel—one turn at a time—to the job title of each stakeholder. Each team member responds to each step in the problem-solving process from the perspective of each stakeholder by writing comments for the stakeholder on self-stick notes, posting the comments on the chart paper with the stakeholder's job title, and identifying how the management skills listed in Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges are important to the stakeholder. (See Handout 12 for the steps in the problem-solving process and for the list of management skills.)

Referring to the transportation example, review the technique:

The transportation accident is the problem. The first step in problem solving is to state the problem. Andre, a team member, begins. He turns the wheel once to the left, and it stops in front of "parent." Andre states the problem from a parent's perspective—his child was injured and hospitalized while on a Head Start bus, he is concerned about the financial cost and also the emotional impact of the hospitalization on his child,

and he has difficulty finding transportation to visit his child in the hospital. Andre also refers to the list of management skills in Handout 12 to see if any of the skills are related to him. He then states the importance of parents continually receiving feedback on situations that impact them. After addressing any questions about his comments, Andre writes his comments on self-stick notes and posts them on the chart paper labeled "parent."

Everyone else on the team takes a turn to state the problem from the perspective of a different stakeholder, discusses how the management skills in Handout 12 are important to the stakeholder, and posts comments for the stakeholder on the appropriate chart paper.

The process continues until all the steps in the problem-solving process are discussed. Therefore, all the team members will have an opportunity to respond to the problem from at least one perspective for each step.

Practice Technique

4. Ask participants to identify the problem they will address. Divide participants into groups of seven or fewer. Examples of situations for the problem wheel include the following:
 - A family is getting ready to enroll its child with cerebral palsy in your program. The child uses a gait trainer and has gross motor challenges. During a site visit, the parents notice that the center does not comply with standard Americans With Disabilities Act regulations. For example, there are no ramps or special stalls in the bathrooms, the center has two levels with no access other than the stairs, and so forth.
 - Parent involvement has dropped dramatically recently. Parents do not attend daytime or evening meetings. The number of volunteer parents at the center has dropped as well. It has also been difficult to get parents to commit to helping with special events discussed during the Policy Council meetings.
 - Several families within the program continually send their children to school with untreated illnesses. Other children and the teachers are getting sick. This is affecting attendance as well as the learning process, creating an unhealthy environment.

Once participants identify a problem, they are to prepare the problem wheel and index cards and chart paper with the names of the stakeholders. Distribute poster board, index cards, chart paper, and packages of self-stick notes.

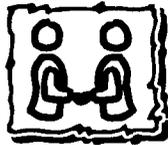
Module 3

Close Activity

5. After participants have discussed each strategy for their problem, reconvene for the following closing questions:
 - *How did it feel going through the process of hearing views from every possible stakeholder? Was it comfortable for you? Why or why not?*
 - *What would happen if some of the stakeholders were left out?*
 - *What value do you see in using the problem-solving steps in this activity?*
 - *What are your reactions to linking the management team skills to the process?*

Note that when the management team supervises the work process, it helps determine where the management systems break down throughout the program; addresses challenges and problems as they occur; and implements quality solutions, strategies, and practices.

Activity 3-3: Problem Solving: What Would You Do?



Purpose: Participants will identify steps for problem solving and the skills necessary to solve a variety of staff problems that can occur on a daily basis. Participants will review monitoring and continuous improvement techniques.

Materials:

Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges

Handout 14: What Would You Do?

Copies of the *Background Information* section in *Module 1: Recognizing Our Diverse and Dynamic Nature* and *Module 2: Strengthening Our Cooperative Relationships*

Introduce Activity

1. Refer to *Background Information* sections for *Module 3* on *Using Team Management Skills, Maintaining Team Skills and Program Success, Applying Team Skills, Taking Responsibility through Ongoing Feedback, and Supervising Work Process*. Use these sections to discuss and coach participants regarding the importance of management team skills and how they are often used with problem-solving steps. Distribute *Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges*. Review the team management skills and the problem-solving steps.

Introduce Scenarios

2. Distribute *Handout 14: What Would You Do?* Explain to participants that they will now have an opportunity to review four challenging scenarios (they may choose to review their own personal challenge). Participants will use their current knowledge, experience, and skills regarding team management and problem solving, as well as what they have learned from this module about the team approach and problem solving. As the coach, discuss each of the scenarios with the participants.

Referring to the *Background Information* in *Module 1* and *Module 2*, discuss other important issues to consider when handling challenging team situations. Examples include basic responsibilities of the management team, essential characteristics of effective teams, team work styles, and team codes of conduct.

Give participants 1 week to complete *Handout 14*. Have them work on their own to answer the questions for each scenario. Distribute the *Background Information* from *Module 1* and *Module 2* for participants to read before they complete *Handout 14*.

Discuss Scenarios

3. Meet with participants in approximately 1 week to coach and discuss participants' responses to each scenario. Discuss the problem-solving steps, the management skills needed, and team relationships and management techniques.

Ask participants what tools or methods they know of that would assist them in monitoring the strategies and steps they suggested. Refer to the *Monitoring Team Progress for Continuous Improvement* section in the *Background Information* in *Module 3*. Briefly discuss the different tools to monitor success and continuous improvement.

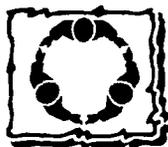
Ask participants which areas from the scenarios they felt comfortable with and had success with. Take a few minutes to discuss these and recognize strengths.

Discuss Areas to Develop and Next Steps

4. Ask participants to list the strategies, skills, or techniques discussed in the scenarios that they would like to improve or develop in themselves. Have them identify opportunities where they can practice and use the team management skills they want to develop. Discuss an action plan for accomplishing this, including time lines and follow-up meetings.

Module 3

Activity 3-4: Team History



Purpose: Participants will identify, record, and evaluate the effect of past events and experiences on the team and the program. Participants discuss what they can learn from reviewing the team history.

Materials:

Handout 15: Team History Sample

Handout 16: Our Team History

Handout 17: Team Coat of Arms—Instruction Sheet

Handout 18: Continuous Improvement Tools

Markers, stickers, colored paper, scissors, glue stick, and tape
Several large sheets of white poster board

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Instead of breaking individuals into separate smaller teams, this activity can also be done by the management team as one team. In this case, one team history chart would be completed by the entire management team. Only one coat of arms would be created and decorated to be displayed as a reminder for the future.

Introduce Activity

1. Refer to the *Background Information* sections on *Monitoring Team Progress for Continuous Improvement* and *Using Various Continuous Improvement Tools*. Explain to participants that a team's experiences and background can serve as guidelines for monitoring team performance. Further explain that it is important to examine past relationships and dynamics in the team as well as interactions with other teams, key partners, and policy groups.

Review Sample

2. Distribute *Handout 15: Team History Sample*. Review this example with the team.

Re-create Team History

3. Distribute *Handout 16: Our Team History*. Explain to participants that they will now complete their own history chart. Instruct participants to discuss the history of the team in critical events and incidents, both positive (above the center line) and negative (below the center line). Remind participants that this history does not have to reflect complete agreement within their team. It represents each member's memories and perceptions of positive and negative events and relationships, good and bad decisions, problems, and successes.

Discuss Team History

4. Each team member takes turns describing the team history. Use the following questions for discussion:

- *What benefits are there in going through the historical events of the team?*
- *Why are both negative and positive categories important for this type of historical discussion of past events?*
- *What were the challenges in completing the chart together as a group? Why?*

Build Team Coat of Arms

5. Transition the activity by noting to participants that it is important to know where they have been and where they are now. The next step is ongoing, continuous improvement, which will shape how the management team will see itself in the future. Ask participants to reflect on the following question: *What do we want to look like in the future?*

Distribute *Handout 17: Team Coat of Arms—Instruction Sheet*, poster board, scissors, markers, stickers, and other materials for creating the coat of arms. Ask participants what symbols, pictures, phrases, or words on their coat of arms will represent how their team will look in the future. Refer each team to *Handout 17* and direct them to draw and decorate their coat of arms with symbols that will represent the future of their team. Allow time for the team to create its personalized coat of arms.

Close with Final Discussion

6. Close the activity with the following discussion questions:
 - *What did you learn from this activity about using historical data to monitor and plan for improvements?*
 - *What does your coat of arms represent for your future program? What are the key themes or actions?*

Explain that a historical review is just one method of monitoring success. (Another tool, which is the team rating scale, is found in *Appendix C: Quick Check of Team Member Skills*.) Distribute and review *Handout 18: Continuous Improvement Tools* for examples of additional team monitoring tools.

Module 3

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice



Participants working independently or with other staff can build on the skills developed in this module by completing the activities described in this section. Some activities can contribute to the participants' professional development plan.

- This activity allows participants to extend the skills they have developed in this module as members of a management team. Ask participants to think about the different needs, problems, or issues that have been identified through the management team approach.

Participants will use *Handout 19: Improvement through Teamwork* to list these needs, problems, and issues and will select one problem from their program to work on with others. For example, a team may be formed to improve the playground facilities. The goal statement might say: *We will improve the safety of the equipment on the playground to meet current standards.* If possible, it would be helpful to use a consultant who specializes in playground safety to facilitate achieving this goal. (Refer to *Enhancing Children's Growth and Development, Module 2, Handout 5: Planning for Outdoor Play* from the Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community series for a checklist of safety requirements.)

Participants will determine the type of team that will be necessary to investigate the problem. The team title can be recorded on *Handout 19* and initial action plans can be listed, such as: *Assess and investigate the current level of playground equipment safety.* The rest of the decision making and the list of responsibilities is completed and planned with the new team. Participants will list a few of the skills from *Module 3* that they plan to use with the team they will lead. Participants can share their ideas with other members on the management team.

- For this activity, have participants work independently or with a partner from their team. They are to think about when their team achieves goals and is generally at its best. Remind participants to keep in mind the following:
 - Recognize the importance of cooperating with other team members and other teams in the program
 - Allow others to use their skills and areas of expertise for implementing action plans to accomplish goals or solve problems
 - Support one another and share information to build commitment

Participants then discuss and list on *Handout 19* the issues that prevent their team from performing at its best. Solutions and strategies should also be discussed.

- An important source of commitment to team success and improvement is cooperation with key partners and other teams. If members' ideas are welcomed and implemented, or at least tested, these individuals are likely to feel personal commitment to the team and its success. To enhance and expand this kind of commitment, participants can consider their role as they lead and interact with other teams in the program. Participants can ask themselves the following questions:
 - *What strategies should I consider to ensure that the service team that I manage achieves results and continuously improves program goals?*
 - *How can I, as a leader, work with my team members, policy groups, and other teams to use their strengths and experiences as we work with other teams in the program?*

For example, all staff members can join one of three or four teams that have been created to improve quality, such as the Staff Quality Team, which might conduct training, needs assessments, planning, and holiday activities. Another team could be the Curriculum Quality Team. This team would review curriculum plans, lesson plans, and school themes. There could also be a Parent Activities Quality Team or a Clean-Up Team.



Handout 12: Handling Team Challenges

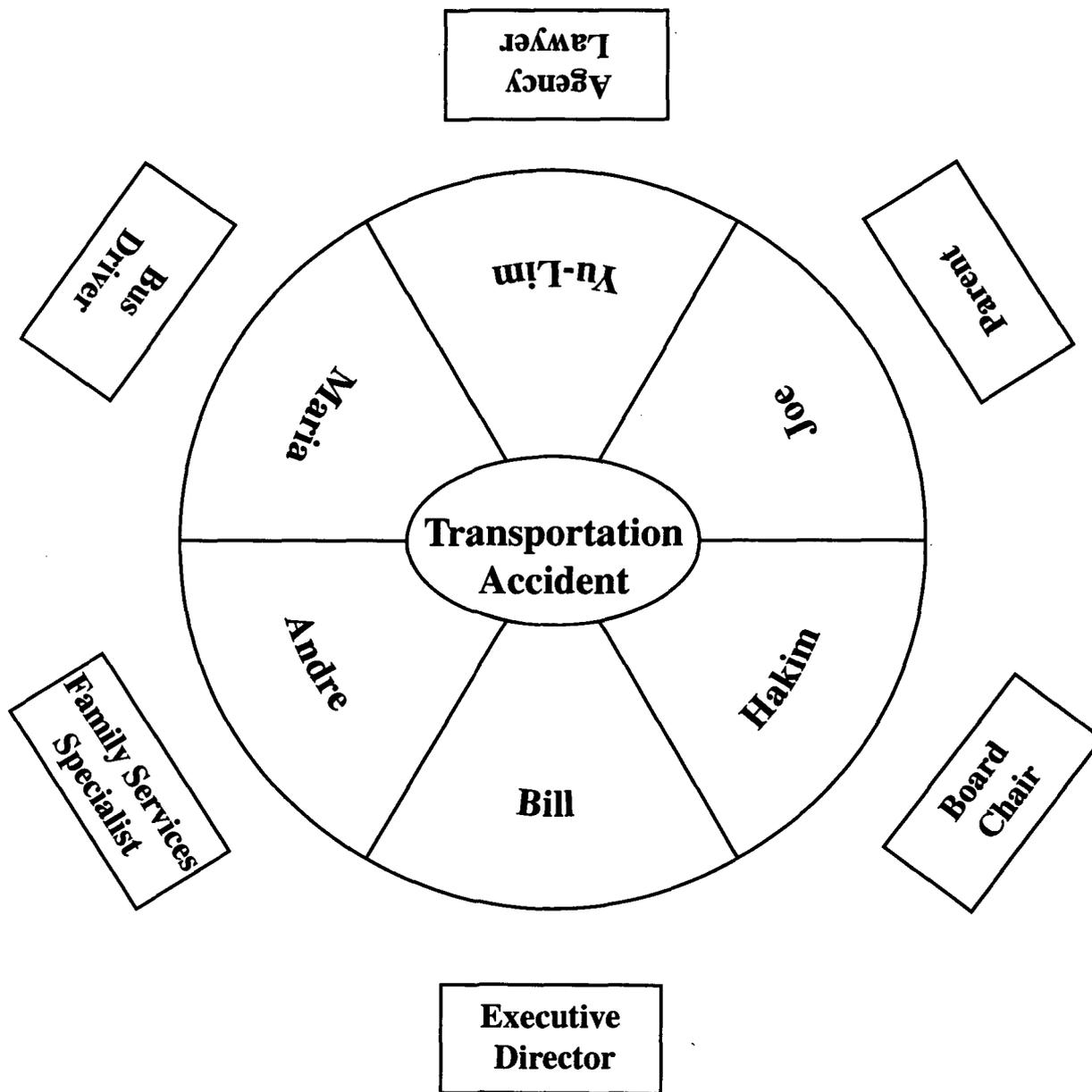
Management Skills

- ❖ Provide ongoing feedback
- ❖ Supervise the work process
- ❖ Make recommendations based on facts and trends
- ❖ Monitor team progress

Problem-Solving Steps

- ❖ State the problem
- ❖ Gather facts, feelings, and opinions concerning the problem
- ❖ Identify and evaluate solutions
- ❖ Decide on solutions through consensus building
- ❖ Implement solutions and monitor progress and improvements

Handout 13: Problem Wheel



Handout 14: What Would You Do?

Review the strategies and the problem-solving steps from *Module 1* and *Module 2*. Then identify the “problem” in each scenario. Finally, determine how you would handle the situation.

Scenario #1

Your management team recently hired a new teacher, Charles Torres. Mr. Torres met all the qualifications. However, for the past 2 weeks, parents have complained about what they have observed on the playground. There seems to be a lack of safety rules and procedures as well as consistent practices regarding appropriate attire, discipline, weather, and temperature. It was not quite 50°, and the children did not have their jackets on. The parents informed the Policy Council of these observations. The parents also reported isolated fighting incidents and unsafe use of the equipment. The management team must meet to decide how to handle the problem. What steps should the management team discuss?

Scenario #2

Your program has recently received county funds to implement a pilot Early Intervention program at the school site. The goal of the pilot program is to create one inclusive classroom that will house Head Start children and children receiving therapeutic services from the Early Intervention program. However, there is a problem with two of the team members. One member wants to meet every week to discuss the situation in detail and the other member wants to work alone. What would you do?

Scenario #3

Key management team members have not been attending the regularly scheduled meetings lately, claiming scheduling conflicts. However, the team had established its code of conduct and part of it states that all members are expected to participate fully in scheduled meetings. What would you do?

Scenario #4

You are on a project planning team that is working on a community health fair. Two weeks before the event, the team is having problems. Kathy, the public affairs committee chair, is blaming Vanessa, the health services manager, for not sending out notices in time to notify the participating community agencies. Darlene, the family services manager, agreed to line up transportation for families that needed it, but she never followed through on her promise. The Policy Council and the teachers do not have enough information to pass on to the parents who are asking about the event. One member of the team continuously rejects any idea that is presented for fixing this problem, saying it is too late and nothing will work now. What would you do?

Handout 14: What Would You Do? (continued)

Scenario #1

What strategies, techniques, or skills would you use to handle this situation?

Points to consider:

- How are playground safety policies communicated?
- Is there a need for additional training for the new teacher?
- What type of supervision do new teachers need?

Scenario #2

What strategies, techniques, or skills would you use to handle this situation?

Points to consider:

- Work styles
- Scheduling meetings at convenient times for everyone
- Assigning tasks based on strengths and work styles

Scenario #3

What strategies, techniques, or skills would you use to handle this situation?

Points to consider:

- Are meetings running too long?
- Do members receive a prepared agenda?
- Are there hidden problems within the team?

Scenario #4

What strategies, techniques, or skills would you use to handle this situation?

Points to consider:

- Conflict resolution steps
- Code of conduct agreements
- Problem-solving steps

Handout 15: Team History Sample

First, at the bottom of the chart, fill in the time periods for which you want data. Above the center line, write in the positive critical events that you think have shaped your team. Below the center line, write negative critical events that you think have shaped your team.

+	Major changes to menus	15 new families added to the program	Old center renovated Goal of increasing percentage of parents at closing banquet achieved	10 parents earned their GEDs New position added—Training Director
-	Holiday show canceled	Myra transferred to Education Glen Oak Center closed Our management team meetings never seem productive!	Head lice epidemic	Dorothy resigned
	1995	1996	1997	1998

→

Handout 16: Our Team History

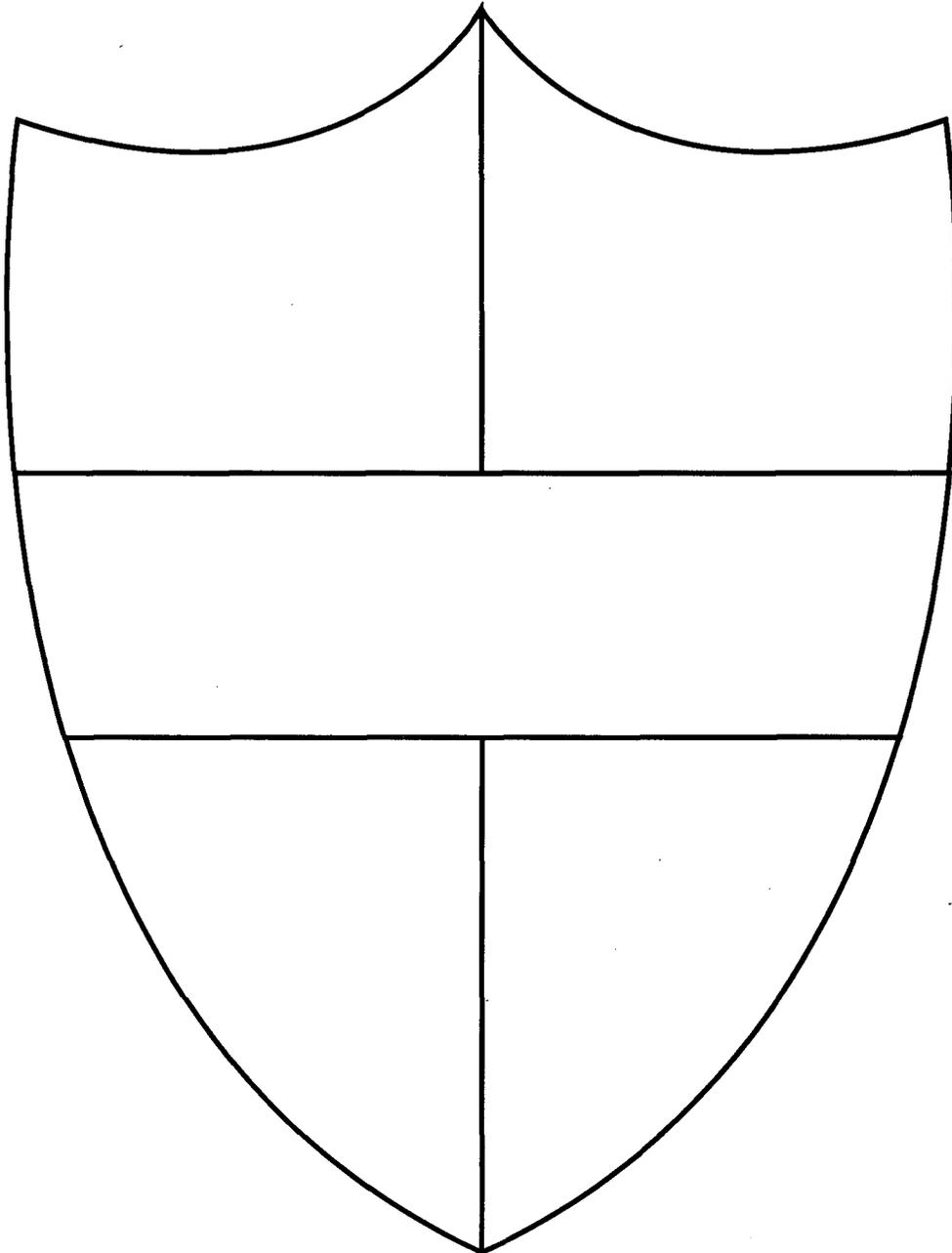
First, at the bottom of the chart, fill in the time periods for which you want data. Above the center line, write in the positive critical events that you think have shaped your team. Below the center line, write negative critical events that you think have shaped your team.

+				
-				

_____→

Handout 17: Team Coat of Arms—Instruction Sheet

This is a model of a coat of arms for you to create on posterboard. Use the whole sheet. Use the markers and colored paper and other supplies to create your coat of arms. Cut out your coat of arms when you are finished. You may want to display it!



Handout 18: Continuous Improvement Tools

Tools	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Team History</p> <p>Review of team history can be a guided discussion with note taking or written as in <i>Handout 15</i>. Team members educate one another about positive and negative events over a specific period of time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gives a clear visual depiction of events ■ Allows the opportunity to reflect on past events, both positive and negative ■ Gives a comparison of different years' successes and problems to learn from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not everyone will agree on what is positive or negative ■ Could possibly create atmosphere of "should haves" and "could haves" ■ Can be time consuming to retrace events
<p>Team Rating Scale</p> <p>Written survey filled out by team members that generates a valid, objectively derived basis for monitoring team effectiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A clear, objective way to look at progress ■ Typically easy and quick to complete ■ Clearly delineates differences between areas of strength and areas to be developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sometimes scoring is very elaborate ■ The challenge is to find rating scales that meet criteria for testing relationships as well as achievements and results ■ Everyone reads at a different rate; can be a problem depending on how scale is administered
<p>Skilled Discussion</p> <p>Engaging team-level discussion, requiring designated, skilled facilitator and a recorder. Discussion often has guided questions and should have an evaluative focus on team successes, relationships among members, team growth, and results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Can be a lively and energetic form of information gathering ■ Everyone has an opportunity to contribute ■ Allows for lots of information ■ Members can influence the topics or areas of improvement discussed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May take too long ■ Recorder needed so all information is recorded ■ Generates a loose kind of information that is sometimes cumbersome to put together and analyze ■ Requires skilled facilitator so discussion remains productive and on task



Handout 19: Improvement through Teamwork (Continued)

Team Responsibilities Chart				
Person Responsible	Activities	Resources	Date Expected and Actual Date	Monitoring Success

Continuing Professional Development



Head Start staff can use the following activities during the year to complement and build on the skills developed in this guide.

Individual, Self-Guided Activities

Mastery of the team management skills covered in this guide is a long-term investment that begins with team members assessing their own skills. Work with a coach on next steps for the improvement areas identified in *Module 3*. Reflect on how these steps will affect what you do on the management team, as well as how you do it. Develop strategies for evaluating your progress and performance.

Seminars

The first step to a common understanding of how teams fit the comprehensive focus of Head Start begins with individual team members' appreciating the importance of team management. During in-service training for content area teams, work with a peer manager to provide seminars on team building. You may want to contact your regional Quality Improvement Center for additional resources or assistance before developing the seminars. Presentations to Head Start staff should capture the following team benefits:

- **Quality:** Staff take one another's work into account and coordinate activities.
- **Cost:** Program leaders can focus on broader issues as teams coordinate and manage their own work based on the program goals.
- **Innovation:** Team members can create new approaches to meet the program needs.
- **Staff development:** Staff can learn and apply new skills and contribute more effectively as members of teams.

Team Training

Management teams can continue to increase their professional competency by taking the lead in planning ongoing training workshops for other program teams. They can begin by organizing task forces composed of trainers, center team members, and service area managers. Each task force can research the team training needs of the program, collect resources, and develop workshops and seminars for all program teams. The training workshops should consider the specific needs of new and experienced staff and should build on the knowledge and skills of all staff.

Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Education

Several universities and colleges offer courses on team development with emphasis on areas such as group dynamics, problem-solving strategies, and evaluation techniques. Contact your local university or college to obtain information on possible courses that can help build relationships among staff and help increase the skills needed to work in a team environment. Many community colleges work with local early childhood programs as well as Head Start programs to design courses for academic credit that address the staff development needs of the organization.

Books and Manuals

Arcaro, Jerome S. *Teams in Education: Creating an Integrated Approach*. Delray Beach, FL: St. Lucie Press, 1995.

This book provides a framework for organizing and managing quality teams. Arcaro suggests how to select team members, develop the team's focus, organize and measure team activities, and document team results. The methods described in this book recognize the value of people and emphasize a philosophy that fosters teamwork and partnerships. A few of the topics discussed include stages of successful team building, quality task teams, managing team meetings, and tools for reaching consensus. An appendix of forms that teams can use is included.

Bloom, P.J., M. Sheerer, and J. Britz. *Blueprint for Action: Achieving Center-Based Change Through Staff Development*. Mt. Rainier, MD: Gryphon House, Inc., 1991.

A practical, comprehensive resource for Head Start directors about change, detailing a model of staff development that links individual needs to organizational needs. Topics include child care centers as organizations, the dynamics of organizational change, the director's role in the change process, assessing organizational needs, assessing individual needs, implementing an individual model of staff development, linking staff development to performance appraisals and a career ladder, and meshing organizational and individual needs. Assessment tools and sample forms are also included as references.

Calbom, Hal. *Team Building Group Training Video*. Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 1992.

This collection includes a 50-minute video, book, and leader's guide. Designed for a formal team-building training program, the detailed leader's guide contains materials that establish the conceptual framework for the program and show how each component can be used effectively. The video integrates real examples and discussion groups with activities, cases, and illustrations from the book by Robert B. Maddux, *Team Building: An Exercise in Leadership—A Proven Way to Increase Effectiveness*, Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 1992. (See entry below describing this book). The Calbom collection can be purchased or rented.

Fisher, Bob, and Bo Thomas. *Real Dream Teams: Seven Practices Used by World-Class Team Leaders to Achieve Extraordinary Results*. Delray Beach, FL: St. Lucie Press, 1996.

Real Dream Teams focuses on how to create superior teamwork, collaboration, and true dedication. The authors describe the outstanding efforts of team winners who have achieved notable results through *synergistic group dynamics*. The seven key principles of successful dream teams are discussed with examples and models. The authors provide strategies for team development practices.

Garner, Howard G. *Helping Others Through Teamwork*. Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America Publications, 1988.

The author suggests how practitioners who work on interdisciplinary teams can better understand the team approach. He outlines how behaviors that encourage real teamwork can produce effective services. He also explains the difference between the structure of a team and a department, discusses why teams are the preferred system, and explains how to work in teams.

Harrington-Mackin, Deborah. *The Team Building Tool Kit: Tips, Tactics, and Rules for Effective Workplace Teams*. New York: AMACOM (a division of the American Management Association), 1994.

This book is an easy reference tool for start-up teams as well as existing teams as they develop their rules. The author has provided clearly written lists and descriptions, step-by-step solutions or suggestions, and worksheets with examples and diagrams. Each section is followed by a detailed question-and-answer supplement with real-life illustrations. Book topics follow the life cycle or growth of a team. The topics include getting started, let's meet, team meetings, team behavior, problems of fear and control, team decision making and problem solving, evaluating and rewarding team performance, and training.

Haynes, Marion E. *Effective Meeting Skills*. Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 1988.

Although meetings are commonplace in most organizations, they are often poorly managed and unproductive. This book provides strategies for effective meetings from the perspectives of a leader and a participant. The author states that the overall goal for a successful meeting is

to achieve its objective within a reasonable, agreed-upon period of time. The five major sections in this book explain a step-by-step process, as well as skills for effective meetings, types of meetings, problems with meetings, planning meetings, conducting meetings, and improving meetings. The author discusses skills such as decision making, brainstorming and choosing alternatives, handling difficult situations, managing conflict, and evaluating.

Hodge-Williams, J., J.B. Anderson, and J.E. Spratley Wynn. *Quality-Centered/Team-Focused Management*. Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America Publications, 1996.

This book offers an overview of total quality management and shows how it relates to the practices of a child welfare agency. Topics include organizational assessment, the critical role of leadership, planning, the importance of teamwork, and the reasons quality service must be the driving force for agencies in their struggle for survival in a changing environment.

Joiner, Brian L., Peter R. Scholtes, and Barbara J. Streibel. *The Team Handbook*. 2d ed. Madison, WI: Joiner Associates Inc., 1996.

Joiner discusses the need for effective teams that work together to accomplish goals quickly and efficiently. The handbook features clearly written descriptions, sidebar information (tips, highlights, and cautions), illustrations and graphics, key definitions, and cross-references to describe an effective team. The reader is introduced to three key elements of successful teams: dedication to quality and customer value, a systematic approach to continuous improvement, and the environment of teamwork and cooperation. Topics include getting started, learning the tools, supporting successful projects, doing the work, and building an improvement plan.

Kroeger, Otto, and Janet M. Thuesen. *Type Talk: The 16 Personality Types That Determine How We Live, Love, and Work*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1988.

In *Type Talk*, the authors show you how to identify your own personality type by using a scientific method based on the work done by C.J. Jung. This validated method provides insight into why others behave the way they do, and why you are the person you are—at home, on the job, as a parent, in relationships, and in all aspects of life. Kroeger and Thuesen offer a productive way of looking at people in a wide variety

Resources

of settings by looking at four dimensions of human behavior: (1) how people prefer to interact with the world and how they get their energy, (2) how people gather data, (3) how people make decisions, and (4) how people prefer to orient their lives. This book explores interdependence and how to join with others in mutually enhancing ways.

Lawson, James R., and Steven Saint. *Rules for Reaching Consensus: A Modern Approach to Decision Making.* San Francisco: Pfeiffer and Company, 1994.

One of the biggest challenges for leaders in organizations today is to facilitate collective decision making among diverse individuals and teams. The authors help leaders and management teams build consensus among members of a group. They define and describe consensus in a how-to format with a step-by-step process for reaching consensus in group meetings. The topics in this book cover the rules for reaching consensus in the following sections: collective decision making, overview of the consensus meetings, preconsensus process, the consensus process and rules, tips for facilitators, and consensus management.

Maddux, Robert B. *Team Building: An Exercise in Leadership—A Proven Way to Increase Effectiveness.* Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 1992.

Written in a self-paced format, this book helps the reader recognize the differences between team building and groups. Maddux discusses the continuous effort that is required from all members to develop and maintain a positive, productive team. *Team Building* includes skills necessary for effective teams, such as planning, organizing, building a motivating climate, involving others in setting goals, collaborating in using ideas and opinions of others, communicating openly, building trust, and handling conflict. Maddux provides the reader with self tests, examples, cases, and worksheets.

Mohrman, Susan A., and Allan M. Mohrman, Jr. *Designing and Leading Team-Based Organizations—A Workbook for Organizational Self-Design.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997.

This workbook is a tool that managers, leaders, and team members can use to establish or refine team-based organizations—organizations in which teams direct the core work processes. It includes guidelines and principles, as well as a framework for understanding team-based organizations. It also offers design suggestions on the organizational

structures, systems, processes, and behaviors that should be in place for a team-based organization to be effective.

Neugebauer, Roger. *Does Your Team Work? Ideas for Bringing Your Staff Together. Reprint Collection #10.* Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, Inc., 1997.

This book contains articles on team building in early childhood education that were originally published in *Child Care Information Exchange*. Updated ideas and recommendations from eight authors are featured. Topics include assessing team performance, fostering staff unity, implementing a peer coaching program, managing meetings, and developing strong child care teams.

Nolan, Tim. *Handbook for Head Start Professionals.* New Berlin, WI: Nolan Communications, 1995.

This handbook contains activities that strengthen the professional skills of Head Start staff and parents. Section 3 focuses on teams and provides useful insights, tools, and inventories for team building and understanding.

Orelove, Fred, and Howard Carner. *Teamwork—Parents and Professionals.* Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America Publications, 1996.

Teamwork among professionals is an essential ingredient for success in many organizations, including schools, centers, and social service agencies. Barriers that hamper effective teamwork and cooperation include competition, distrust, territorialism, confusion, and stereotyping. This book provides strategies designed to help professionals overcome these barriers.

Parker, Glenn M. *The Handbook of Best Practices for Teams. Volume 1.* Amherst, MA: HRD Press, 1996.

This handbook provides the resources to help make productive team management decisions. Parker has put together a collection of work from the world's leading team builders with wide variations for organizations and teams of any size. The book includes activities, instruments and assessments, case studies, practical theory, organizational issues, and a resources section following each content area. Some of

the topics are conditions and requirements for a successful team, team formation, team growth, trust, team skills, team conflict, team assessment, empowerment, and the measurement of team results.

Pearman, Roger P., and Sarah C. Albritton. *I'm Not Crazy, I'm Just Not You.* Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publications Division, 1997.

The authors discuss the differences in the way people perceive and respond to the same situation. They suggest strategies for identifying, understanding, and recognizing individual style and perceptions and recommend techniques for communicating effectively with others.

Piele, Philip K., and Stuart C. Smith. *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence.* 2d ed. Eugene, OR: University of Oregon, ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, 1989.

The authors present the roles and responsibilities as well as the demands and challenges of effective school leaders. The reader is given the theory, research background, and a variety of alternatives with practical applications for the topics presented. Smith and Piele point out the importance of achieving results through others. Chapters of particular interest for teams include team management, participative decision making, communicating, leading meetings, and managing conflict.

Rees, Fran. *How to Lead Work Teams: Facilitation Skills.* San Francisco: Pfeiffer and Company, 1991.

The author discusses facilitating as a new form of leadership and prepares leaders to facilitate teamwork. Rees also describes the new roles for managers and supervisors as they become team leaders in today's successful organizations. This book helps the reader understand that the team is a synergistic group with diverse and valuable knowledge and experience in which everyone takes responsibility for the success of the team. Some of the chapters included in the book deal with facilitating meetings, planning and focusing meetings, encouraging participation, managing the group process, and getting to consensus and closure.

Rees, Fran. *Teamwork from Start to Finish: 10 Steps to Results.* San Francisco: Pfeiffer and Company, 1997.

The author asserts that a team can be a group of people working together as a unit but requires some general ground rules for conduct and a concentrated effort to work in a cohesive manner. A step-by-step approach to teamwork, which can create productive, cohesive teams, is outlined in this book. The author guides teams through ten major steps to help produce desired results. The first half of the book discusses the ten steps and the second half provides practical activities. Topics include assessing the need for a team, selecting team members, and using the ten steps of the team approach.

Rouillard, Larrie. *Goals and Goal Setting.* Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications Inc., 1993.

Rouillard explains that before actions are taken, a goal must exist. The goal is the team's common purpose—the point that the team must reach. The activities in this workbook focus on a series of questions: What is a goal? Who sets goals and how do they agree? How are goals set? and How do you make sure the goals are achieved?

Senge, Peter, Art Kleiner, Charlotte Roberts, Richard Ross, and Byron Smith. *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook.* New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1994.

This practical guide shows how to create an organization of learners that identifies and challenges participants' perceptions, taps into their personal experiences and values, stresses collaboration, and tackles challenging issues. Topics include personal mastery, shared vision, systems thinking, and team learning. Icons and cross-references throughout the book help the reader define and solve specific problems.

Articles

Alexander, Mark. "The Team Effectiveness Critique." In *The 1985 Annual: Developing Human Resources.* San Francisco: Pfeiffer and Company, 1985.

The author emphasizes how the success of organizations depends on the development of effective teams. He provides a team effectiveness critique, an inventory that can be used as an observational tool by a consultant or as an intervention device by specific teams. Alexander also discusses the factors that contribute to team development and

effectiveness, and reviews how to use the team effectiveness critique to improve team performance.

Anderson, Mark E. "The Management Team: Patterns for Success." *Oregon School Study Council Bulletin*. 31, no. 6 (February 1988).

The author discusses the benefits of team management, such as improved decision making, higher staff morale, and greater support for decisions. He reviews four essential elements for effective team management: team organization, shared power and trust, participative decision making, and the board-administrator agreement. Anderson uses case studies to illustrate several characteristics of successful management teams: organizational structures that vary according to size, strong leadership support and guidance, and strong support and advocacy by administrators.

Hoevemeyer, Victoria A. "How Effective Is Your Team?" *Training and Development*. 47, no. 9 (September 1993).

The author discusses a team effectiveness inventory that enables teams to assess themselves in five areas: team mission, goal achievement, empowerment, open communication, and positive roles and norms.

Hohmann, Mary, and David P. Weikart. "Working in Teams: Adult Collaboration to Promote Active Learning." In *Educating Young Children*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1995.

This chapter in a volume on active learning practices for preschool and child care programs focuses on teamwork and collaboration as a key part of the High/Scope preschool approach. The authors maintain that teamwork built on supportive adult relationships forms the basis for adults' interacting with children and families, observing children, planning for children, and assessing their service approach to ensure that it builds on the strength and interests of each child and family.

Hurson, Kathleen, Ed Musselwhite, Craig Perrin, and John H. Zenger. "Leadership in a Team Environment." *Training and Development Journal*. 45, no. 10 (October 1991).

The authors discuss a new breed of managers in organizations today who are responsive to the changing nature of the workforce. This

article reviews the skills and commitment necessary for today's managers to continuously improve team performance. Five strategic skills are described: developing self-motivated people, helping diverse people generate ideas, building self-managing teams, acting as a champion for cross-functional efforts, and managing change. The final discussion in this article focuses on the power of letting go; significant responsibilities must be delegated for this new leadership to succeed in a team environment.

Huszczko, Gregory E. "Training for Team Building: How Do You Avoid the 10 Common Pitfalls of Team-Training Approaches?" *Training and Development Journal*. 44, no. 37 (February 1990).

Training is a crucial element in developing work teams. The author maintains that training must support seven components of successful work teams: clear goals, talent, understanding of roles, efficient procedures, good interpersonal relations, active reinforcement, and constructive external relations.

Jessup, Harlan R. "New Roles in Team Leadership." *Training and Development Journal*. 44, no. 11 (November 1990).

This article describes what happens to supervisors when an organization starts using self-managed work teams. In many industries, those who immediately support teams adopt three roles: administrator, coach, and advisor. Harlan defines work teams and describes the internal and external leadership roles for those who guide, support, and direct the teams' activities. Specific tasks for the administrators, coaches, and advisors are also discussed. A summary of organizational considerations for self-managed work teams is also included.

Lindelow, John. "Team Management." In *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence*. 2d ed. Edited by Stuart C. Smith and Philip K. Piele. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, 1989. (ERIC Document # 309510)

This chapter of a volume on school leadership emphasizes that for a team arrangement to be successful, trust among all members is important and the leader's commitment to sharing power is essential. The author maintains that the design of the team management system, especially its communication channels, is crucial. He describes team arrangements for districts, schools, and programs of different sizes, and provides three examples of successful teams.

Neugebauer, Roger. "Guidelines for Effective Use of Feedback." *The Best of Exchange, Reprint Collection #3*. Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, Inc., 1991.

This article reviews the positive impact that effective feedback can have on a group of individuals or a team. Neugebauer states that an overall improvement in performance and morale occurs when feedback is given to others in a careful, timely, and nonthreatening manner. He makes the following recommendations for providing effective feedback: focus on behavior and not the person; focus on observations and descriptions; give unfiltered, timely feedback; avoid mixed messages; be open to feedback; and check for reactions.

Oswald, Lori Jo. "Quality Work Teams." *Oregon School Study Council Bulletin*. 39, no. 2 (November 1995).

This article provides recommendations for successful teamwork in education. It suggests effective structures and practices for work teams at the district and local level, as well as discussing various teams used in education. The article reviews common problems faced by teams and includes a framework that experienced team members and consultants can use to provide guidance on how to overcome these problems.

Oswald, Lori J. "Work Teams in Schools." *ERIC Digest*. No. 103 (1996). (ERIC Document # 391226)

According to the author, *more is better* seems to be the motto behind the increasing use of teams to handle problem solving and decision making in schools. The author reviews several key questions that must be addressed when dealing with work teams in education. Why are quality work teams used in education? What are the most common types of teams? What factors ensure a quality team? What are the best strategies for forming a team? What are common problems teams must overcome?

Swezey, Robert W., et al. "Ensuring Teamwork: A Checklist for Use in Designing Team Training Programs." *Performance and Instruction*. 31, no. 2 (February 1992).

This article reviews instructional design and team training, including checklists and guidelines for use in designing team training programs. The teamwork characteristics checklist offers 30 guidelines and the instructional characteristics checklist presents 41 guidelines.

Wright, David W., and Paul E. Brauchle. "Teaming Up for Quality." *Training and Development*. 51, no. 9 (September 1994).

The authors provide practical suggestions for using high-performance work teams to achieve total quality. They discuss the three stages in an effective method for increasing active participation from various levels of an organization: preparation, initiation, and maintenance.

Magazines/Journals

Children's Voice Magazine. Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America Publications.

This quarterly magazine focuses on issues for education professionals. Articles highlight achievements of community agencies and programs, national trends in child welfare practice, and emerging issues in the field, as well as management and administrative issues that concern its readers.

Executive Excellence: The Magazine of Leadership Development, Managerial Effectiveness, and Organizational Productivity. Provo, UT: Executive Excellence Publishing.

Edited by Stephen Covey and Kenneth Shelton, this monthly publication provides background on personal and organizational growth and development. Several issues focus on teams and teamwork. Article topics include team-based management, team formation, cross-functional teamwork, and dynamics of effective teams.

Team Management Briefings, Ideas for Building the Winning High-Performance Organization. Portland, OR: Moran Publishing Company.

This monthly magazine contains short, insightful briefings on teamwork and team performance issues. Briefing topics include performance, leadership, quality, problem solving, and relationships. To obtain subscription information, contact the editorial office: 800-722-9221.

Internet/World Wide Web Sites ***National Network for Child Care***
www.exnet.iastate.edu/pages/families/nbcc/

This Web site contains a collection of education resources for parents, early childhood practitioners, and policy makers. Topics focus on

Resources

themes of interest to early childhood educators and families with young children, such as business management, funding, licensure and accreditation, welfare reform, health and safety, nutrition, parent involvement, diversity, special education, and personal development.

CYFERNet, Children, Youth, and Families Education and Research Network

www.cyfernet.mes.umn.edu/

This Web site contains hundreds of complete online publications featuring practical, research-based children, youth, and family information in six major areas: health, child care, building organizational collaborations, promoting family strength, science and technology programs, and strengthening community-based programs.

Team Decision Making

What Is Consensus?

Consensus is team decision making at its purest—it means arriving at a decision each member can accept. Consensus has great strengths—it makes full use of team resources and allows every member to *buy in* to the decision, making it easier to implement the decision. In consensus:

- All members of the team participate fully in the decision-making process.
- The team arrives at a decision that every member of the team can accept and support.

This may not be the outcome each person favored, but each person—based on logic and feasibility—decides he or she can live with it.

When each member of the team has reached this point, the team has reached consensus.

Achieving consensus can be hard work. Not every decision can meet with the full approval of each person involved in the decision. A single person can block the decision, if he or she feels strongly enough that an emerging team decision is wrong. Consensus works best when team members reserve their *veto power* for extreme circumstances that really merit it.

Consensus decision making takes longer to achieve than any other type of decision making. The additional effort up front in consensus decision making will ensure universal buy-in and will greatly reduce the time it will take to implement the decision. Implementation can occur more quickly because the resistance to the implementation is greatly reduced since everyone agreed to the decision up front. The following graph depicts that relationship.

Authoritarian Decision Making

I—I—————I
Decision Implementation

Consensus Decision Making

I—————I—I
Decision Implementation

Appendix A

Why Use Consensus?

A consensus decision produces synergy—the extra power of combined action. Synergy comes from a Greek word meaning working together. Synergy implies two basic principles team members already know:

- Two heads are better than one
- The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

What the team can produce, working together, is greater than what individual members of the team can produce working on their own.

As a result, decisions reached by consensus have two great advantages:

- Quality
- Acceptance

Consensus decision making, done well, taps the knowledge, experience, and creativity of every team member. As a result, the quality of the decision is likely to be higher than a decision made by a single individual. Because something is gained from team interaction, the decision is likely to be better than what the individual members could come up with, working on their own.

Universal acceptance of the decision, by all members of the team, is key when it comes to implementing the decision.

Human nature dictates that people will probably not implement a decision they have not accepted. When a decision is made by the team leader or a team majority, other people involved may not have accepted it. When it comes to implementation, only some of the people affected are likely to participate willingly.

On the other hand, consensus decision making frees up the entire team's energy for implementation. Coordinated, cooperative action means the decision is more likely to be implemented:

- Successfully
- Completely
- In the least time possible

Choosing the Best Decision Method

If consensus is so good, why don't organizations, agencies, or teams always use it?

Consensus is not always the best method to make decisions. Its chief disadvantage—the time it takes to reach consensus—suggests that other ways to make a decision are sometimes more desirable. A team's effectiveness depends, in part, on its wisdom in selecting the best

decision-making method for the situation at hand. What works best in one set of circumstances may not work best in another.

The three most common ways teams have made decisions in the past are:

- **Unilateral decision:** The leader decides.
- **Unilateral with team input:** The leader gets input from the team, then decides.
- **Majority:** The team takes a vote and goes with the decision favored by a majority.

Which method is best depends on:

- The nature of the problem or topic
- The circumstances surrounding the decision

Factors to Consider

When deciding which method will best serve the needs of a team, consider these factors:¹

- *How important is a high-quality decision?*

If quality isn't important, a unilateral decision may be adequate. The more important quality is, the more important it is to tap the resources of all team members. Because consensus involves all members in all stages of the decision process, it is likely to produce the highest quality decision.

- *Does the team leader have enough information?*

If the team leader has enough information, a unilateral decision may be the best choice. If the team leader doesn't, input from team members will be needed, and one of the other methods will be better.

¹Adapted from Victor H. Vroom, "A New Look at Managerial Decision Making," *Organizational Dynamics* (Spring 1973).

Appendix A

- *Is the problem structured?*

Is it clear what information is needed and where to get it? When that information is obtained, will there be only one right answer to the problem?

If so, a unilateral decision, with or without team input, can be considered. If not, consider a consensus decision that allows the interaction of many people with knowledge of the problem. In this case, consensus may be the most efficient way to gather information and the method most likely to generate a high-quality decision.

- *How important is acceptance of the decision?*

If acceptance isn't critical, methods other than consensus can be considered. However, all team members must be able to support the decision. If acceptance is in doubt, consensus should be considered. A secondary choice might be unilateral with input, if team members are likely to accept a decision made by the team leader with their input.

Decision by majority voting is not desirable if acceptance is critical, since the minority may not accept the majority decision.

- *How likely are other people in the team or program to accept the team leader's decision?*

If team members are likely to accept the team leader's decision with enthusiasm, unilateral decision making can be considered. If they are not likely to accept the leader's decision with enthusiasm, then acceptance is an important factor and consensus should be considered.

- *How likely is conflict over possible solutions?*

If conflict is likely, methods that let people air their disagreements and resolve their differences with full knowledge of the problem are best. Consensus should be considered. If conflict is unlikely, unilateral decision making or majority vote can be considered.

How to Reach Consensus

Assume that your team has agreed to operate by consensus. Here are the steps the team can take to reach consensus.

Step 1: Prepare for the Decision

The first step is to prepare to discuss the issue. Preparation requires a well-thought-out agenda and team members who have a clear understanding and knowledge of what needs to be decided.

To focus quickly on the topic, team members must share a clear understanding of what must be decided. Team members must have all background information and facts on the topic in order to make an intelligent decision. Necessary information for making a decision must be gathered before the meeting and shared with everyone who will attend. This requires preparation prior to the meeting by members of the team.

Step 2: Hold a Discussion on the Topic

✓ *Put all ideas out on the table.*

The consensus decision-making process can work only when every team member maintains an open mind. It is best to initiate discussion via a round table discussion. It can be extremely valuable to move the discussion in a circle around the room rather than have people offer their thoughts randomly as ideas and opinions surface. This approach assures everyone's input before the team begins to focus on one or two particular ideas.

Moving the discussion in a logical order can also circumvent tensions between team members. When everyone feels confident that his or her ideas will be heard, there is less tension and it is easier for the team to concentrate. It can also guarantee those who sometimes don't express their opinions or fear that their opinions are not worth expressing a chance to share their ideas. Otherwise, these people may withhold ideas that the team would benefit from considering.

✓ *Focus on interest, not positions.*

Coming into a meeting with predetermined positions and solutions to problems makes it hard to reach consensus. Each team member should ensure that he or she thoroughly understands each of the agenda items and can recognize his or her needs and concerns regarding them. At the meeting, each team member must be able to articulate his or her criteria for an outstanding decision. This way, solutions are built on the concerns and ideas of all participants.

✓ *Put forward all ideas without criticism.*

Many people are in the habit of listening to an idea and immediately criticizing it to determine its strengths and weaknesses. In consensus decision making, this has the effect of shutting down a

Appendix A

team's ability to come up with new ideas. Instead of looking for a series of options, the team simply concentrates on the option in front of it.

Start a discussion by allowing all ideas to be put forward without criticism. The emphasis should be on understanding the ideas put forward by others on the team. Critically examining ideas is important to the process, but should be postponed until all members of the team have the opportunity to share and explain their ideas.

- ✓ *Discuss each of the ideas, considering the pros and cons.*

Once each person has an opportunity to express opinions and ideas, and there is a clear understanding of all aspects of the topic under discussion, it is time for a critical review of the ideas. The team is now better able to deal with the value of each idea in relation to the whole, rather than seeing the idea as an *opinion* of the person who had contributed it. It is not unusual for the original contributor to criticize his or her own idea rather than doggedly defending it.

- ✓ *Recognize the value of a facilitator.*

It can be useful to have someone outside the team facilitate a meeting where an important decision is to be reached. A facilitator can manage the discussion to promote the maximum contribution of ideas, depth of discussion, resolution of conflicting positions, and focus on consensus. This person helps the team focus on underlying fears, biases, or assumptions that may be blocking decisions. The nonpartisan nature of a facilitator must be maintained to provide the support the team needs to achieve its purpose.

- ✓ *Use problem-solving techniques to ease consensus and speed the process.*

Consensus requires the team to explore the universe of ideas regarding a particular topic. This can be overwhelming when many ideas or options are under consideration. Fortunately, there are a number of techniques, such as prioritization and multivoting, that allow the team to focus its efforts on a manageable number of issues. Teams should use the techniques when necessary.

Step 3: Test for Consensus

Consensus often comes quickly and naturally after discussion. All it requires is for one person to say, *It appears that we all agree*, and for the team to verbally acknowledge the decision. This is often referred to as a test for consensus.

A quick way to test for consensus is to have everyone indicate *thumbs up*, *thumbs down*, or *thumbs sideways*. Thumbs sideways means *I'm not enthusiastic, but I can live with it*. Thumbs down can mean either *I need to discuss it more* or *I veto the issue*. Thumbs up means *I am in favor of this decision*.

What happens if universal agreement does not exist? How does one proceed to reach agreement? When majority and minority opinions can be identified, the team should debate the pros and cons of each opinion. The person with the minority opinion should be called upon to explain why he or she holds that opinion. No one should be allowed to interrupt or offer opinions until the person has fully expressed the minority opinion. A person who holds the opposite opinion should then be called upon to express that point of view.

After all opinions have been expressed and before positions begin to be repeated, the prevailing majority position should be identified through a test for consensus. Each member of the team should consider whether he or she can live with the decision. If so, the decision is made. If not, the discussion continues.

It is important to remember that teams have learned over time that an idea originally greeted with a lack of enthusiasm by many team members can turn out to be the best idea. Teams have also reconsidered ideas, after time was available for reflection, and changed their decision.

Step 4: Make the Decision

No matter how good a decision is, it is worthless unless it is carried out. It is important to determine who is responsible for implementing a decision and how soon it needs to be accomplished. The team must ensure that sufficient support is provided to the person(s) assigned to complete the task.

- *How formal should the decision-making process be?*

How closely should the team adhere to strict procedures or models for making decisions? The answer depends on the skill level of the team members and the topic under consideration. A newly formed team should follow a more formal process than a team that has been working together over a period of time.

Appendix A

Guidelines for Reaching Consensus

Some decisions are less important than others. Some decisions can be made in minutes; others require hours of discussion.

You can help your team reach consensus faster by the way you behave in team meetings:

- ✓ *Avoid arguing for your own view.*

Present your position as clearly and logically as possible, but listen to the other participants' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.

- ✓ *Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose.*

When the discussion reaches a stalemate, look for the next-most-acceptable alternative for all parties.

- ✓ *Do not change your mind just to avoid conflict and try to reach a harmonious agreement.*

Be suspicious when agreement seems to come too quickly and easily. Explore the reasons and be sure everyone accepts the solution for similar or complementary reasons. Yield only to positions that have objective and logical foundations.

- ✓ *Avoid conflict-reducing techniques such as majority vote, averages, coin flips, and bargaining.*

Conflict is a natural and valuable part of the process. It should not be avoided or ignored. It should be brought out in the open and channeled into useful purposes with creative, productive solutions.

- ✓ *Differences of opinions are natural and expected.*

Try to involve everyone in the decision process. Disagreements can help the decision, because with a wide range of information and opinion there is a greater chance that the team will find a better solution. Disagreement can lead to hard feelings or to innovations, depending on how it is used.

- ✓ *Identify areas of agreement as you go along.*

From time to time, list the areas of agreement, and focus the discussion on the remaining areas where the team has not yet reached consensus.

✓ *Test for consensus.*

You may want to check for consensus by having everyone vote *thumbs up* (yes), *thumbs down* (no), or *thumbs sideways* (can live with it). Remember that *thumbs down* may just mean the person needs clarification or more discussion. Some people may object to *thumbs up or down*, but teams need to find a way for members to actively show consent.

✓ *Consider making a rule that a veto must be accompanied by an alternative proposal.*

Many teams have found this rule helpful in breaking a deadlock that a veto sometimes implies.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Total Quality Management, Consensus Facilitator's Guide* (Washington, DC: 1992).

Conflict Management Techniques

As a management team member, you will be negotiating and resolving conflicts throughout your professional life. It is likely that conflict will be an even greater component of organizations in the future than it is now. Developing and practicing conflict management skills are critical needs for Head Start management team members.

Conflicts are part of life. Positive outcomes can emerge from conflict situations that are well managed. For instance, conflict can:

- Strengthen relationships and build teamwork
- Encourage open communication and cooperative problem solving
- Resolve disagreements quickly and increase productivity
- Reveal all sides of an issue in a positive, supportive environment
- Focus energies on results

If improperly managed, however, conflict has potentially damaging outcomes. It can:

- Hurt relationships and discourage cooperation
- Result in defensiveness and hidden agendas
- Waste time, money, and human resources
- Focus on faultfinding and blame
- Produce stressful, hostile, chaotic conditions

To effectively resolve conflict, team members must use skills and behaviors that promote communication. They must be able to intervene early in the situation, initiate discussion, and listen effectively. They must also model problem-solving behaviors.

Problem-Solving Behaviors

Management team members can model problem-solving behaviors and attitudes when intervening in conflict situations. They should use these behaviors to encourage all parties in the conflict to follow these guidelines:

- *Attack the problem, not the person.* It is important to focus on the issue; never focus on the person. This activity separates the people from the problem.
- *Be sure to understand what you see and react appropriately to people and situations.* Know when to give feedback and when to observe. Tell people what you are feeling without blaming anyone.
- *Understand and take charge of your feelings and behaviors.* Manage your emotions before they reach a point of no return. Accept

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responsibility for your anger—know that you become angry; no one makes you angry. Remember that emotions are part of human nature and often must be expressed before problem solving can begin.

- *Look forward toward opportunity; do not look backward at blame.* Justifying your position is usually not helpful in conflict resolution. People must let go of positions and excuses to move to problem solving.
- *Analyze the situation and attempt to view it from all sides.* Walk in the other person's moccasins. Focus on shared needs and recognize the other person's needs and values. Ask why the other person feels the way he or she does and practice active listening to clear up any misconceptions.
- *Understand and deal with the real issues behind the conflict.* Uncover any hidden agendas and bring them to the table. Be open and make every effort to respond in a positive manner.

Communication Techniques

Conflicts cannot be resolved without communication. Good communication skills, which include active listening, expression of emotions, and sensitivity to body language, are extremely important for Head Start management team members to master. Effective management teams model a process that empowers people to build mutually beneficial relationships leading to win-win outcomes. Win-win outcomes are solutions where the most important interests of each party are preserved.

Head Start team members can use these communication techniques when intervening in conflict situations:

- *Express needs, feelings, and views honestly, in a calm voice.* When expressing feelings, needs, and viewpoints, use *I messages*, such as *I feel, I think, I need*. Speak about yourself, not about the other party.
- *Respect the other person.* Show respect for all parties with both your body language and your words. Always avoid sarcasm, and display body language that indicates you are listening.
- *Listen actively and acknowledge what is being said.* Good listening involves paying close attention to what is being said and asking for clarification of anything not understood. Try to actively understand the other's point of view by repeating what you believe was said and asking if you have explained it correctly.

- *Speak to be understood.* Express yourself clearly and concisely without accusation, sarcasm, or hostility.
- *Speak with a purpose.* Good communication does not mean too much communication. Before making a significant statement, know what you want to communicate or find out and know what purpose this information will serve.

The Conflict Partnership Process

Conflict partnership¹ is an eight-step approach that focuses on empowering people and building relationships. The partnership process is based on five principles:

- Think *we* rather than *I versus you*—work as partners rather than as enemies
- Keep in mind the long-term relationship
- Resolve conflict effectively to improve the relationship
- Resolve conflicts to benefit both parties
- Focus on both conflict resolution and relationship building

The eight essential steps of the conflict partnership process are:

1. *Create an effective atmosphere.* People need to feel comfortable to do their best work. Effective leaders understand the importance of this simple need. When thinking about creating an atmosphere conducive to resolving conflict situations, approach the issues honestly and openly. Choose a time that is best for all parties involved—time that reduces rather than adds to stress and pressure. Select a neutral location where all parties can feel comfortable. Make an opening statement that sets a positive tone—we have come together to treat this situation with a teamlike attitude that focuses on positive outcomes. Invite the trust and confidence of everyone involved.
2. *Clarify perceptions.* Clarify everyone's perceptions and judgments of the situation. In this step each person gets a clear understanding of the problems or challenges and the issues involved. To understand the issues, ask questions to gain insight into the feelings and values that may not be evident. Recognize and deal with hidden agendas, agree to get to the heart of the matter, and deal with the

¹Adapted from Dudley Weeks, *The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution* (Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc., 1992).

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emotions and the facts. Get agreement from the parties to proceed in an open and honest fashion, encouraging everyone to express feelings about the conflict.

It is very important to clarify your perceptions of others. This can be done by recognizing and avoiding stereotyping, listening carefully and actively, and putting yourself in their positions. Clear up any misconceptions you may have.

3. *Focus on individual and shared needs.* Individuals often have common needs. In fact, conflicts typically arise as a result of people feeling that their needs are not being met. Expand on shared needs, recognizing that the goal is to achieve an outcome that meets everyone's interests and is mutually beneficial. This is called a win-win solution.
4. *Build shared positive power.* Management team members understand the concept of empowering relationships. Empowerment is a highly valued skill and behavior that team members can model to enable the parties in conflict to rely on their own abilities and skills to achieve the best outcome. Positive power or empowerment promotes building and strengthening partnerships. Each person offers his or her best positive energy for a synergistic solution.
5. *Look to the future, learn from the past.* On one hand, dwelling on previous conflicts can cause people to get stuck in the past and keep them from moving forward. On the other, lessons learned from past conflicts may help move the process toward successful resolution. It is up to the leaders on the management team to keep the focus on the present and future, while applying lessons learned in the past.
6. *Generate options.* Options or alternatives can be created in a variety of ways. Brainstorming allows many ideas to surface quickly without making preliminary judgments about them. All parties are encouraged to make suggestions. All ideas should be written down. When all the options are on the table, discussion can begin. Delaying discussions until all ideas are presented promotes free-flowing options. Examine all ideas, no matter how silly they may seem.

Similar options can be grouped together. The list will narrow with discussion and clarification. Begin to predict possible outcomes. Imagine, dream, and envision what the best option would look like, feel like, be like.

Key options will be those that meet one or more of the shared needs while meeting individual needs. Key options will also improve the relationship among the parties in the conflict and will be at least acceptable, if not satisfying, to all involved.

7. *Develop do-ables—stepping stones to action.* Look for ideas that have the best chance at success. Then, search for steps that can be taken that are founded upon trust and shared input from all parties. These are actions that meet shared needs and encourage confidence in working together.
8. *Make mutual benefit agreements.* Mutual benefit agreements give lasting solutions to conflicts. Team leaders can promote mutual benefit agreements by encouraging parties to work on stepping-stone solutions that meet others' needs in addition to their own. There may be basic items that cannot be altered or compromised. If so, all parties must honor these. Clarify what is expected of each party in implementing the stepping-stone solutions.

Concluding Thoughts

Though conflict occurs in relationships of every kind, the best ways to deal with it are often misunderstood. Conflict is not something to be avoided at all times. Avoidance can result in resentment and lost creativity. In some Head Start agencies, there is a tendency to feel that we should always get along together and never disagree. This is neither realistic nor desirable. Getting along and never questioning do not produce the kinds of innovations and learning that are expected of Head Start in the 21st century.

Conflicts usually arise when people's interests or values are challenged. Conflict often surfaces when people's needs are not being met. Because Head Start encourages people to express themselves openly, it provides conditions under which conflicts arise.

It is critical to deal with the emotions of the parties in a conflict before progressing to problem solving. Sometimes just expressing feelings will clear up the conflict. The emotions of all parties must be recognized and understood. It is productive to allow everyone to let off steam, without reacting to emotional outbursts.

When management team members are allowed to seek win-win solutions—in which both sides benefit—conflicts can be turned into opportunities to grow.

Appendix B

References:

Conflict Management. Head Start Bulletin Number 61: Enhancing Head Start Communication. Spring 1997.

Fisher, Roger, and William Ury. *Getting to Yes*. Boston: Houghton and Mifflin, 1981.

Weeks, Dudley. *The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution*. Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc., 1992.

Quick Check of Team Member Skills

Instruction

This quick check will give you a snapshot of your actions as a team member over the past several months. Answer the questions the way you think other members of your team would if they were describing your actions.

Using the scale provided in the left margin, rate how often other team members would say you perform these activities.

Total your score for each section. Then transfer all totals to the boxes in the large circle on the "Analysis of the Quick Check" sheet, page C-4.

For this chart, I will focus on my relationship with the following team:

I. Honor team values and agreements

Scale:

- 1 = Almost never
2 = Seldom
3 = Sometimes
4 = Usually
5 = Almost always

As a team member, I:

Your score:

- a. Show appreciation for other team members' ideas.
b. Help other team members cope with change.
c. Encourage others to use their strengths.
d. Help the team develop a productive relationship with other teams.
e. Willingly assume a leadership role when needed.

Total: _____

Appendix C

II. Promote team development

Scale:

- 1 = Almost never
- 2 = Seldom
- 3 = Sometimes
- 4 = Usually
- 5 = Almost always

As a team member, I:

- a. Volunteer for all types of tasks, including the hard ones.
- b. Help orient and train new team members.
- c. Help organize and run effective meetings.
- d. Help examine how we are doing as a team and make any necessary changes in the way we work together.
- e. Help identify milestones and mini-successes to celebrate.

Your score:

Total: _____

III. Help make team decisions

Scale:

- 1 = Almost never
- 2 = Seldom
- 3 = Sometimes
- 4 = Usually
- 5 = Almost always

As a team member, I:

- a. Analyze what a decision entails.
- b. Ensure that the team selects and includes the appropriate people in the decision process.
- c. Clearly state my concerns.
- d. Search for common ground when team members have different views.
- e. Actively support the team's decisions.

Your score:

Total: _____

IV. Coordinate and carry out team tasks

Scale:

- 1 = Almost never
- 2 = Seldom
- 3 = Sometimes
- 4 = Usually
- 5 = Almost always

As a team member, I:

- a. Help identify the information, skills, and resources necessary to accomplish team tasks.
- b. Help formulate and agree on a plan to meet performance goals.
- c. Stay abreast of what is happening in other parts of the organization and bring that information to the team.
- d. Find innovative ways to meet the needs of the team and of others in the organization.
- e. Maintain a win-win outlook in all dealings with other teams.

Your score:

Total: _____

V. Handle difficult issues within the team

Scale:

- 1 = Almost never
- 2 = Seldom
- 3 = Sometimes
- 4 = Usually
- 5 = Almost always

As a team member, I:

- a. Bring team issues and problems to the team's attention.
- b. Encourage others on the team to state their views.
- c. Help build trust among team members by speaking openly about the team's problems.
- d. Give specific, constructive, and timely feedback to others.
- e. Admit when I've made a mistake.

Your score:

Total: _____

Source: Glenn M. Parker, *Handbook of Best Practices for Teams*, vol. 1 (Amherst, MA: HRD Press, 1996).

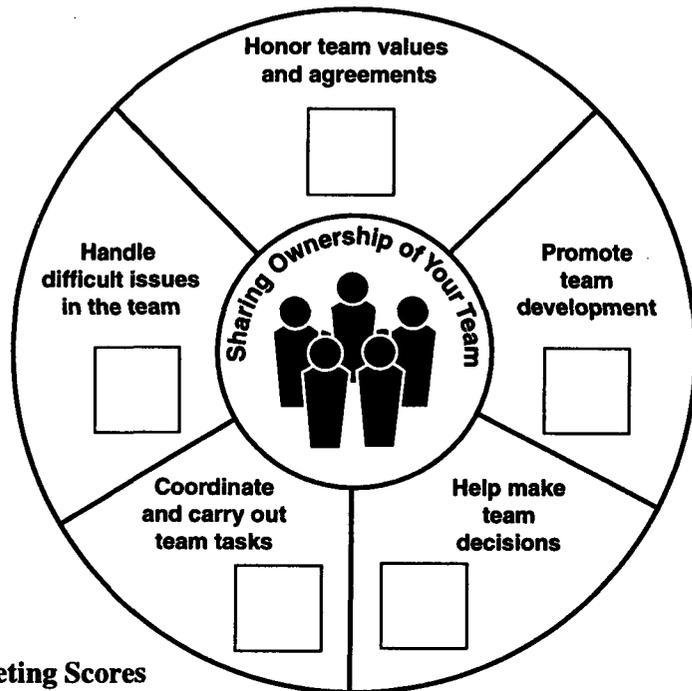
Appendix C

Analysis of the Quick Check

Instructions

Transferring Scores

Enter your total scores for each section of the quick check in the boxes provided below:



Interpreting Scores

- A score of 20 or above in any activity indicates an area of strength.
- A score of 19 or below in any activity indicates an area that needs more attention.

When you look over your scores, which activities are currently areas of strength?

Which activities need more attention on your part?
