

Pro-activity in teams: Going beyond the task

99 teams – Survey study – Renske Erin Van Geffen MSc

More and more work is designed around teams, and an increasingly dynamic economic climate asks those teams to go further than the goals set for them. Teams need to look ahead, find problems before they arise, improve their methods constantly. So when employees come together in a team context, what is crucial in driving proactivity?

Team composition

Autonomy: Team members need to feel that they have the freedom to determine how to go about their tasks – this indicates a negative effect on proactivity of strict procedures and micromanagement.

Competence: Team members need to feel that they have the tools to perform well on their tasks – constructive feedback and fit between team member and task play an important role.

Satisfaction: Team members need to feel happy with their team and their tasks – it is important to monitor team member satisfaction and address issues timely.

Social processes

Team Values: team members need to feel that they are working under the same values – assessing and aligning the views on the work the teams is doing is of importance.

Relationship Conflict: clashing personalities are unavoidable, yet detrimental to team proactivity – These conflicts need their own time and place to be resolved, outside of team tasks.

Task Conflict: When team members discuss different views on the content of the task, proactivity is more likely to occur – make sure all options and opinions are considered.

Social Coherence: Team members need to feel safe to express their ideas and opinions, they need to feel related to others – teambuilding is crucial.

Work design

Goal Interdependence: Goals need to be set at the level of the team so that team members are committed to the same process – communicate the objectives of the team and show how individual tasks contribute

Team autonomy: Teams have a need to internally decide on methods and practices used to reach goals – Give teams the chance and trust to be creative and find their own solutions

Team Impact: Teams need to understand the value of their work to be proactive – communicate how the team's work is linked to other organizational processes.

Task Coherence: The tasks of team members need to be linked – breed understanding of how individual tasks are related and affect one another

Team environment

Servant Leadership: A style of leadership focused on the process of work, not the outcomes – make sure team members develop their skills and own methods rather than checking for errors and applying targets

Voice Effectiveness: The feeling that voiced concerns and ideas are taken seriously and acted upon – Only when employees feel speaking up is effective can proactive ideas surface.

Learning Climate: An organizational climate that stresses the development of employees – mistakes are seen as learning experiences and knowledge is shared throughout the organization to enable proactive solutions to be found.

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