



TEC Check

When The Whole Is Greater Than The Sum Of Its Parts

Team Building: Making It Work For You

Perhaps you've heard that TEAM means Together Everyone Accomplishes More.

But is it true?

If you've built your team using sound and proven methods, it most certainly is. If you haven't, your team may struggle and not achieve its goals.

"At its best, a team is a highly communicative group of people with different backgrounds, skills and abilities whose members share a common purpose," says Kaie Pahi Latterner, TEC founder and president. "Members contribute their best skills and work collectively to achieve clearly identified and common goals.

"Building an effective and efficient team is a big task," Kaie explains. "TEC's training and guidance can help everyone learn how to be an effective team builder or member. We also teach skills that will keep each person's efforts relevant, effective and on track."

Here's a primer from TEC about effective team building.

Groups vs. Teams

There are differences between "groups" and "teams" that should be kept in mind when forming one or the other.

In groups, people work independently.



Kaie Pahi Latterner
President, TEC, Inc.

They're not closely involved in planning their unit's objectives. People are told what to do and their input may not be encouraged. Group members may distrust the motives of colleagues because they don't understand the roles of other members.

Group members also can find themselves in difficult situations that they don't know how

to resolve, and they may not have effective supervision to guide them. In some cases, conformity often appears more important than achieving results. And groups often aren't motivated to think beyond the *now*—what is being accomplished today.



Team members, on the other hand, recognize their interdependence and understand that both personal and team goals are best accomplished with mutual support. They feel a sense of ownership for their jobs and and loyalty to their unit because they're committed to goals they

Continued on page 2

In the next issue:

- **Employee Training: Why It Matters Now More Than Ever**
- **TEC's Software Expertise**
- **TEC at NRF**
- **More Consultants . . .**
- **More Clients . . .**
- **More TECHniques!**

TEChniques

Be a Better Manager and Leader

1. People are everything. Act like it!
2. Be a role model; be and do your best.
3. Don't assume anything. Ask questions. Listen. *Understand.*
4. Become a great communicator and say "thank you." *A lot.*
5. Let everyone know your expectations.
6. Give constant feedback. *No surprises.*
7. Everyone is different. Treat them that way.
8. Teach people what you want them to know.
9. Be flexible. Everyone should have fun!

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*Addressing the
human side of your
training and systems
integration needs.*

TEC Talk

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helped establish. They apply their knowledge and unique talents to team objectives. Finally, team-centered people look forward to what might be accomplished.

“All teams go through ‘forming, norming, storming and performing’ phases,” Kaie explains. “The most effective teams are aware of and accept these phases up front. They minimize negative impacts that can occur during each phase and move to the productive performing stage fairly quickly.”

Not every team experience is a honeymoon, Kaie cautions. “Conflicts can and do arise among teams. Yet, team members recognize that conflict is a normal aspect of human interaction; in fact, they view

conflict as an opportunity for new ideas and creativity.”

Team Member, Leader Characteristics

Ideal team members are committed to the process and to success. They’re cooperative and they’re communicators.

“Members participate in decisions; still, they understand their leader must make a final ruling whenever the team cannot decide something, or when an emergency exists,” says Kaie.

Team leaders, in turn, display highly devel-

oped interpersonal skills and are organizationally effective. They are enablers who provide guidance and get out of the way if they’re in it. They are willing to listen and can express themselves. Leaders pursue progress and develop people while setting high expectations for all. They can model required team behavior and deal with problem team members.

Like everything in this world, the behavior of team members can change over time. The following negative behaviors need to be changed or eliminated

quickly: limited communication, a “me-centered” tone, no direction, no bond, hostility, negative competition, poor leadership skills and, perhaps worst of all, a poor attitude.

Start Building Your Team Today!

Successful team builders are strong in four areas:

Planning This is the essential foundation for successful team building. Strong planners select a team’s members and explain the team’s purpose, goals and objectives. To help the team serve the organization, they interpret goals of higher-level management and acquire the tools necessary to do the job. They create the timelines and deadlines, set performance standards, and measure results.

Organizing Organized managers divide work into logical tasks. They set up a communication network, know how to obtain needed resources, and provide feedback on progress. Their people skills help them determine the experience and skills of team members.

Motivating Effective team builders get to know their team members’ personal and professional needs and motivate them accordingly. They communicate expectations; provide training, assistance and tools; and support and encourage personal growth. While they recognize and reward good performances, they also correct poor ones.

Managing Team builders *manage* to keep things moving in the right direction. Schedules and checkpoints help maintain focus so that progress is steady. They encourage ongoing feedback so they can evaluate problems and make course corrections (revising the plan or reorganizing the work force, for example) to ensure objectives are met. They communicate plan changes and progress to those who need to know.

Kaie reminds us that we can always learn from others. “Study other successful teams,” she advises. “What worked? What didn’t? What do you admire about the leader or members? Do your homework. Then apply the fundamentals of successful team building, arrange for help from TEC or others in a position to contribute, and start your own successful team. The whole really is more than the sum of its parts when it’s done right.” •



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Our website is always changing and evolving so visit us and see what’s new. You’ll learn about TEC and how our expertise can help you. Or, send us your questions at

www.TECconsultants.com

TEC@TECconsultants.com. If you’d prefer to talk, call us at 715-247-5054. BE ready with TEC! •

Introducing: Lara Pederson

Perhaps she learned it extracting data at S.C. Johnson. Maybe it came from establishing ShopKo University at the Midwestern retailer. Being the daughter of a successful entrepreneur didn't hurt. Her product development coordinator duties at a uniform manufacturer helped, as did her business manager stint at Fort Howard Paper Co., and merchandise analyst duties for Target Stores. Her BS in Business Administration from UW-Stout and her MBA from UW-Oshkosh certainly contribute a lot.



Lara Pederson

TEC's activities align with the business plan she initiated, helped develop, and diligently maintains.

"In all my positions, I found myself assisting in the development of one or more systems initiatives," says Lara, noting that this experience contributes to TEC's systems integration efforts for retailers and other organizations. Her outstanding organizational skills help keep everyone and everything moving forward for TEC and each client.

Put it all together and you clearly see that Lara Pederson knows a lot about business and retailing. She knows and understands numbers and she's not afraid to use them!

With TEC, says this outstanding organizer, "There's never, ever a dull moment."

What better place than TEC to apply her considerable business knowledge? As TEC's business manager since 2000, Lara

is closely involved in core aspects of the company. Her duties include: proposal writing; coordinating and managing trade shows; coordinating TEC's marketing, sales, PR and website; and ensuring that

"TEC is special because of Steve and Kaie Latterner, and their values and philosophies," observes Lara. "Moreover, TEC offers its consultants an awesome flexibility, along with the opportunity to work on things they enjoy with an extremely talented and great group of people."

Lara takes great pride and satisfaction in every aspect of her work. "A well-written, finished proposal, followed by a call from Kaie saying we got the job—well, that can really make my day!" she declares. "I enjoy originating ideas and then creating and producing materials that are easy for other TEC consultants and prospective clients to use. To me, the best part of working for TEC is helping to run a successful business. There's never, ever a dull moment." •

Bits and Bytes: TEC News from Coast to Coast

TEC Is Making Industry News *Integrated Solutions for Ret@ilers*, a major industry publication about retail technology for IT executives and CEOs, featured an editorial by Kaie Pohl

Latterner on its August website. Entitled "**Remember the Human Factor**," the editorial can be accessed on TEC's website or by requesting copies from us . . .

What's Working in WMS (*Warehouse Management Systems*) featured Kaie and TEC's people-oriented focus in its July 2002 issue. The article, "**Employee Training Must be a Priority**," offered TEC's human factor perspective and valuable training tips. *Read these two articles on our website . . .*

We wrapped up our summertime interviews on business news station **KCCO-AM 9*5*0** in the Twin Cities. We shared our change management, business process redesign, training and other expertise twice a month with the host and listeners.

TEC Trekkers are preparing for the Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day event this October in L.A. We'll report on their efforts in the next issue of *TEC Talk*. •

TEC drew crowds, contacts, clients at RS 2002

TEC's Retail Systems 2002 pre-show seminar "*The Human Side of Systems Integrations: The Essential But Often Forgotten Element*" was a well-received event that attracted many participants and media alike.

The show was held in Chicago in June.

Watch our website this fall for news about obtaining a CD of seminar highlights. You'll also be able to read and download our white paper about it. •



TEC's Amy Larson, Kelly Vanderkolk, Judy Wallace, Kaie Latterner, Regina Hunt and seminar speaker Bill Elwood at our RS 2002 booth.

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1483 North Bay Road
Somerset, WI 54025
715-247-5054

TEC@TECconsultants.com
www.TECconsultants.com

*Addressing the human
side of your training and
systems integration needs.*

Featured TEC Program: Productivity Under Pressure Workshop

Think you've got your new system integration or new initiative planning covered on all fronts?

Chances are you haven't planned for the management or even *prevention* of organizational stress that can cause extreme resistance to the very changes you're planning.

TEC's **Productivity Under Pressure** (PUP) workshop can help! PUP works to prevent organizational stress that can cause people to fight change—without hurting productivity, people or profits.

PUP is now available from TEC consultants certified to deliver it to management and employees. It's one of several classes and workshops TEC offers to facilitate change management and communication during system integrations and other organizational transitions.

PUP is based in part on Pritchett & Associates' *Survival Guide to the Stress of Organizational Change* and *The Employee Handbook for Organizational Change*. To keep things personal and effective, each session is limited to 25 participants. Lead-time is minimal.

Change Brings Stress, Turmoil

"It seems like every company is undergoing some sort of change that is causing a great deal of turmoil," observes Regina Hunt, TEC Senior Project Lead and a PUP trainer. "Change cascades through an organization, causing disruption. People cause much of this turmoil themselves because of the way they react to change. And people at different levels experience the shock, denial, resistance and acceptance stages of the change at different times.

PUP helps people deal with all this change and turmoil on their own terms."

What It Is, What It's Not

PUP is not a stress management workshop. It is an information-packed, six-hour session that reviews the specific issues facing an organization, opportunities that are both hidden and obvious, and the mistakes individuals make during change that lead to organizational and personal stress.

In a nutshell, PUP will:

- ▶ Provide tools that help people focus on productivity during change.
- ▶ Recognize the predictable dynamics of change.
- ▶ Diagnose and reduce stress.
- ▶ Capitalize on personal change management strengths.
- ▶ Clear up the myths that accompany change by helping people reshape their thinking.
- ▶ Eliminate or reduce self-induced stress and channel that energy toward productivity.
- ▶ Teach individuals how to "own" change and make it successful.
- ▶ Help employees to learn ways to cope with an even faster rate of change that is sure to come in the future.

Each PUP participant leaves the workshop with his or her own individual action plan. In addition, the class compiles a list of recommendations for management, which can be of great value to the organization when dealing with associates during the change.

You know change is inevitable. Plan now to manage it! Just call TEC and schedule a PUP session today. •

