Team Dynamics

Structure, Power, & Communication Theory
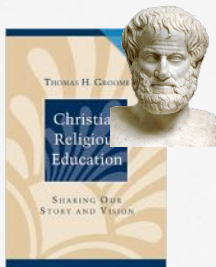

Thinking about theory

> There's nothing so practical as a good theory.

Kurt Lewin

Thinking about theory

THOMAS H. GROOME

Christian Religious Education

SHARING OUR STORY AND VISION

- *Theoria,* the speculative life
- *Praxis,* the practical life
- *Poiesis,* the productive life

Groome, 153

What is theory?

Theory is the quest for truth by a contemplative/ reflective/nonengaged process. Groome, 153.

What does theory do?

Theory moves beyond cataloging empirical/factual data to construct an explanation "which explains the phenomena under study." Yount, 31

Why is theory important?

"But if we view effective practice solely as the improvement of ever more refined practice skills and regard facilitator roles and responsibilities as being primarily those of technicians of design, we denude practice of any philosophical rationale, future orientation, or purposeful mission."
Brookfield, 1986. p 28

What is Brookfield saying?

The theory target ...

Our target (goal) is to come to a clearer "theory of practice" about teams when it comes to **structure**, **power**, and **communication**.

Y.B.H.?

"The educator who has engaged in consciousness-raising activities, made assumptions explicit, reflected on those assumptions, and engaged in dialogue with others most likely will have come to a fairly clear theory of practice." Cranton, 224.

Think . . . Construct . . . Dialogue

Team Dynamics -- Structure, Power, Communication Theory

How Theory Impacts Team Effectiveness

Structure Matters

How a team is structured will impact its effectiveness.

Power Matters

The kind of power the leader wields will impact team effectiveness.

Communication Matters

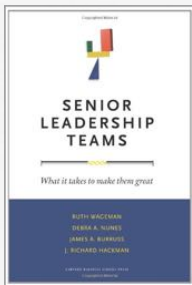The nature of the communication process impacts will impact our teams.

Structure Matters

How a team is structured will impact its effectiveness.

Structure Matters

The Applebee's Team

- Excellent individual performers.
- Good leaders in their areas of expertise.
- No experience collaborating as a leadership team.
- Had clarity about the team's purpose.
- Did not have a common understanding of the work they had to do to make it happen....

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

What it takes to make them great

RUTH WAGEMAN
DEBRA A. NUNES
JAMES R. BURRUSS
J. RICHARD HACKMAN
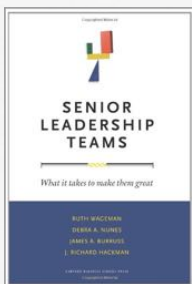
Structure Matters

Research Findings

- A solid team structure significantly enhances the ability of members to work together to achieve their purpose.
- The better the structure, the more effective and productive the team.
- *Quality of the team's structure -- more than any of their 6 findings determined which teams were outstanding & which were not.*

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

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Structure Matters

How a team is structured will impact its effectiveness. Structure includes:

1. Right size
2. Meaningful tasks
3. Clear norms

Based on the conclusions of a multiyear research study on senior leadership teams by Wageman, Nunes, Burrus, and Hackman. Reported in *Senior Leadership Teams: What it takes to make them great.* Pages 111-138

Right Size

1. Carefully selected for the value/contribution they bring (Not SG).
2. The smaller the better. Why?

   The bigger the team the harder:
   (a) To establish & enforce rules of engagement.
   (b) Create genuine teams tasks.
   (c) Accommodate all the voices.

Think about your team structure: Is your team the right size?

Based on the conclusions of a multiyear research study on senior leadership teams by Wageman, Nunes, Burrus, and Hackman. Reported in *Senior Leadership Teams: What it takes to make them great.* Pages 111-138

Meaningful Task

1. Task = Your target. Your finish line. Your "bigger yes."
2. This is the important job of the leader. (Chase, *TOR*, p 243)

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Meaningful Task

Moreover, as the third largest delegation at the convention, Ohio wielded substantial power. "If united," observed Halstead, "it would have a formidable influence…." "There was no unity of action, no determination of purpose," one Chase supporter lamented…." Once again, he failed to appoint a set of trusted managers who could guide his campaign ….

Salmon P. Chase

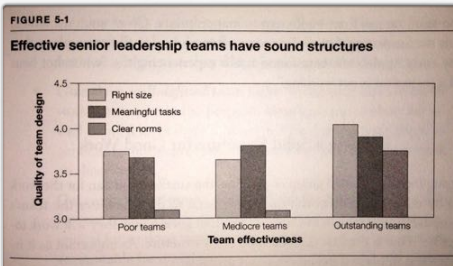Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, page 243.

Meaningful Task

1. Task = Your target. Your finish line. Your "bigger yes."
2. This is the important job of the leader. (Chase, *TOR*, p 243)
3. Takes tremendous amounts of time to craft your mission/task.
4. Great time to relaunch your team.
5. In meetings, focus on strategy before tactics.

Think about your team task. What is your "Bigger Yes"?

Clear Norms

FIGURE 5-1

Effective senior leadership teams have sound structures

Legend: Right size, Meaningful tasks, Clear norms

Y-axis: Quality of team design (3.0 – 4.5)
X-axis: Team effectiveness — Poor teams, Mediocre teams, Outstanding teams

Clear Norms
Our team's "rules of engagement"

1. Tailored to our unique team challenge.
2. Clear. Example: *"Transparency: If it affects more than one of us put it on the team table."*
3. Few in number.
4. Specific.
5. The leader sets the pace (follows & holds the team accountable).

Evaluate your team norms. What needs to change?

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Structure Matters

How a team is structured (size, task, norms) will impact its effectiveness.

"Date your structure, don't marry it."
Bill Hybels

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Power Matters

The kind of power the leader wields (**coercive**, **reward**, **legitimate**, **expert**, **referent**, **information**) will impact team effectiveness.

French & Raven

The power leaders wield:
1. Coercive
2. Reward
3. Legitimate
4. Expert
5. Referent,
6. Information

Mind Tools provides a great summary of their study. Read it now.

Power Matters

Power Matters

How would you describe the power that is being wielded by the leader? Is it appropriate or inappropriate? Why?

Power Matters

Power Matters

How would you describe the power that is being wielded by the leader? Is it appropriate or inappropriate? Why?

Power Matters

Tombstone

Power Matters

How would you describe the power that is being wielded by the leader? Is it appropriate or inappropriate? Why?

Power Matters

Reflect on the use of power on your team (yours and others) in light of the French & Raven research:
1. Appropriate or inappropriate? Why?
2. How can you more effectively use the power God has given you?

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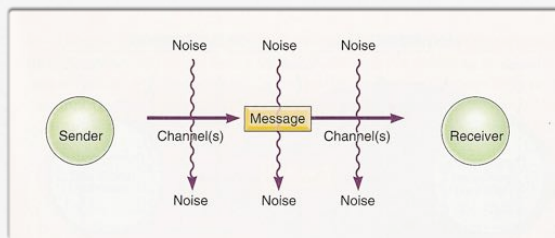2. Meaningful tasks
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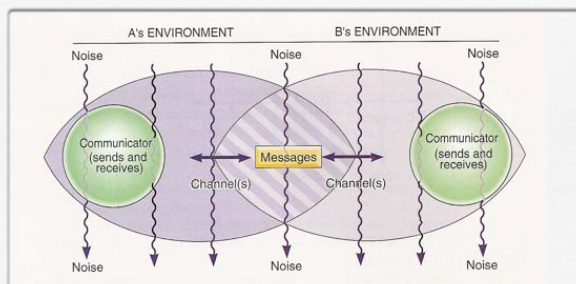
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Communication Matters

Noise   Noise   Noise

Sender → Channel(s) → Message → Channel(s) → Receiver

Noise   Noise   Noise

The Linear Model of Communication (Adler, Proctor, Towne, *Looking Out Looking In*, page 11)

Communication Matters

A's ENVIRONMENT   B's ENVIRONMENT

Noise   Noise   Noise

Communicator (sends and receives) ↔ Channel(s) ↔ Messages ↔ Channel(s) ↔ Communicator (sends and receives)

Noise   Noise   Noise

The Transactional Model of Communication (Adler, Proctor, Towne, *Looking Out Looking In*, page 12)

Communication Matters

The Transactional Model of Communication (Adler, Proctor, Towne, *Looking Out Looking In*, page 12)

Communication Matters

The nature of the communication process impacts our teams.

What are two implications of the transactional nature of communication for your team's relationships & effectiveness?

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