

The team coaching to excel together

Second part

After analyzing the relational and experiential processes that improve the performance of the team, in the second part of this article the author will explain what the team coach should do to build his team and to bring it to its high potential, so he will analyze some useful operative means.



di Savino Tupputi

In the first part of this article, published in previous number, we analyzed the nature, the function, the objectives and possible dysfunctions of team coaching, illustrating various benefits of relational and experiential processes that, connecting the members of team, promote the growth and the development of both individual and collective performances all to the good of a company. In the second part of the article we shall see what a team coach should do to make his team compact in order it can use all its potential and we shall analyze some useful means. In other words round table, team wheel, team library and team paper. The latter

is a model that includes everything that is important for the Team: organizational vision, goal, values and norms, team initiatives (goals and roles), team practices (communication, decision making, responsibility) and resources (internal and external).

How to make a team functional and well-performing

So we'll see what the team leader needs to do to achieve maximum results from his team. He or she at first should be vulnerable, he or she needs to take a challenge sincerely. So only if the leader is the first to do this the others will follow his example. He should let the team members arrange and resolve the conflicts – avoiding to be as a filter, so as everyone can develop the ability to arrange discussions. Besides the team leader should feel at ease in perspective to make a decision that can be revealed wrong, he should push the group into concentrating on the matters to be resolved and fixed deadlines, he should face difficult matters and he should not centralize on him all the responsibility to avoid to create the lack of responsibility inside the team. He has an assignment to attribute the correct value to

the results since if the members perceive that he assigns value to something different, they will feel themselves authorized to do the same. The leader should be altruist, impartial and he needs to reserve prizes and recognitions to those people who really contribute to the achievement of group goals. One of the best solutions that he has is just Team Coaching, the relational and experiential dynamics in virtue of which team is sustained by a coach, that supports and leads it to face and resolve Five dysfunctions of Team, discussed in the first part of this article, to reach desired results.

At this point arises a question: when is the intervention of Team Coaching appropriate? It is a perfect solution in different situations particularly when:

- Team shows problems of operation and/or performance;
- The “formal” leader isn't fully recognized;
- There is one or more leaders of “fact” and not of “role”;
- There is a need of integration among different business functions;
- The team has just been composed;

The first question to ask is very easy: does the team exist? It is an essential question because in most cases the team exists only on the paper, but not in daily working process in which the members act as a group of job and even though directed by only one supervisor, they don't collaborate enough among them to complete their tasks.

While the team is characterized by a number of people endowed with **complementary competences** that work at reaching a **common goal** in respect to which they are mutually responsible. The team coach is a facilitator of process that accelerates **the passage from group to team**, he makes every single person feel part of the team.

One of the most used means for getting this result is the “round table” in which every single member is called to set



Figure 4 Team wheel

forth his idea causing a series of opinions and a constructive comparison among the members. In this context the coach leads interpersonal dynamics and favors three essential critical elements for team success:

Clarity on the degree of mutual trust, useful and harmful behaviors, shared values, common goals;

Focus, concentration, attention, time and energy in the correct direction, emerged after the phase of clarity; we often need to bring the attention on the fact that it is in the context of team;

The execution of actions created and shared in coherent way with a common goal, therefore the mission, values and roles in order to turn the goals into results.

The principal that subtends to this dynamic is the one shared by Round Table Knights of King Arthur: “we make us free serving of each other”.

In figure 4 the **Team wheel** is shown, a model of organizing “round tables” to make the team functional and performing and to prevent five “dysfunctions”.

The realization of this model foresees a **specific training** articulated in different sessions that allows to establish a virtuous circle and that, promoting high-level of discipline and perseverance, becomes the ingredient of team success.

The training is divided into different phases:

- evaluation of team;
- comprehension of dysfunctions;
- overcoming of dysfunctions

In each of these phases are fulfilled **individual and group exercises, moments of rational learning** in which the team coach exposes some concepts and helps the members to put them into practice, but also moments of experience with carrying out of activity-sometimes also outdoor- in which the team lives an experience, that brings out group dynamics. So the coach promotes a debriefing to give feedback to group dynamics and to those who ask for an improvement. Round tables can exclusively concern core team or leader or people that are responsible for functions, as to be expanded to whole team, it depends on

contents, goals and on the number of members. In order to work and to be successful this interactive dynamics should be conducted by a correct number of participants, not more than 12-15.

To continue the formulation of Round tables, even out of sessions, the technology can be of great help. To create sharing groups on **Facebook** can allow the members to exchange opinions and experiences among sessions at the moment in which the coaching, if organized well, expresses its results (let's don't forget that it deals with a process so that's why we use coaching the gerund of verb to coach).

Another way of promoting and favoring learning and constant updating consists of establishing "team library " in this way each member can read a book and can discuss with others about the notions learned during the meetings. Some source of ideas and interests are created that feed the innovation and creativeness.

WhatsApp is another technological means commonly used in team for its instant communication, it allows to maintain the focus of team on important matters and relative plan of action.

Daily measurable actions, for reaching important goals, that are connected to the critical factors of team success, for instant, can be monitored. After all the most important test of great teams are the results to be achieved.

Team paper

Another useful model used in the dynamics of team coaching, during Round Tables, is that of Kenneth Blanchard **"The team charter"** (figure 5). It allows to unite the team towards one unique and common direction and it produces as a final result the writing and sharing of so-called team paper, that contains everything that is important for team: organizational vision, goals, values and rules, team initiatives (goals and roles), team practices (communication, decision making, responsibility)

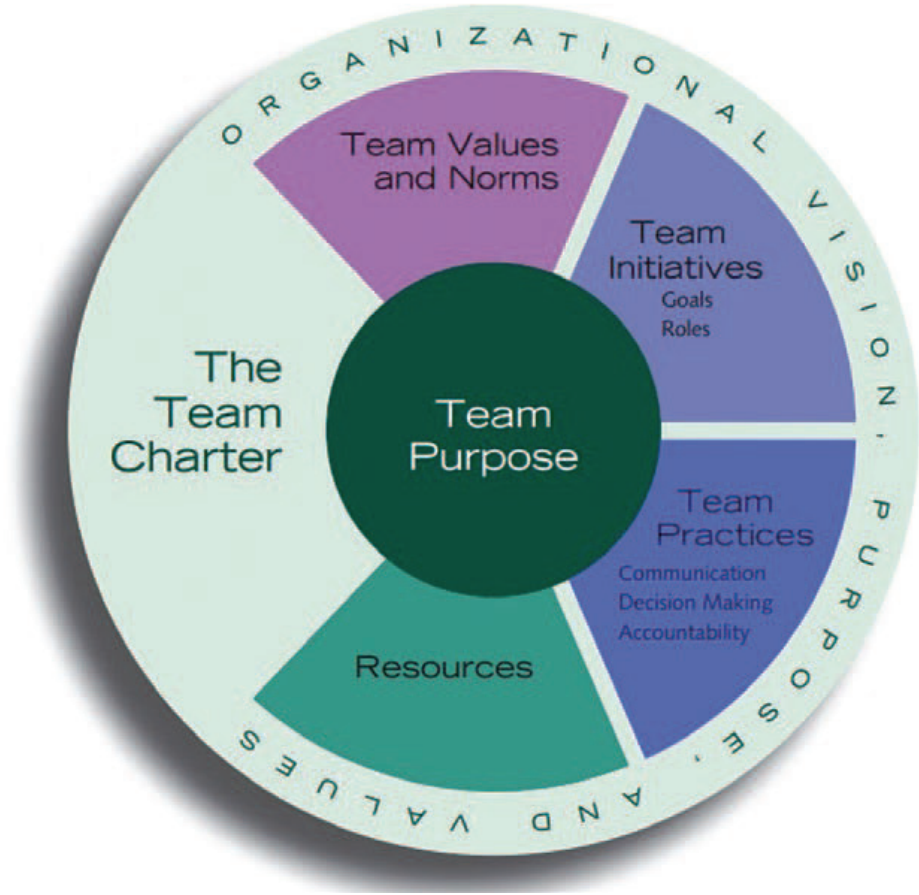


Figure 5

and resources (internal and external).

This paper is drawn by the core team, together the owner or manager with coach's support, and subsequently, shared and eventually implemented by the rest of the team. In this part we prefer to propose some useful questions how to start and use it, rather than to explain in details the model.

Ten questions to be asked in range of team coaching for setting up the team paper are the following:

Does the team exist? An essential question to verify if we are a team or a group.

Why are we together? To identify the common goal of the team.

How will we reach our common goal? To identify the values so what is important for team.

Which are the conditions that allow us to live our values. To establish rules and criterions.

Which are the important and critical goals? To realize goal setting.

Who wants to be one of us

to reach the goal? To define roles and own individual contribution.

How do you communicate inside and outside a team?

Who says what and how? To establish communication processes inside and outside the team.

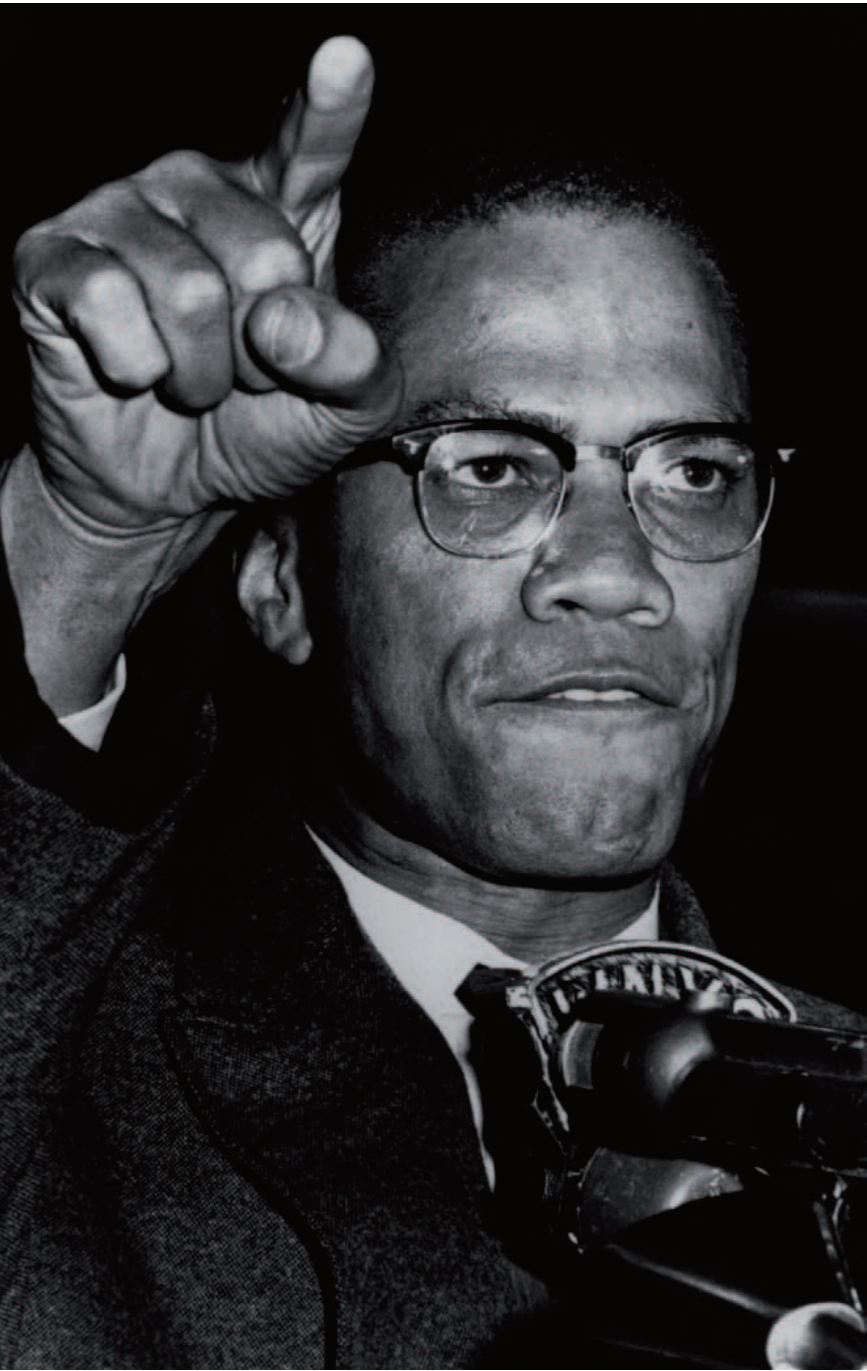
How are the specific decisions made? To identify specific decision making.

How do we take responsibility for the specific decisions taken? To create a mutual responsibility among the members.

What kind of and how many resources do we have at our disposal? How can we get the ones we miss? To map internal and external resources.

It is obvious that these series of questions can't be enough to draw Team paper, but it can be useful to begin the guided exploration and the contribution of team's external coach in this situation it is essential, immune from internal conditionings.

Sometimes I come across with



The leader should show vulnerability, he needs to take a challenge sincerely, because only if he is the first to do it, the others will follow his example (In the photo Malcom X)

organizations whose goal, although being present on the paper, isn't fully shared and lived. Once I made the members of a team do individual jobs, to my great surprise, each of them wrote a mission different from the one of the communication material.

So it isn't enough to write it down but it should be lived, personalized and showed frequently in behaviors.

On other occasions I have noticed that the common goal and business mission are usually confused with one of goals. For instance to introduce a new center of profitable income into the club can be a critical objective for the reaching of greater goals, obviously it doesn't coincide with the mission. To make another clarifying example we can take Walt Disney. If the American giant had had a primary goal to make the best cartoons in the world what would have happened?

The successful initiatives as Disneyland would probably have never be born, due to a great mission: to make people happy.

The process of team coaching, therefore, should foresee a series of sessions in which both individual and group exercises and work are done. The real process in fact occurs between one session and the other, when the responsibility of the action is transferred to team and single individuals. To make it have success the team coaching should spread inside the team the



A good leader looks always ahead.

culture of coaching and learning. And since this isn't a result of case, we need the leader's and coach's support and guide to create structures, climate and proper processes.

Here are **nine ingredients of team**, directed to the learning through team coaching:

- Sense of common goal;
- Common sense of priorities;
- Wish to speak openly;
- Conscience of strong and weakness points;
- Appreciation of differences;

- Wish to share knowledge and experiences;
- Mutual understanding of opinions;
- Trust in mutual abilities and good will;
- Lively atmosphere.

Organizational benefits of team coaching

There are numerous benefits and all of them are very important, benefits that can be got doing an accurate work of team coaching. The principals are:

- Improvement of single and team performances in its all complex;
- Multiplication of innovative and creative ideas;
- Acceleration of development and innovation processes;
- Improvement of decisions and simplification of processes;
- Changes of productive management in sight of great Efficiency;
- Creation of favorable atmosphere for collaboration

- and drastic reduction of inside conflict;
- Great flexibility and adaptation of changes.

Sometimes it happens to me to come into contact with teams composed of people that have just got to know one another and that meet occasionally because they prefer to dedicate themselves to "real job" to daily practicality, but I consider it an error as a strong team passes considerable time together, and in doing so, it saves time eliminating the confusion minimizing the efforts and reducing useless communications. Here is Sir John Whitmore's idea, one of the founders of coaching "A team guided by coaching does its work well and at the same time it evolves and develops".

I conclude inviting you to think over. Is your team ready to face new challenges of market? Does it have necessary flexibility to face the changes?

Is your team ready to face new challenges of the market?

Is your team ready to face new challenges of the market?



Savino Tupputi

Graduated in Motor Sciences with the specialization of management and organizing sport structures, has operated as an instructor, personal trainer, club manager and he was the head of two wellness clubs for many years in this field. Now he is engaged in formation and consultation of fitness centers as an expert of organization, marketing and the development of political commerce and marketing. Business and team coach, he is the creator of Wellfit Solutions.