

Coaching Teams

Professional Development Workshop
Academy of Management
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Presenters: Richard Hackman
Ruth Wageman

Outline

1. Conceptual core: The three process criteria
2. Conditions for team effectiveness
3. Coaching a team (1): Remediating design flaws
4. Coaching a team (2): Key times for coaching
5. Coaching a team (3): Coaching at other times
6. Coaching a team (4): Fostering peer coaching
7. Conclusion

Domain

Purposive groups that operate
in a social system context

Criteria of Team Effectiveness

1. Task output that is (at least) acceptable to those who receive, review, or use it--and that, occasionally, is magical.
2. Members become increasingly competent in working together as a team.
3. Members' personal growth and well-being are fostered by their team experiences.

Conceptual Core: The Three Process Criteria

Effort

Strategy

Knowledge and Skill

Characteristic Process Losses and Gains

Loss

Gain

Effort

Social loafing

High shared
commitment to the
team and its work

Strategy

Mindless reliance on
habitual routines

Invention of work
procedures uniquely
appropriate to the
task and situation

Knowledge
and Skill

Inappropriate weighting
of member contributions

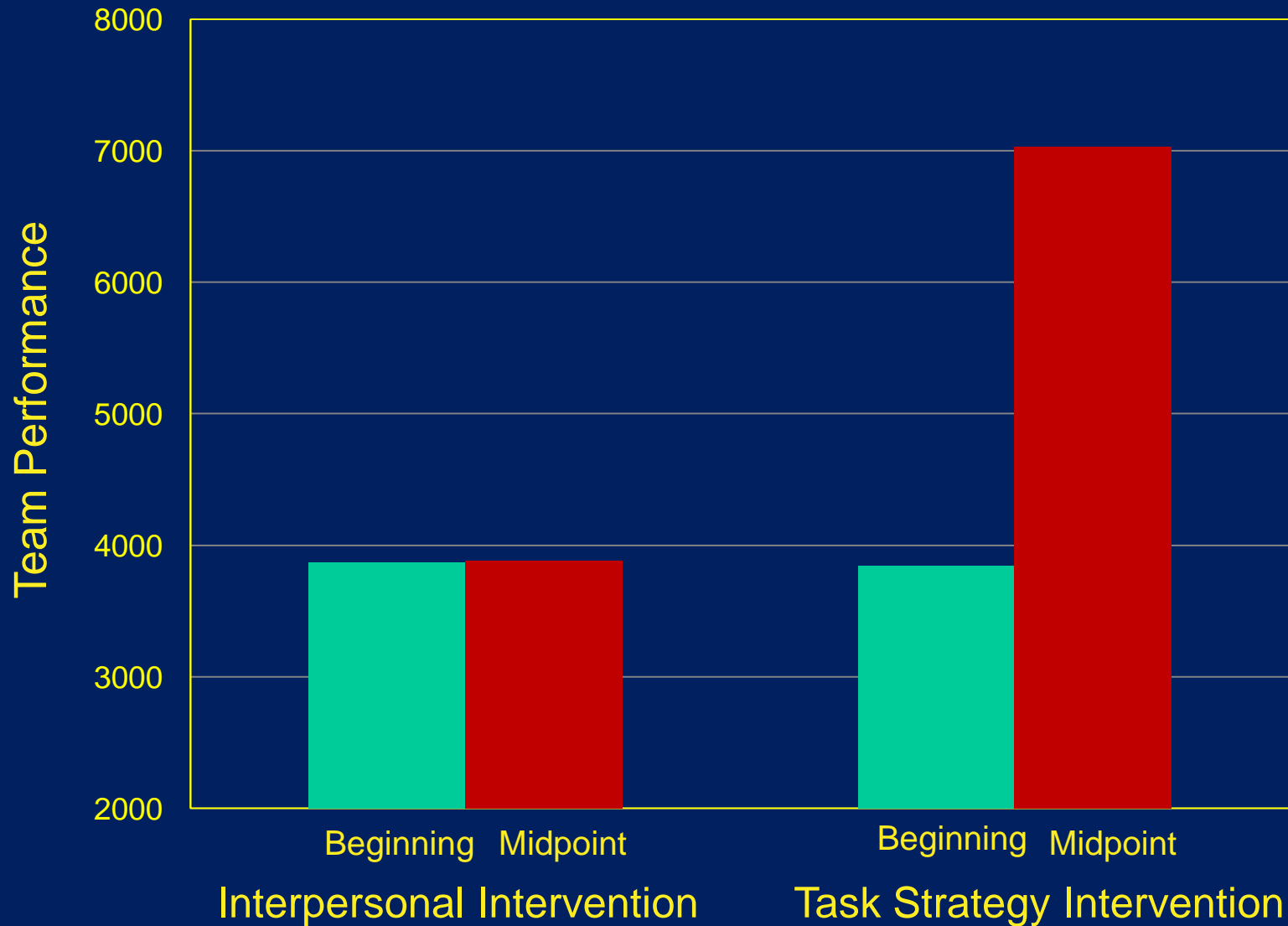
Knowledge sharing
and skill learning

Research Note:

This is not about group cohesiveness, harmony, or the quality of members' interpersonal relations.

Woolley, A. W. (1998). Effects of intervention content and timing on group task performance. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 34, 30-49.

Woolley's Findings about Coaching Type and Timing



Available Tool:

Group Process Checklist

Note: All tools mentioned or shown in these slides can be requested on the Leading Teams web site:
<http://www.leadingteams.org>

GROUP PROCESS CHECKLIST

For example:

How are our team processes?

What actions might we take to improve our team processes?

A B C D F
excellent so-so flunk

Overhead Orpheus

↓
B-
Effort
Overall

↓
C+
EFFORT AND COMMITMENT
Avoiding process losses:
___ No "social loafing" by team members
Building synergy:
___ Team builds high shared commitment to the team and its work

Possible actions . . .

Strategy
Overall

TEAM PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES
Avoiding process losses:
___ No mindless reliance on habitual performance routines
Building synergy:
___ Active invention of innovative and task-appropriate ways of proceeding

Possible actions . . .

Talent
Overall

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
Avoiding process losses:
___ No inappropriate "weighting" of member contributions
Building synergy:
___ Active teaching and learning among group members

Possible actions . . .

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Fostering the Process Criteria: Conditions for Team Effectiveness

The Five Enabling Conditions

1. A real team
2. Compelling direction
3. Enabling team structure
4. Supportive organizational context
5. Available, expert coaching

Linking the Five Conditions to the Three Process Criteria

Note: Do not take the next few slides too seriously. The links between features of the conditions and the three process criteria are not tight, one-to-one links that could be cleanly documented empirically.

Real Team

Bounded



Effort

Interdependent



Strategy

Stable



Knowledge/Skill

Compelling Direction

Challenging



Effort

Clear



Strategy

Consequential



Knowledge/Skill

Enabling Structure

Task



Effort

Norms



Strategy

Composition



Knowledge/Skill

Supportive Context

Reward System → Effort

Information System → Strategy

Educational System → Knowledge/Skill

Expert Coaching

Motivational



Effort

Consultative



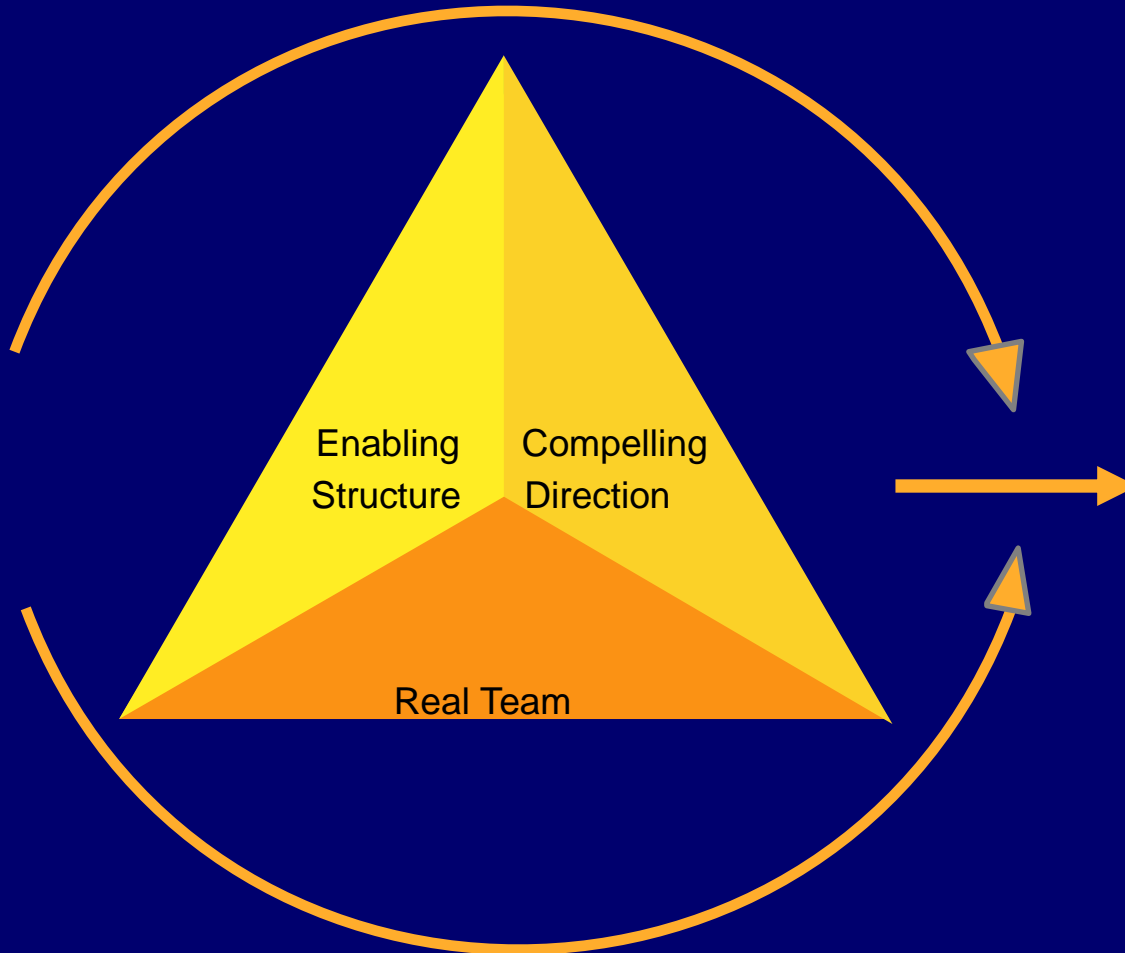
Strategy

Educational



Knowledge/Skill

Supportive Organizational Context



Expert Coaching

Research Note #1:

Collectively, the five conditions control substantial variance in team effectiveness.

Intelligence analysis teams: 70+%

Hackman, J. R., & O'Connor, M. C. (2005). *What makes for a great analytic team?* Washington, DC: Intelligence Science Board, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence.

Senior management teams: 50+%

Wageman, R., Nunes, D. A., Burruss, J. A., & Hackman, J. R. (in press). *Senior management teams: What it takes to make them great.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Research Note #2:

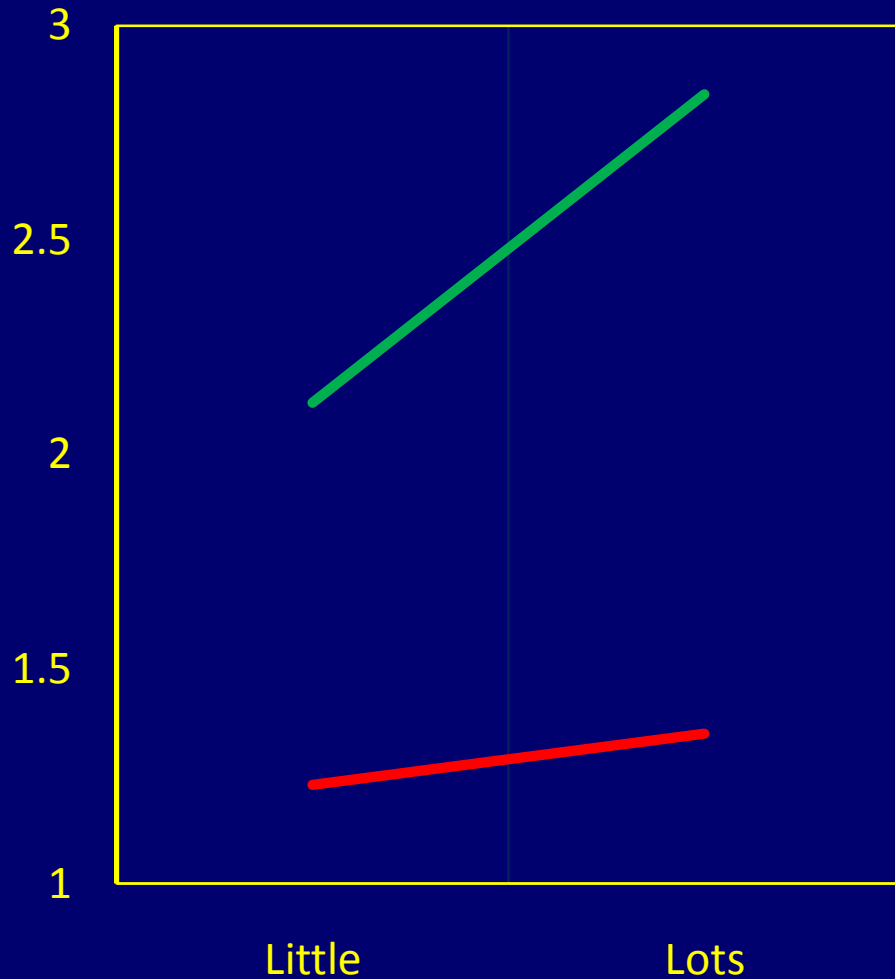
Competent team coaching greatly helps well-designed teams, but does not help poorly designed teams.

And bad coaching hurts poorly designed teams, but does not significantly impair well-designed teams.

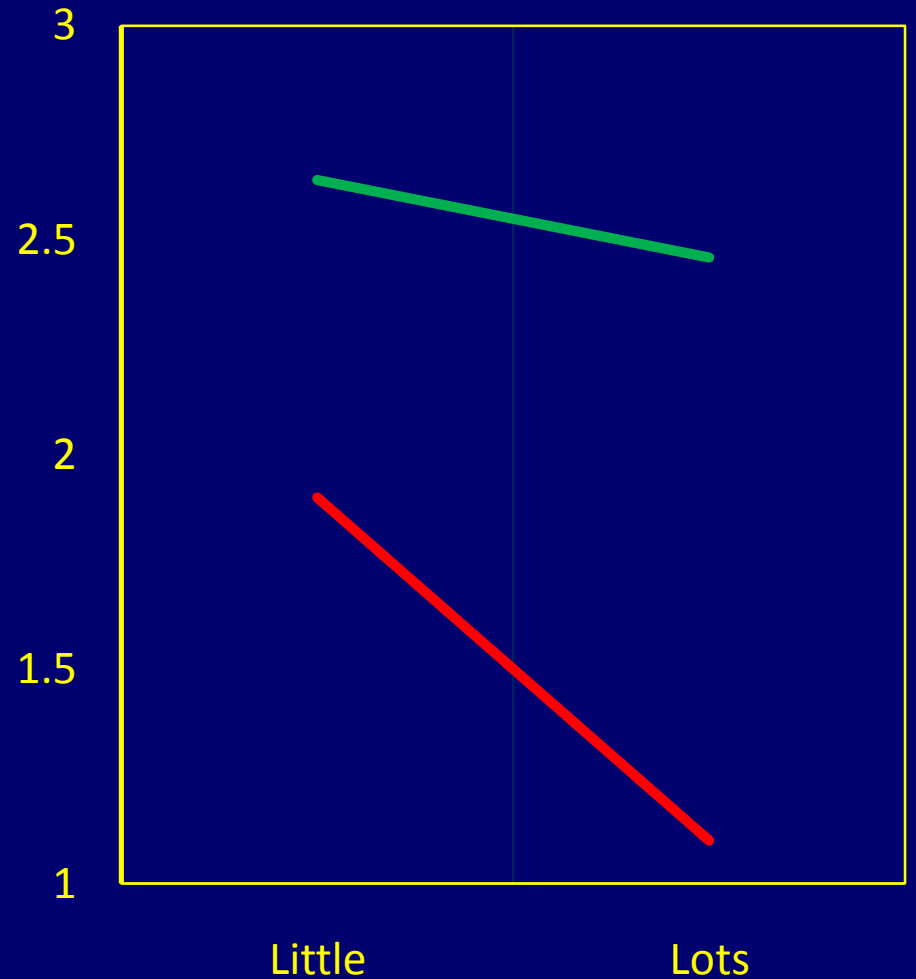
Wageman, R. (2001). How leaders foster self-managing team effectiveness: Design choices versus hands-on coaching. *Organization Science*, 12, 559-577.

Wageman's Findings about the Interaction between Team Design and Leader Coaching

Good Coaching



Poor Coaching



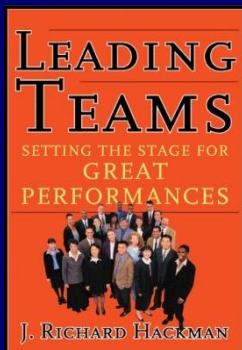
Green: Well Designed Team

Red: Poorly Designed Team

For details about the conditions that foster team effectiveness, see:

<http://www.leadingteams.org>

or



Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances

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Coaching a Team (1):
Remedying Design Flaws

Available Tool:

Group Design Checklist

GROUP DESIGN CHECKLIST

How well-structured is our team?

A B C D F
 excellent so-so flunk

What actions might we take
 to improve our structure?

Real Team

 Overall

REAL TEAM

- Bounded: Clear membership
- Interdependent for common purpose
- Stable membership

Possible actions . . .

Direction

 Overall

COMPELLING DIRECTION

- Challenging
- Clear and well understood
- Consequential

Possible actions . . .

Structure

 Overall

ENABLING STRUCTURE

- Task: A whole piece of work with autonomy and built-in feedback
- Norms: Clarity about "must always do" and "must never do" behaviors
- Composition: Small size, good mix of task-relevant skills, heterogeneous membership

Possible actions . . .

Context

 Overall

SUPPORTIVE CONTEXT

- Rewards: Favorable consequences for good team performance
- Information: Data needed for the work are available to the team
- Education: Any training or technical consultation needed are available to the team
- Resources: Material resources needed for the work are available to the team

Possible actions . . .

Assessment instrument:
The Team Diagnostic Survey

To review and/or use the TDS:
<http://www.team-diagnostics.com>

Available Tool:

Guide to scales and items in the TDS

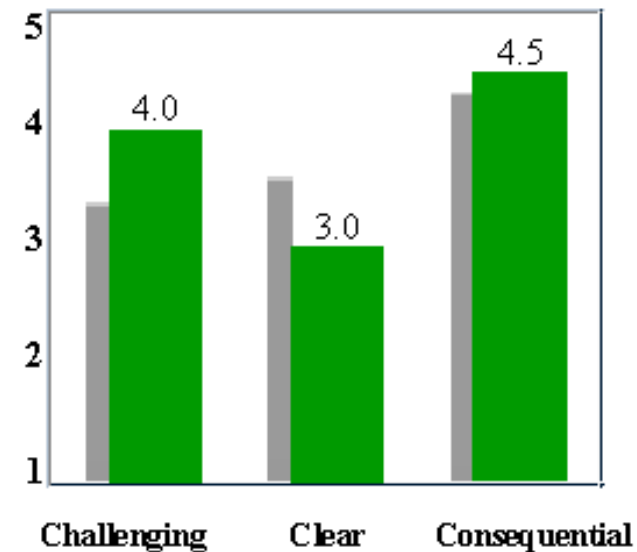
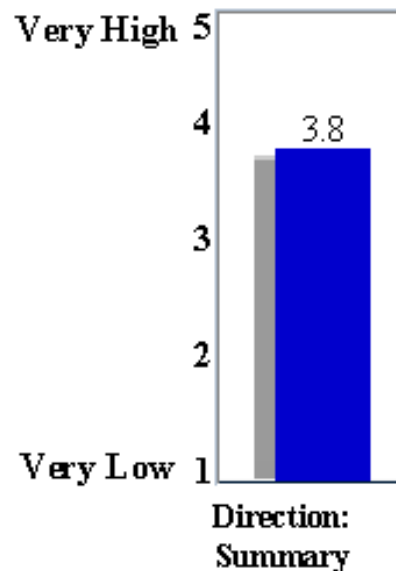
Article on the instrument:

Wageman, R., Hackman, J. R., & Lehman, E. V. (2005). The Team Diagnostic Survey: Development of an instrument. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 41, 373-398.

Does the Team Have a Compelling Direction?

Team members tend to be highly engaged with the work when team purposes are **challenging**, **clear**, and **consequential** for others.

The left bar on the chart summarizes the degree to which this is true for your team. The bars to the right break out the scores for each of the three attributes.

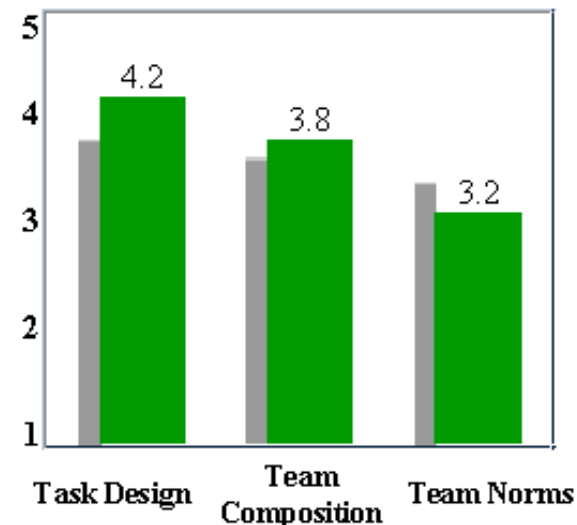
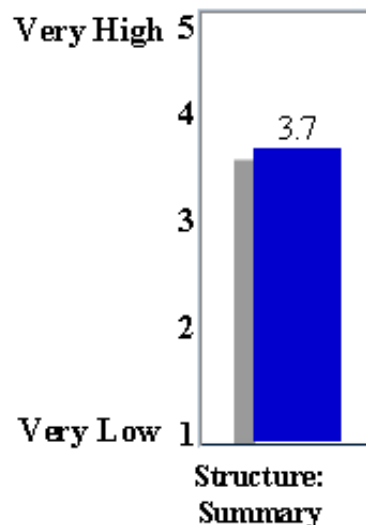


Does the Team Have an Enabling Structure?

An enabling team structure has three components:

1. A well-designed team task--one that is a whole, meaningful piece of work for which members have autonomy and receive trustworthy knowledge of results.
2. Clear norms of conduct for member behavior--shared expectations about what behaviors are acceptable and unacceptable in the team.
3. Good team composition--a team that is as small as possible and whose members bring to the team a good mix of task and interpersonal skills.

The left bar in the chart summarizes what members reported about the structure of your team. The three bars to the right break out the overall score for task design, team composition, and team norms of conduct. (The findings for task design and for team composition are further broken out in the two charts that follow.)



Coaching a Team to Remedy Design Flaws: Questions to Address

1. How would you talk with the team about patterns in the data?
2. How would you help the team improve its design (establish better clarity, create constructive norms)?

For information on use of the TDS:

Trex Proffitt

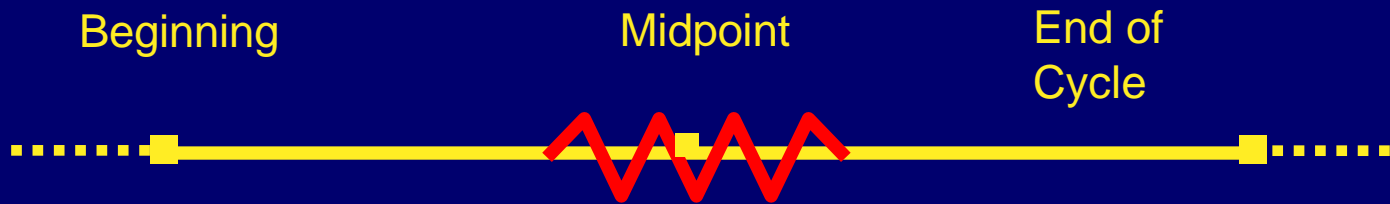
trexler.proffitt@fandm.edu

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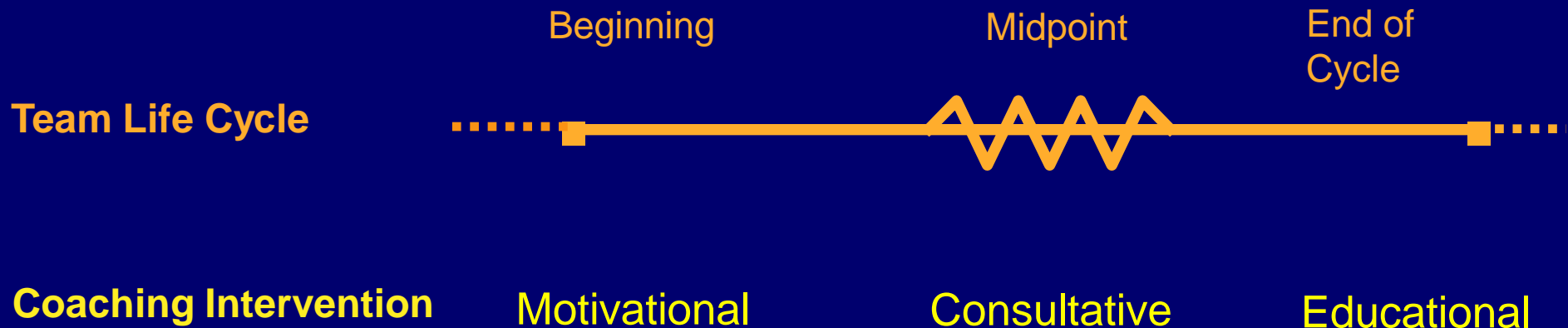
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Coaching a Team (2): Key Times for Coaching

The Team Life Cycle



The Temporal Appropriateness of Coaching Interventions



Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2005). A theory of team coaching. *Academy of Management Review*, 30, 269-287.

Video Case:

Overhead Reduction Task Force

(HBS Case No. 9-400-501; Written case: 9-400-026; teaching note also available)

Available Tools:

Launch exercise

Midpoint: 10,000 mile team checkup

Team debrief exercise

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Coaching a Team (3):
Coaching at other times

Research Questions

Timing: Too Soon vs. Too Late

- Detecting problems and opportunities
- Intervening to help team solve problems and exploit opportunities

Focus: Individual vs. Group Level

- What is detected?
- What is the intervention target?

Comparison: Novices vs. Experts

- Selected on basis of coaching experience

Training: Detection vs. Intervention

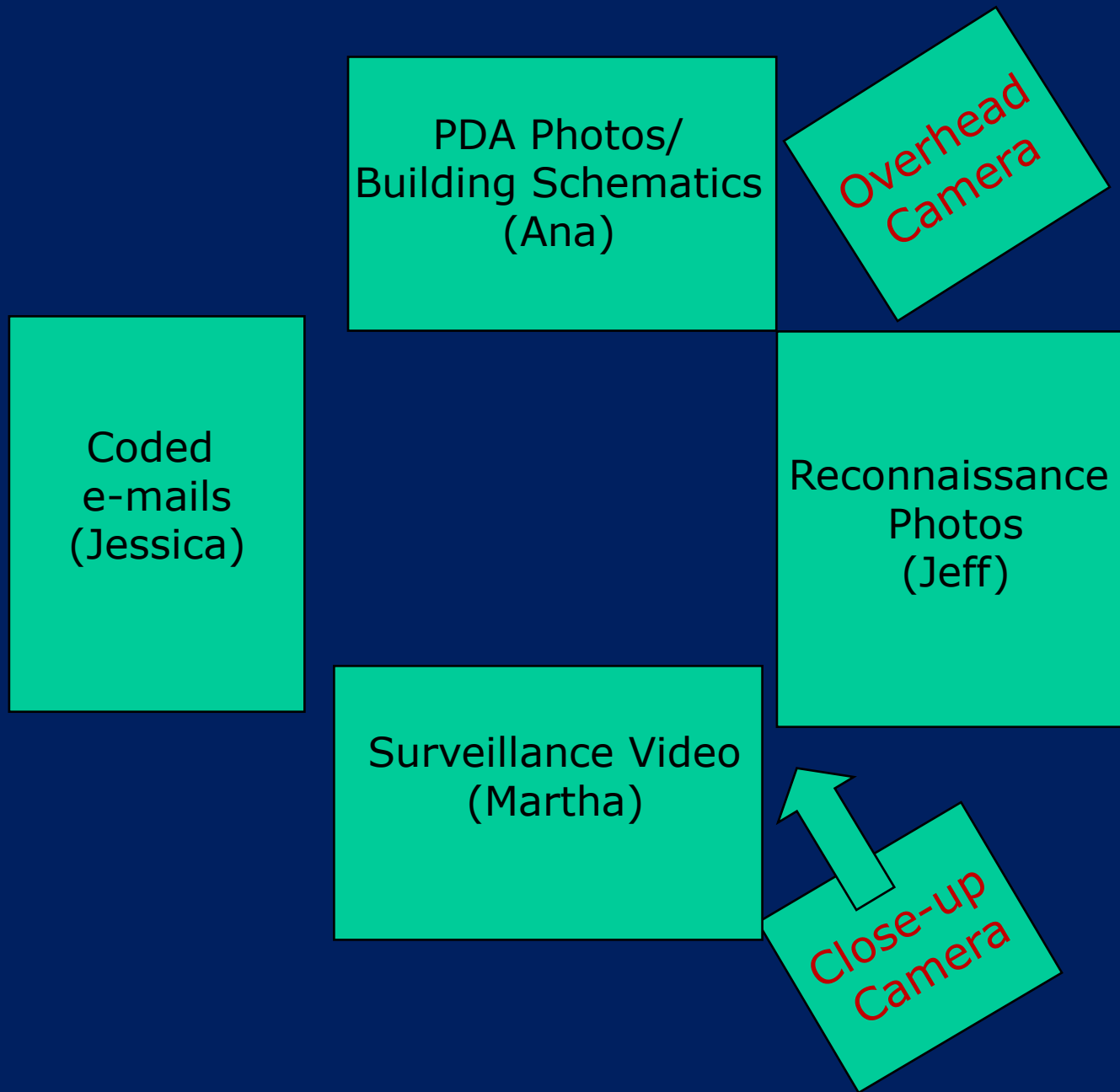
- Detecting team issues (effort, strategy, knowledge/skill)
- Group-focused interventions

Research in progress being conducted by Colin Fisher, Ruth Wageman, and Richard Hackman



From the video of an intelligence analysis team, used in experimental studies of the timing of coaching interventions

Room Layout and Final Task Assignments



What You Should Do:

- Imagine you are in charge of coaching this team
- Offer coaching interventions that will help this team achieve its task goals as effectively as possible, and to help members learn to become better performers in the future.

Collaboration Opportunity

To explore teaching or research possibilities regarding real-time coaching, contact Colin Fisher: cfisher@hbs.edu

Supplementary Research Report

The timing video was based on a study of the interaction of coaching and member expertise. Findings: High member expertise in the absence of coaching about using it well actually can impair team performance. For details, see:

Woolley, A. W., Gerbasi, M., Chabris, C. F., Kosslyn, S. M., & Hackman, J. R. (2007). *What does it take to figure out what is going on? How team composition and work strategy jointly shape analytic effectiveness*. Technical Report No. 4, Group Brain Project, Dept. of Psychology, Harvard University.

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Coaching a Team (4): Fostering peer coaching

When Peer Coaching Is Especially Helpful

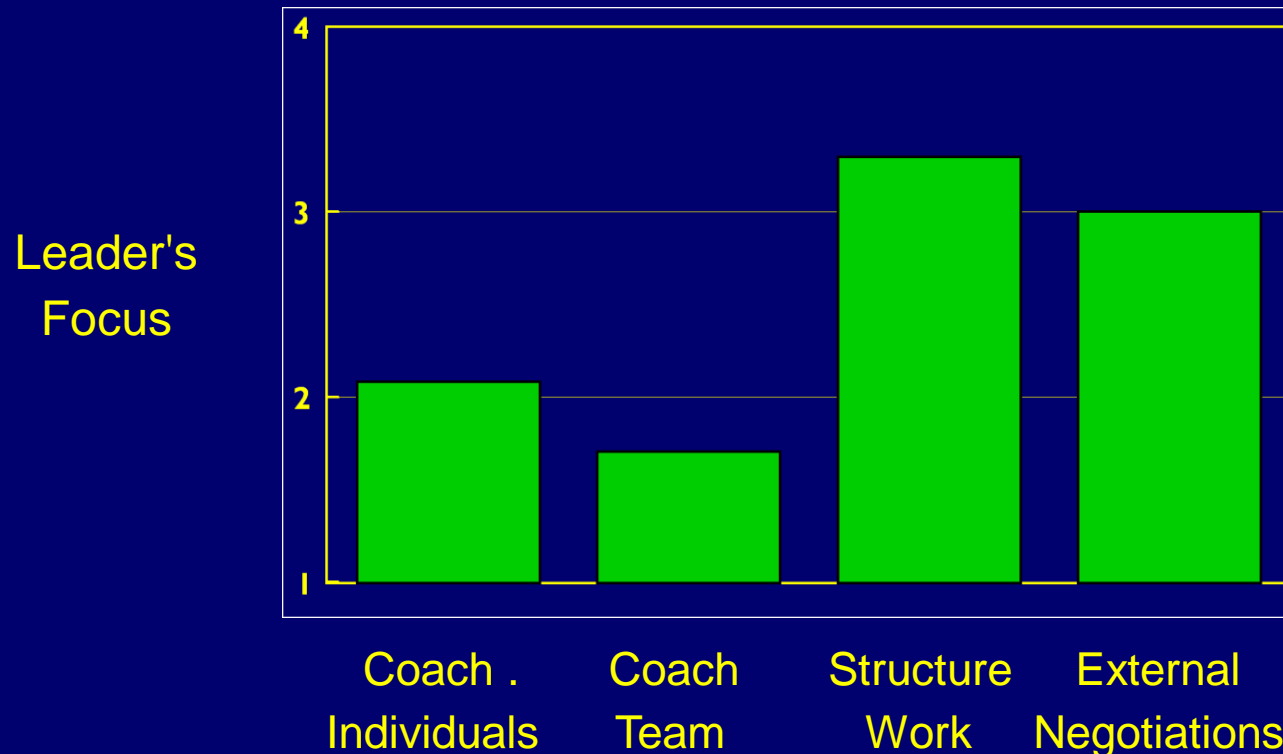
1. There is no designated team leader.
2. The designated team leader does not provide much team coaching.
3. Members have diverse knowledge, skills, and experience--and therefore have much to learn from each other.

Example 1: Intelligence Analysis Teams

Team leaders did not provide much coaching.

Perhaps because:

They were busy doing other things.



Leader coaching was helpful to team performance, but not empirically strong.

Peer coaching, however, predicted team effectiveness better than any other factor we measured:

$$r = .82$$

Hackman, J. R., & O'Connor, M. C. (2005). *What makes for a great analytic team? Individual vs. team approaches to intelligence analysis*. Washington, DC: Intelligence Science Board, Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

The Apparent Causal Flow

Well-designed Work Team



Peer Coaching



Performance Effectiveness

Example 2: Orpheus Chamber Orchestra

1. No designated team leader (conductor)
2. Diverse, highly talented members

Video Case:

Nobody on the podium: Lessons about leadership from the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra

Kennedy School of Government Case No. 1644.9

A teaching note for the case is available on our web site:

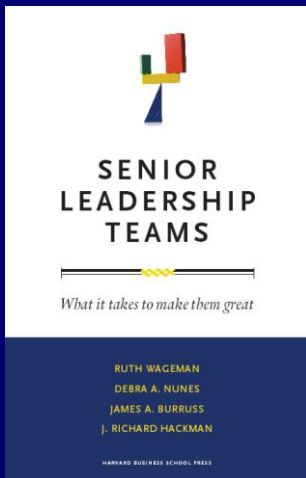
<http://www.leadingteams.org>

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Other Resources

Hackman, J. R., & Wageman, R. (2005). When and how team leaders matter. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 26, 37-74.



Wageman, R., Nunes, D. A., Burruss, J. A., & Hackman, J. R. *Senior leadership teams: What it takes to make them great*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press (available late 2007).

Use of the Materials

The various coaching tools are freely available for educational use; permission is not required.

The tools also are available at no cost for research use, but please tell us beforehand.

Please contact us to discuss arrangements for any consulting or commercial use of the materials:

[hackman \[at\] fas.harvard.edu](mailto:hackman@fas.harvard.edu)

[rwageman \[at\] wjh.harvard.edu](mailto:rwageman@wjh.harvard.edu)

