

OFFICE POLITICS

Troublesome teamwork: Ten tips to co-exist peacefully

Only shared knowledge is power, say **Mandy Flint** and **Elisabet Vinberg Hearn**

ON AVERAGE, we spend 37 hours a week at work, which means that most of us spend more time with our colleagues than with our family and friends. And if things aren't amicable with the people we work with, or our teams don't function efficiently, those 37 hours are going to be painful indeed.

We have identified 10 common problems which teams often encounter. So be proactive. Whichever of these you face, address them to ensure your team is as successful as it can be.

LACK OF TRUST

Trust is crucial to teamwork, and it is hard to trust someone you don't know. Team members must spend time together and get to know each other if there is to be a sense of cohesion.

CONFLICT AND TENSION

Conflict, a difference of opinion, can be healthy, and if carefully managed, can trigger useful debates.

Different opinions are no bad thing. It's how we handle them that makes a difference. We can look for the creative power in the different views and use it to find better solutions.

NOT SHARING INFORMATION

Knowledge is not power, until it is shared. Effective teams share regularly and generously for the benefit of everyone. This allows the whole team's capabilities to grow and gives the team more power.

LOW EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Less than 20 per cent of people are fully engaged at work. This is a massive waste



Effective teams share regularly and generously for the benefit of everyone

of resources, and of employees' time. The key to engagement is keeping staff involved. When involved, it is impossible to stay detached.

LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is becoming the expected norm in business. The same goes for teams; they want to see what other teams do, and managers should provide them with the opportunity.

LACK OF LONG-TERM THINKING

Long-term success requires long-term thinking. Businesses have to look beyond the urgent, take a holistic view, and see how all the parts fit together.

In teams it's about considering the impact of actions and behaviours – on each other, customers and financial results.



TAKING THE BAC SEAT

BACtrack
Free

If you've had a few to drink, this breathalyser app may prove a stitch in time. BACtrack allows you to monitor your BAC (blood alcohol content), and find out when your system will be booze-free so you can make a more informed decision before you get behind the wheel. The catch is that you have to buy the breathalyser itself (currently £80 on Amazon). But on the plus side, a graph will track your consumption over time.

NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS

Every team has a brand and reputation. A large part of that is driven by how well the team delivers on expectations and promises. Everyone needs to take responsibility for their role in creating the perception of the team. This includes both what is delivered and how.

NOT MANAGING CHANGE WELL

Change is inevitable. All organisations go through change continuously. But it slows people down and creates uncertainty.

Be proactive about how the change is handled; talk about it in a constructive way, get clarifications, find solutions to make the change work.

SILO WORKING

Silo working is a reality for many teams. Working together in earnest is making the most of the fact that you are a team.

Honour your time and efforts by seeing yourself as a full time member of the team, not just an individual contributor. Look out for each other and help each other succeed.

DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS

Unless your team is all going in the same direction, you are effectively pulling the potential of the team apart. To walk in the same direction, spend time clarifying what you are contributing to (vision) and why (purpose).

Keep in mind that visions need to be compelling, and purposes meaningful.

● *Mandy Flint and Elisabet Vinberg Hearn are authors of Leading Teams – 10 Challenges: 10 Solutions, published by FT Publishing.*

COFFEE BREAK

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SUDOKU

Place the numbers from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each row, each column and each 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9 to solve this tricky Sudoku puzzle.

			4					
						1	4	
	3		6			8		
9						5	7	4
		9	2					
	1		8			9		
	5	8				6		3
9	1	7				5		

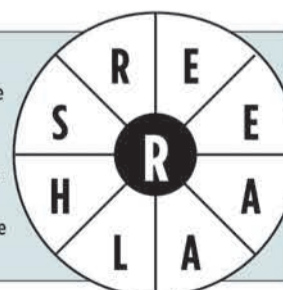
KAKURO

Fill the grid so that each block adds up to the total in the box above or to the left of it. You can only use the digits 1-9 and you must not use the same digit twice in a block. The same digit may occur more than once in a row or column, but it must be in a separate block.

	17	15	15	38		16	38	7
13						19		
27					28			
10			10				6	
	30		16			14		11
12		42			10			
3	34				18			
41								
8	7			13				11
14			10					15
16			23			9		
6		8				17		
					14			
					29			

WORDWHEEL

Using only the letters in the Wordwheel, you have ten minutes to find as many words as possible, none of which may be plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. Each word must be of three letters or more, all must contain the central letter and letters can only be used once in every word. There is at least one nine-letter word in the wheel.



QUICK CROSSWORD

1		2		3		4	5	6		7
8										
						9				
10	11		12			13				
14										
	15							16	17	
18								19		20
21		22		23		24				
		25								
		26								
27										

ACROSS

- 4 Remark made spontaneously (2-3)
- 8 Group delegated to consider some matter (9)
- 9 Away (3)
- 10 Relating to the organ of smell (5)
- 13 Mountaineering spike (5)
- 14 Printing command to ignore a former deletion (4)
- 15 Set up (9)
- 19 Eye secretion (4)
- 21 Mr Rooney, footballer (5)
- 24 Combine (5)
- 25 Unmatched (3)
- 26 Look at again more closely (2-7)
- 27 Gloss (5)

DOWN

- 1 Religious paintings (5)
- 2 Entertains or diverts (6)
- 3 Terminate a life (4)
- 4 At the summit of (4)
- 5 Precise and explicit (8)
- 6 Remaining (4)
- 7 Sets on fire (5)
- 11 Had a meal (3)
- 12 Conference delegate (8)
- 16 Country, capital Belgrade (6)
- 17 Shrewish old woman (3)
- 18 Elegant water-birds (5)
- 20 Dissenter (5)
- 22 Past times (4)
- 23 Birthplace of mankind (4)
- 24 Drink of fermented honey and water (4)

LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

QUICK CROSSWORD

A	B	S	U	R	D	V	N		
W	M	O	L	D	A	G	E		
A	R	A	B	L	E	N	V		
I	P	R	E	S	C	R	I	B	E
T	A	P	A	S	A	S	R		
W	R	E	S	O	S	H			
W	R	E	S	T	I	N	T		
A	T	T	E	N	T	I	O	N	E
T	A	H	A	N	G	E	R		
C	H	I	L	L	I	E	M		
H	N	S	T	R	A	I	Y	S	

KAKURO

2	7	8	5	9	2				
1	4	2	3	6	8	7	9		
5	6	1	9	7	2	4	3	8	
6	9			9	7			1	5
4	8			8	1	7			
3	5	2	1		4	1	2	3	
		9	6	8				7	9
1	7		3	7				4	7
4	9	7	2	6	1	3	5	8	
3	5	1		4	2	1	3	5	
8	9		9	3		1	6		

SUDOKU

1	7	9	2	5	4	3	8	6
5	2	4	6	3	8	7	1	9
8	6	3	1	9	7	4	2	5
9	5	7	8	1	3	2	6	4
3	4	2	5	7	6	8	9	1
6	8	1	9	4	2	5	7	3
7	1	6	3	8	5	9	4	2
2	3	8	4	6	9	1	5	7
4	9	5	7	2	1	6	3	8

WORDWHEEL

The nine-letter word was **TOOTHACHE**