



Survival in the Matrixed Organization

The common picture of the project manager in a matrixed organization is of a frustrated diplomat struggling to cajole the functional departments into performing the work on schedule and within budget.

To Survive You Must Have a Charter

- Create a charter from top management defining the responsibilities and authority.
- Define these responsibilities and authority for the functional managers and staff as well.

You Must Anticipate Conflicts

- Conflict is inevitable with dual authority.
- Conflict can be constructively channeled.
 - Take positive steps to develop teamwork.
 - Regular social gatherings help foster a team spirit.
 - Formal training for “matrix” managers adds value as well.
- Avoid direct conflict with the functional manager.
 - Use the “chain of command” for this purpose.

You Must Identify the Sources of Power

- The project manager's primary source of power comes from "approved" projects, plans, and budgets.
- Use these documents to hold the functional managers to their commitments.
- It is critical that the functional managers be committed to the plans and schedules.
 - This includes all the functional staff.
 - Functional managers must review and commit to the project manager's plan.
- The Project Manager is a "coordinator" of "what" is to be done, not "how" it is to be done.
 - Management by objectives is a powerful tool.
 - Stating the objectives upfront in clear and concise terms that can be measured is a source of power for all participants.
 - Do not supervise the functional departments.



Five Dysfunctions of Teams

In the matrixed organization, survival as a team member and survival of the team requires more than just the “intent” to survive.

It requires specific actions be taken by the team to assure its survival.

Identifying the possible “dysfunctions” of the team is the starting point.

Five Dysfunctions of a Team

- Absence of trust.
- Fear of conflict.
- Lack of communication.
- Avoidance of accountability.
- Inattention to results.



Absence of Trust

Trust lies at the heart of a
functioning, cohesive team

Members of Teams With an Absence of Trust ...

- Conceal their weaknesses and mistakes from one another.
- Hesitate to ask for help or provide constructive feedback.
- Hesitate to offer help outside their work areas of responsibility.
- Jump to conclusions about the intentions and attitudes of others without attempting to clarify them.
- Fail to recognize and tap into one another's skills and experiences.
- Waste time and energy managing their behaviors for effect.
- Hold grudges.
- Dread meetings and find reasons to avoid spending time together.

Members of Trusting Teams

- Admit weaknesses and mistakes.
- Ask for help.
- Accept questions and input about their areas of responsibility.
- Give one another the benefit of the doubt before arriving at a negative conclusion.
- Take risks in offering feedback and assistance.
- Appreciate and tap into one another's skills and experiences.
- Focus time and energy on important issues, not politics.
- Offer and accept apologies without hesitation.
- Look forward to meetings and other opportunities to work as a group.



Fear of Conflict

All great relationships, the ones that last over time, require productive conflict in order to grow.

Teams That Fear Conflict

- Have boring meetings.
- Create environments where back-channel politics and personal attacks thrive.
- Ignore controversial topics that are critical to team success.
- Fail to tap into all the opinions and perspectives of team members.
- Waste time and energy with posturing and interpersonal risk management.

[Teams That Engage in Conflict]

- Have lively, interesting meetings.
- Extract and exploit the ideas of all team members.
- Solve real problems quickly.
- Minimize politics.
- Put critical topics on the table for discussion.



Lack of Commitment

Commitment is a function of
two things:
Clarity and Buy in

A Team That Fails to Commit

- Creates ambiguity among the team about direction and priorities.
- Watches windows of opportunity close due to excessive analysis and unnecessary delay.
- Breeds lack of confidence and fear of failure.
- Revisits discussions and decisions again and again.
- Encourages second-guessing among team members.

[A Team That Commits]

- Creates clarity around direction and priorities.
- Aligns the entire team around common objectives.
- Develops an ability to learn from mistakes.
- Takes advantage of opportunities.
- Moves forward without hesitation.
- Changes direction without hesitation or guilt.



Avoidance of Accountability

Accountability refers to the willingness of team members to call their peers on performance and behaviors that might hurt the team

A Team That Avoids Accountability

- Creates resentment among team members who have different standards of performance.
- Encourages mediocrity.
- Misses deadlines and key deliverables.
- Places an undue burden on the team leader as the sole source of discipline.

A Team That Holds One Another Accountable

- Ensures that poor performers feel pressure to improve their performance.
- Identifies potential problems quickly by questioning one another's approaches without hesitation.
- Establishes respect among team members who are held to the same high standards.
- Avoids excessive bureaucracy around performance management and corrective action.



Inattention to Results

An unrelenting focus on specific objectives and clearly defined outcomes is a requirement for any team that judges itself on performance.

A Team That Is Not Focused on Results

- Stagnates / fails to grow.
- Rarely performs at any level considered exceptional .
- Loses achievement-oriented employees.
- Encourages team members to focus on their own careers and individual goals.
- Is easily distracted.

A Team That Focuses on Collective Results

- Retains achievement-oriented employees.
- Minimizes individualistic behavior.
- Enjoys success and suffers failure acutely.
- Benefits from individuals which subjugate their own goals and interests for the good of the team.
- Avoids distractions.