

WHAT TEAM ROLES ARE NEEDED IN CERTAIN TEAM SITUATIONS?

In order to be a successful team, the team members need to be able to utilise their strengths in different situations. Some roles are more beneficial than others in certain situations, as the team members' personal work styles either enhance or inhibit teamwork.

The facilitator's role is different from the other team roles. He needs to be the team leader if the teamwork is not progressing as planned.

Start, Initiation

In the start or initiation situation, the meaning of the meeting, project or organisation is explained to the participants. The purpose of the situation is to motivate the team to achieve the planned outcome. All team members need to be present in this situation. If required, the team members get to know each other first, so as to enable trust between them.

The **facilitator** is the best person to take chair responsibilities in this situation. He can clarify the objectives and keep the team energised. The **enforcer** can help the facilitator to keep the team moving. The **teambuilder** is also valuable in this situation. He can encourage team members to discuss things with others.

In this situation, the analyser should be careful and watch his behaviour. He is not the best possible cheerleader and inspirer for the team.

Information acquisition, Information distribution

When acquiring or distributing information, one or more team members share information with the others, preferably in dialogue. As a result, the level of understanding regarding the topics increases in the team.

The **explorer** has collected a lot of information about what other teams or organisations have experienced in a similar situation. He also knows whom to contact for further information. The **enforcer** knows how to combine information from various sources and speed up teamwork. The **analyser** makes sure that the information is analysed objectively and he knows what kind of value the information has for the team.

The micromanager may be overly keen on minor details and he would hinder teamwork. Therefore, he should remain in a muted role in this situation.

Definition, Focusing

In defining or focusing situations, the team focuses and describes the challenge or problem. This can be done on the basis of the calendar, the amount of work, target groups, technologies or design disciplines, for example. In problem solving, the focusing is done by defining the problems as accurately and in as much detail as possible.

The **analyser** is the best team member to contribute in this situation. He can see all the available options and make the decisions best for the team. The **enforcer** can steer the teamwork and the **micromanager** makes sure that all the details are taken into account.

When defining or focusing the teamwork, the innovator is not the most useful participant. He wants to test everything from scratch and prefers to broaden the team's focus rather than to narrow it down.

Clarification, Classification, Modelling

The team analyses the dependencies in situations where information is classified and complex cause-and-effect relationships are identified. Setting and refining targets requires the targets to be clarified. In such situations, the targets can be modelled as deliverables and tasks. Then it is possible to outline the details of the project plan and schedule.

The **analyser** is valuable to the team because he can absorb, interpret and evaluate complex and vast entities, as well as draw conclusions. The **doer** ensures that the team works efficiently. The **enforcer**, on the other hand, makes sure that the activities are coordinated and benefit the team objectives.

In this situation, the explorer might not be able to contribute anything valuable. His focus is too much on topics that are external to the team.

Ideating, Creating anew

Ideation or creating anew on the basis of the given boundaries gives rise to new alternatives for the team. The purpose is to create as many new ideas as possible without judging them. Filtering the ideas is another team situation, and these actions are usually performed alternately.

When creating something new, the **innovator** is the best team member for leading the situation. He has unique ideas and proposals. The **facilitator** can facilitate the idea creation with different techniques and tools. The **explorer** looks for ideas from his network that is external to the team.

In this situation, the analyser should bear in mind that the ideas are in the unfiltered and, therefore, no judging is allowed.

Filtering

Ideating is usually followed by filtering. The ideas with the greatest potential are identified and other alternatives are dismissed.

In this situation, the **analyser** is an asset to the team. He ensures that the team makes the right decisions. The **enforcer** reminds the team of the objectives and the **doer** makes sure that the selected ideas can be turned into actions.

The innovator may find it hard to filter the ideas because of his desire to find new alternatives.

Agreeing on responsibilities

The team needs to decide on who will perform which tasks. The responsibilities should be based on competencies as well as available time. The decisions can be made in various ways and to make decisions, someone needs to exercise power. Unless someone in the team makes the decisions, the team will follow decisions made by other teams and organisations.

The **doer** can turn ideas into practical actions. The **analyser** makes sure that the decisions are sound. The **micromanager** can also contribute by making sure that persons in charge and target dates are assigned to all actions.

It is hard for the teambuilder to make decisions. He is too concerned about the well-being of the team members and wants to make sure that everyone is comfortable.

Monitoring, Follow-up

In monitoring or follow-up situations, the team analyses how the implemented actions have progressed and how they have affected the team's objectives. The plan or the problem is analysed together as a team.

Usually, monitoring or follow-up requires information to be acquired first or in parallel with this situation. The team analyses its performance on the basis of the feedback received. In addition, all agreed actions and their progress are discussed. If an action has not progressed as planned, the team needs to make a decision on how to proceed. One option is to change the target date.

The **analyser** is the best team member for analysing the team situation. However, he needs help from the practically minded **doer**. The **enforcer** coordinates the team's activities and ensures that all targets are met.

The micromanager is too detail-oriented to help the team in this situation. He does not see the big picture well enough and is not familiar with the team's targets.

Grounding, Attaching, Hygge

Grounding or attaching helps the team to commit to the targets – also on the emotional level. This situation is similar to the start or initiation, as both focus on team atmosphere and emotional aspects.

The team also considers what is progressing according to the plan and what is not. Based on the need for changes, the team can define a development plan to outline the required development actions and their order of implementation.

The **enforcer** needs to clarify the objectives and the targets for the team. He also drives the team forward. The **teambuilder** opens and maintains the dialogue within the team. The **explorer** encourages the team members to communicate actively.

As in start or initiation, the analyser is not the best possible cheerleader and inspirer for the team.

Conflict

In conflict situations, the team is divided into two or more groups based on topics or people. Conflicts, even hidden ones, decrease team performance and they need to be resolved to allow the team to succeed.

To resolve a conflict, the opinions and expectations of all involved parties need to be identified and preferably also made visible to the team. The existence of the conflict is acknowledged, but the different views will not be judged. The team needs to create proposals to solve the conflict (ideating, creating anew) and select the best proposal for further analysis (filtering).

If the conflicts are interpersonal, principles and tools of non-violent communication (NVC) may help the team (see, for example,

<http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/aboutnvc/aboutnvc.htm>)

The **teambuilder** has good interpersonal and communication skills and he can be the most useful team member in conflict situations. He is loyal to the team and supports all members. The situation also calls for the **facilitator**'s core skills. The **innovator** can find new approaches and perspectives for resolving the conflict.

The analyser may be tactless or judgemental and, therefore, may even make the conflict worse.

Conclusion, Closure

This team situation acts as the conclusion to a task, meeting or session. When concluding a project or an organisation, we recommend arranging a separate workshop for this purpose.

The **doer** translates the team's ideas into action. The **enforcer** makes sure that all targets have been met. The **analyser**, on the other hand, helps the team to make sound decisions.

It is hard for the micromanager to conclude tasks or let go of a team or project.