SUPERTEAMS

A *SuperTeam* is a team that *consistently delivers* a *superior performance relative to expectations.*

The biggest challenges for leadership on the road to creating a Superteam:

- Belonging & inclusion

- Fostering trust & psychological safety

- Increased pressure & expectations

- Skills shifts

- Remote team management

- Focus & commitment

At some point in our lives, we work as part of a team.

In 2013 a study of 831 global companies found that individuals spend an average 54% of their time working in a team environment with South Africa rating at 47% and China being the highest with 64.8%.

The description "Superteams" came to life in Fortune magazine in May 1990 as a replacement for what has been known as high-performing teams; cross-functional teams or even "self-managed teams" in the past. Simply put, a SuperTeam is a team that consistently delivers a superior performance relative to expectations. These teams are characterised by their agility, excellent communication, constant evaluation and improvement, sense of trust, aligned vision as well as their effective work methods.

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In high-performing teams, the cost of speaking out is lowered, the cost of silence is raised.

- Nick Pope (Global Learning Director)

"

Superteams have become the heartbeat of not only larger organisations in the world, but smaller businesses have stood witness to the success of companies consisting of these high-performing teams. The traditional structure of teams have been thrown out the window – and this is what distinguished a superteam from other teams.

The old-fashioned team structure adopted the "workers at the bottom and manager at the top" layout. The structure became the enemy as managers soaring at the top, didn't have the capacity to address the issues that workers at the bottom had to face on a day in and day out. Superteams were proof that a group of individuals can indeed manage themselves and that collaboration is the secret ingredient to teamwork.

Let's look at what studies have found:

High-performing teams outperform the average team by 2000%.

97% of employees and executives believe lack of alignment within a team impacts the outcome of a task or project.

37% of employees say "working with a great team" is their primary reason for staying.

Studies also found that 95% of people participate on more than one team at a time and 91% of individuals agree that teams are crucial to organisational success. With that said – are superteams the answer to most organisational struggles, especially in their efforts to regain productivity after the global pandemic's economic repercussions? Consider this: At Federal Express super teams figured out how to solve a billing problem and wound-up saving the company $2.1 million a year.

So, in short, the answer is YES! Also being the reason why we listed Superteams as a trend for 2021.

Our Approach to Superteams – Agile Team Intelligence

In reaction to the need for high-performing teams, our team at Yellow Seed Consulting partnered with USA based group, Cloverleaf to develop a programme guiding teams on their transformation journey towards becoming a Superteam.

The Agile TQ (Team Intelligence) model, developed by YellowSeed Consulting identifies the following 8 elements of an Agile High Performing team:

RESULTS DRIVEN 01
Clear, shared goal, focused on end result.

OPEN COMMUNICATION 02
Regular, effective communication and feedback,

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY 03
Free to be vulnerable & authentic, willing to ask for help

ACCOUNTABILITY 04
Self-organizing team with clear accountability for each team member and holding each other accountable

08 COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS
Strengthen relationships and networks within and outside of team

07 CONTINUOUS LEARNING
Quick response to change, learn from mistakes, iterative feedback

06 DIVERSITY & CREATIVITY
Constructive debate, diverse thinking, win-win conflict management, cross-functional diversity

05 ADAPTING TO CHANGE
Openness to change; quick adoption and support of others through change

Agile High Performing Teams

During March, we will be launching a Team Development series, delving deeper into each of these 8 factors.

Why Agile?

The term Agile has been around for a while. It can be traced back to the Latin term agilis which means "nimble or quick," and from the term agere which means "to set or keep in movement".

When we refer to "AGILE", we're referring to two aspects of team functioning:

1) individual agility: a team member's ability to adapt quickly and efficiently in reaction to change and

2) collective agility: the team's ability to align with the principles and mindsets defined in the Agile methodology (i.e. breaking down work into several stages, constant collaboration with stakeholders; continuous improvement; iteration at every stage etc.).

So, why the focus on Agile? It's quite easy: the volatile and uncertain work environment we are currently operating in demands it. From an individual standpoint, teams who have agile (a.k.a. quickly adapting) team members are well well-positioned to navigate the constant change they are operating in – they possess the skills required to pivot and respond to market or customer changes much quicker. From a collective point of view, teams who adhere to the principles defined by Agile methodology waste little time fixating on problems. They identify what changes need to be made, implement, iterate quickly and prioritise collaboration. This results in continuous improvement .

But don't take our word for it, let the research convince you:

Companies that are deploying agile at scale have accelerated their innovation by up to 80 percent. Furthermore, a summary of research on project management methods found that agile approaches yielded 29 percent better cost, 91 percent better schedule, 97 percent better productivity, 50 percent better quality, 400 percent better satisfaction and 470 percent better ROI than the least effective traditional methods.

The biggest Challenges for Team Leaders:

Whether you're an experienced manager or brand new to managing, there are unique challenges that come with leading a team, especially in a post-covid world.

Common challenges faced by team leaders in 2021 are:

1. Belonging & Inclusion
Our current environment is one of a divide. We see it in our politics, but we also experience it in real- life. The in-group, out-group bias easily becomes the ruler of the way we view and in response, treat those around us. As leaders, it has become increasingly difficult to navigate divisiveness and encourage inclusivity.

TIP: Structure your teams to encourage collaboration across various fields and backgrounds. Ultimately, be the driver of a healthy workplace culture where everyone has their place and where they know they belong.

2. Fostering Trust & Psychological Safety
Macro-culture is becoming a distant memory due to the lack of engagement with the broader organisation. The micro-culture within the team is taking over and becoming increasingly important as we find ourselves working remotely. Employees can only perform at above above-average levels when their need for trust has been met and when they feel safe enough to take social risks and be their authentic selves at work.

TIP: Schedule regular check-in meetings to stay up to date with employee progress instead of micro-managing from afar. Welcome diversity of opinions and voice your appreciation for individual inputs.

A study published in The Harvard Business Review compared employees in low-trust companies with those in high-trust companies. The outcome of this study revealed employees in a high-trust team reported:

74% less stress

106% more energy at work

50% higher productivity

76% more engagement

3. Increased Pressure & Expectations

Covid proved that teams are indeed capable of more, better, and faster. Unfortunately, now that is has been proven, what was meant to be temporary is not expected to be permanent. Employees are kept to a standard of rapid response and delivery, mostly at the cost of their wellbeing and team collaboration.

TIP: Have regular check-in's with team members to discuss workloads and set clear expectations that are in line with the overall goal as well as the capabilities of the individual. Prioritise the wellbeing of your team (that includes you!).

4. Skill Shifts

While new machines and technology will disrupt the world of work, overall, it will create more new jobs than those it destroys. But these gains imply significant workforce transitions in South Africa. According to a recent study completed by McKinsey & Company (2019), it is estimated that technological advances will create 4.5 million potential new jobs, while these technologies could displace 3.3 million existing jobs by 2030. The reskilling mandate within South Africa is a mammoth task requiring the investment of government, organisations and leaders alike. Team leaders are uniquely positioned to drive the on-the-job reskilling and development of their team members.

TIP: Offer the time and resources for team members to be able to upskill or reskill themselves to stay relevant. Invest in conversations to discover the road ahead for each individual and how they can achieve that with your support.

5. Remote Management

Remote working has many advantages, but increased collaboration and connection is not one of them. Team leaders need to learn to lead differently, now that more than 50% of the workforce is working remotely. Enhancing team cohesion, ensuring collaboration and constructive team debate, building trust within the team – all of these need to be redesigned for the virtual working environment.

TIP: Schedule regular, fun, social check-ins amongst the team by doing virtual team-building exercises. Stay up to date with where each person is at (personally and professionally) to manage engagement and expectations. Create dedicated virtual team sessions for the purpose of ideation, constructive debate and/or relationship building.

6. Focus & Commitments

The number one challenge most team members are dealing with in 2021 is maintaining their focus and commitment. With so many distractions and priorities coming at employees at the same time (navigating multiple work priorities, home-schooling, health issues, multiple technologies), team members might need to approach work very differently. This is where team leaders can be very supportive. Helping team members prioritise work, set healthy boundaries (e.g. no-meeting Wednesdays), navigate additional personal responsibilities etc, can all help them enhance their performance.

TIP: Help your team to remain focused on the most important tasks. Have regular conversations about the team goals and amend these as needed. As a team discuss healthy meeting and engagement boundaries that you would like to enforce in your team. Role-model strategic prioritisation. If you are constantly in fire-fighting mode, and lacking strategic planning, don't expect your team to be any different. selves to stay relevant. Invest in conversations to discover the road ahead for each individual and how they can achieve that with your support.

How to Ensure Your Team is Agile, Well-Balanced & High-Performing

Individualised Approach:

By viewing each team member as their own person, you will get a sense of their needs, fears, preferred communication, and work style etc. This might require more energy for those working with larger teams.

Consider Team Intelligence:

Invest in programmes that delve into the team structure as well as the way in which-how team members interact with one another. Be willing to explore new ways of structuring your team or advice on how you can improve current habits to contribute to a better, more effective functioning team.

Start With Insight:

Providing each team member with insight into the behavioural preferences of their colleagues is a powerful way to deepen the trust and heighten empathy in the team. Consider using team assessments that give team members self-insight and insight into the strengths, development areas and preferences of their colleagues.

Sustainable Learning & Experimentation:

Behavioral change takes time. To ensure sustainable team development, try to enforce a drumbeat focus on team development. Build it into your weekly, monthly and quarterly get-togethers. And don't be afraid to experiment with different activities.

The Agile TQ Team Development Programme

The YellowSeed Consulting Agile TQ (Team Intelligence) team development programme combines scientific assessment results with the expertise of Agile Coaches and Organisational Psychologists to optimise team functionality. Team strengths and pitfalls are identified through our in-house diagnostic tool and team member traits and preferences are assessed individually on the Cloverleaf platform. A unique approach is designed for each team based on their results to maximise team performance by individualizing tactics to meet every need the team might have.

Our team at Yellow Seed Consulting is invested in your team's journey towards becoming a Superteam. Reach out to one of our Team Development experts to find out more.

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> **Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.**
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> - Michael Jordan
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Our Events

Yellow Seed Superteams Indaba – March 2021

Why not rub shoulders with the leaders in our field – for free? Register for the Yellow Seed Indaba to join in the conversation surrounding the Superteam phenomena with world-renowned speakers such as Megan Bickle (Head of Talent at Dropbox) and Scott Dust (Cloverleaf, USA).

Registrations open Monday 1 March 2021.

Agile TQ Certification Training – April 2021

Become the driver of change within organisations and team through our unique, world-class Agile TQ certification training programme. Get yourself certified today and leave your mark.

Register me now!: https://forms.gle/sFQGViQWnVx8x1TT7

AssessFirst Certification Training – May 2021

AssessFirst is a leading assessment battery introduces to the South African market by Yellow Seed for the first time this year. AssessFirst harnasses the incredible AI technology to assist with recruitment, potential identification, manager-employee compatibility, internal mobility, and the list goes on. Get yourself certified this year and explore the remarkable possibilities within the platform.

Register me now!: https://forms.gle/BGnQGdxJFHA4btMP6

Catch Us Here

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2021 ACSG Virtual Conference

15-19 March 2021: https://acsg.co.za/conference-programme

Yellow Seed Superteams Indaba

30 March 2021

Junior HR Professional Conference

10-11 March 2021: http://www.kr.co.za/BookingRetrieve.aspx?ID=292712

Yellow Seed
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