

# Building a Thriving Team Culture



Pastor Marc Estes



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## I. Introduction

### A. Overview

Fulfillment of vision requires strategic execution on the part of the leaders. This requires development of the leader himself, his team and their ability to work together. How a leader and their team functions together as well as a part of the whole organization will have a great affect on the overall momentum of the church. Building a healthy team culture is one of the most important keys to building a vibrant, healthy and growing local church.

### B. Introduction to Building a culture of Team of Teams



1. The scales represent the two growth cultures.
2. The base represents the Word and God's purposes.
3. The shaft represents (team) the vehicle God uses to accomplish His will. It is evident that from the beginning God has used (people) relationships and teams to fulfill His purposes:
  - Godhead- Father, Son AND Holy Spirit.
  - Adam and Eve.
  - Joshua, Moses with Aaron and Hur, the battle against Amalek.
  - David and His mighty men.
  - Jesus and His Disciples.
  - Paul AND Barnabas, Paul AND Timothy, etc.
4. The cross beam in which the scales are hung represent the function of the teams. Without a functioning cross beam, well oiled, the scale would cease to function. The bible is filled with examples where the mission of a team hinges on the ability of the team to function together properly.

Wrong way –

- 2 Kings 6 - David bringing the Ark back to Jerusalem. Uzzah/Team out of order.
- Joshua 7 - Achan's mistake affects the entire team and their mission.
- Exodus 18 - Moses rebuked by Jethro for trying to do it all himself.

Right way -

- Daniel 1-3 - Shadrach, Meshach, Adednego, always together (14 times) never once alone.
- Joshua 6 Joshua, fighting men, priests and people defeating Jericho.
- Judges 7 Gideon and his three hundred men, three teams, horn, jar and torch.

5. The same principles apply to your church leadership team and our team of teams.
6. You can have a clear vision, your philosophy defined, and a strategy developed, but if your teams do not function properly, your vision is nothing more than a fantasy, or at best greatly hindered.
7. There are a minimum of three influencing factors that influence vision fulfillment.



8. The strength of the overall team is found in the functionality of each of these three entities playing their role individually AND interpedently.

## II. Defining Team Culture and Function

### A. The Interrelationship between Culture and Function

1. Culture defined – Culture is the compilation of the values, thoughts, attitudes and actions of a certain group of people.
2. Team Culture defined – The *unique interrelationships* of values, thoughts, attitudes and action within a group of leaders that reproduces patterns of thinking and behaving among them and their followers.

4. What determines the type of culture you actually have become is “how you function.”
5. Function defined - "the action or activity of a person (you), team, thing, or organization; the action expressed towards achieving a defined goal or objective. (Application of values)
6. Culture includes “how” you function. Your values determine your thoughts, which determine your attitudes/emotions, which result determine your actions.

### III. Improving the Function of your Team

Here are four simple, yet crucial principles:

#### A. Understand the Goal

1. Everything starts with vision. Without a goal in mind you can't have a real team. Great vision precedes great achievement. Every team has a purpose.
2. First, the team of teams must understand the overall vision of the church & where you are going as a whole. Each team should know it, live it, breathe it, be passionate about it & reproduce it.
3. Next, the team of teams must be able to define their specific role in fulfilling the overall vision.
4. Proper functioning of a team begins with each member understanding the goal for both the church and their respective team/department.
5. A team that is consistently reminded of the reason in which they exist (vision) will become a focused, energized, confident and fruitful team. We must discuss it clearly, creatively and continually.
6. How about your team? Ask yourself some important questions about you and your team:
  - Do you know the goal? Can you clearly articulate why HOCC exists?
  - How does our overall vision as a church specifically apply to the goals of your team?
  - What is the vision/goals of your team?
  - What are you doing on a regular basis to practically implement these crucial principles?
  - How do you measure your successes and failures?

#### B. Understand Your Role

1. One of the greatest breakdowns to a team's ability to function efficiently is the lack of clarity regarding individual roles and responsibilities.
2. As a leader of team, the following important questions should be asked:
  - Do we know specifically the role and responsibility of each person on our team?
  - Have we defined these responsibilities specifically in a document?
  - Have we shared these responsibilities with those on the team?
  - Have we set up a process in which we discuss on going progress with our team members?

3. As a member of a team, the following questions should be considered:
  - Do you know specifically what your role is on the team?
  - Can you define specifically how you will care out each responsibility?
  - Do you know what resources, skills and aptitude are needed to fulfill this role?
  - Do you sense that you have the support and encouragement needed to succeed?
  - If not, have you discussed this concern with your team leader?

### C. Improve Personal Standards

Your standards and how you function will affect the culture of your team. Each of us is responsible for the overall well being of our teams.

[Daniel 6:3](#) Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.

1. Remember, culture is the interrelationships of beliefs, thoughts, attitudes and actions between YOU and your team. You should take personal responsibility to develop your own leadership capacities in each of these areas, if you are going to improve your team, enhance your culture and fulfill your vision. Change in the team begins with change in me.
2. Let's look at a chart that defines the four areas for developing our personal leadership culture:<sup>1</sup>



3. Values – Character/Being: Soul Work: Deals with our character. How we do personally when it comes to integrity, purity, honesty, humility, etc. How does our character align with our leadership values? Our personal character has a great affect on our team culture.
4. Our Thoughts – Knowledge/Knowing: Head Work: This category deals with our knowledge, thoughts, intellect. What we think & believe, how we think about certain things or people, etc. It also has to do with our capacity level which is affected by the level of knowledge we possess.

5. Our Attitudes – Emotions/Feeling: Heart Work: The category deals with our emotions. How do we feel has a great bearing on how we act. How do we feel about overall vision? How do we feel about our leader? How do we feel about our job? How do we feel about other team members? Your personal attitude has a great bearing on the overall team and its advancement as well as your personal advancement.
6. Our Actions – Skills/Doing: Hand Work: This is the outworking of the other three (values, thoughts and attitudes) and deals with our skills, disciplines and behavior. This is how we “function” personally. There are so many areas to discuss that affect our team culture when it comes to our actions. Here are just a few:
  - Work Ethic – Punctuality, Carrying my load, spirit of excellence, hard worker.
  - Use of Time – Where we spend our time, who we spend our time with, project focus.
  - Personal Disciplines – Prayer life, word, fasting, diet, exercise, finances, family, etc.
  - Personal Growth Strategies – Defining areas of weakness and establishing growth plan.
7. It is the assessment of these four personal areas, coupled with a strategic plan to grow in our weaknesses that will help to improve the culture of our teams.

#### **D. Improve Team Standards**

1. Commitment to Building Healthy, Lasting Relationships –
2. Commitment to Communicate -
3. Commitment to Understand before being Understood -
4. Commitment to Accountability –
5. Commitment to Help Others Succeed –
6. Commitment to Celebrate –
7. Commitment to Respect your Differences –
8. Commitment to be a Team Player -

## IV. Leadership Team Covenants

1. WE will accomplish what we do together. We share our successes, celebrate our wins, and will never let any one of us fail alone.
2. WE will take personal responsibility to grow as individuals in our own personal lives. We will set our standards high and challenge each other to exceed them. We recognize that our weaknesses will affect the entire team and its mission.
3. WE are fully grown adults and leaders of an incredible church. We will act as such, and expect the same from every person on the team.
4. WE will not keep secrets or build any division amongst our team. Information that affects us will be dealt with openly, honestly and in a timely manner. We will quickly and openly work to separate fact from fiction.
5. WE will keep our word. We will say what we mean, and do what we say. We trust the word of others to be good as well.
6. WE will keep our head. We will not panic or over-react in the face of adversity. We will always choose to roll up our sleeves together to solve any problem or overcome any obstacle rather than wring our hands in defeat.
7. WE will protect our church vision and church family at all costs. There is nothing we will allow to separate us from each other or from the purposes of God that we have been called together to accomplish. We will look out for each other.
8. WE will be unselfish and expect that everyone will exhibit the heart of a servant. No one is above the need to serve another. We are servants together, yet each playing our distinct role.
9. WE are each part of a greater vision than anyone of us can accomplish alone. We need each other. What we are a part of is more important than the individual role we play.
10. WE will not tolerate a maintaining, declining or defeated mentality. We will accomplish all that God has called us to accomplish. We are in this together for the long haul.<sup>2</sup>

Footnotes:

1. Chart taken from Aubrey Maphurs
2. Combination of CBC Team Values and USC Football Values rewritten