

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF  
TEAMBUILDING IN THE WHOLE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF A NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION  
(NGO) IN THE VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS, KWAZULU-  
NATAL**

**by**

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**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my original work, except where specific acknowledgement is made to the work of others.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Vilbro', written over a horizontal line.

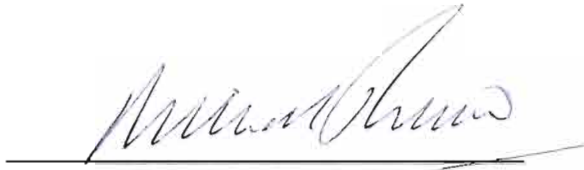
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## STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

This mini-dissertation is submitted with/~~with~~out my approval.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Thurlow', is written over a horizontal line.

Professor M Thurlow

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to Professor Mike Thurlow for his constant support and encouragement during the past 2 years.

This piece of work is dedicated to my husband, mother and son for their love and patience which enabled me to complete this research.

## **ABSTRACT**

This research investigates the effectiveness of teambuilding in the whole School Development Department of an NGO based in the Valley of a Thousand Hills, KwaZuluNatal.

My personal view is that teamwork is essential to the effective functioning of people in organisations. As I am the manager of the Whole School Development Department, I initiated a teambuilding programme at the beginning of 2002. My gut feeling is that teambuilding is the most important tool that can bring a team together in pursuit of common goals. By embarking on this research, I would be able to explore the perceptions of team members in respect of the effectiveness of teambuilding.

From the outset it was believed that a case study approach would be most appropriate. This approach allowed the manager (researcher) to freely observe and interact with the subjects of the research. During the research, data was collected and analysed on an ongoing basis. Due to the nature of the research and the size of the population (eleven members in the team) the researcher was able to focus on the entire population.

Results obtained revealed that the manager and team members were committed and dedicated to make teambuilding work. All the participants had a large say in how it would be run and all wanted the team to be as good as it could be.

## CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Teams have existed for hundreds of years. In recent years organisations around the world have adopted programmes to enhance quality. Many organisations are making the transition to a team based approach in order to improve effectiveness. Working with teams is part of a set of interrelated organisational functions and process of human resource management. Other processes include staffing the organisation, training and developing skilled employees, assessing and rewarding employee performance etc.

*"Since 1987, however, the use of teams has almost exploded." (Dyer 1995 p3).*

The importance of employee involvement and participation has increased in the past several years. There is a great deal of data showing how productivity and morale are affected positively when people are personally committed to the decisions and goals of the organisation. Therefore, they emphasis on developing ways to involve employees in significant ways has increased the trend toward participative management and greater teamwork. There is more urgency to team performance today.

Teambuilding as a human resource management process takes the power of teams further as a workplace strategy. Research has long shown that productivity and morale are impacted by effective or ineffective teamwork. The theory of working within teams portrays teams as an attractive and empowering approach.

Working through teams which are effectively managed provides a powerful opportunity to meet the 'novel challenges' (Leithwood 1996) which South African schools and organisations undoubtedly face. Since this novelty rests in turning away from hierarchy and individual autocracy, a teams-based approach is surely something all managers cannot ignore.



Usually a teambuilding programme is undertaken when a concern, problem, issue, or set of symptoms leads the manager to believe that the effectiveness of the work unit is not up to par. The following symptoms provoked serious thought in the mind of the manager of the Whole School Development Department:

- Increase of grievances/complaints from the staff
- Evidence of conflicts among staff members
- Confusion about assignments/programmes and unclear relationships
- Decisions misunderstood or not carried through properly
- Apathy and general lack of interest or involvement of staff members.
- Lack of initiation, imagination, innovation - actions taken for solving complex problems
- Ineffective staff meetings, low participation, minimal effective decisions.

As I was appointed as the manager of this department at the beginning of 2002, and believe that teambuilding is the most important tool that can bring a team together in pursuit of common goals, our department embarked on a teambuilding process.

There was a strong desire and dedication of the team members to make teambuilding work. All the participants had a large say in how it would be run.

We believed this process would be instrumental in building the best possible team and would unleash the full potential of individuals.

The purpose for researching teambuilding is to find out if it has been effective in improving the quality of teamwork and helping members of the team (department) to work together to accomplish results.

## **1.2 Context of the Study**

The NGO referred to in the title is a holistic primary health care organisation founded in 1953. The vision of its founder was to take a holistic approach to development incorporating infrastructure development, primary health care and education.

The Whole School Development Department is one of the eight departments in the organisation. Within the Whole School Development Department there are four units, each with its own coordinator and facilitators. The researcher is the manager of the department. Although members of the department shared a common vision (to create an environment in school communities in which optimal learning can occur), the researcher, in 2002 found that members operated individually. There was a group but no team.

Because of the holistic nature of the department and the way in which the different units integrate it is vital that the members of the department work as a team. This will enable them to accomplish their goals and realise the vision of the department.

## **1.3 Specific Focus of the Study**

Teambuilding takes time. As the Whole School Development department was into its second year of teambuilding, the researcher (manager) was now in a position to investigate the effectiveness of teambuilding thus far.

The research questions were:

1. What are the characteristics of effective teams?
2. How are effective teams built?
3. What strategies for team building were adopted in the project?
4. What are the perceptions of team members in respect of the effectiveness of team building?

5. What recommendations may be made to enhance team effectiveness/team building?

In an attempt to answer question 1 and 2, the researcher conducted a review of the research literature to find out what could be learned from comparable studies, their objectives, procedures and problems encountered.

For question 3, the researcher (manager) provided an account of what was done with regard to teambuilding and a personal assessment of how effective it was. Research instruments for data collection included: diary, observational data, field notes, photography, documents and records.

To answer question 4, research instruments such as an observation schedule and interview questionnaire were used. The observation questionnaire included a Likert scale as a way of capturing relative emphasis. The use of the interview questionnaire was for discussion during lunch or tea breaks.

In addressing question 5, the researcher identified common themes, differences and similarities that emerged and drew all the common themes together.

Data analysis was formative and summative, with triangular procedures built into the process.

#### **1.4 Limitations of the Study**

The researcher considers that this study was limited as the observations are determined by the context and do not necessarily reflect what is taking place in other organisations.

Choosing my department (Whole School Development) as my research site proved to have many advantages and disadvantages. Some of the problems that I encountered were relatively minor, while some really hampered the process. Nevertheless, I found ways of working around the problems.

One of the greater difficulties that had to be overcome were staff members who joined the department at a later stage and who were not familiar with our teambuilding strategy. Getting them to participate in teambuilding activities which were new to them, and then knowing they were being observed, and later interviewed, the researcher sensed they were a little uncomfortable with the process.

The fact that the manager of the department is also the team leader and researcher led to the possibility of team members being reluctant to divulge information, which they perceived may have had negative implications for themselves. However, it was assumed that by seeking the assistance of an external interviewer and observer, this challenge may have been overcome.

## **1.5 Structure of the Dissertation**

- Chapter 1: Introduction  
Provides a context for the study
- Chapter 2: Literature Review  
Deals with the literature and theory most relevant to the study
- Chapter 3: Research methods  
Explanation of how the research was done
- Chapter 4: Presentation of findings  
After the findings had been analyzed, they are presented in this chapter
- Chapter 5: Recommendations  
Recommendations are discussed

## **1.6 Conclusion**

This case study on the effectiveness of teambuilding was undertaken in an NGO using the observation schedule, semi-structured interview and data analysis as research methods. In the following chapter, part of the literature will be reviewed with specific emphasis on that which has direct relevance to the focus of this study.

## CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

The notion of teams is not new and few people would deny that teams can be highly effective. A suitable definition as supplied by Everard and Morris (1990, p172) states

*A team is a group of people that can effectively tackle any task which it has been set up to do... the contribution drawn from each member is of the highest possible quality, and is one which could not have been called into play other than in the context of a supportive team.*

Effective teams are a vital mix that makes up a successful organisation. In organisations throughout the world, smart business leaders are moving away from the traditional work structure that stifle creativity, innovation and change. Their focus is on people, potential, productivity and profits. These leaders are redesigning work to include teams at all levels in their organisation. They are realising that teams offer many advantages over the more traditional ways of organising the workforce. In using teams, skills and tasks are widely distributed among all team members. Also, team members are accountable for maintaining and improving the process for which their team is responsible, and share leadership and management responsibilities.

Furthermore, due to the increasing competitive nature of business, organisations and managers alike are faced with the task of tapping into the cognitive assets that staff bring with them, their diverse talents and skills as well as keeping these "teams" together.

Regardless of how we feel about teams, we know that most organisations cannot survive without them. People working in teams have the capacity to solve complex problems that cannot be solved by individuals working alone. People working in teams bring more resources to a task, including a variety of perspectives, knowledge, skills and experience. When well managed, teams

can turn these resources into greater productivity gains than any individual can accomplish working alone.

Teambuilding refers to a set of activities to enable groups of people to perform well together – so that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. It helps members build on their strengths and minimise their weaknesses, encourages them to manage their differences together and it promotes a better understanding between individuals... the most critical factor in the success of an organisation. Without adequate teambuilding, it is unlikely that the team will work effectively to develop and realise a shared vision.

## **2.2 Why Teams?**

We put our faith in teams because we instinctively understand that group life is necessary for human survival. We know that in many situations “two heads (or more) are better than one”. This is as true today as it was in the nomadic ages when human beings depended on groups to forage for food, protect themselves from predators, and move from place to place to find new resources to ensure their survival. Undoubtedly, we have different challenges in the twenty-first century. Increasingly, our individual, organisational, and societal survival requires that we regularly solve complex problems that we have never faced before, that we have no right answers, and for which the consequences of our decisions are uncertain.

Furthermore, for our organisations to survive, we must work faster and better than the competition, meet the rising expectations of a customer base that is increasingly more culturally diverse and globally dispersed, and deal with the onslaught of new technologies that seems to outpace our ability to learn how to use them. Given this complex and fast-paced environment, it's no surprise that more and more organisations are using teams to achieve their goals.

In addition, people working in teams tend to have more say over how they do their work and expect a greater degree of personal learning and fulfilment from the team than do people working individually.

This change is taking place because more people are realizing that empowered teams provide a way to accomplish organisational goals and meet the needs of our changing workforce.

### **2.3 What is Team-work?**

Like families, teams consist of a number of partners that live together five days a week for eight or more hours a day. Unlike families, teams are composed of members with diverse attitudes, values and backgrounds. Because of this diversity, learning to work together requires time, patience and effort.

Teams should not be regarded as synonymous with "groups": A group is a looser notion than that of a team which is a body established to fulfil certain specified tasks or activities.

Asking a group to work together does not mean that you have created a team. In fact, there are major differences between a team and a group. A group consists of individuals who gather for a purpose (plan, vote, perform a task, play a game), to discuss issues, or to inform. A team builds on the group by defining roles for individual members, utilizing individual strengths, and nurturing synergies to create a unified plan of action to achieve identified results.

According to Coleman and Bush in the 'Principles of Educational Management', team-work, then, is much more than meetings of groups. It has to solve agreed aims, have active commitment and co-operation, adopt a problem-solving approach and devote time to team-building if it is to achieve its potential as a vehicle for organisational improvement. (1994, p267)

Adair (1988, p44) identifies overlapping characteristics of teams that are worthy of consideration and support by other authorities in the field. He includes having a common task, a hierarchy of team roles, high quality of



leadership, a shared historical background, encouraging the participation of all members, cohesiveness, supportive atmosphere, defined standards and structure related to the common task. He goes on to define a properly functioning team as one in which:

- People care for each other
- People are open and truthful
- There is a high level of trust
- Decisions are made by consensus
- There is a strong team commitment
- Conflict is faced up to and worked through
- People really listen to ideas and to feelings
- Feelings are expressed freely
- Process issues (tasks and feelings) are dealt with

Team-work occurs when there are committed individuals who trust each other; have a clear sense of purpose about their work; are effective communicators within and outside the team; make sure everyone in the team is involved in decisions affecting the group; and follow a process that helps them plan, make decisions, and ensure the quality of their work.

The team consistently creates the following:

- Better decisions made faster
- Tasks completed in a collaborative manner
- Morale consistently improves
- Problems resolved at the source
- Customer satisfaction improved
- Less “fires” to put out
- Reduction in absenteeism

Members of teams tend to develop a collective purpose that goes beyond that which the organisation has established for them. Often, team members develop a purpose that gives them an opportunity to showcase and leverage their particular talents.

Because they have personalised the teams goals, team member feel greater ownership of their work and believe that they are working for each other as well as for the team leader and the organisation.

Team members move from passive and reactive roles to more proactive ones. By assuming authority over their work, team members become actively involved in the process of continuous improvement.

This has not prevented some authors from drawing conclusions about the impact of teamworking, however: according to Katzenbach and Smith (1994, p1), in the introduction to their book on creating the high performance organisation, 'it is obvious that teams outperform individuals.' Pil and MacDuffie (1996, p343) are also convinced about the value of teamworking: two decades of research provides 'considerable evidence that workers in self-managed teams enjoy greater autonomy and discretion, and this effect translates into intrinsic rewards and job satisfaction; teams also outperform traditionally supervised groups in the majority of empirical studies.'

## **2.4 Teambuilding**

The phrase "teambuilding" is often heard and sometimes overused, but in today's work environment the importance of building successful and effective teams can not be overestimated.

People in every workplace talk about building the team, working as a team, and my team, but few understand how to create the experience of teamwork or how to develop an effective team. Belonging to a team, in the broadest sense, is a result of feeling part of something larger than yourself. It has a lot to do with understanding of the mission or objectives of organisations.

A group is “a collection of people who come together because they share something in common”. What they share could be as insignificant as desire to get on the next bus that will arrive at a particular stop. A team, however, is a “group of people who share a common name, mission, history, set of goals or objectives and expectations.” A strategy that can help groups develop into real teams is teambuilding, “the process needed to create, maintain, and enrich the development of a group of people into a cohesive unit.” Teambuilding exercises are very important in the development of teams that will work together for an extended period of time on a complex project or a series of activities. Teambuilding is not a silver bullet for fixing dysfunctional teams, or assuring that all teams will work well. But, teambuilding exercises can be helpful in developing effective teams.

It was noted earlier that team building is an important determinant of effectiveness in the operation of teams. According to Bell (1992, p53), there are four central factors in the development of successful teams:

- The objectives of the team should be clearly understood by all team members.
- Procedures for decision-making and planning should involve all team members.
- All members should be clear about team processes – what has to be done, by whom, by when, with what resources.
- The team should review its work regularly as part of a development process.

Research has proven that effective teambuilding and leadership skills have a major influence in winning the commitment of staff and increasing their motivation and overall job satisfaction.

Teambuilding draws on research and experience in the psychology of individuals and groups. It recognises that effective teams are made, not born,

and that success depends on having a mix of skills and roles within the group. Effective teams are created out of talented individuals who are committed to doing something that they believe is important, who have ways of working together that help reach their collective goals, and who have leaders that create a work context that enhances rather than hinders the team's efforts.

Trethowan (1985, p11) offers some guidelines for teambuilding:

- Teambuilding takes time. It may be years rather than months before a sound and effective team is created.
- Team leaders must listen to and support the problems and solutions being proposed by the team.
- Team changes need to be built into the routines or structures of the team. The team should not be allowed to slip back into its old ways once improvements have been agreed.
- Team decision making increases commitment to allow the team to decide.
- Team building needs constant maintenance and servicing to enable members to develop and grow.

Teambuilding occurs more easily when all team members work jointly on a task of mutual importance. This allows each member to provide their technical knowledge and skills in helping to solve the problems, complete the project, and develop new programmes. As part of this process, team members need to be willing to manage conflict, evaluate performance of the group and provide feedback and support that will encourage each member to meet their commitment to the team and the organisation.

As team members build commitment, trust, and support for one another, it allows them to develop and accomplish desired results. This commitment, trust and self-determination by each team member are critical in achieving a sustained high level of performance. Team members will learn to appreciate and enjoy one another for who they are and will help keep one another on track.

Team members may need encouraging, reassuring and appreciating in order to establish and retain their membership in an active sense. (Bell 1992, p52).

And who better to do this than the team leader. The continuing sensitivity and support of the team leader is essential. The process of team development is dependent on team leadership.

Providing that teams operate effectively, they have the potential to enhance the quality of decision-making, and of relationships. Both research and practice demonstrate the advantages that teams bring to accomplishing goals. But effective teams do not develop by accident. Teams take time, skills, and knowledge to be successful. Nine components of team effectiveness have been identified by West-Burnham (1992a, p121 – 124):

1. Explicit and shared values

West-Burnham (1992a, p121) stresses that no team can operate effectively unless it is working in a context where the values are clear and agreed and translated into a mission.

2. Situational leadership

The team is sufficiently mature to base leadership on functional and need rather than power and status. Skills are more important than hierarchical factors. This requires a willingness by the designated leader to stand back and allow other team members to assume control according to the needs of the situation.

3. Pride in the team

This implies commitment and involvement and is manifested in high morale and loyalty. Team members have self-belief, and confidence in others and the team as a whole.

4. Clear task

The outcome that the team is created to achieve is clear, realistic and understood. Teams are motivated by tangible goals, clear outcomes and a firm time-scale.

5. Review

Effective teams learn and develop by a process of contribution feedback and review. Team review is a permanent feature of every activity and leads to more effective working.

6. Openness

Teams achieve a high level of candour in review and exchange. There are no 'hidden agendas' and there is praise and criticism. The latter is frank and direct but constructive rather than negative.

7. Lateral communication

Team members are able to communicate with each other without reference to the team leader. Networks are formed and nourished by the team.

8. Collaboration

Decisions are shared and have full commitment. Quality decisions emerge from the full utilisation of the knowledge and skills of team members.

9. Action

Team decisions are expressed in terms of the action. Each team member knows what has to be done, by whom and when. Effective teams issue agreed actions after their meetings.

(Adapted from West-Burnham 1992a, pp 121-124)

Team building is an effort in which a team studies its own process of working together and acts to create a climate that encourages and values the contributions of team members. Their energies are directed towards problem solving, task effectiveness, and maximizing the use of all members' resources to achieve the team's purpose. Sound team building recognizes that it is possible to fully separate one's performance from those of others.

Team building works best when the following conditions are met (Francis and Young, 1979):

1. There is a high level of interdependence among team members. The team is working on important tasks in which each team member has a commitment and teamwork is critical for achieving the desired results.
2. The team leader has good people skills, is committed to developing a team approach, and allocates time to team-building activities. Team management is seen as a shared function, and team members are given opportunity to exercise leadership when their experiences and skills are appropriate to the needs of the team.
3. Each team member is capable and willing to contribute information, skills, and experience that provide an appropriate mix for achieving the team's purpose.
4. The team develops a climate in which people feel relaxed and are able to be direct and open in their communications.
5. Team members develop a mutual trust for each other and believe that other team members have skills and capabilities to contribute to the team.
6. Both the team and individual members are prepared to take risks and are allowed to develop their abilities and skills.

7. The team is clear about its important goals and establishes performance targets that cause stretching but are achievable.
8. Team member roles are defined, and effective ways to solve problems and communicate are developed and supported by all team members.
9. Team members know how to examine team and individual errors and weaknesses without making personal attacks, which enables the group to learn from its experiences.
10. Team efforts are devoted to the achievement of results, and team performance is frequently evaluated to see where improvements can be made.
11. The team has the capacity to create new ideas through group interaction and the influence of outside people. Good ideas are followed up, and people are rewarded for innovative risk taking.
12. Each member of the team knows that he or she can influence the team agenda. There is a feeling of trust and equal influence among team members that facilitates open and honest communication.

The best teambuilding sessions occur when the participants have a large say in how it will be run, and a lot of participation during the session. In other words, it is only as effective as the desire and dedication of people to make it work.

Many teambuilding approaches are based on analysing the team members in terms of their personalities and preferred roles and helping the group learn to make best use of these.

Training techniques such as role-play simulation and outdoor activities might be used, but teambuilding is a continuous activity, not just a decision to send individuals on a course.



There is no guarantee of success by any method of teambuilding and circumstances change dramatically over time, from organisation to organisation and from situation to situation.

Developing a leader and work group into an effective team is as much, if not more, an emotional process as an intellectual one. The change can often best be realised if a team and its leader are taken away from the pressure and reality of work and helped in a non work related environment to truly experience the power of working together as a team.

These suggestions are ideal for the early stages of team development. Some of these may simply build relationships within the team, others will have an output of longer term value. Here are nine great team building suggestions...

- Allow the team to develop their mission/vision statements together. This is an excellent way of building team ownership and responsibility for delivering results.
- Work together on a short-term challenge. This may be completely unrelated to the task, e.g. Undertaking a sponsored walk together, or painting a community building. The process of working together on a task offers a chance for the team to talk to each other, build relationship and to achieve early success.
- Have an early team building away from home – either going away for the day, or even better with an overnight stay. Being away from home base helps to generate team spirit.
- Have fun! A shared social event, party, hike, or whatever can be a great way of allowing people to get to know one another without any pressure to get on with the task.
- Look together at successful examples of teams, and understand what they have in common. Broaden the net to consider sporting teams and business teams as well as Christian teams. Think through how their common elements can be reapplied in your team. You might even consider going together to watch a match, or talk to a business team.

- Pray together. Praying together for the success of the team and for each other is a powerful way of supporting one another. This can either be as a whole team, or by giving each member of the team two or three other team members to pray for (so each team member gets prayed for by two or three other members of the team).
- Share personal experiences and expectations. Each person takes between five and ten minutes to outline why they want to be on the team, what they bring that is relevant, and what they are hoping to get out of it. No interruptions whilst they are talking, but questions allowed at the end. (This works best when all members of the group will feel comfortable to participate).
- Affirm each other. Each member of the team is given the same number of cards, as there are team members, less one. Each person then writes the name of another team member on the top of each card, and then briefly writes down one quality, strength or characteristic they particularly appreciate about that person. This is replicated until they have completed one for each other member of the team. All the cards are gathered together and then redistributed to the members concerned. Feedback remains anonymous. Participants should be told that the aim of this exercise is team development-i.e. given a clear purpose.
- Roles and tasks. The team works out the tasks and roles needed to achieve its mission and allocates roles to team members. Then allow an open discussion to develop about what will be done independently and what will be done together.

These suggestions are likely to require the team to invest in a reasonable amount of time to ensure that they are working effectively, and feel comfortable with one another. This is time well invested, and likely to pay dividends later.

Teambuilding helps members build on their strengths and minimise their weaknesses. It encourages them to manage their differences together and it promotes a better understanding between individuals...the most critical factor in the success of an organisation. In short, team building is the single most important tool that can bring a team together in the pursuit of common goals.

## **2.5 Developing High Performance Teams**

The journey is a long one with few shortcuts. But getting there can be fun. And once the team has arrived, the payoffs can be tremendous. According to Wellins, Byham and Wilson (1991, p189) it helps to keep the following in mind:

### **Key Factors in Team Development**

- **Commitment**  
Team members see themselves as belonging to a team rather than as individuals who operate autonomously. They are committed to group goals above and beyond their personal goals.
- **Trust**  
Team members have faith in each other to honour their commitments, maintain confidences, support each other, and generally behave in a consistent and predictably acceptable fashion.
- **Purpose**  
The team understands how it fits into the overall business of the organisation. Team members know their roles, feel a sense of ownership, and can see how they make a difference.
- **Communication**  
Communication refers to the style and extent of interactions both among members and between members and those outside the team. It also

refers to the way that members handle conflict, decision making, and day-to-day interactions.

- Involvement

Everyone has a role in the team. Despite differences, team members must feel a sense of partnership with each other. Contributions are respected and solicited, and a real consensus is established before committing the team to action.

- Process Orientation

Once a team has a clear purpose (why it's together and where it's going), it must have a process or means to get there. The process should include problem-solving tools, planning techniques, regular meetings, meeting agendas and minutes, and accepted ways of dealing with problems.

West-Burnham (1992a, p119) stresses that teams need to be nurtured and developed if they are to be effective.

Because teams necessarily involve individual members joining together and bringing their personal characters and abilities to create the collective effort and performance of the team, it is obvious that team effectiveness does not emerge immediately. Each member learns as the team progresses, both about himself/herself and about other members; but there is also a 'team learning' process taking place.

Teams go through stages of development based on their composition and purpose. There are many models of team development. The Early and Fletcher-Campbell research illustrates the maxim that high-performance teams do not happen by chance, they have to be deliberately created and systematically managed. Tuckman (1985) suggests that teams go through a series of stages in the move to high-performance. The road to high performance is bumpy.

It is expected for teams to pass through four highly predictable stages:  
Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing

### **Stage 1: Forming**

Expect a period of nervous excitement when teams are first formed. People who have been picked to be on teams will feel a sense of pride that they have been chosen, but they will have a lot of questions. “What’s expected of me?” “Will I fit in?”, “ What am I supposed to do?”, “What are the rules?”

The forming stage is a stage of exploration. Along with the excitement of being involved in something new, people feel insecure, anxious, and confused. Everyone on the team is privately assessing everyone else – sizing up their abilities and attitudes. In the Team Handbook, Peter R. Scholtes and his colleagues at Joiner and Associates describe this stage as one in which the team members are all hesitant swimmers, standing by the pool dabbling their feet in the water. Because no one is quite sure of what is going to happen, productivity is low.

To lead a team through forming:

- Help team members get to know each other;
- Provide the team with clear direction and purpose;
- Involve members in developing plans, clarifying roles, and establishing ways of working together;
- Provide the information the team needs to get started;

### **Stage 2: Storming**

In stage two, things appear to go from bad to worse. Team members grow impatient with the lack of progress and want to get down to work, but they don't know how to get anything accomplished. Everyone is beginning to find

out that this team business is much more difficult to accomplish than find out that this team business is much more difficult to accomplish than anyone suspected. People feel awkward working together. Everyone is frustrated and frequently angry with themselves and others on the team. This is a period of blaming, defensiveness, confrontation, disunity, tension, and hostility. People become jealous of each other. Subgroups form. In-fighting breaks out between opposing factions competing for influence. The team struggles to sort out its mission, goals, roles of the team members, and agreement on how to work together. Productivity continues to take a beating. The team passes through its most difficult stage.

To lead a team through storming, Scholtes suggests that you:

- Resolve issues of power and authority. For example, don't allow one person's power to squash other's contributions;
- Develop and implement agreements about how decisions are made and who makes them;
- Adapt the leadership role to allow the team to become more independent. Encourage team members to take on more responsibilities.

### **Stage 3: Norming**

Suddenly, things begin to improve in stage three. The team develops some ground rules, or "norms", concerning ways to work together. People finally stop grandstanding and begin to realize that they are all in this team business together. Gradually, people even come to like the team and develop an attachment to one another. Increasingly, people begin to feel that they belong. There is a sense of WE. People take pride in being part of something and start cooperating instead of competing. Communication opens up and trust deepens. After the storming phase, life on the team becomes almost tranquil – sometimes too tranquil. The team goes from fighting to almost the opposite extreme. People focus on maintaining team

relationships. There is less interest in tangible results than in keeping the peace. Productivity continues to lag as little gets done.

To lead a team through norming:

- Fully utilize team members' skills, knowledge, and experience;
- Encourage and acknowledge members' respect for each other;
- Encourage members to roll up their sleeves and work collaboratively.

#### **Stage 4: Performing**

Finally, a breakthrough occurs. The team gains confidence. People reach a consensus on who the team is and what it is trying to accomplish. The team develops and begins to use structured processes and procedures to communicate, resolve conflict, allocate resources, and relate to the rest of the organisation. People freely and constructively share information and viewpoint. Conflict is channelled in constructive ways and leads to finding creative solutions to work-related problems. The team starts to develop a strong sense of pride in team accomplishment. Finally, work gets done.

To lead a team through performing:

- Update the team's methods and procedures to support cooperation;
- Help the team understand how to manage change;
- Represent and advocate for the team with other groups and individuals;
- Monitor work progress and celebrate achievement.

The passage from storming to performing can take weeks or many months. It is described as a roller-coaster ride of highs and lows in the which every team is different, progress is never smooth, and the team's mood swings are usually unpredictable.

West-Burnham (1992a, p125) argues that effective team building is to facilitate by minimising the time spent on 'forming' and 'storming' and devoting more attention to the creative stages of 'norming' and 'performing'. During norming, working procedures are established and the team builds its own sense of identity. In the performing stage, high levels of trust are evident and the team becomes effective in solving problems and in decision-making.

## **2.6 Leadership of the Team**

The most influential person in most teams is the formal leader or manager. Like it or not, the leader sets the tone for the team, whether intentionally or unintentionally, and it is inevitable that team effectiveness cannot be improved unless the manager is willing to look at his/her contributions to the team. Management usually has to change too.

If the manager is not willing to hear from employees how their behaviour impacts the team (negatively or positively), team building should not be done. The concept of managers being the heroes in the workplace who make everything happen is now proven to be far less effective than the role of managers as a facilitator and developer of individuals and teams.

Although teamwork is widely acclaimed it is far less practised, not necessarily because people do not support the concept, but because it is difficult to re-align people's values and beliefs and behaviour towards truly working together as a team. It is often equally hard for managers to take the risk of giving up the comfort zone of being in control of what goes on.

Effective leadership depends on instinct and improvisation as much as it depends on knowledge and careful planning. Team leaders must know when to intervene and when to stay out of the team's way, when to reward individuals and when to reward the team, and when to connect the team to external individuals and groups and when to protect the team from external influences.



Senior management support and commitment is considered essential for teamworking to have any chance of success. If employees see little evidence of this, it is understandable that their interest and commitment is likely to be minimal and any initiative is treated with disdain.

Creating and managing high-performing teams is as much an art as it is a science. There is no magic formula that will guarantee team success, nor is there one best way to lead a team.

John Katzenbach and Douglas Smith (1993, p111-120) spells out several key expectations of team leaders during team development. Supervisors/team leaders are expected to handle the following responsibilities:

- **Help the team shape its own common purpose, goals, and approach**

Team leaders are expected to be working members of the team, but they are also expected to maintain some distance and perspective that will enable them to help the team clarify and commit to a mission, goals, and approach. Leaders at this stage maintain a delicate balance between providing team members with some guidance and issuing more direct advice.

- **Build commitment and confidence**

A key task of the leader at this stage is to build the confidence and commitment of individuals and the team as a whole by providing large amounts of positive feedback and reinforcement.

- **Strengthen mix and level of skills on the team**

Team leaders are expected to encourage team members to take risks, learn, grow, and take on new assignments and roles. The most effective team leaders at this stage are vigilant about acquiring and/or developing the technical, functional, problem-solving, decision-making,

interpersonal, and teamwork skills the team will need to perform and progress to higher stages of team development.

- **Manage external relationships and remove obstacles to team performance and development**

Team leaders are viewed by those inside and outside the team as principally responsible for managing the team's relationship with the rest of the organisation. The team leader is responsible for interceding on the team's behalf, whenever necessary, to remove obstacles to team performance and/or acquire the team needs to function effectively.

- **Create opportunities for team members to excel**

Instead of grabbing the best opportunities, assignments and credit for themselves, team leaders are expected to help team members grow and develop by allowing them to take on additional responsibilities and by ensuring that they receive credit for their accomplishments.

- **Do real work**

Everyone on the team, including the leader, is expected to do roughly the same amount of real work. Team leaders maintain a certain distance from the team because of their position, but they do not use their position to avoid work. Team leaders must contribute, just like any other members, and they do not delegate the unpleasant jobs to others.

Finally, leaders of effective teams spend less time in direct contact with the team and more time managing the context in which the team works. Rather than doing the team's work, they champion the team, provide direction, and structure, supply resources and remove obstacles, and help the team manage the boundaries between the team and external people and groups.

In spirit, effective team leaders live by the words of the Chinese philosopher Lao-tse: Leaders are best when people barely know that they lead. Good leaders talk little but when the work is done, the aim fulfilled, all others will say, "We did this ourselves."

## **2.7 Conclusion**

We hear it all the time: People are the most valuable and expensive resource and are the key to organisational performance. But dealing with people can often be time consuming, frustrating and baffling.

Working in teams can represent a unique opportunity for us to develop and experience a success beyond what we could achieve as individuals. They can also be the source of much friendship, enjoyment and job satisfaction.

But effective teams don't just happen. They are created out of talented individuals who are committed to doing something that they believe is important, who have ways of working together that help them reach their collective goals, and who have leaders that create a work context that enhances rather than hinders the team's efforts.

The following chapter deals with the research methodology adopted throughout the study.

## **CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes and accounts for the research methods and approach employed in this study.

### **3.1 Introduction**

This was a qualitative study. The aim of the study was to gain qualitative insight into the different ways people have experienced, understand and perceive the effectiveness of teambuilding.

A case study approach enabled a focus on one department (Whole School Development Department) in a much bigger organisation (NGO). The case study approach enabled the researcher to focus on a bounded system, which has its own character and totality. The nature of this system was able to be analyzed, its meanings for different participants, individual relationships, and the exchanges and dependencies between participants (Vuliamy and Webb, 1992)

### **3.2 Design of the Study**

Initial communication between the researcher (manager) and staff members about this study began in February 2003. Once the purpose of the research had been explained to them, all ten members of the team were eager to participate. It was emphasised that participation was entirely voluntary.

Different methods of investigation were discussed and it was decided to use:

- Semi-structured interviews
- Observations
- Analysis of documentation

Because the researcher is the manager of the department, it was decided that an external person would conduct the interviews and observations. It was assumed that this would prevent the staff from feeling pressured into giving responses to gratify the manager.

The effectiveness of the interview as a means of eliciting accurate information from the respondent is dependent on both the efficiency of the research tool and the ability of the interviewer to develop a rapport with the interviewee and to ensure that she is able to both elicit and record the required information.

Considerable time was spent on developing these skills which involved both discussions about and role playing of interviewing skills and techniques between the manager and the interviewer.

### **3.3 Research Methods**

A combination of data gathering instruments viz semi-structured interviews, observation schedules, document analysis, was used to explore the research questions of this study. The use of varying research methods in this study addressed issues of validity, since cross-checking and triangulation was possible.

#### **3.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews**

The interview is a widely applied technique for conducting inquiries and was selected for its ability to get access to the way team members perceive the effectiveness of teambuilding.

Semi-structured interviews were used rather than structured interviews because of the degree of flexibility involved. This allowed the interviewer to probe for more details, and ask clarification where necessary.

An interview guide (questionnaire) was used to prevent the possibility of questions being omitted. In order to provide the opportunity for free

expression, it was decided to keep the questionnaires anonymous. The questionnaire was designed in English. Despite English not being the first language to some of the team members, all were well versed in it. Questions that were evaded, misrepresented or misunderstood were also rephrased. Telephoning respective interviewees beforehand was done in order to set up interviews.

Interviews were conducted in a private, relaxed, secure and confidential manner, during break interval or at afternoon sessions. Interviewees were assured of their confidentiality before each interview session. Each interview lasted a time-span of approximately thirty minutes.

### **3.3.2 Observation**

In this instance the same external person that conducted the interviews endeavoured to observe at least two teambuilding sessions. This observation technique was utilized to verify data collected through the semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

An observation schedule was constructed as an instrument for data collection which highlighted certain issues of the teambuilding sessions that it was felt needed to be examined, viz. Purpose, Leadership, Understanding, Differences, Communication and Relationships. During the observation, the observer was asked to make some judgement about the events being observed, and to enter responses onto a rating.

As the observer was visible to the subjects where they were aware that they were being observed, observation was overt. Although the observer attempted to observe the respondents in a discrete and unobtrusive manner, systematic observations in “natural settings” are intrusive and reactive to the dynamics of the situation (Bailey, 1987; Best and Khan, 1986). In this regard, it was essential that the observations were as objective as possible. This was achieved through the structured observation schedule, where only specific features of the sessions were focussed on.

### **3.3.3 Document Analysis**

It is proposed by Duffy cited in Bell (1987 p57) that the techniques of document analysis; are merely the application of common sense, because by critically analyzing documents through basic questions, the researcher exposes the clues and truths in its construction. The method of internal criticism was employed whereby the contents of the various documents were examined according to the following questions: What kind of document is it? What does it actually say? Who produced it and what was its purpose? When and in what circumstances was it produced, and how did it come into existence? (Bell, 1987)

Against this background, the Whole School Developments annual plans, reports, photographs, field notes and records related to teambuilding were analyzed.

### **3.3.4 Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are imperative to the effectiveness of any data-gathering procedure. Due to the carefully constructed questions in the semi-structured interviews, validity was heightened. This ensured that significant and relevant information was elicited. At the same time, reliability was ensured as if clarity was required, the interviewer restated questions in slightly different ways.

However, given the uniqueness of situations, the case study approach has been criticized for its weakness in reliability as a different researcher may discern different conclusions (Anderson, 1993). In this study, the incorporation of multiple sources of data collection and triangulation yielded stronger support for increased reliability. Moreover it was hoped that by involving an external interviewer and observer as well as emphasizing anonymity and confidentiality, the validity of the results would be enhanced.

### **3.3.5 Triangulation**

Triangulation is the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some form of human behaviour; as in this research initiative (Cohen and Manion, 1995). It is claimed that by using multiple approaches, the strengths of one will compensate for the weakness of another, therefore improving the quality of data – particularly its validity and reliability (Sim and Sharp 1998).

Moreover, 'human behaviour and human interaction is complex, and research methods may filter selective experiences, which are never neutral in representing the world' (Cohen and Manion, 1995). In this regard, exclusive reliance on one method may distort or bias an investigation. If different methods yield the same results the researcher can be confident that these results are valid. Confidence is hence increased where different methods of data collection are employed (as in this case: semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis), to yield more or less the same results.

## **3.4 Research Process**

### **3.4.1 Entry into the Setting**

As the researcher is the manager of the Whole School Development department and also a participant in the teambuilding sessions, entry was relatively easy with a discussion held about the research process. In an attempt not to disrupt the routine of the departments work, afternoon sessions, tea-breaks and lunch-breaks were time periods used for data collection.

### **3.4.2 Data Collection**

The external interviewer telephoned team members beforehand to make appointments during the afternoon sessions or tea breaks for the interviews. With regard to the observations, these took place at the teambuilding sessions which were planned for at the beginning of 2003. Two teambuilding



sessions were observed. The researcher had to be sensitive to the fact that schedules and agendas had to be adhered to. Fortunately there was 100% commitment to appointments and sessions.

All (ten) team members were interviewed for approximately thirty minutes, where responses were written down by the assistant researcher. Questions during the semi-structured interviews were framed around the perceptions of team members in respect of the effectiveness of teambuilding.

An observation schedule was constructed to be used when observing the team during a teambuilding session. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations.

Through document analysis, the Whole School Development department annual plans, reports, filed notes, photographs and records related to teambuilding were examined and deconstructed.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Data analysis took place as information was being collected and in an ongoing manner. Foremost was the need to select and eliminate data using the research questions as a guide. Coding data was the translation of question responses and respondent information into specific categories for analysis purposes, where issues pertinent to the research aims were generated, collected and sorted into categories (Cohen and Manion, 1995).

### **3.6 Conclusion**

It is not possible within the scope of this study to conduct an exhaustive analysis of all aspects of teambuilding. Thus, the findings presented in the following chapter have been processed using the above-mentioned tools and methods.

## **CHAPTER 4 : PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the findings obtained from the descriptive analysis of the semi-structured interview, observation schedule and documents, are discussed. A combination of representing data on graphs and using verbatim from interviews and observations has been used to support the findings. Where similar responses were given, these have been grouped together. The results of this investigation concentrate on four significant features of teambuilding, viz:

- Effectiveness of teambuilding in supporting the goals of the department
- Leadership of the team
- Relationships in the team
- Communication,

and a summary is then given at the end.

### **4.2 Effectiveness of Teambuilding in Supporting the Goals of the Department**

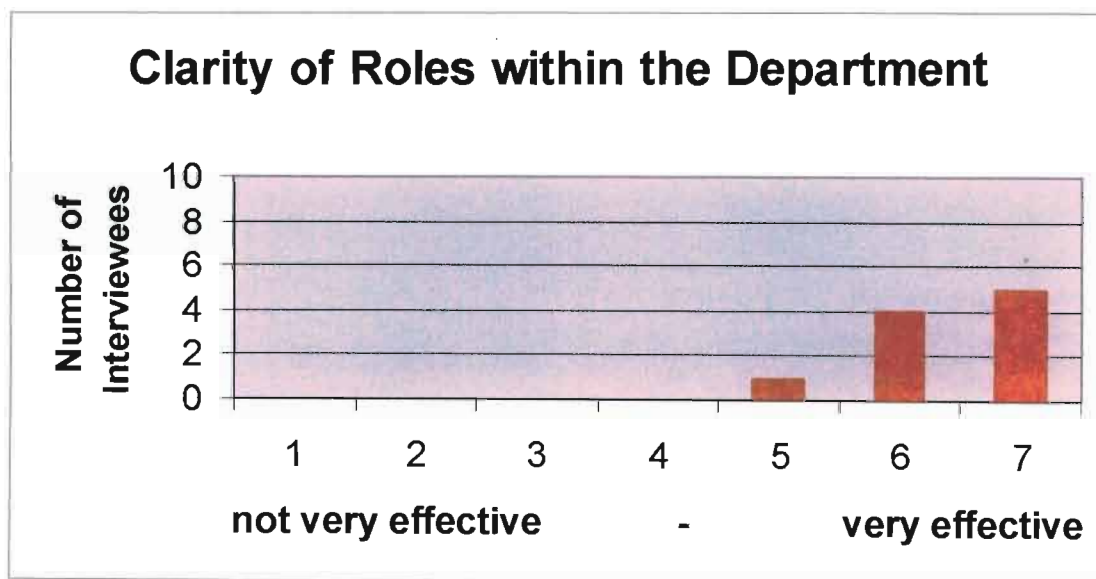
80% of the interviewees knew why the team was together and where it was going. They clearly understood the goals of the department.

*“A team, to be effective in achieving its goal, must commit to a constant process of teambuilding and team cohesiveness: (Briggs 1997 p14).*

It was clear that the purpose of the team building was to help the team accomplish results, to identify any condition that impeded effective collaboration, and to engage in actions that improved the quality of teamwork.

**“Before we used to find it difficult to ask other people to help us now there is more team spirit and everybody helps everybody.”**

The team was clear about its important goals and established performance targets that caused stretching but were achievable.



**“We used to forget some workshop tools now are more careful and conscious.”**

Because team members personalised the team's goals, they felt greater ownership of their work and believed they were working for each other as well as for the team leader and the organisation.

### 4.3 Leadership of the Team

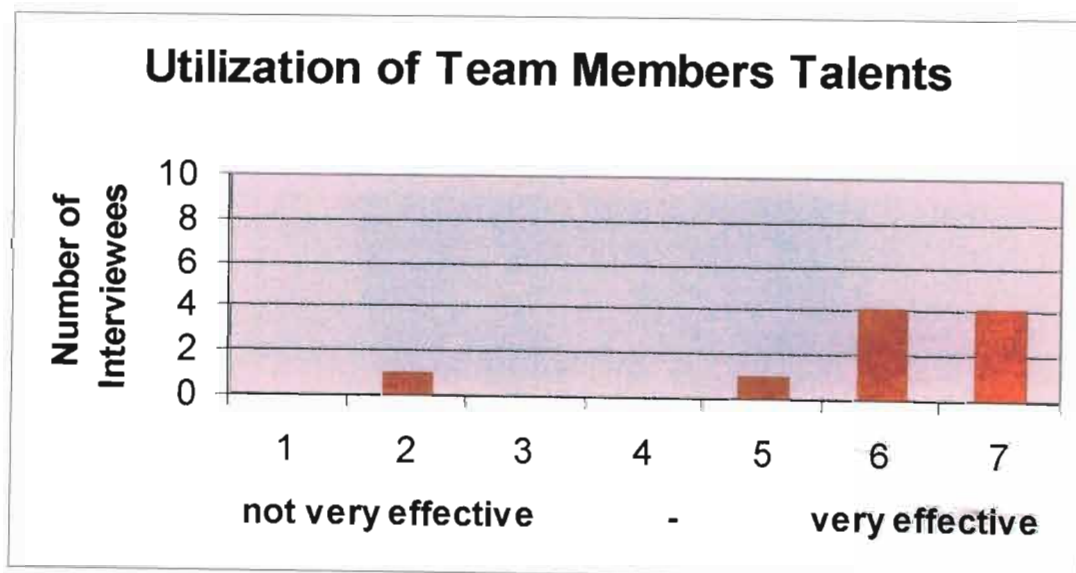
100% of the interviewees indicated that the team leader was very committed. They said that she was not afraid of giving up the control of teambuilding by allowing team members to take turns in facilitating team building sessions. 90% of the team enjoyed the support of the leader:

**“When we have to prepare a workshop she offers help and helps make things clearer if we don’t understand.”**

One of the interviewees said that the leader offered good advice, not by calling a person to her office and by sitting them down, but she did this in passing:

**“For example, if you are the person preparing to facilitate the teambuilding workshop, she will ask you in passing if everything is okay and if you need any help.”**

Another team member indicated that he was fortunate to be given the opportunity to facilitate a teambuilding session. He felt that by being given this additional responsibility, and with the encouragement of the leader, he was growing and developing his skills.



50% of interviewees voiced their concern that the leader had been criticised by some people in the organisation, as the organisational grapevine carried the tale that teambuilding was a waste of time, and yet others sought out her assistance in teambuilding. In spite of this, teambuilding continued in the Whole School Development department, and this they said, showed that she was committed.

It was observed that the leader spoke to the staff as equals and did not speak “down” to them. A good relationship existed between the leader and staff members, and as six interviewees said, the leader was passionate about teambuilding. It was also observed that the leader was prepared to spend her time, energy and resources to make the team as effective as possible and she also indicated that she was willing to make needed changes.



Team members praised the Manager’s leadership style.

**“We are not dictated to.”**

*According to West Burnham (1992 a p 121), Skills are more important than hierarchical factors. This requires a willingness by the designated leader to*

*stand back and allow other team members to assume control according to the needs of the situation.*

80% of the interviewees indicated that the leader was present at all teambuilding sessions, and always punctual. This, as one interviewee put it, was leading by example, and it motivated other members to do the same.

Teams are made, not born, and the leadership challenge is clear: to create and support an environment in which professionals participate in setting goals, and in which they pool their skills and resources to accomplish these goals.

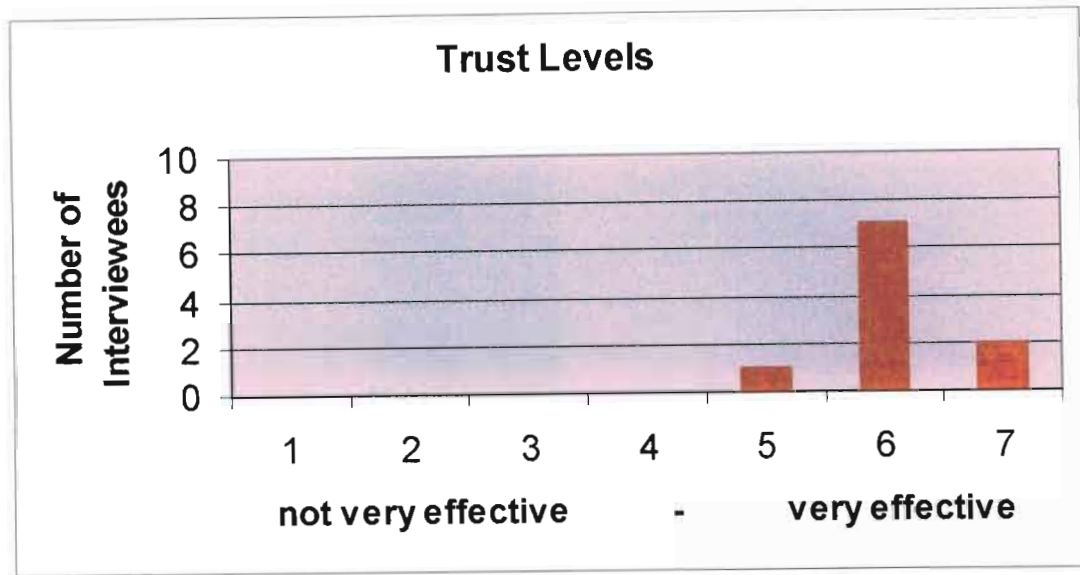
#### **4.4 Relationships in the Team**

Because of the diverse attitudes, values and backgrounds of team members, learning to work together required time, patience and effort.

**“Teambuilding is helping us because we hear the views of others and can then help each other. Now we share a lot”.**

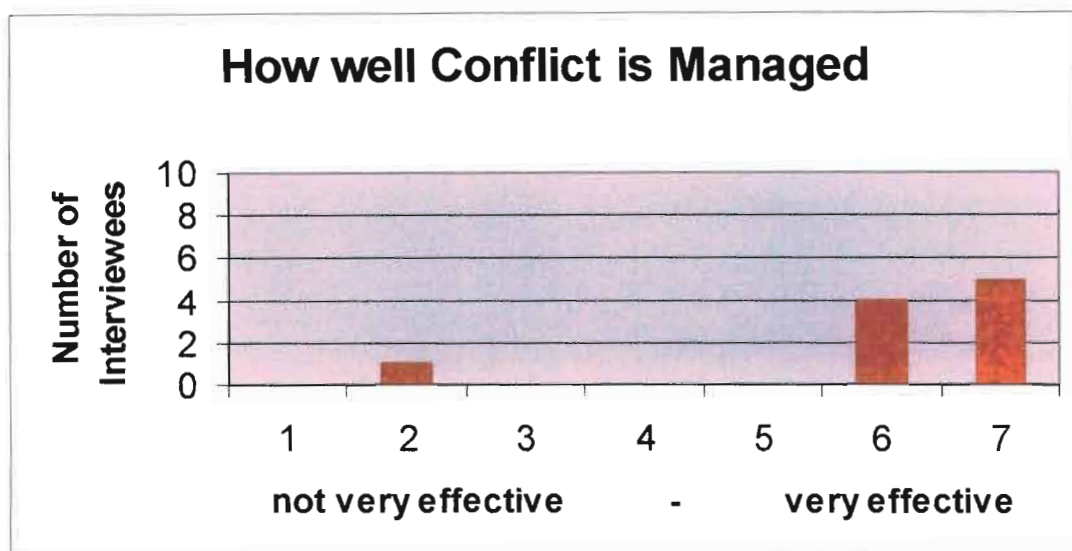
Team members have learnt to appreciate and enjoy each other for who they are and this helped them keep each other on track.

*‘Team members may need encouraging, reassuring and appreciating in order to establish and retain their membership in an active sense’ (Bell 1992 p 52).*



There was a climate of trust and support that everyone felt whereby contributions of team members were encouraged and valued. The current level of morale was high:

**“The whole department pitched in to help me for the event. I could not have done it on my own.”**



Individual errors and weaknesses were examined without making personal attacks, which enabled the team to learn from its experiences. There was a

bond of working with others and being mutually involved in searching for possible solutions.

**“Teambuilding also gives us time to know each other on a personal level.”**

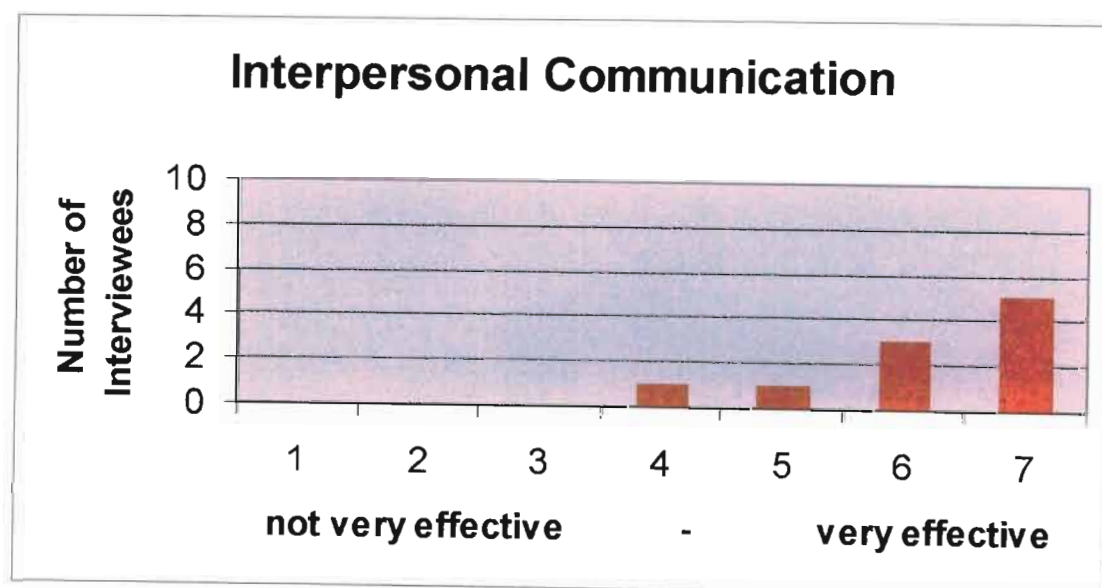
There was caring and closeness amongst members who knew each other. There was laughter, joking, fun of teasing, kidding and challenging each other.

#### 4.5 Communication

**“Everybody felt comfortable in participating in the conversation and felt free to voice their opinions.”**

It was observed that team members felt their ideas and input were listened to by the rest of the team and that interaction between team members was open and honest.

**“For example people feel more comfortable to accept constructive criticism: he used to come to work slumped and looking uninterested. We told him how we felt and he accepted the criticism.”**





Differences and conflicts were resolved openly and constructively. Team members were not afraid to voice their opinions. If criticism was directed towards an individual, it was taken in the right spirit. Although frank and direct, it was constructive rather than negative.

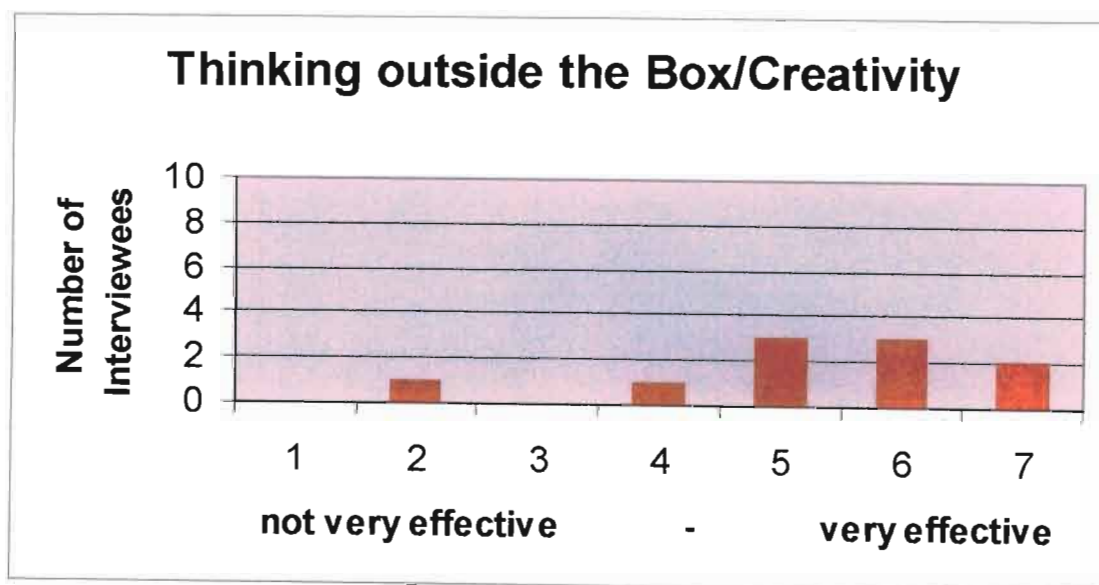
The knowledge and skills of all team members were taken into account and this enhanced the quality of decisions taken and led to decisions being shared and having the full commitment of team members. After the teambuilding sessions, each team member knew what had to be done, by whom and when, as team decisions were also expressed in terms of the action.

Sometimes the discussion needed to be steered back on line. When a decision had to be reached, the leader moved the team quickly towards a firm and decisive outcome.

The leader listened carefully and summarised contributions (on a flipchart if necessary).

It was observed that team members volunteered for the tasks rather than being given the task by the leader.

The leader ensured that everybody understood the decision, e.g. by asking one of the team members to repeat or explain if necessary.



Interviewees expressed a strong desire to be more creative in finding solutions to work related problems.

#### **4.6 Summary**

*Teambuilding takes time. It may be years rather than months before a sound and effective team is created* (Trethowan 1985 p11). It is widely recognised that effective teams do not develop by accident and teambuilding takes time, skills and knowledge to be successful. In the Whole School Development Department the process has been going on for the past 18 months.

Teambuilding is a human process involving human feelings, attitudes and actions. Teambuilding is something people have to accomplish among themselves.

Teambuilding in the Whole School Development department has had a major influence in winning the commitment of staff and increasing their motivation and overall job satisfaction.

A critical factor in starting a teambuilding program is the degree of commitment of the manager and the members to building a better work team. As the manager of the team, the researcher made it clear from the beginning that she wanted the team to be as good as it could be.

It appears that trust is a central factor. The building of trust should be a key goal for any team. Trust is the glue that keeps team members working together; when trust is lost, it is very difficult to regain. The evidence is that people who trust one another can work together effectively and productively on a team.

Sharing power is the basis of true participative management. Team members felt that they were partners with the team leader in the work to be done, their

ideas were listened to and respected, and that they could disagree with the team leader without fear or reprisal.

It is clear from the interviews that this team's leader tends to give more responsibility to the team, opens up lines of communication, encourages collaboration and mutual helping among members, and allows – even encourages – differences and works through them.

The leader spends time building the team so that team members feel responsible for working together to accomplish common goals.

Most team members compared their past work experience with what was happening now in the department (since teambuilding began), and 100% of team members expressed that they were happier now more than they had ever been before.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

The general consensus within the team is that teambuilding has been effective in enhancing the quality of teamwork within the department. In the following chapter, the main findings, concluding remarks and various recommendations are made in response to the analysis of data performed in the previous chapters.

## **CHAPTER 5 : SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, various recommendations are made in response to the analysis of data performed in the previous sections.

### **5.2 Summary**

In this section, the main findings for each research question will be summarised.

#### **5.2.1 What are the characteristics of effective teams?**

According to the literature, it may be concluded that effective teams occur when there are committed individuals who trust each other; have a clear sense of purpose about their work; are effective communicators within and outside the team; make sure everyone in the team is involved in decisions affecting the group; and follows a process that helps them plan, make decisions and ensure the quality of their work.

#### **5.2.2 How are effective teams built?**

A strategy that can help teams to develop into effective teams is teambuilding. It recognises that effective teams are made and not born. There is no quick-fix to build an effective team and it may take years rather than months before a sound and effective team is created. The commitment and support of the team leader is essential, as is the allocation of time to teambuilding activities. Teambuilding works best when the team develops a climate in which people feel relaxed and are able to be direct and open in their communications, and when team members develop a mutual trust for each other and believe that other team members have skills and capabilities to contribute to the teams.

### **5.2.3 What strategies for teambuilding were adopted in the project?**

At the beginning of each year (2002 and 2003) a meeting was held to develop a teambuilding strategy. All ten members of the team and the team leader were committed to teambuilding. Management of teambuilding was seen as a shared function and team members were given the opportunity to exercise leadership when their experiences and skills were appropriate to the needs of the team. It was decided to hold teambuilding sessions on a Friday afternoon for 4 hours. Facilitation of the sessions was shared and team members took turns, in pairs if they preferred. A teambuilding programme was developed together, which included:

- Developing mission/vision statements together
- Teambuilding sessions away from the organisation
- Social events

### **5.2.4 What are the perceptions of team members in respect of the effectiveness of teambuilding?**

Team members have realised that teambuilding is a valuable and worthwhile experience which has enhanced the teams performance. It has been instrumental in helping the department to shift from a group to a team. Team members feel more motivated in reaching the goals of the department. Interpersonal relationships have been strengthened which has led to improved working relationships between members of the team.

### **5.2.5 What recommendations may be made to enhance team effectiveness/teambuilding?**

Team members were asked this question in the interview. The researcher has taken these responses into account and identified common themes, differences and similarities that emerged. Three common themes were drawn together, and are discussed in the next section.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

### **5.3.1 Follow-up Sessions**

It is recommended that there should be follow-up of sessions. At the teambuilding sessions, team members are very enthusiastic about making improvements, but within a few weeks, some of that spark may have dwindled. To prevent this from happening, prior to starting the next teambuilding session, a reflection on the previous teambuilding session should be done. This would ensure that team members put into practice the agreements made at teambuilding sessions. This could be achieved by the facilitator allocating a time slot for a report back on tasks and assignments given at the previous session.

### **5.3.2 External Facilitation**

Although teambuilding sessions are conducted by team members who take turns in preparing for these, it is recommended that an external person (consultant) should be a resource and be allocated a time slot during sessions. For example, an expert could be invited to discuss issues such as financial management, HIV/AIDS etc. This would add variety to the sessions and would build the capacity of team members to improve their knowledge skills and values base. Building capacity of team members will ultimately lead to a boost in morale and team members will be encouraged to reinvest their efforts in the department.

### **5.3.3 Interdepartmental Development Programme**

An interdepartmental development programme is suggested. A major organisational problem is the lack of teamwork between departments. If this does not occur it may result in the following:

- Instead of people from different departments spending more working time together they will avoid interaction with people from other departments.

- The goals and objectives for reaching the vision of the organisation will be altered to the dissatisfaction of one or more departments.
- Departments will not ask each other for their services or assistance.
- As a result of departmental interactions, people will feel resentment or antagonism.
- People feel frustrated, rejected or misunderstood as a result of lack of communication and integration.
- Departments tend to avoid each other and resist interaction amongst one another rather than working through mutual problems.

*In their differentiation-integration model, Lawrence and Lorsch have clearly demonstrated that units of organisations are and should be different. When units have differing tasks, goals, personnel, time constraints, and structures, the functioning of these units is bound to be different (Dyer 1995, p145).*

An integrated teambuilding process would allow different and contrasting departments of the organisation to work together.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

The vision of the NGO in the study is.....

to realise the potential of individuals and communities and enhance their ability to improve their own health and quality of life within a democratic society.

As Dyer (1995, p154) concludes:

*The use of real teams is the only way I know to ensure that people feel that they have influence over the key aspects of their lives, can shape their world, and can find growth and satisfaction.*

With the vision of the NGO in mind, the Whole School Development department does not give lip service to teamwork, but has embarked on a process of teambuilding to ensure effective team functioning, growth and satisfaction.



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## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1: Guideline Questions used During Semi-structured Interviews
- Appendix 2: Observation Schedule
- Appendix 3: 2003 Whole School Development Department Planning Document
- Appendix 4: Examples of Teambuilding Sessions Held:
  - 15<sup>th</sup> February 2002
  - 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2002
  - 16<sup>th</sup> August 2002
  - 4<sup>th</sup> July 2003
- Appendix 5: An Exercise Used to Show the Effects of Teamwork
- Appendix 6: An Acronym Developed by the Team
- Appendix 7: Photographs of the Teambuilding Sessions

**TEAMBUILDING EFFECTIVENESS INTERVIEW**

- 1. How effective is teambuilding in supporting the goals of the department?  
Why do you say that (example)
  
- 2. How committed is the leadership of the department to teambuilding?  
Why do you say that (examples)
  
- 3. To what extent does the team have a sense of mutual accountability for teambuilding?  
If the team does not feel accountable, who does?
  
- 4. How would you rate the following aspects of teambuilding effectiveness?  
(1 = not very effective to 7 = very effective)

Clarity of roles within the team.	
Utilization of team member talents	
Trust levels	
How well conflict is managed.	
Leadership style used	
Thinking outside the box/creativity	
Interpersonal communication (listening, mutual respect, appreciation)	

- 5. What could be done to make to make teambuilding more effective?  
Find out most important suggestion.

**TEAMBUILDING EFFECTIVENESS OBSERVATION**

	Rating	Comments
<b>Purpose/Direction</b> a. There is a clear purpose known by all team members		
<b>Team Leadership</b> b. The leader balances appropriate direction with support and openness. c. The leader discusses key issues with the team		
<b>Understanding Differences</b> d. Open dialogue encouraged		
<b>Communication</b> e. Everyone feels their ideas and input are listened to by the rest of the team. f. Differences and conflicts are resolved openly and constructively g. Members interaction is open and honest		
<b>Relationship</b> h. The team's different experiences, skills and gifts are accepted and used i. There is trust and openness between team members		

**Rating**

- 5 = Strongly Agree – Fully operational and exceeds the description
- 4 = Agree – Operational and meets all or nearly all aspects of the description, but not ideal
- 3 = Slightly Agree – Operational, but incomplete. Partially meets the description
- 2 = Slightly Agree – Nearly operational, but some long way to go. Doesn't yet really meet the descriptors
- 1 = Disagree – We have started on this, but is along way to go. The descriptors do not apply
- 0 = Strongly disagree – Nothing has been done – this does not apply at all to our team

## **APPENDIX THREE**

### **2003 WHOLE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT PLANNING DOCUMENT**

#### **DEPARTMENTAL PURPOSE**

Facilitating the creation of an environment in school communities for optimal learning.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To build and develop excellence and effect sustainable quality in the education sector.
2. To build capacity and empower communities through the provision of holistic educational programmes, addressing needs through access to skills, training and resources.
3. To build proper relationships amongst all of ourselves inside of our department/organisation, between ourselves and our target group, with our donors. To seek robust relationships characterized by human warmth and mutual understanding (including good debate and disagreement).
4. To work with private sector, governmental departments, donor agencies, tertiary institutions and other NGO's in an attempt to streamline our efforts, combine our strengths and offer a holistic approach to development.

#### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

For our purpose, three benefits of monitoring and evaluation have been identified:

1. Learning – staff will learn how to continuously improve their approach to their work and to their professional practice as they reflect on what they have done.
2. Effective Management – timely and relevant information will help to identify problems, allowing us to decide how best to deal with them.
3. Accountability – donors and other stakeholders will be provided with regular updates, thus helping to maintain their support and interest.

We decided to use the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation approach. It promotes the use of methods in a participatory manner, allowing respondents to be involved in deciding which methods are appropriate, designing them, and collecting information. By involving participants in analysing information for significant changes, there is a greater likelihood that stakeholders as well as facilitators will learn from the experience.

Possible monitoring methods will include:

- Individual interviews
- Group interviews
- Storytelling and focus groups
- Participant observation
- Questionnaires and surveys
- Forms
- Diaries and log books
- Photographs
- Calendars
- Daily and weekly schedules

Within WSD, there are a number of projects. Projects will be evaluated every 6 months to make sure they are on track with regard to prior planning and a fundamental evaluation will take place once a year. The questions that will inform each Monitoring and Evaluation plan are:

**1. What is the objective being monitored?**

There are four issues to be considered.

		Monitoring and evaluation
		Concern
a.	Development goal	Impact
b.	Project Purpose	Effectiveness
c.	Results	Performance
d.	Activities	Progress and Efficiency

**2. What is the information we will be looking for?**

Here we will be looking for tangible and concrete evidence that will help us to identify what has happened.

**3. How will the information be collected?**

A range of data collection methods will be used: e.g. letters, reports, plans, contracts, registers, invitations, quotations, receipts.

The choice of data collection process will be informed by our needs.

**4. When, and how often, should the information be collected?**

Different parts of the plan will need to be monitored at different periods:

- Activities will be reviewed on their scheduled completion date
- Results and project purpose will be monitored in six-monthly intervals
- The development goal which describes the long-term impact of the project will be monitored less frequently

**5. Who will be responsible for collecting and analysing this information?**

This will vary. In some projects, the person who collects the data will also assess it. In other projects, the tasks may need to be separated and done by different people.

An example of a table that may be used:

Expected Evidence/ Indicator	Actual Evidence	Any Deviation?	Reasons for the Deviation	Recommendations

**6. Who will use and act on this assessment?**

From the outset, it will be clarified who will receive the analysed data, and who will decide what to do with the recommendation.

**7. Will there be any time and/or budgetary implications?**

Monitoring and evaluation will be integrated into the scheduling and budgets of the projects.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING**

The department recognises that the way we have done things in the past is not the only way. We are committed to learning about new demands and learning about the skills required to meet those demands which entails, among other things, being prepared to learn from others. As facilitators, coordinators and managers we can learn from the educators, from each other and from communities.

Through monthly meetings, workshops and our teambuilding programme, we plan on creating time for reflection, which will include:

- Reflecting on a piece of work that has recently been completed, and to draw out lessons (after action review).
- Calling on experienced people to share their insights.
- Looking at how other organisations do things so that we can identify 'benchmarks'.

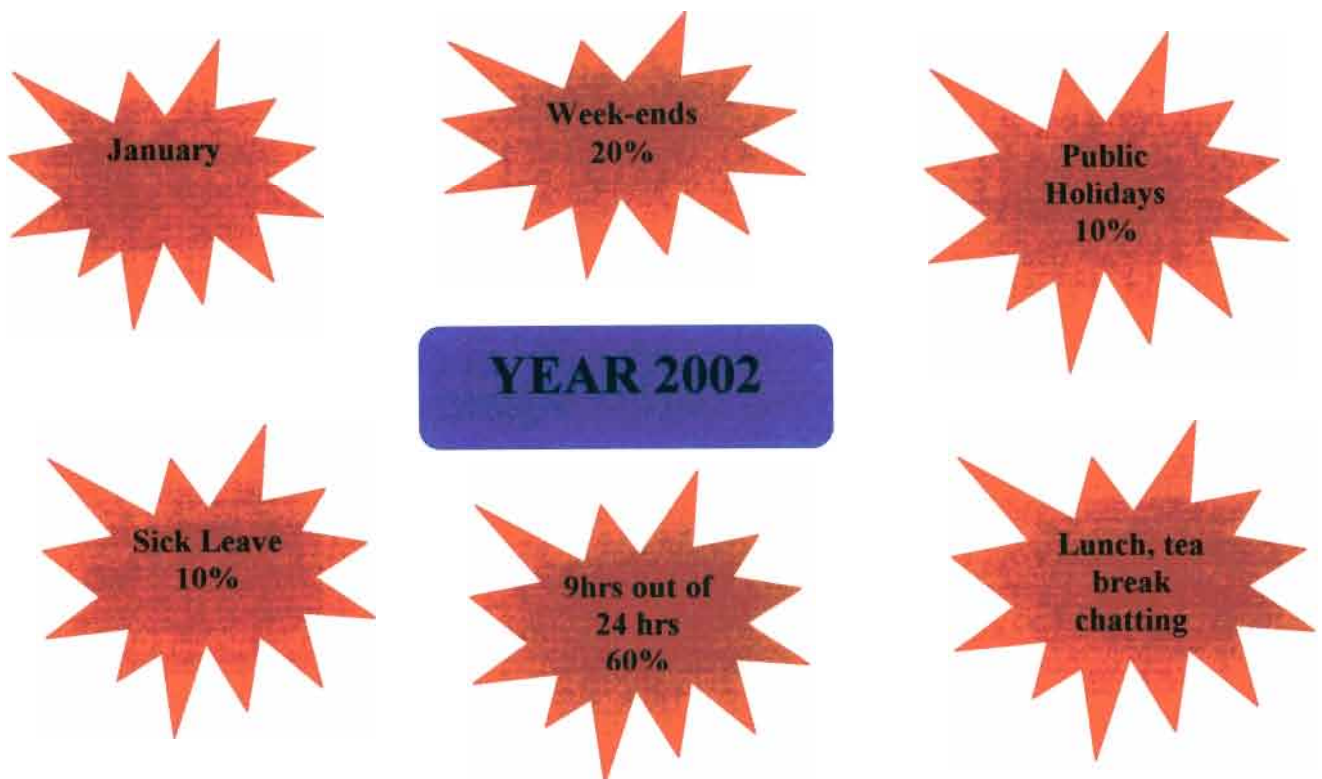


EXAMPLES OF TEAMBUILDING SESSIONS HELD

Teambuilding Session on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2002

OPPORTUNITY  
IS  
NOWHERE

- How are we going to make 2002 really count? What is left of 2002?



- We want to make our organisation world class, based on the fact that the year is already taken by the activities above, ask yourself:
  - How can I make this year count?
  - What opportunities are there for you and the organisation?
  - How can I make a difference

## Teambuilding Session on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2002

FACILITATED BY: THOZO

### STORY

One night in a large city two men entered into a huge department store. They were chuckling as they went in, and chuckling when they walked out. A couple of hours later even though they hadn't stolen a thing, what they did was far more sneaky and perhaps even more damaging to the store than an actual robbery.

The two men went through the department store swapping price tags. They took the price tag off a bicycle and put it on a baseball bat. They ran upstairs and removed the price from a pair of socks, then tiptoed downstairs and stuck it on a shirt. They swapped the price tag on a plastic soccer ball with the price tag on a leather one. These two men re-arranged every price tag in the store, and they left. The store opened as usual the next morning. The cashiers were at their stations.

The merchandise was neatly displayed throughout the store. Customers trickled in from the street to do their shopping. People found the items they wanted, paid for them and left. It took hours for anyone to notice that all the price tags had been switched.

Some lucky customers walked away with the deal of a lifetime, others paid double or triple for what they ended up with.

### THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS:

We may or may not be good judges of what things are really worth. We can get confused about which things in life are worth a lot and which things are actually worth very little. Sometimes other people switch the price tags on things or activities and we don't realise that what we get isn't worth the price we pay.



**WHAT IS YOUR  
WORTH?**

## **Teambuilding Session held on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2002**

**Facilitators: Agnes and Manti**

### **Activity 1**

The team was given blank papers to write down what they like and dislike about their team. The following was shared:

<b>What I like about the team</b>	<b>What I dislike about the team</b>
I like the respect from the team	I don't like people who come late at work
Laughing	When I do not get a car
Helpful	When people talk badly about others
Talking	Selfish
Parties and gifts	More time to be afforded to meet on the occasions like this
Sharing ideas	Few things can be said here
Togetherness	Lack of confidence in themselves
Easy to communicate with them	They are not getting together on Fridays as planned
Always there to listen	Don't wear their uniforms and badges
Willing to share their ideas	Too relaxed
Friendliness	Competing for cars
Always one thing	
Behaviour/supportiveness	
Honest	
Reliable	
Good spirit	
Sometimes good advisers	
Openness	
The team is co-operative	
The team is always cheerful	
Mature/vivacious	
Easygoing/jokes	
Happy/cheerful	
Adventurers/playfulness	

Looking at this list we can immediately see that our team has advantages and disadvantages. The next step would be to work together or individually to eliminate these disadvantages.

## Activity 2

Honesty is one of the characteristics of a healthy team. When a team lacks honesty, you find that they rarely work towards a common goal, they talk behind each others backs, and they lie to save oneself etc. Being honest with the team strengthens the ties between team members as they tend to build and protect each other.

As discussion progressed on this subject it came out that being honest has a price, the price could be that team members hate you for being honest because it could happen that they are denying what they have done. On the other hand being honest does not mean you have to be aggressive to prove a point. When you are being honest you are being sincere, the intention is not to hurt the other person but to build and support them.

Below is a definition of honesty and the advantages it brings to the team:

## **H O N E S T Y**



## WHOLE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### TEAMBUILDING

TOPIC : Principles of Freedom  
PRESENTED BY : Nkabane N.T. Johnson  
VENUE : Bizzy Lizzy  
DATE : 4<sup>th</sup> July 2003  
TIME : 12h30

### WHERE ARE YOU:

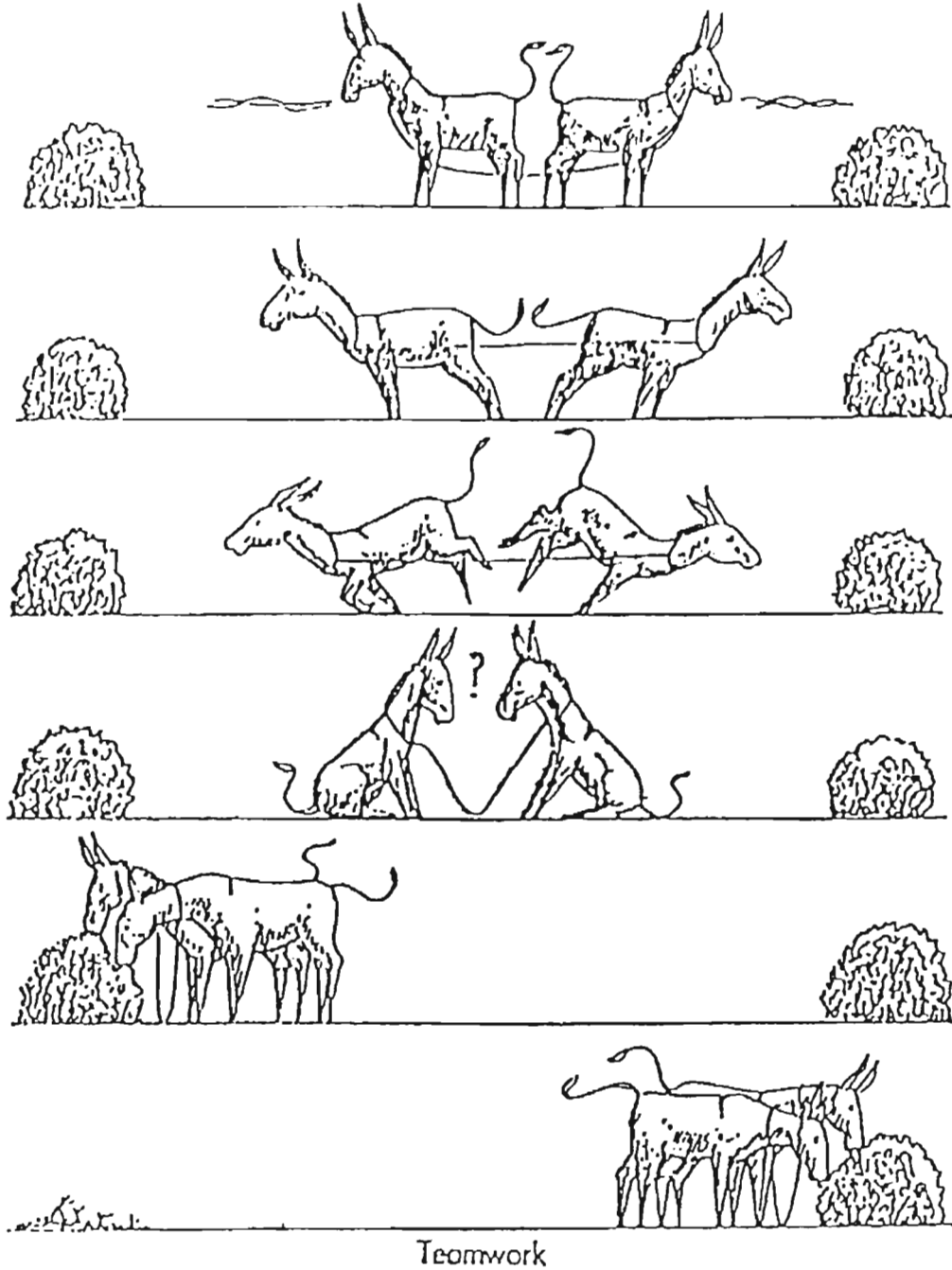
OPPRESSION —————> DELIVERENCE —————> FREEDOM  
(dependence) (independence) (Interdependence)

Decide your Destiny! Accept your freedom.

Take your position. Respond to responsibility.

## APPENDIX FIVE

### An Exercise Used to Show the Effects of Teamwork



**T**

**TOGETHER**

**E**

**EVERYONE**

**A**

**CHIEVES**

**M**

**ORE**

## Teambuilding at Crinkly Bottom Park





**Team Members Receiving their Birthday Presents during a Teambuilding Session at Amatata Primary School**



## **Team Members Build a Tower using Straws to Demonstrate Creative Solutions to Problems**





## **Team Members Playing a Synergy Game Called Ganghis Khan**



## **A Picture of the Whole School Development Department**

