



## ***Tool #4 - Part A***

### ***Create Team Synergy***

#### ***Part A Includes:***

***Lesson***

***Quiz***

***Goal Setting***

(Each tool is presented in a 2 part lesson format.  
Part B will follow in two weeks)

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# *Employee Success Toolkit*

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### *Create Team Synergy*

A team is important when an individual cannot do a task effectively. However, merely designating a group of people as a team is no guarantee that the people in the group will work well together.

The dictionary defines synergy as – the working together of two or more things, people, or organizations especially when the result is greater than the sum of their individual effects or capabilities.

Are you part of a team that works as a team or are you just doing “*team work*”? Here is how Patty Hendrickson, a certified professional speaker who specializes in team building and author of *Who I Am Depends On Me*, explains what happens when you eliminate the space between the words, “*team*” and “*work*”, to create the word, “*teamwork*”:

“Imagine each member of your group comes to the project with a personal toolbox full of skills, talents, resources and ideas. If you’ve got a group that engages in ‘*Team Work*’, members individually use their own tools inside their own boxes and contribute what they can. They are productive but limited by the contents of their own toolboxes.”

“If, on the other hand, you’ve developed a group adept at ‘*teamwork*’, members open up their toolboxes for use by the entire group. The team operates as a cohesive unit that uses all the best individual assets of its members.”

#### **Use Your Toolbox**

Your toolbox contains the things that are unique about you. You bring your uniqueness to the team not only in the form of skills, but also in the form of personal shortcomings and strengths.

Like many people, you may have the habit of undervaluing your assets and overestimating your shortcomings. Taking an inventory will increase your awareness of how much you can contribute to your team, and where you need help from others.

#### **Inventory Your Skills**

Just like a store has to take an inventory of products, you need to take an inventory of the skills and personality strengths in your toolbox. On a sheet of paper write the word, Strengths. On this page write any strength you can think of. Here are some questions that will help you think of your strengths:

- Are you creative, detail oriented, good at follow through?

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- Are you effective at communicating with others?
- Do you write clearly and concisely?
- Are you prompt, honest, assertive, kind, clever?
- Do you have a sense of humor?
- Are you able to see the big picture?
- Do you have certain computer or other valuable skills?

All these things and more, make you unique. They are the tools in your toolbox.

On another paper write the word, Weaknesses. On this page list the skills you lack and your personality shortcomings. These are the tools you can look for in your teammates' toolboxes. Here are some questions that will help you think of your weaknesses:

- Are you lacking a skill, such as writing, computer skills, etc.?
- Are you impatient, impulsive, or the opposite, very slow to take action?
- Do you have difficulty in relating to different personality types?
- Is it hard for you to see the big picture?

#### **Strengths And Weaknesses**

When team members discuss their strengths and weaknesses with each other they can determine who is strong where someone else may be weak. This process helps everyone discover different ways to work together and enjoy each other.

Skills that will make you a more valuable team player.

#### **Be Patient**

"The power of many brains is what teamwork is all about," according to Kathy Reed, president of TeamWorks Training & Consulting in Dallas, Texas.

Teams go through various phases. It's important to understand that if things aren't going well, it may be a necessary part of a certain phase. Reed says different stages of a team are:

- Forming - the team tries to figure out its goals, roles and processes.
- Storming - the normal and predictable stage of team conflict. When the team members have decided on the goals, roles and processes, they want to negotiate them. Egos emerge and turf wars develop. The team needs to bring the issues to the table and work through them. Trust and respect are cemented in the storming stage by the way people handle the issues that develop. A team can get stuck in this stage if members try to ignore the conflict.

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- Norming - Once the issues are resolved, team members work well together. But in the norming stage, they just have to be careful not to develop “group think” because they’re tired from working through the storming stage.
- Performing – Finally, a team progresses to the ultimate stage, performing, in which true synergy happens and the maximum benefit of teamwork is achieved.

When there is any change, however, the team must move back to the forming stage to re-group and move back up through the stages. It’s trust and respect that give a team the ability to quickly return to the forming stage when there’s a change in goal or roles and scoot back up to performing.

#### **Build Trust**

Trust is the foundation that builds teams. It is an essential part of your toolbox. Building trust takes time. Here are some things which, when done consistently, build trust:

- Show up at meetings on time.
- Be prepared to share your ideas and opinions during meeting.
- Listen attentively to your teammates’ ideas.
- Be organized.
- Be cheerful.
- Be appreciative.
- Keep a positive attitude.
- Get assignments done on time.
- Ask for help when you need it.

#### **Show Appreciation**

It may be especially difficult for team members who are used to working alone to switch to working in a team. You can help by being very appreciative of others who share their tools with you. Your appreciation will encourage more sharing. In addition, you should reward yourself whenever you share your tools with other team members.

It is important to also understand that conflict and difficult situations are a natural process of working together as a team, so do not get discouraged by them.

“Teamwork is a new experience for many. When members trust themselves and each other enough to show the contents of their toolboxes, with all the positives and negatives, the group has the potential to work as a team,” says Hendrickson.

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Doing “*teamwork*” rather than “*team work*” takes time, effort, and a willingness to share. Everyone benefits from the synergy created when the team becomes one in thought and purpose, sharing their individual assets with each other for the success of the team.

Different people have different ways of thinking and different experiences. When team members bring their personal wisdom to their team, they discover many innovative ideas.

“The best team players recognize that the team takes on a life of its own and they help nurture that life,” says Kathy Reed,

What’s more, according to Reed, they are not just fulfilling their roles on the team. They’re also helping team members communicate with each other, reach consensus, come up with solutions to team problems and work through conflicts. “They truly share leadership,” says Reed. “Speaking up assertively and listening actively are the two most important skills for team members.”

#### **Speak Assertively**

If you’re timid about presenting your ideas and opinions, being part of a team is a good place to practice overcoming your shyness. “Good team members need the courage to bring up their ideas. They have to fight the inner voice that says, ‘My idea isn’t good enough.’ Otherwise, they really cheat the team of the power of many brains,” says Reed.

#### **Listen Actively**

“Teamwork requires greater interpersonal skills than traditional work. Good team members need active listening skills,” says Reed. “The best way to demonstrate respect and build trust in a team is to listen to each other, understand each other’s point of view, and prove you understand it by paraphrasing it back to the person.”

To paraphrase what you’ve heard, start your sentence with something like, “I want to make sure I understand what you said. Your point of view is. . .” If you’re on target, your teammate might say, “Yes, that’s exactly what I meant.” If not, the person will have a chance to clarify the idea.

“As a result of being on a team, you’ll learn more effective communication skills and develop an understanding of team dynamics. The highlight of being a team player, however, is the sense of accomplishment and pride you will feel in having contributed your special part to the synergy and success of your team’s mission,” says Reed.

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#### *Experts quoted:*

Patty Hendrickson, Certified Speaking Professional, <http://www.pattyhendrickson.com/>  
Kathy Reed, president of Work Team Dynamics, <http://www.workteamdynamics.com/>

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## *Tool #4 - Quiz*

### *Create Team Synergy*

Complete the quiz, and give the answers to your supervisor.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your personal toolbox and what does it contain?

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2. What are the four different stages of a team?

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3. What are some benefits of working effectively as a team?

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4. How can you be sure you have understood another person's point of view?

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5. Name 3 ways in which you can build trust with team members.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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#### *Tool #4 - Your Goals to Create Team Synergy*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

What are your 3 main goals for this month for creating team synergy?  
Make a copy of this to give to your supervisor, and keep one for yourself.  
Post your goals in your workplace where you can easily see them.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

In two weeks you will receive Part B of this lesson. It will contain:

- The 7 key points from this lesson to refresh your memory, and
- A place for you to record your progress toward your goals.

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#### *Additional Resources*

*All are available on The Confidence Center Web at*  
[www.ConfidenceCenter.com](http://www.ConfidenceCenter.com)

#### *Free Resources*

##### **Email Newsletter:**

##### **Employee Morale and Confidence Tips**

It has creative ideas you can use every week to keep up morale.

Sign up for Free at [www.ConfidenceCenter.com](http://www.ConfidenceCenter.com)

##### **Assessments:**

Are you happy at work? Take the [Employee Morale Assessment](#)

How confident are you? Take the [Confidence Quiz](#)

##### **Articles and Past Newsletters**

##### **Calendar of Special Days:**

Special days you can celebrate for every month of the year.

##### **Fun Zone:**

Jokes, cartoons, and more - when you just need a break.

##### **Coaching:**

Telephone coaching by our certified professional coach. To get one *free* coaching session.

Details at <http://www.confidencecenter.com/serv06.htm>

#### *Low Cost Resources*

##### **Products:**

Books, eBooks, videos, and other products to make you more successful at work.

##### **Seminars:**

We offer in-house seminars, customized for your company or organization.

##### **Tele-seminars:**

Telephone seminars on employee morale and employee performance. These will be announced in our newsletter and on our web.