

# Leadership in Aid



## HOW TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL TEAM

### 5 Critical Keys to Success

Teams are not successful by chance. Indeed, most of the problems that teams encounter are both predictable and preventable. In its research into teams, CCL has worked out that what a leader does, or fails to do, when building up a team has a huge impact on the team's eventual success. Simply put, you can head off most of the problems that teams face by working hard on who is in the team, the purpose of the team and having a good, realistic, idea of the problems your team is going to face.

Getting it right at the beginning greatly increase the chances that your team will not only work well together, but – most important of all – deliver on the task it was set to do. To do that, make sure you have these five critical components of the ideal team in place :

**Set a clear direction.** A common sense of purpose unites team members and provides a context within which they can understand the functioning of the team and how their own contributions play a part.

**Build organisational support.** Teams are always more productive when they have the clear support of the organisation and access to the resources to support their efforts. Get that clear from the outset.

**Create a team structure that empowers team members.** Creating shared expectations, identifying and organising resources; working on how all the team does its work in the best possible way.

**Identify key relationships.** Build key relationships with individuals, other teams and the whole organisation to allow the very best access to the resources you need for your team.

**Monitor external factors.** Gathering and analysing information about the external environment that is relevant to your team's goals, enables it to quickly make adjustments as necessary – possibly pre-empting problems before they begin.

**One more thing.** When team's stop working well together it is often because team members have different, conflicting ideas of what the team's mission is and what they are expected to deliver. Don't forget that effective teams begin and end with a clear purpose.

A team's purpose doesn't spell out how the team will carry out its work, but it does explain what the end result is supposed to be. Get these basics in place and you have the formula for building highly successful teams. A formula that can be repeated time and time again.

*This how to guide is specifically designed as part of an ongoing series of "How To" guides for People In Aid by the Center for Creative Leadership ([www.CCL.org/europe](http://www.CCL.org/europe)) for leaders at all levels in humanitarian and development organisations.*

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Remember, most teams need to be good at... analysis + listening + strategic thinking + logistics + conflict resolution + negotiation + problem solving + creativity + facilitating + understanding the "real" organisation. Make sure these skills are present when you build your team

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