Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX)
Guidebook Series

*A practical guide to organizational assessment,
performance improvement, and change management*

APEX Resources Directory Vol. 2:

Communications, Focus Groups, and Team Development

NIC

National Institute of Corrections

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Corrections
320 First Street, NW
Washington, DC 20534

Morris L. Thigpen
Director

Thomas J. Beauclair
Deputy Director
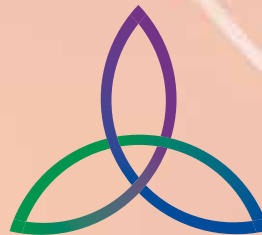
Sherry Carroll
Project Manager

National Institute of Corrections
www.nicic.gov

Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX) Guidebook Series

A practical guide to organizational assessment, performance improvement, and change management

APEX Resources Directory Vol. 2:

Communications, Focus Groups, and Team Development

Janet Mancini Billson, PhD

Nancy Cebula

Theresa Lantz

Elizabeth Ritter

Tom Ward

People in Charge LLC

Contents

Exhibits

Foreword

Correctional organizations today must balance the challenges and complexities of managing supervised populations and of using public resources efficiently, all while striving to become higher performing organizations. *APEX Resources Directory Volumes 1* and *2* present interventions and resources to help agencies build and sustain their Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX) change plans. This book, *APEX Resources Directory Volume 2,* introduces the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Information Center and critical additional resources on communications plans, focus groups, and team development.

The APEX Resources Directories were developed as part of NIC's APEX Initiative. The APEX Initiative is an agency-driven systems approach to building capacity for higher organizational performance, best practices, and data-driven decisionmaking. A whole-systems view of a correctional agency is provided through the APEX Public Safety Model. The APEX Initiative includes the APEX Assessment Tools Protocol, the APEX Guidebook series, and the APEX Change Agent Training.

NIC hopes that the APEX Initiative's resources, in particular *APEX Resources Directory Volume 2,* help guide your organization in the quest for higher performance.

Morris Thigpen
Director
National Institute of Corrections

Preface

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) and People in Charge are pleased to present the Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX) Guidebook series. The APEX Initiative began as NIC's Higher Performing Correctional Organization (HPCO) project in 2008. The HPCO project involved many correctional practitioners helping to identify the characteristics of a higher performing correctional organization. Practitioners and subject matter experts created a definition and a model of an HPCO based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program at the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program provides global leadership in the promotion and dissemination of standards of performance excellence. NIC is excited to bring this to correctional organizations around the country.

As HPCO progressed, it was renamed APEX and now includes three major developments: the APEX Assessment Tools Protocol, the APEX Public Safety Model and Guidebook series, and the APEX Change Agent Training.

The APEX Assessment Tools Protocol was developed during the years 2009–2011 to help correctional agencies identify their current organizational performance and areas to improve. Many correctional practitioners and agencies participated in the development, testing, and refinement of the tools in the protocol.

The APEX Guidebook evolved from one guidebook with information on the APEX model, its domains, and organizational change into a series of books. The Guidebook series is designed to provide resources, information, and processes to correctional organizations as they travel the path of organizational change leading to higher performance.
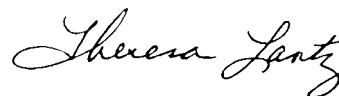
The APEX Change Agent Training will provide correctional agencies with capacity-building training and technical assistance in the APEX systems approach to organizational performance improvement.

APEX Resources Directory Volume 2: Communications, Focus Groups, and Team Development presents three practical guides for correctional leaders to use when they (1) decide to adopt the APEX Initiative and need to develop a communications plan to share their ideas with stakeholders, both internal and external; (2) want staff to facilitate focus groups to gather a variety of information from diverse sources; or (3) want to develop teams or to help intact teams improve their effectiveness.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Cebula
People in Charge LLC
Owner and Principal Consultant

Theresa Lantz
People in Charge LLC
Criminal Justice Consultant

PEOPLE IN CHARGE

People in Charge is a small, woman-owned business that works with organizations and communities in the public and private sectors, helping them maximize their effectiveness through the participation of their people. Our focus is to help groups of people work together to build strong and vibrant organizations through participative planning, organizational design, and learning. You can learn more about People in Charge by visiting our website at *www.peopleincharge.org*.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their contributions to this book:

Introduction to Achieving Performance Excellence

T he APEX: Achieving Performance Excellence Initiative introduces a systems approach to change, specifically for correctional organizations, and incorporates multiple tools and strategies to assist agencies in building sustainable capacity for higher performance. The APEX Initiative includes the APEX Public Safety Model and its components, the APEX Assessment Tools Protocol, the APEX Guidebook series, and the APEX Change Agent Training. This initiative informs data-driven decisionmaking, enhances organizational change efforts, and provides support and resources to correctional agencies. At the heart of APEX is the fundamental mission of correctional organizations to maintain public safety, ensure safe and secure correctional supervision of offenders, and maintain safe and secure settings for those who work in the field. This comprehensive systems approach to continuous performance improvement encourages innovative ideas to enhance organizational operations, services, and processes and to achieve desired results.

APEX Guidebook Series Overview

The APEX Guidebook series presents a breadth and depth of information on the APEX process, the APEX domains, and interventions and resources for correctional agencies to use as they implement organization improvement efforts. The series includes seven books, descriptions of which follow.

APEX: Building the Model and Beginning the Journey

This book gives a detailed description of the National Institute of Corrections' (NIC's) APEX Initiative, including the APEX Assessment Tools Protocol. The book presents reasons to self-assess and discusses change management and the benefits that correctional agencies can reap when they implement the APEX process.

Each of the APEX domains has a brief chapter devoted to defining it and the benefits of exploring the domain. "Overview to Achieving Performance Excellence" explains the various ways the APEX Initiative can be used in correctional agencies. "Developing a Communications Plan" describes in detail how agencies can inform stakeholders about their performance improvement journey, from the beginning through implementation and sustainability.

Culture and Change Management: Using the APEX Model To Facilitate Organizational Change

This book focuses in depth on organizational culture and change management in the correctional organization context, presenting a roadmap for correctional agencies to use as they begin a change initiative, whether it is a systemic change or a one-issue/intervention change.

Understanding Corrections through the APEX Lens

This book presents details on several of the APEX domains: Operations Focus (which includes Safe and Secure Supervision and Settings and Process Management); Stakeholder Focus; Strategic Planning; Workforce Focus; Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; and Results.

Achieving Performance Excellence: The Influence of Leadership on Organizational Performance

This book focuses on what individual leaders need to know and do as they develop their best leadership capabilities—the knowledge and practices necessary to lead people, organizations, and those outside the organization, including stakeholders, governing agencies, and the public, and gives the reader an opportunity to understand transactional and transformational leadership. Case studies from correctional agencies illustrate the concepts and provide realistic examples.

Applying the APEX Tools for Organizational Assessment

The APEX Assessment Tools Protocol includes three assessments that are corrections focused and user friendly. This self-assessment protocol includes the APEX Screener Tool (a short survey designed as a first step to assess readiness for change), the APEX Organizational Profile (a series of questions that help identify data, knowledge and performance gaps in the organization), and the APEX Inventory (an indepth survey that rates performance in domains as well as change readiness).

APEX Resources Directory Volume 1 and Volume 2

These volumes present numerous interventions and resources that agencies can use to help them build and implement their APEX change plans, deal with challenges and adjustments along the way, and sustain the changes. Volume 1 includes an introduction on how to use the NIC Information Center and sections on change management and each of the APEX domains and is designed to work with the reports from the APEX Assessment Tools. Volume 2 contains information on communication during times of change, focus groups, and team development; it also includes the NIC Information Center introduction.

USING THE ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Fifteen staff and managers participated in the Organizational Profile to get a better idea of how their probation agency is dealing with its stakeholders and political environment. They learned that, although they are doing a pretty good job of dealing with their judicial overseers, there is a lack of trust and collaboration with other service providers in their jurisdiction. They downloaded several APEX books from the NIC website, including *Understanding Corrections through the APEX Lens* and the *APEX Resources Directory Volume 1*. They reviewed the sections on stakeholders to get ideas for increasing communication, building relationships, and improving collaborative initiatives with other agencies and external stakeholders as well as improving relationships with clients and their families.

The Guidebook series may be used in its entirety or in parts to suit the needs of agency personnel. The books in this series provide information, strategies, and tools to address the performance issues of correctional agencies. Use of the assessment tools is optional. Agency staff who know which topic they want to work on may go directly to the *APEX Resources Directory* or another book in the series for guidance.

How To Use APEX

The APEX Assessment Tools are designed for agencies to assess their organizational performance. The tools—Screener, Organizational Profile, and Inventory—were designed specifically for use in correctional agencies and are discussed in detail in *Applying the APEX Tools for Organizational Assessment.*

As an agency begins a change process, it can choose to use one or more of the APEX Assessment Tools, and it can cut and paste certain Guidebook chapters or strategies to target performance improvement areas. Because APEX is an agency-driven initiative, users can navigate the APEX materials and the tools to create a customized implementation plan. *APEX Resources Directory Volumes 1* and *2* provide access to other materials, tools, publications, and websites to tailor a specific performance improvement strategy.

Chapter 1: Introduction

A*PEX Resources Directory Volume 2* provides supportive information to correctional agencies embarking on the APEX (Achieving Performance Excellence) journey. It introduces the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Information Center, provides detailed information on creating a communications plan for those implementing the APEX Initiative, describes how to use focus groups to effectively gather information and feedback, and includes a team development guide for those who want to build teams, enhance team performance, and understand what makes teams an effective part of any organization.

Chapter 2 presents resources available from NIC, including the NIC Information Center and the Corrections Community website.

Chapter 3 details the process of developing an APEX communications plan. Communication is especially critical in corrections. Putting into place the seven-step plan outlined in this chapter ensures that the APEX objectives and messages reach all stakeholders efficiently and effectively.

Chapter 4 presents focus group research, the basics of focus groups and how they work, and the steps to conducting effective focus groups. Knowing how to conduct a focus group, setting the stage and proper tone, asking the right questions, and even closing the group effectively are part of this chapter.

Team development, critical to higher performance in any organization and especially important in corrections, is presented in chapter 5. All aspects of the process, including the steps involved in building an effective team and the types, purposes, and goals of and communication within teams are discussed. The chapter also includes ways to enhance team effectiveness, the process of team development, and a detailed case study on teams and team building.

Chapter 2: NIC Resources

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) has a wealth of resources and information for correctional practitioners. These resources are available through:

■   The **NIC Information Center,** which offers publications online and, in some cases, in hardcopy format, including publications from NIC, correctional information from other sources, and information from other industries that applies to correctional agencies. The center also provides research assistance to staff working in corrections.

■   The **Corrections Community website,** which provides opportunities to collaborate with others via news updates, public discussion forums, and networks for private discussion.

NIC Information Center

NIC's Information Center assists correctional policymakers, practitioners, elected officials, and others interested in correctional issues. The center's resources cover all aspects of corrections, including:

■   Corrections research.

■   Policy formulation.

■   Professional standards.

■   Staff training.

■   Facility planning, design, and transition.

■   Special offender issues and programs.

Provided free of charge through its library and through research assistance services, this information helps correctional professionals and policymakers address the complex issues they face every day.

The Library

The Robert J. Kutak Memorial Library is a specialized collection of corrections-related materials such as policies, procedural manuals, reports, newsletters, and training materials. The focus of the collection is on unpublished, operations-oriented resources developed by correctional agencies for use by practitioners in the field.

The library also collects published materials on correctional topics and serves as a distribution center and archive for NIC publications. All NIC publications from 1976 to our current releases are available to download or order. Publications cover many topics, including popular ones such as the Thinking for a Change program and the Prison

Rape Elimination Act (PREA). In addition to NIC publications, the library contains more than 20,000 corrections-related documents and materials from government agencies at all levels and from associated correctional organizations.

Almost one-third of the library's materials are available online at *www.nicic.gov/Library.*

Research Assistance

As stated above, many NIC materials are available online. However, nondigital, copyright-restricted, and sensitive materials are available only in the NIC main library. Through NIC's online help desk (Ask NIC: *http://info.nicic.gov/Customer/Ask.aspx*), correctional workers can request free, personalized research assistance from the staff at our library. These experts have access to the **complete** library and can help you find information that is not available online.

The Information Center does not provide legal advice or directly assist offenders/ex-offenders or their friends and family. Only limited support is available for students, educators, and consultants.

For more information, visit the NIC Ask A Librarian webpage at *www.nicic.gov/ResearchAssistance.*

NIC INFORMATION CENTER

Information Center services are available weekdays, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST.
Phone: 800–877–1461
Library: *www.nicic.gov/Library*
Research assistance: *www.nicic.gov/ResearchAssistance*

Corrections Community Website

The Corrections Community website provides an environment for correctional professionals to communicate and work together online.

The website includes access to community blogs, which provide current information about NIC activities, announce opportunities, and solicit feedback from the field. In addition, the site offers public forums that are open to all and cover topics ranging from pretrial services to mental health issues to reentry.

By invitation only, private forums and networks are provided to support discussion on specific topics in the correctional field. Examples of private forums are the Large Jails Network and the Crisis Intervention Teams Forum.

To access Corrections Community, visit *http://community.nicic.gov/.*

Chapter 3: APEX Communications Plan

A quick survey of the vast landscape of things that can go wrong in a modern day correctional system is revealing. Not only can a flawed communication strategy contribute to the problem, but in many cases, an effective communications plan could have prevented it in the first place. Correctional systems are under close oversight by the courts, regulatory agencies, and state and federal legislators as well as scrutiny from the media and the public. Correctional organizations are now expected to be effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent—all at the same time. When resources are constrained, public sector agencies, and correctional agencies in particular, face three major challenges. They must:

1. Demonstrate prudent stewardship of the taxpayers' money.

2. Demonstrate a strong commitment to public safety.

3. Play a lead role in reducing criminal activity in our communities.

The most successful agencies in the field of corrections are those whose staff and leadership master a proactive and comprehensive agenda to address the expectations that stakeholders demand. Their work calls for performance excellence in the daily administration of correctional organizations and in their communications plans.

Developing and implementing any change process requires effective communication between those who are initiating the change and those who will be affected by it. The size and intensity of the change effort does not matter. Any change, from full adoption of the Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX) Initiative to the development of a new intake process, requires a carefully thought-out and developed communications plan. Understanding the importance of the what, how, and why of the change effort, who will be affected by it, and its benefits and challenges is critical for success. An agency communications plan is essential to implementing and sustaining significant organizational change. It is not enough for the agency leader to deliver "the message"; internal and external stakeholders must be engaged in promoting the agenda.

Communications practices and opportunities may include incorporating APEX in training; setting up speaking engagements; meeting with other agency leaders, media representatives, and service providers; promoting collaborative partnerships; and communicating progress and achievements.

What Is in a Communications Plan?

A well-thought-out communications plan includes:

■ Objectives

  • Step 1: Articulate the rationale, benefits, and goals of the change initiative.

- Step 2: Identify all internal and external stakeholders who can influence the organization's success and their level of support for the change initiative.

- Step 3: Identify the communication objectives for each stakeholder group.

■ Message

- Step 4: Formulate the message to address the communication objectives for each stakeholder group.

■ Plan

- Step 5: Deliver and reinforce the message.

- Step 6: Encourage open communication with stakeholders, including feedback processes.

- Step 7: Assess the outcomes of the communications plan.

Objectives

Step 1: Articulate Rationale, Benefits, and Goals

"Doing what we've always done" is no longer acceptable. Agency leaders, communications officers, and others identified by the agency need to develop a clear introduction to the agency's change effort.

Rationale for Change

Many correctional staff and stakeholders resist change, yet say "they want things to get better." Leaders in agencies embarking on organizational change need to be able to answer questions such as these:

■ Why does the organization value higher performance/the change effort?

■ How is this related to the agency's vision, mission, values, and strategy?

■ Why are we doing this?

Benefits of Change

With all the challenges confronting correctional agencies today, why begin an APEX change process? Correctional leaders recognize that organizational change can lead to great benefits once they commit to the process of self-assessment and use the results to develop a strategy for moving the agency to higher levels of performance. Some examples of key performance outcomes that may result from implementing APEX include:

■ Increased facility safety and security through enhanced operations.

■ Decreased staff turnover and absenteeism and improved morale.

■ Reduction in offender violence.

- Enhanced public safety due to increased offender success rates and reductions in recidivism.

- Improved communication with internal and external stakeholders.

- Enhanced data collection/information for informed decisionmaking.

- Demonstrated public confidence in the agency leadership and operations.

- More effective media relations.

- More efficient use of fiscal appropriations.

Goals

Specific and measurable goals are an important component of any initiative and can include, for example, creating a policy for decreasing revocations, increasing staff retention by 15 percent, and lowering the recidivism rate by 10 percent.

Step 2: Identify Internal and External Stakeholders

Early identification of stakeholders and their positions allows agency leaders to develop strategies to increase stakeholder engagement and to begin to address any concerns, especially from those who are less than supportive. Stakeholder mapping is a useful tool for identifying who the agency's stakeholders are. Stakeholders can be sorted into groups with similar interests and by the amount of impact they may have on the change effort.

A simple way to identify stakeholders is to have a brainstorming session and write down each stakeholder anyone in the room comes up with. The next step is to identify the most important stakeholders, those who could have the most impact on the initiative. Then they can be sorted into groups with common interests and/or traits.

Key stakeholder analyses determine stakeholders' attitudes toward the organization or the change effort. This type of analysis often looks at the type and degree of each stakeholder's influence and enables the agency leaders and/or communications officers to determine the type of communications focus that each stakeholder group will require (see, e.g., exhibit 1).

The thoughtful assessment of stakeholders and their degrees of support enables more focused communication objectives, message content, and delivery methods. Strategies can be developed for each stakeholder group to most effectively use the agency's communications resources, depending on whether the focus is to inform, engage, and/or encourage participation.

Exhibit 1: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholders	Degree of Influence*	Communications Focus
Internal Stakeholders		
Staff	1	Engage and participate
Clients/Offenders	2	Engage and participate
Middle management	1	Engage and participate
Labor unions	2	Engage
External Stakeholders		
Client/Offender families	2	Inform and engage
Legislators	1	Inform
Other public agencies	2	Inform
Government budget office	1	Inform and engage
Private agencies	3	Inform and engage
Advocacy groups	3	Inform
Media	2–3	Inform
Citizens	2–3	Inform
Vendors/Contractors	3	Inform

* Degree of stakeholder group influence: 1 = high, 2 = medium, 3 = low.

Step 3: Identify Communication Objectives

The communication objectives need to be tailored to each stakeholder group, depending on their level of influence, power, and support. Is the message intended to persuade, inform, educate, create participation, change perceptions, influence behavior, engage, garner support, address concerns, or establish ambassadors of change? These objectives inform the content of the various messages.

Message

Step 4: Address the Communication Objectives

The message can be formulated, based on the stakeholder assessment and the identified objectives, to effectively meet the agency's communications goals and proactively address any issues and concerns. See "About APEX: Information To Include in Your Message," which is designed specifically to help you introduce the APEX Initiative to stakeholders.

ABOUT APEX: INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN YOUR MESSAGE

The following information may be helpful for leaders and public information officers to use as they custom design their agencies' messages to stakeholders. Not all of the information is geared toward each type of stakeholder; as you pull content to develop a message, make sure to customize it to suit your audience's needs.

What Is APEX?

APEX is about changing correctional organizations to be more effective and to produce better results. It is an agency-driven agenda designed to provide correctional leaders and staff with a comprehensive model and the tools necessary to assess their organizational performance and the strategies necessary to improve competence and skills that enhance mission success and operations. Each agency is responsible for its own commitment, direction, pace, improvement, evaluation, and success.

APEX is neither a report card nor an accreditation process. It does not disclose agency performance, compare results, or mandate specific actions. While it is not driven by fiscal- or personnel-related concerns, APEX has an impact on the effective allocation of resources by narrowing performance gaps. In addition, these performance excellence initiatives can guide continuous improvement over the long term, transcending fiscal constraints and changes in leadership.

Why Take the APEX Journey?

APEX helps correctional leaders and staff assess and maximize their organizational strengths. The commitment to begin the APEX journey is an agency leadership prerogative, relying on support from internal and external agency stakeholders. It is not enough for the leader to want to engage; a systemic commitment is required to move the agency in a positive direction and to encourage staff to examine and change their behaviors and activities. "Doing what we've always done" is no longer acceptable.

The criteria comprising higher performance include Organizational Culture; Leadership; Strategic Planning; Workforce Focus; Stakeholder Focus; Operations Focus (Safe and Secure Supervision and Settings, Process Management); Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; and Results. The APEX self-assessment tools gauge performance in each of these areas, indicating areas in need of change in policies, procedures, and practices. The APEX Guidebook series is a compendium of advice, strategies, resources, and tools to enhance organizational competence. It can be used as a standalone resource and/or in conjunction with the assessment process.

With APEX, change and performance improvement are reinforced and agency staff are engaged in achieving performance excellence and supporting a healthy organizational culture.

Setting the Agency Agenda

Often the first step in the APEX journey is to identify appropriate, knowledgeable staff to complete the APEX Organizational Profile and Screener assessment tools. The Executive Team and an interdisciplinary transformation committee can review and analyze the results to develop an implementation plan that may include:

- Adopting the APEX Public Safety Model as a business model.

- Reviewing *Culture and Change Management: Using APEX To Facilitate Organizational Change* in the APEX Guidebook series for strategies to implement and sustain organizational change.

- Identifying and assessing the influence of internal and external stakeholders.

- Defining the message and providing the rationale for any changes to all stakeholders (internal and external).

- Analyzing the current situation.

- Identifying strategies to build consensus for the APEX agenda.

- Identifying strategies to counter barriers and resistance to APEX and to change.

- Developing facilitators (or "ambassadors") of change across the agency.

- Establishing goals and an action plan with designated timelines, progress reports, and feedback guidelines.

- Identifying fiscal implications of resource allocation and intended results.

- Developing a training agenda for staff, volunteers, and contractors.

- Identifying policies, procedures, and practices that may need revision.

- Building comprehensive internal and external stakeholder communications plans.

- Implementing an ongoing evaluation and performance analysis system of all APEX efforts.

A message designed to *inform* legislators, citizens, or vendors, for example, could look like this: "We are about to begin a journey that will result in enhanced services, more efficient operations, improved outcomes for our clients, better stewardship of public resources, and increased public safety. The APEX Initiative is about improving organizational performance and implementing a systemwide approach to change how we do business. APEX stands for Achieving Performance Excellence and is a program of the National Institute of Corrections, which provides innovative solutions to correctional agencies. We look forward to sharing our successes and our challenges as we work through them. Our staff and leadership promise to maintain the quality and level of service you are used to as we work through this shift in policies, procedures, and operations."

A message to *inform* and *engage* client families could read this way: "We are about to embark on a performance improvement initiative called APEX, which stands for Achieving Performance Excellence. This will result in better services for you and your family members. Our staff will continue to supervise their clients well and, as changes are implemented, even better than they do today. We think that you may have some good ideas, and your involvement as we review policies and procedures will be an important way to help us take the needs of everyone, including families, into account when we begin to identify needed changes."

A message to invite clients to *participate* could read this way: "We are about to embark on a performance improvement initiative called APEX, which stands for Achieving Performance Excellence. This will result in better services for you while you are under supervision. Your probation officer will continue to supervise you and other clients. As changes are implemented, they will be better equipped to help you achieve positive outcomes while you are under supervision. We would like to find out your ideas for improving people's success while on probation. Your opinion is very important. How can we best serve your needs and maintain public safety? Your ideas and support will be important as we move forward."

A message to staff to *inform* them on how work will look during this process might look like this: "As you know, we are in the planning phase of the APEX Initiative, a National Institute of Corrections program to help correctional agencies achieve performance excellence. We will be going through the APEX recommended change process: six steps designed to help agencies plan and assess, define goals, organize for results, plan implementation strategies, implement the change plan, and sustain the changes. We are very excited about the possibilities for improvement, innovation, and success. As we go through the APEX process, we will be asking many of you to participate in various activities, give feedback, suggest innovative ideas, and share your enthusiasm for new ways of doing things. At the end of the day, this is all about increasing the chances of our success at achieving our mission and goals, while taking good care of the individuals we supervise and house and of our staff, volunteers, and stakeholders. We look forward to going on this journey to higher performance with you."

Plan

Step 5: Deliver and Reinforce the Message

The communications plan includes multiple formats and opportunities to deliver the agency message to its stakeholders. These may include one-on-one meetings, e-mails, website notices, postings, paycheck attachments, memos, letters, brochures, policy changes, media releases, videos, training, newsletters, rollcall announcements, staff meetings, and so forth. The message must exhibit the full support of the agency leadership and be reinforced multiple times in multiple formats.

Message delivery strategies can include:

■ Enhancing agency policies and procedures.

■ Incorporating APEX in training.

■ Setting up speaking engagements.

■ Meeting with leaders of public agencies.

■ Meeting with media representatives (e.g., print, television) and inviting them to speaking engagements.

■ Meeting with contracted service providers.

■ Promoting collaborative partnerships.

- Developing a video that promotes the change initiative.

- Establishing agency/facility committees to target performance excellence.

- Posting progress reports in agency newsletters, other media sources, and websites.

- Posting pamphlets and signs in facilities and offices promoting performance excellence.

- Communicating progress and achievements.

See exhibit 2 for an example of this part of the communications plan—Message Delivery Strategies.

Exhibit 2: Message Delivery Strategies

Stakeholders	Degree of Influence*	Message Delivery Strategy
Internal Stakeholders		
Staff	1	Briefings from immediate supervisors, meetings, newsletters, rollcalls, focus groups
Clients/Offenders	2	Unit meetings, postings, focus groups
Middle management	1	Meetings, newsletters, focus groups
Labor unions	2	Letters
External Stakeholders		
Client/Offender families	2	Letters, postings in visiting areas, focus groups
Legislators	1	Meetings, letters, memos
Other public agencies	2	Letters, meetings
Government budget office	1	Meetings, letters, documentation
Private agencies	3	Letters, meetings
Advocacy groups	3	Letters
Media	2–3	Editorials, interviews
Citizens	2–3	Editorials, website postings
Vendors/Contractors	3	Letters

* Degree of stakeholder group influence: 1 = high, 2 = medium, 3 = low.

Step 6: Encourage Open Communication

Audiences need the opportunity to reflect on and respond to messages. Offering opportunities for feedback encourages support for and cooperation with the change efforts and increases interaction with key stakeholder groups. In the policy-driven world of corrections, staff and those under supervision need to have a voice in how they will work and live.

The development of a menu of formats to deliver the messages with ongoing reinforcement and repetition is critical. For the key stakeholders, one-to-one communication with the agency leadership may be the initial contact. Other formats, including memos, progress reports, newsletters, and public service announcements, can be used to reinforce engagement and support. Agencies should actively seek and respond to stakeholder voices. Ongoing communication with stakeholders is critical; it enables them to provide feedback on what they hear and read. Deliberate and ongoing communication will enhance support for implementing the change initiative.

Step 7: Assess Outcomes

Any well-planned initiative needs to have an evaluation process. Success measures and outcomes need to be carefully identified, defined, collected, and analyzed. These outcomes and results inform adjustments and modifications to the communications plan.

If the goal is to gain the support of a particular group of key stakeholders, measures such as the type and amount of feedback or the number of supportive actions by the group (e.g., public testimony, media comments) indicate success. Stakeholders who become ambassadors of the change initiative demonstrate agency success in successful communication, stakeholder engagement, and feedback. The number of downloads of a website posting is one way to measure how many people are being informed about the initiative.

Sample Communications Plan: Implementing APEX

Developing a standard action plan to roll out the communications plan will keep the initiative on track. Part of this plan is identifying the desired results and developing measurements to assist in the analysis of the data to gauge the actual outcomes with the desired results. A communications action plan may have several components to address myriad activities.

Exhibit 3 shows how one agency set up a communications plan matrix:

Goal: Implement the APEX Initiative to enhance agency performance.

Objective: Implement a communications plan to increase and ensure stakeholder support.

Exhibit 3: APEX Communications Plan Matrix

	Steps	Actions	Responsible Party	Progress	Date	Outcomes
1	Benefits of APEX	Identify benefits and goals; report	Executive Team	Executive Team meeting scheduled 10/10	11/01	Report on benefits and goals by 11/01
2	Identify stakeholders	Conduct stakeholder analysis and force field analysis; report	OD director and management team	Meeting with eight managers as team participants	10/15	Report on stakeholder analysis and force field analysis by 11/01
3	Identify communication objectives	Review OD team report and develop communication objectives for key stakeholders	Executive Team and PIO	Executive Team meeting	12/15	Report on communication objectives by 12/20
4	Formulate messages	Review OD report and communication objectives	Executive Team and PIO	Meeting scheduled	1/4	Messages to key stakeholders drafted
5	Deliver messages to stakeholders	Develop message content and delivery formats to stakeholders; deliver message to stakeholders	Executive Team and PIO director	Message and format determined for key stakeholders; messages delivered	1/15	Messages delivered to stakeholders in multiple formats and schedules
6	Solicit stakeholder feedback	Hold focus groups; do surveys; conduct interviews	OD and PIO directors and staff, select managers and line staff	Continuous followup with stakeholders and requests for feedback	2/1	Stakeholders provide feedback
7	Measure and analyze outcomes	Develop desired outcomes; measure and report	OD and PIO directors and Executive Team	Report on outcomes monthly	Monthly reports on 15th	Outcomes support APEX Initiative

Note: OD = Organization Development; PIO = Public Information Office.

APEX COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING IN ACTION

The governor of a mid-sized state recently appointed a new director of the Department of Corrections. The governor charged the new director with enhancing public safety and controlling the costs of administering the correctional agency. The new director goes to the NIC website to see what might be available to guide her. She decides to explore the Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX) Initiative, believing that it will provide the business model framework for mission success, help the agency achieve higher performance, meet the expectations of the governor, and provide a leadership agenda for managing and sustaining change.

The director begins by conducting meetings with the agency's Executive Team to discuss the APEX Initiative. The Executive Team reviews the model, the APEX Assessment Tools, and the APEX Guidebook series. They identify benefits and barriers of the initiative as well as the stakeholders who may support or hinder successful implementation. After the review and education process, the director has consensus among the Executive Team to engage in the APEX Initiative. The Executive Team's goal is to improve performance and contain costs by addressing any gaps identified in the assessment results with the APEX Guidebook series strategies, tools, and interventions.

The director establishes a Transformation Team to begin the APEX journey. The chair is a member of the Executive Team with full authority to manage the work processes involved in this organizational change effort. The Executive Team and the chair identify 10 key staff who are viewed as influential leaders across divisions in the agency. At the same time, the chair and the agency's communications office write a communications plan to publicize the agency's commitment to performance excellence and its engagement with the APEX model, which the Executive Team then reviews and approves.

The communications plan begins with a message from the director that describes the APEX Initiative, announces the agency's ongoing commitment to successful achievement of its mission and higher performance, and how engagement with APEX will support that agenda. The director announces the establishment of the Transformation Team and how it will work with staff, welcoming input and suggestions from across the agency. Each facility will have its own APEX Implementation Team, chaired by the warden or department head, made up of representatives from various disciplines and job functions. The Implementation Teams will be charged with exploring how and what to change within their facilities or departments, using the APEX process. Their ideas, strategies, and activities will be reviewed by the Transformation Team for ongoing monitoring, sharing across the agency, and evaluation results.

This initial communication is distributed through staff rollcalls and meetings, agencywide bulletin boards, the agency's newsletters, and intranet and internet websites. The director notifies critical stakeholders, including government leaders in the agency's reporting structure, other agencies, and community groups. The director commits that ongoing APEX activities will be communicated to all staff and appropriate information will be accessible to the client/offender population.

When the communications plan is implemented, the Transformation Team assists the facility Implementation Teams in engaging the APEX Assessment Tool(s), analyzing results, and developing strategies and activities to address any gaps or improvements in performance. The Transformation Team maintains communication with the Implementation Teams to ensure there is support and consistency across the agency with all of the various activities.

Each month, the Transformation Team presents a report to the Executive Team of activities related to APEX, including performance issues, measures, and results. A summary of these activities and results is communicated to all previously identified stakeholders through various methods. With the Transformation Team's oversight and the facility-based Implementation Teams, the APEX Initiative is implemented and becomes formalized in the agency's strategic plan. The results show ongoing improvement in the agency's performance. Success stories and progress reports are shared with stakeholders, encouraging continued commitment, cultural change, and positive results.

Summary

Once an agency's leadership decides to embark on the journey to higher performance, developing a communications plan is critical to ensure that the agency gains the support necessary to meet its goals and objectives. Without thoughtful planning and implementation of a strategy, the path to higher levels of performance may be met with resistance by influential stakeholders. With a solid communications plan, the agency will be able to enhance the support for and the success of the change management process necessary to sustain progress.

When bad things happen in corrections (and they do), it is easy to revert to a defensive reaction or an attitude of failure. This is exactly the time to reinforce the commitment to APEX. Acknowledging that an unplanned and negative event occurred, reinforcing the agency's commitment to resolving the issue, implementing strategies to prevent a recurrence, and communicating these strategies reflect responsible leadership during the process of change.

Chapter 4: Focus Groups— A Practical Guide

Focus groups offer a flexible tool for tapping the views of management, line employees, inmates/offenders, community organizations, government agencies, and others involved in corrections. They can uncover problems before they become critical and help develop insights into how things work so that appropriate and creative recommendations for change can be developed.

—Janet Mancini Billson, PhD

In this chapter, agencies can learn how to use focus groups to open communication channels among staff and management, facilitate offender feedback, and involve stakeholders in decisionmaking within or outside of a correctional agency.[1]

Collaborative decisionmaking in any agency requires input from all levels of staff. Focus groups offer an opportunity to gather information from either a homogeneous group of people (all line staff working in a correctional facility or all probation supervisors) or a cross section of the whole agency (12 people of varying ranks with different responsibilities). Depending on the size of the project, more than one focus group may be necessary to target different perspectives on the issue. Agencies should design questions that relate specifically to the type of responses and information for which they are looking.

Basics of Focus Group Research

What Is a Focus Group?

A focus group is a structured group discussion designed to gather data to answer specific questions for organizational development.

- Focus groups afford insight into human behavior and attitudes.

- Focus groups usually last from 90 to 120 minutes and engage between 5 and 12 participants in focused discussion on a topic of interest selected by the research team.

- Focus groups are *not* decisionmaking groups, conflict resolution groups, brainstorming groups, training or educational groups, buzz groups, or therapy groups. They are conducted for the purpose of exploring participants' views, opinions, attitudes, perceptions, and values.

---

[1] This chapter is an abbreviated version of "Conducting Professional Focus Group Discussions: A Practical Guidebook" (Billson n.d.). For additional information about the manual, contact NIC's Administration Division at 800–995–6423.

- The moderator facilitates the discussion and draws out participants' motivations, feelings, and values through skillful probing and by restating responses.

- Participants stimulate each other in an exchange of ideas that may not emerge in individual interviews or surveys.

- Group interaction generates insights that might not occur without the cross-fertilization of ideas that occurs in a focus group.

- Focus groups produce *qualitative* rather than *quantitative* data, but the insights extend far beyond the number of people interviewed or the cost of conducting groups and reporting data.

- Because of the small numbers involved, participants cannot be expected to be statistically representative of the target population, and findings cannot reliably be generalized beyond their number.

Eight Steps to Conducting an Effective Focus Group

Step 1: Identify Participants

As you plan to conduct focus groups, a critical question emerges: Which internal and external stakeholders should be invited to participate in the focus groups?

- Executives.

- Managers.

- Nonsupervisory staff.

- Supervised population/offenders/clients.

- Other stakeholders.

Step 2: Protect Participants

Focus groups must be conducted with the highest professional standards to protect those who participate. If you adhere to these practices and maintain careful control over notes (e.g., destroying them after a certain time period), you will maximize participant protection and ethical behavior.

- At the beginning of each group, the moderator should:

  - Provide verbal and/or written explanations of the purpose, methods, and setting.

  - Assure participants that focus groups will not be facilitated to elicit emotionally sensitive responses and that the group will be a safe climate in which anyone who wishes to contribute can do so with ease.

- Inform participants that they can decline to answer any question and that there are no right or wrong answers; participation in the groups is entirely voluntary.

- State that the session is being recorded through notetaking, and explain how the notes will be used.

- Address any potential ethical concerns.

■ Determine whether an informed consent agreement is required as part of the protection of subjects (see "Sample Informed Consent Agreement"). The informed consent agreement is highly recommended when members of the supervised population are participating in focus groups.

SAMPLE INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT

On behalf of [name of agency/facility], the [name of change/intervention/unit team] is conducting focus groups to collect comments on [brief description of subject]. A written report will be produced for the use of the agency and to provide feedback to the executive and his/her designees of this agency/facility. By providing feedback, you will help improve the agency's/facility's organizational performance. The focus group will last up to 120 minutes.

The anonymity of all focus group participants will be protected. Notes are being taken to ensure accuracy in writing up the report. Your name will not be linked with specific responses in any way.

Under no circumstances will any concealment or deception be used in this group discussion. On the contrary, the moderator's approach to focus groups is to create an open forum for discussion that is nonthreatening and nonmanipulative. The risks involved are considered minimal with this particular topic. If you have any questions about the focus group report, contact [XXXX].

By signing this consent form below, you are stating that:

■ You have read and understood this form.

■ You are willing to take part in the focus group and to let us record your comments.

■ You authorize the moderator to publish anonymous quotations from the interviews (in written form only) for appropriate use.

■ You understand that a trained facilitator is conducting this focus group for a serious purpose and that careful attention to your general welfare will be provided throughout.

■ You understand that your participation in this focus group is voluntary and that you may stop participation at any time.

Participant's signature_____   Date_____

Participant's name printed_____   Moderator/Team Member_____

Step 3: Develop the Moderator's Guide

Come up with focus group questions and include them in a first draft of a moderator's guide:

■ Design first questions to help establish rapport early in the session.

■ Make sure that your questions are open ended to encourage discussion among participants.

■ Begin questions with "who," "what," "when," "how," "which," "where," and so forth rather than "why," which can lead to defensive responses.

■ Make sure that questions are on target.

■ Design last questions to allow participants to reflect, bring up new material, and gain a sense of closure.

■ Most importantly, make sure the moderator's guide does not look or act like a survey.

Several types of interview questions for focus groups follow (Krueger 1994):

■ **Opening question:** A round-robin question that can be answered quickly and that allows participants to talk about something they have in common (e.g., structured introductions).

■ **Introductory questions:** Questions that introduce the topic, stimulate interaction, and place participants at ease.

■ **Transition questions:** Questions that "help the participants envision the topic in a broader scope." These help participants see how others view an issue, program, event, or problem.

■ **Key questions:** Two to five major questions that "drive the study."

■ **Ending questions:** These questions bring the interview to a close and give participants a chance to bring up material that was not anticipated by the moderator.

Although these suggestions can help structure the moderator's guide, designing focus group questions requires as much art as science.

Expect the moderator's guide to go through many revisions as you streamline and reorganize the flow of questions. The guide is often revised after the first focus group, even if it has been tested with a mock group. Different participant types interpret questions differently, which might not become apparent until you conduct your first group.

Step 4: Set the Tone

Focus groups depend on a warmup period to operate efficiently. This period sets the tone of the group, introduces the moderator and the review process, establishes ground rules, and suggests some important ways in which a focus group is not like other group discussions.

A group that does not go through a sufficient warmup period will likely falter, and participants may express resistance when serious questions are placed on the table. As part of the warmup, the moderator should:

- Ask people to introduce themselves with information that will help everyone understand their contributions (e.g., name, type of work, length of service in the workplace).

- Avoid asking participants to go around the table to introduce themselves (or to answer any question). Rather, "popcorn it" by inviting someone to start and asking others to contribute when they hear something they can relate to or something that is similar to their own situation. This method provides the model for later group interaction.

- Be sure to finish the introductions before getting into content. If someone brings up an interesting issue during the introductions, make a note to bring that issue up when appropriate.

- Review the ground rules highlighted in step 2.

Step 5: Ask Questions the Right Way

Conducting focus groups follows the same basic interviewing principles as conducting individual interviews, but it becomes complicated by the fact that several people are interacting around the same set of questions and responses and that small groups afford more discrete interactions than a dyad (group of two) or triad (group of three). The moderator's guide developed during step 3 helps add structure to the process. Moderators should use the guide while asking questions and should:

- Keep responses on target.

- Be prepared to drop questions or rephrase them.

- Avoid pressing individuals to respond to particular questions.

- Pursue unexpected leads with probes and followup questions

With experience, focus group moderators will develop a keener sense of *how* to ask questions that elicit rich responses from participants. Sometimes asking a question in an unexpected way yields more spontaneous and lively answers. For example, in a series of focus groups that explored how incarcerated individuals in a maximum security facility viewed their physical environment, food, and administration of policies/rules, the moderator asked, "What really bugs you about the way this facility has been run?" instead of the more clinical, "What do you see as the greatest problems facing this facility?" Debate and disagreement yielded deeper and more interesting data than polite conversation in these groups.

A focus group does not consist of going around the room and asking each person to respond to each and every question. This type of serial interviewing probably kills off as much interactive discussion as survey-type questions. Effective moderators inspire participants to ponder how they *feel,* what they *believe,* and what they *think*—and the complexities surrounding each of these types of response.

Step 6: Set an Appropriate Pace

How much time should the moderator spend on each question? Moderators should cover the guide with each focus group to avoid holes in the resulting data (i.e., questions that were not asked or discussed in some groups). This means establishing a relaxed but steady pace as participants work through the guide. Moderators should:

- Develop an appropriate pace that is comfortable for the participants but also ensure that all questions receive ample time for discussion.

- Pace the discussion to finish at the agreed-upon hour.

- Consider doing a mock focus group in advance, which will test both the wording and the timing of the guide. It is much better to adjust wording and flow during a mock group than during the actual focus group, though that also may occur.

- Estimate the number of minutes each question will take, and record the actual number of minutes in the margin of the guide. This will help keep the pace moving.

- Keep the group on task to meet research goals and to start and end the group on time.

Step 7: Enhance Communication through Effective Facilitation

Understanding effective facilitation of small groups, given the complexities of interaction patterns, helps one become a strong moderator.

- Be a good listener.

- Limit the number of participants in each group to preferably 8 and no more than 12 participants.

- Set ground rules: Cell phones and pagers off; everyone participates; respect each other's ideas, feelings, and beliefs; one person talks at a time; avoid interrupting.

- Ensure that all participants have the opportunity to communicate their views.

- Learn each person's name and use it. This personalizes the interaction process and the relationship between the moderator and participants.

- Remember that the moderator's primary role is not decisionmaker, mediator, conflict resolver, or consensus builder. The primary role is to gather data as skillfully, thoroughly, and objectively as possible, and the ultimate goal is to achieve complex interaction, discussion, and debate.

- Stimulate the group to talk to each other, not just to the moderator.

- Do not let domineering or difficult participants take over. If 2 or 3 people take over a group of 10, the moderator is losing data and jeopardizing the scientific value of the process.

- Avoid distracting or prolonged digressions. Keep the group on topic and on task.

- Respond positively to a person's initial attempts to communicate and invite further contributions; this will affect whether he/she will risk contributing again.

- Attend to content—lines of argument, specific responses to questions, probing for deeper meaning, and further ideas.

- Observe, understand, and manipulate the process—nonverbal cues, conflicts, coalition building, scapegoating, participation levels, and more. The key is balance. If a moderator pays too much attention to content-related issues, he/she may lose sight of participants' emotional reactions or to conflicts emerging in the group. Concentrating solely on "covering" every question and closing exactly on time may mean that underlying meanings and motivations are overlooked. On the other hand, if a moderator pays too much attention to the group's emotions, those who want to concentrate on task—solutions, practical activities, or making concrete decisions—will feel frustrated.

- Ask direct questions and avoid restating, which can inadvertently and easily change the meaning of the original question.

- Use *direct hooks* if a few individuals are not participating (e.g., "Jane, how do you feel about this?").

- Be consistent across focus groups. If a moderator asks a question in different ways in subsequent groups, responses cannot be compared in a scientific way.

Step 8: Close the Focus Group Effectively

The moderator should bring the group to closure about 15 minutes before the end of the session. If the group needs more time to complete its discussion, the moderator should ask the group's permission to extend the session. The closure stage allows time for the group to reflect and also to talk about ideas that were brought up during the session but perhaps were not discussed fully. During this stage, the moderator can:

- Return briefly to questions that were left unfinished, clarify certain responses, or ask a new question.

- Enliven closure by asking the group to brainstorm on "key lessons learned" or "main ideas we take away from this group."

- Leave time to ask at least two general closure questions, which enables participants to bring up points not covered during the session. For example, "What else would you like us to know?" "What else would you like us to take back to [the client]?" "Who would like to make the last 'burning point'?" These questions also give quieter people a chance to reveal their unspoken concerns. Sometimes critical points emerge during closure.

- Thank the group as a whole for working hard and for contributing useful data.

References

Billson, J.M., PhD. n.d. "Conducting Professional Focus Group Discussions: A Practical Guidebook." Unpublished document prepared for the National Institute of Corrections, Technical Assistance Number 10B5202.

Krueger, R.A. 1994. *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research,* 2d ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Chapter 5: Team Development Guide

This chapter is designed for agencies and organizations that are interested in developing or enhancing teams and those that have discovered that the Workforce Focus domain was highlighted as an area to improve when they used one of the Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX) Assessment Tools to assess their organizational performance.

In public and private organizations around the world, savvy leaders are moving away from the traditional work structures that inhibit creativity, innovation, change, and progress. These leaders are redesigning the workplace and implementing new concepts of people management to increase productivity, enrich the workplace, and stimulate creativity and innovation. They understand that the shift from a hierarchical command-and-control structure to a team collaboration model may be hard work but is well worth it. As one management consultant so simply stated, "Even the smartest person in the room can't beat a team."

This chapter clarifies the rationale, process, and attributes of effective team building and team development. Part 1 contains information for those who want to build an effective and productive work team. Part 2 presents topics for those who want to move their teams to a higher level of functioning. Part 3 provides checklists of the steps involved in building and enhancing a team. Part 4 presents a team-building case study.

The topics in this chapter can be used as a step-by-step guide to build a new work team. Once team members have read parts 1 and 2 and have a good understanding of team dynamics and the stages of team development, an intact team can pick and choose among the topics to enhance its current functioning. Cross-functional team members can use the steps as a guide to work together. Frontline staff, management, Executive Teams, committees, and temporary teams all can benefit from the topics discussed in this guide.

The more planning that takes place, the smoother a team will function and the greater its productivity. The more care taken at the beginning of a team's life cycle, the less time needed to begin working together productively. Taking the time to go through the steps highlighted in this chapter can increase the chances of success, job satisfaction, and organizational learning.

Part 1: Building a Team

In many correctional organizations, top management makes all the decisions and filters them down through layers to the rank-and-file workers. As time progresses, this command-and-control management structure is being replaced by a more collaborative model in which people at all levels are able to contribute to every aspect of their organization's activities. The goals include increased productivity, a sense of ownership among employees, and creativity and innovation throughout the agency.

Today, getting things done in organizations is often due to teams that plan, implement, and control the work together. The team is a collaborative workgroup, not just assigned staff taking orders and carrying them out. When

team members help set and achieve organizational goals, they become more committed to the success of the organization.

The process of team building is how team success is ensured. It reflects the need to change the way we do business and to create a structure for employees to contribute to the success of the agency. Team building helps members learn about group dynamics, build on their strengths, and minimize their weaknesses and is one of the most important tools in bringing employees together to achieve common goals.

The successful team-building process is dynamic, interactive, and constantly changing. Team members must be creative and flexible while developing and improving working relationships and team functions, effectiveness, and efficiencies.

Defining "Team"

A team is a group of people working together to achieve a common goal. The team comprises team members and a team leader who coordinates and facilitates the team's work. Ideally, each member enhances the functions of other team members, which enables the team to achieve its mission and goals. Thus the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

Effective Team Characteristics

Effective teams:

- Include diverse members.

- Make decisions effectively—is there a decisionmaker on the team, or will all the team decisions go back to the warden, commissioner, chief probation/parole officer, or undersheriff?

Effective team members:

- Share a common identity.

- Have common goals and objectives.

- Share common leadership.

- Share successes and failures.

- Cooperate and collaborate.

- Have specific roles on the team.

Workgroups or Teams?

Not all workgroups are teams. In traditional workgroups, a supervisor directs the workload of staff members, who do what they are assigned to do and are measured by their individual performance. In teams, the team leader guides and facilitates the work of team members, who share the responsibility for getting the work done.

Expectedly, teams often can perform at greater levels than individuals in a workgroup. However, workgroups may be less time consuming and more comfortable for staff who prefer being told what to do. In workgroups, the supervisor directs the activities and sets the goals. In teams, the leader serves as coach and facilitator, the team collaborates to develop goals and assignments, and performance is team based. Workgroups seem less risky, whereas teams tend to encourage creativity, innovation, open communication, and employee buy-in. If staff turnover is high or the supervisor doesn't support a team, it may be beneficial to use workgroups instead. For teams to be successful, they must have the support of agency leadership.

Types of Teams

There are many types of and purposes for teams. These include:

- **Working teams:** Members are assigned to the team on a permanent basis, and they perform the activities that are basic to the operation of the organization. These teams do the frontline work of the organization.

- **Project teams:** Sometimes called project groups, task forces, or special purpose teams, these teams deal with a specific situation or they analyze a problem and make recommendations to resolve it. Members may be fully dedicated to the team or they may be assigned to it for a specific duration or on a part-time basis while continuing normal work duties.

- **Multidisciplinary teams:** Members are assigned to the team from several different disciplines and may serve on a permanent or temporary basis.

- **Self-directed teams:** Members share leadership; the team does not have a permanent leader. Team members agree upon assignments and performance standards, serve to motivate each other, and are not dependent on being directed routinely by a supervisor.

- **Management teams:** These teams make management decisions, and the team members reach consensus on major decisions affecting the organization (Katzenbach and Smith 1993; Pell 1999).

Team Purpose and Mission

When a team is first established, the team leader or the entire team should meet with the agency/department head for input on the purpose, objectives, and expectations of the team and how it will support the agency/department.

It is important to understand the team's purpose to be able to define its mission. The team's mission guides what the team intends to accomplish and provides focus for all of its efforts. It outlines why the team exists as defined by the team leader and its members. The mission motivates, inspires, and directs the team in pursuit of its goals. A successful team marries its purpose and mission to the organization's vision.

A clear mission statement provides the foundation for developing goals and action plans as well as making decisions. All team members should be involved in establishing the team's mission statement. This ensures that all members are engaged, committed, and supportive of the process.

The mission statement must articulate the following:

- **What does the team do?** Defines the purpose of the team and explains what the team does and why it exists.

- **For whom and why does the team perform its functions?** Defines the primary stakeholder(s) and the expected benefits.

- **How does the team conduct its business?** Defines the operating principles that guide how the team functions. These principles or values also guide how the team members work with each other.

Although time consuming, developing a mission statement is key to the team's success. The team leader can facilitate, but it is crucial that all members engage in the process. The mission statement is the foundation for everything the team stands for and believes in, and it guides team operations.

Team Goals

A team goal—long- or short-term—identifies an agreed-upon outcome that team members strive to reach and supports the mission and vision of the team.

Setting goals provides the team members with:

- **A purpose:** What do we need to do?

- **Clarity:** What does the outcome look like?

- **Performance standards:** How will we know when we are successful?

- **Direction:** What path must we follow?

- **A timetable:** When must we complete each goal?

Effective goal statements include the following elements (**SMARTS**) (Lloyd and Halasz 1999):

- **Specific:** Goals must be easily understood and should communicate specifically what the team will accomplish.

- **Measurable:** Goals must be easily measured so that there is no question as to whether they have been achieved or not.

- **Achievable:** Goals must be achievable and not too difficult or too easy. This saves frustration in not being able to achieve the goal and avoids wasting time. If the goal is not challenging enough, the team may lack the motivation and commitment to accomplish it.

- **Relevant:** Goals must be relevant, support the team's mission, and be aligned with the organization's vision for the future.

- **Time limited:** Goals must have specific deadlines for completion to avoid procrastination.

- **Shared:** Goals must reinforce commitment and clarify direction and purpose.

Goals provide focus, motivation, commitment, and direction for good teamwork and the effective use of team/ agency resources.

Team Boundaries and Operating Principles

It is important for teams to have clear boundaries so that team members, managers, and others understand the team's responsibilities. The team should know what it does and does not control in addition to what it should and should not be consulted on. Organizational policy, laws, regulations, and the like are always considered outside of the team's boundaries. As teams form, determining these boundaries is crucial to the team's (and, ultimately, the organization's) success.

Sometimes the boundaries include physical spaces, such as a housing unit or a geographic area (parole district). Other times, the boundaries are not as visible. They can include the decisions that the team can make, those that need to be negotiated with management or other teams, and those that are out of the team's control (decision-making boundaries) and the tasks the team is charged with doing and their performance expectations (work task boundaries).

It also is important for the team to establish operating principles, which provide a roadmap for working together by identifying shared values.

Decisionmaking

The process of deliberation, in which team members arrive at a decision, judgment, or conclusion, is critical for effective teamwork. Getting clear about what decisions are within the team's control is essential to understanding the team's boundaries.

Working with management, teams should identify their decisionmaking boundaries (Rehm 1999):

■ Decisions and tasks that are owned by the team:

- How members interact.

- Members' daily work assignments.

■ Areas outside the team's control:

- Legal obligations.

- Organization policy.

- Union contracts.

- Labor management agreements.

- Agency policy.

■ Decisions that need to be negotiated with management and/or other teams:

- Resource requests.

- Changes/improvements to work tasks and processes.

- Reallocation of personnel to help another team that is temporarily short staffed or to get help from other teams when the team is short staffed.

■ Decisions the team is consulted on, but not responsible for making.

Decisions can be classified into three different categories:

1. **Complex decisions** require large amounts of information and the involvement of all team members.

2. **Yes-and-no decisions** involve two alternatives—to either accept or reject the proposal.

3. **Single-course-of-action decisions** involve determining whether the single proposed measure should be implemented.

Work Tasks

The work that is assigned to the team is negotiated with management and sometimes other teams. This can be done in an open setting or it can be predetermined by management alone with teams assigned their area of responsibility for work tasks.

The team needs to understand its work expectations clearly. The team's goals should give an adequate picture of what the team is expected to accomplish, what success looks like, and how to measure performance.

Once the team's work has been determined, the team now needs to decide how the work should be done. To do so, the team could:

■ Make a list of work tasks.

■ Under each task, list the skills, knowledge, and number of staff required to do the work.

■ Identify which team members have the appropriate skills and knowledge.

■ Assign the work tasks to team members.

■ If there is a gap between the number of team members with the skills needed for a particular task and the number of team members required to do the task effectively, identify those team members who will get training in those skills.

■ Determine when and how to measure each team member's performance and the collective performance of the team.

■ Create regular reviews of this work assignment process, incorporate new tasks that may arise, and eliminate tasks that no longer need to be done.

■ Share results with management for feedback.

This process can also be used to create professional development plans for teams and team members. As mentioned in the list above, if a team discovers that it does not have enough members fully trained in the skills and

knowledge for a particular work task, it can decide who should receive the necessary training. The team also may find that certain individuals express interest in learning skills for different tasks, which can then be incorporated into the development plans. This will enable the team to keep up to date on skills and to make sure that its members have the skills and knowledge required to accomplish all of the team's work effectively.

Operating Principles

Operating principles, or ground rules, must align with organizational values and codes of ethics and conduct and should be shared with management. A team's operating principles might look something like this:

In addition to following the code of conduct, we as a team will:

- Encourage open communication and dialogue among all members.
- Work collaboratively to solve conflicts.
- Treat each other with respect at all times.
- Listen to the viewpoints of all team members.
- Be dependable and timely.
- Make and keep commitments.
- Be accountable for all of the work that is assigned to the team.
- Treat offenders/clients with respect and dignity.

By establishing these ground rules, the team may avert misunderstandings or unintended behaviors that could negatively affect its success.

Stages of Team Development

Understanding team development stages, and the roles and interactions that affect the team's process, is critical to the team's success. Many similar models describe the process of team development and its progression. The widely accepted Tuckman Model (Tuckman and Jensen 1977) suggests that the process occurs in five predictable and sequential stages:

1. Stage 1: Forming.
2. Stage 2: Storming.
3. Stage 3: Norming.
4. Stage 4: Performing.
5. Stage 5: Adjourning.

The inference is that all teams must progress through each of these stages to be fully functional and successful.

Stage 1: Forming

The forming stage of team development is when the team is just coming together. It is often characterized by a high dependence on the leader for guidance and direction, shyness, uncertainty, and cautiousness with guarded interactions among team members. Other characteristics of this stage include the following:

■ Team members test the tolerance of the team leader and explore the boundaries of acceptable behavior.

■ Team members are usually polite and noncommittal, although extroverts may rapidly assume some kind of leadership role.

■ Team members may be struggling with feelings of inclusion and a sense of belonging.

■ Individual roles are unclear.

The team leader can steer the team through this stage by:

■ Sharing relevant information.

■ Encouraging open dialogue.

■ Providing structure.

■ Directing team issues.

■ Developing a climate of trust and respect.

Stage 2: Storming

The storming stage of development reflects competition; strained relationships; disagreements; jockeying for position, influence, and authority; and power struggles among team members. Team conflict usually involves issues of power, leadership, and decisionmaking. Characteristics of this stage include the following:

■ Conflict is unavoidable.

■ It is the most crucial stage through which the team must work.

■ It is the most uncomfortable phase of the group's tenure.

■ Decisions do not come easily.

■ Team members challenge differences in attempts to regain their individuality and influence.

■ Each member is addressing the issue of control and determining whether it is safe to be a member of the team.

■ Members either engage actively in the process or disengage due to the intensity of interactions among team members.

■ Working toward task accomplishment is paramount, and relationship building sometimes takes a back seat to team collaboration.

Team productivity remains low but the energy of the team is high. The team leader/member can direct the team through this stage by:

- Focusing the team on goals to avoid the distraction of relationships and emotional issues.

- Engaging team members in joint problem solving.

- Clarifying the team purpose.

- Discussing and reinforcing operating principles.

- Encouraging communication.

- Supporting collaborative team efforts.

Stage 3: Norming

The norming stage of team development is characterized by agreement and consensus among team members. After working through the storming stage, team members discover that they do share common interests. Characteristics of this stage include the following:

- Members learn to appreciate their differences.

- Members respect and respond well to the team leader.

- Members work better together.

- Members solve problems together.

- Commitment and unity are strong among team members.

During this stage, team productivity increases and relationships based on trust evolve. The team leader can direct the team through this stage by:

- Talking openly about issues and concerns.

- Engaging in fun and social activities.

- Giving positive and constructive feedback.

- Supporting consensual decisionmaking efforts.

- Delegating to team members as much as possible.

Stage 4: Performing

The performing stage of team development is the result of working through the first three stages and establishing a stable group structure. By this time, team members are more strategically aware and have a clear understanding of their purpose. The team has a shared vision and is motivated to accomplish the mission. Having now learned how to work together as a fully functioning team, members can:

- Define tasks.

- Work out their relationships successfully.

- Retain the team's high degree of autonomy.

- Manage their conflicts.

- Work together to accomplish the mission.

- Look after each other and maintain open lines of communication.

- Ensure that the team does not need to be instructed or assisted.

During this stage, the team has a sense of its own identity, and team members are committed to the team and its goals. The team leader can assist the team by:

- Observing the team and offering feedback when requested.

- Supporting new ideas and outcomes.

- Encouraging ongoing self-assessment.

- Developing team members to their fullest potential.

- Looking for ways to increase the team's capacity.

- Allowing members to make necessary changes to team process and structure.

Stage 5: Adjourning

The adjourning stage is about completion and disengagement, both from the process/tasks and from the team. It is the breakup of the group, hopefully when the mission is accomplished. Although not part of the group development process, it is important for the leader to recognize the team's accomplishments and have members leave feeling satisfied and proud. Because of the strong bonding that may have occurred in the development stages, there may be a sense of loss and insecurity among some team members.

In summary, all teams must go through stages of development, and all stages must be experienced by the team members if the team process is to be successful. Any change in the composition of the team or its leadership requires returning to the forming stage. In addition, if the team does not pay attention to the needed activities in any one stage, it may have to return to that stage, which would cause delays. The storming stage is the most difficult to work through and will require the team leader's patience and direct intervention. Paying attention to the adjourning stage will enhance opportunities and support for the establishment of other teams in the agency.

Team Member Roles

As team development progresses, members settle into individual roles by mutual consent. Some members will spend time on interpersonal issues while others will be very task oriented. Part of effective team development is how members test issues such as roles in the team and how decisions are made. This allows them to learn how

each team member responds to issues and the decisionmaking process, which will give them practical decision-making experience and build a habit of agreement before more challenging issues arise (Benne and Sheats 1948).

Effective teams require the participation of team members in both task and interpersonal (or process) areas to develop into fully functioning entities. For teams to maximize their performance, it is important that each team member understands and plays the appropriate role at the right time. Building an effective team depends on managing the relationships between the dynamics of task and process.

Task-Oriented Roles

The task-oriented roles that team members play are identified by the "whats" and "whys" of the team's work. Task roles include establishing the team: its mission, operating principles, goals, and member roles. The accomplishment of these tasks drives the team toward its work-related objectives.

According to Benne and Sheats (1948), some task-oriented roles played by team members include information giver, opinion giver, consensus seeker, and recorder.[2] No single team member has to perform every task role. Different members can play different roles, and any single team member can play several roles at different times during team activities.

Because teams in their initial stages of development are primarily task oriented, the roles team members play can cause the team to produce lower output. For example, there could be a clash in the roles of information giver and opinion giver. The development of the team is limited unless it can move beyond the initial task-oriented role phase of the team.

A task-dominated team focuses primarily on the team's mission, often neglecting process factors. Team members compete with each other at the expense of working together in a collaborative manner. This type of behavior can result in anger, resentment, and alienation—all of which lead to poor morale and frustration. If the team fails to manage the task-dominated process during the early stages of team development, it may not be successful.

Process-Oriented Roles

The process roles that team members play contribute to the positive functioning of the team. They refer to the personal and social needs of members and support a sense of team cohesiveness. It is the "how" dynamic that team members use to accomplish tasks. In comparison to task-oriented roles, process-oriented roles focus on the team members' needs concerning commitment, dependence, and involvement.

Building a true sense of teamwork requires managing the team members' process roles. Process roles, like task roles, can hinder or facilitate the team's interaction.

According to Benne and Sheats (1948), some process-oriented roles played by team members include encourager, compromiser, observer, and follower.[3]

---

[2] For descriptions of these and other team roles, see "Benne and Sheats' Group Roles," *www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_85.htm,* accessed April 16, 2012.
[3] Ibid.

Involvement of Both Roles

Team members need to feel that they are an integral part of the team's activities. Involvement is the most important incentive that fosters effective teamwork; the more members work together, the more interdependence evolves. In general, task-oriented roles have a tendency to dominate during the early stages of the team's development, whereas process-oriented roles increase in importance during the later team-building stages. As the team matures, task and process roles parallel each other in importance, which contributes to the effective functioning of the team. Individual contribution becomes secondary to the overall team effort. The balance between task and process roles is critical to the evolution of a successful team.

Successful teams have members who play various task and process roles. The greater understanding that members have of these roles and consequences, the better equipped the team is to accomplish overall team goals.

Team Communication: Task and Process

People attach different meanings to words, sounds, and nonverbal gestures as they attempt to communicate and understand each other. Communication problems develop when team members do not share a common language or understand the difference between facts, feelings, values, and opinions.

A typical task-oriented team discusses issues such as mission, goals, policy, deadlines, and performance measures, whereas a typical process-oriented team discusses feelings, values, and cooperation. Although the communication among members is related in its purpose, the mismatch of task- and process-oriented communication may result in team member miscommunication.

Task-Oriented Communication

The statement "I think that … " is indicative of the speaker using task-oriented communication, which is analytical, linear, explicit, verbal, auditory, concrete, active, and adaptive.

Following are some task statements that team members may make:

- "Nothing else matters except achieving our team mission."

- "We must act immediately."

- "Personal feelings have nothing to do with our work."

Process-Oriented Communication

The statement "I feel … " is indicative of the speaker using process-oriented communication, which is intuitive, spontaneous, emotional, visual, and innovative.

Following are some process statements that team members may make:

- "It feels good when we all work together."

- "I am concerned that we aren't getting along as a team."

■ "Let's relax and lighten up our discussions."

Effective communication results when team members take responsibility for their thoughts and feelings and communicate using both task- and process-oriented communication.

Team Job Satisfaction

In general, members of high-functioning work teams find that they are more satisfied with their work than when working in a more traditional workgroup. Fred Emery and Einard Thorsrud, social scientists from the Tavistock Institute in London, recognized six criteria for productive work. They found that if the following six criteria are maximized for each member of an organization, job satisfaction and productivity increase (Rehm 1999):

1. **Elbow room for decisionmaking.** People need to feel that they have room to make decisions about their work that they can own, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This means that staff know the policies, procedures, and processes and are knowledgeable enough to make decisions about how to act. This is done in the context of the team and the larger organization. Teams learn that some members need more elbow room and others need more direction.

2. **Opportunity to learn on the job and go on learning.** All humans have a basic need to learn, whether they are at work or on their own time. People work hard to improve their performance. On-the-job training and further academic coursework are common in any correctional workplace. Many people spend their own time at the driving range improving their golf swing, preparing for citizens' races on foot or by bike, at the stable improving their skills as equestrians, in the bowling alley working for more strikes and fewer spares, and the like. Learning is enhanced when people can:

   a. Set goals that are reasonable challenges.

   b. Get feedback on their performance in a timely manner so that they can change their behavior.

3. **Variety.** To avoid boredom and to mitigate fatigue, people need a satisfying rhythm to their work that sets reasonable challenges and has some variety. As there is often lots of rote work that needs to be accomplished, members can negotiate with each other to get it done, recognizing that if one person has to do it all the time, that may create carelessness as boredom sets in. Understanding that members need variety in their work can make for a more equitable distribution of work, ensuring that all is accomplished, on time and effectively.

4. **Mutual support and respect.** Successful teams set up conditions in which people are encouraged to work together to achieve goals and outcomes. Pitting people against each other—creating systems that only allow one person to win if someone else loses—tends to keep the focus on conflict and off of working together.

5. **Meaningfulness.** People want to feel that what they do at work is important to their lives and to the larger social environment. "People don't produce to live, they live to produce" (Marrow 1969). In this context, meaningfulness is defined as the worth and quality of the product or service *and* having knowledge about the whole product or service that the organization produces. Often, jobs are considered meaningless by staff when they can only see their small part of the final product, service, or result. Thus, they cannot see their work's meaning. When work is socially useful and people see the whole product, they can see a connection between the work they do every day and the rest of the world.

6. **A desirable future.** People need to have a job that can lead them to a desirable future, although they *may* not be looking for promotions. However, people want to know that they are on a path that will allow them to learn new skills, gain knowledge, and grow personally and professionally.

When teams discuss how each member feels about these criteria—how much or how little each person needs—they can then create work assignments that maximize each other's needs.

Part 2: Enhancing Team Effectiveness

Barriers and Keys to Team Success

Everything included in this chapter so far has been a key to team success and is only scratching the surface. Although this section appears to apply only to higher functioning teams, it actually applies to teams of all levels of performance.

Barriers to Team Success

The two main barriers to team creativity, productivity, and innovation (performance) are organizational impediments and workload pressure.

1. **Organizational impediments** refer to an organizational culture that restricts creativity through internal political issues and problems, criticizes new ideas harshly, encourages destructive internal competition, causes people to avoid taking personal/professional risks, and maintains an overemphasis on the status quo. In these kinds of organizations, one commonly finds the following:

    a. Deep cynicism and negativity.

    b. Negative, destructive criticism.

    c. Emphasis on the past as the only way to do things.

    d. Very formal procedures that are unnecessary (and in the case of correctional institutions, failure to recognize when some procedures must be very formal and some formality is unnecessary).

    e. No risk taking; doing everything exactly by the book, even when everyone knows there are better ways to operate.

    f. Pressure to conform at all costs.

2. **Workload pressure** means extreme time pressures and unrealistic expectations for production that cause a distraction from independent thought and creative work. Teams that perform poorly because of these barriers operate in an environment that:

    a. Piles on too much work.

    b. Fails to allow sufficient time to do necessary tasks.

c. Presents a high degree of distractions.

d. Imposes unrealistic expectations.

Keys to Team Success

In *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *Principle-Centered Leadership,* Covey (1989, 1991) explains that the most effective people and outstanding leaders of teams focus on what they can control.

Many things are outside of a team's locus of control, but eight factors have been shown to be essential for creativity, productivity, and innovation in every team and workgroup. The factors have been tested and retested at better than 93-percent validity and reliability for more than 30 years (Covey 1989). The degree to which organizations and teams are able to address these factors determines their level of performance:

1. Be proactive; be responsible for one's life.

2. Begin with the end in mind; know what the desired future state is.

3. Put first things first; be organized.

4. Think win-win; find mutually beneficial solutions.

5. Listen to understand first; then try to be understood.

6. Cooperate with others; create synergy.

7. Look for development opportunities—personal and professional.

8. Move from excellence to greatness; challenge oneself to higher performance.

According to Amabile (1998), the following factors stimulate team and organizational performance, all of which are within one's control to improve or change:

■ **Freedom:** Individuals decide what work to do or how to do it and have a sense of control over the quality of the job and how to do it.

■ **Challenging work:** Team members feel that they do challenging and important work.

■ **Sufficient resources:** The team has access to appropriate resources, including funds, materials, facilities, and information.

■ **Supervisory encouragement:** The supervisor is a good work model, sets goals appropriately, supports the team with his/her actions, values individual contributions, and shows confidence in the team.

■ **Teamwork group supports:** The team is made up of diversely skilled members who communicate well, are open to new ideas, constructively challenge each other's work, trust and help one another, and feel committed to the work they are doing.

■ **Organizational encouragement:** The best teams work in organizations that encourage creativity through fair, constructive judgment of ideas; reward and recognize creative work and initiative; have mechanisms in place

for developing new ideas; and allow ideas to flow. In these organizations, everyone shares the same common vision for higher performance.

Team Dysfunction

Do these things well and your team will be successful. Ignore them at your peril.

— Tom Ward

What must be overcome for a team to become outstanding—a team that is able to accomplish the goals and outcomes that it sets out to attain—is not as challenging as it seems, but arriving at that state takes work and discipline.

It's important to value team-focused energy over the contributions of the solo player. Have you known a person who was so smart that he/she belonged to Mensa, but who was ineffective at work because his/her interpersonal skills prevented team participation? Team effort, the synergy from drawing on the strengths of each contributor, trumps individual effort and single-source talent every time. This is as true in correctional institutions as it is in Fortune 500 companies and aircraft carriers. It is especially important for wardens or senior managers because the climate that feeds team effectiveness throughout the organization is strongly influenced by their behavior.

One of the most compelling and thoughtful bodies of work on team effectiveness and behavior comes from Patrick Lencioni, who has written extensively on five dysfunctions of teams. The dysfunctions are arrayed in a pyramid, much like Abraham Maslow's famous "hierarchy of needs" theory. Lencioni (2002, 2005) states that a team can overcome each of these five dysfunctions by practicing the behaviors that will counteract each one:

1. **Absence of trust.** Outstanding teams have members who trust each other at a deep, fundamental level. This is not *predictive* trust, in which someone's behavior is known so well that others can predict that person's reaction when certain buttons get pushed. In this case, trust is an ability to share one's vulnerability, to say one doesn't know, and to ask for help and recognize weakness. The best teams are those that can accept members as adults, with no baggage, no subterfuge, and no secret agendas.

2. **Fear of conflict.** Only a team that has mastered mutual trust can be free to argue about important issues in a constructive, productive way. People can be passionate about their ideas without damaging the self-esteem of others or alienating relationships. A healthy climate for conflict requires openness to objection and debate and is neither openly hostile nor artificially harmonious. Fear of conflict can cause people to agree in the team setting and then sabotage the agreement when the meeting is over. When conflicts can be resolved effectively, teams are free to address commitment issues (see next dysfunction).

3. **Lack of commitment.** Teams that can mix it up and debate on an issue can agree to a consensus even when everyone may not be pleased from an individual perspective. A well-functioning team will always be committed to the team effort and will do what is best for the greater organization's team, even at the expense of sacrificing a short-term win for a smaller part of an organization, a unit, or a person. This reflects a personal maturity level that takes considerable work. After all of the ideas are put out on the table and everyone understands where the minority views lie, all commit to do what is best for the team.

4. **Avoidance of accountability.** Teams that practice effective accountability don't rely on the team leader as the primary source of accountability. Team success or failure is on everyone's shoulders. These teams call their peers on lapses and take responsibility for each member's success.

5. **Inattention to results.** Teams that master trust, conflict, commitment, and accountability will normally have what it takes to consistently put their individual interests aside and give it up for the larger team. To help them do this, it's a good idea to discuss what success looks like, how they know when they are performing well as a team, why they need to do it, and how they will measure success so they know exactly when they are off track. This may entail multiple discussions about acceptable behaviors and those that will not be tolerated.

There is much more to be said about each of these dysfunctions and well-designed facilitation practices to enhance results. Further reading of Lencioni's work will increase an organization's ability to recognize and deal with these five dysfunctions effectively (Lencioni 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008).

Team-Based Organizations

Some organizations are becoming more team based and are moving toward a hierarchy of function rather than the more traditional hierarchy of position. Teams have more autonomy and more control over their decisionmaking and

the way they get their work done. As leadership moves to a more distributive way of operating, effective teams become critical to the organization's success, and leadership is shared with people at all levels taking responsibility for their part of the organization.

This does not mean that "anything goes" and that anarchy reigns. Team-based organizations require careful planning, open communication, and strict accountability. High-quality policies, procedures, and processes help everyone understand what is expected and allow for uniformity of processes when necessary. Teams take responsibility for getting their work done and for producing results that are up to set standards. What leaders usually find in team-based organizations is that many teams usually exceed expectations.

As exhibit 4 suggests, team-based organizations have teams at all levels: leadership, management, and frontline. In this type of structure, each team needs to be certain of its purpose, mission, goals, and processes and its relationships among team members and with other teams, management, leadership, and appropriate stakeholders. Addressing the topics covered in this chapter is critical to the successful operation of each team and to the entire team-based organization.

Exhibit 4: Team-Based Organizations
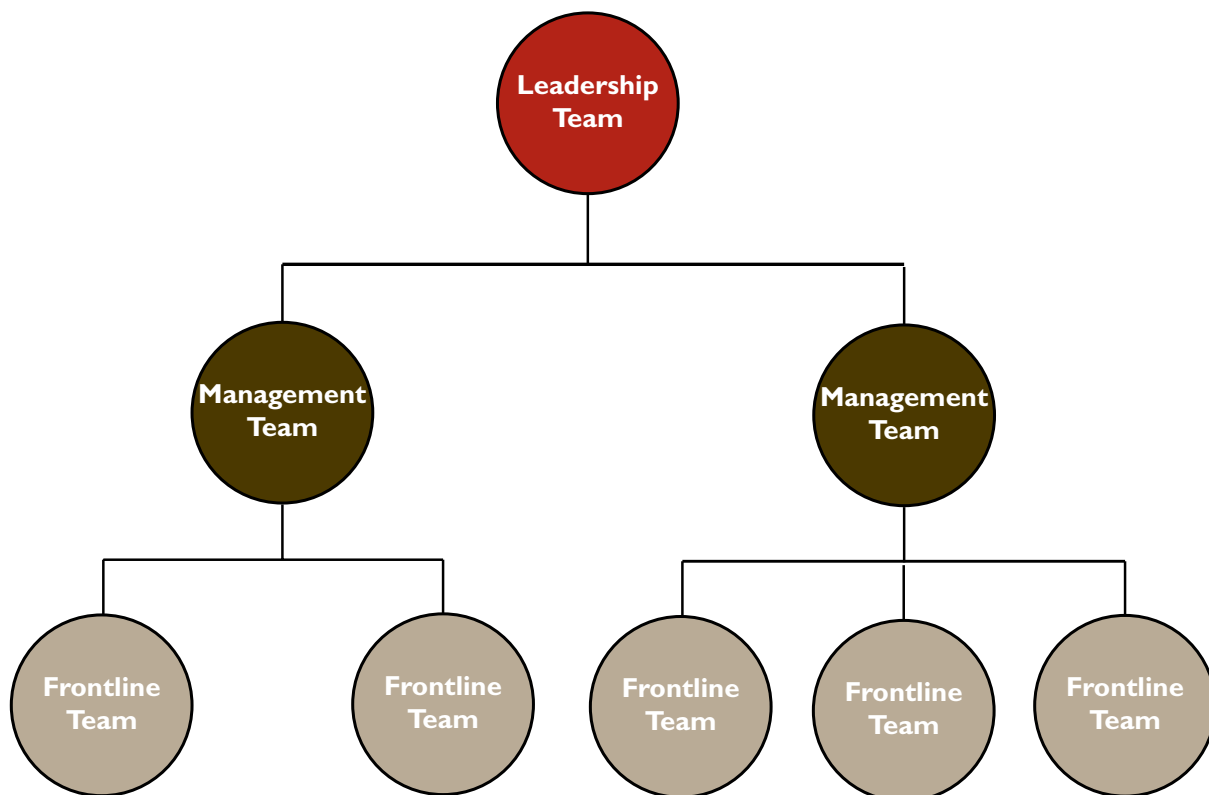
Part 3: Team Development and Enhancement Checklists

The checklists in this section are designed to help those who want to build a new team, enhance an intact team, and help a team deal with productivity, decisionmaking issues, team functioning, and other challenges. When following the step-by-step process of building or enhancing a team described in parts 1 and 2 of this chapter, you can use this section for quick clarification of what is involved in each step.[4]

This section is also useful to new members who may be added to the team at times to manage the workload. These members can review the checklists below (and parts 1 of 2 of this chapter) to help them learn to work in a team environment and learn to make their team as effective as it can be.

Building a Team

Step 1: Team Purpose and Mission

- Define the team's mission.

- Articulate the mission statement.

Step 2: Team Goals

- Determine team boundaries.

- Identify work tasks.

- Establish operating principles.

- Agree on a decisionmaking process.

Step 3: Team Member Roles

- Identify task-oriented roles.

- Identify process-oriented roles.

- Understand the involvement of both task- and process-oriented roles.

Step 4: Team Communication: Task and Process

- Understand task-oriented communication.

- Practice process-oriented communication.

Step 5: Team Job Satisfaction

- Understand the six criteria for productive work.

- Use the six criteria to enhance job satisfaction.

---

[4] The materials in parts 1 and 2 should be read and understood before moving on to parts 3 and 4.

Enhancing a Team

Step 6: Review of the "Building a Team" Steps

- Identify issues that the team wants to improve.

- Revisit those steps that address the improvement areas.

- Review step 5—team job satisfaction—if the team has new members or new work assignments.

Step 7: Stages of Team Development

- Review the stages to help members understand that any team-related challenges that may arise are a part of the team development process.

- Make sure that members understand how to work through the stages successfully.

Step 8: Barriers and Keys to Team Success

- Review the section on barriers and keys to success in part 2 when teams feel that they are losing their ability to be innovative and creative, when their productivity is lagging, or when they feel their progress is slowing down or being stifled.

- Identify and discuss barriers with management to see what help is possible.

- Conduct this review at the same time as other steps, as the team deems necessary.

Step 9: Team Dysfunction

- Review the team dysfunction section in part 2.

- The five dysfunctions can be helpful for teams to discuss when faced with challenges related to trust, conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results.

Part 4: Case Study—Teams and Team Building

A state Department of Corrections (DOC) has experienced an increase in workplace safety issues, including workers' compensation claims, reported incidents of accidents and staff injuries, employee sick time use, inmate sick call use, and recent citations from the state Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspectors of code violations. It is apparent to the DOC Executive Team that these issues significantly affect the safe and secure operations of the correctional facilities, the personnel costs related to overtime and workers' compensation, and the costs associated with the delivery of health care to the inmate population. In addition, the citing of OSHA violations also has incurred penalty fees that the agency is obligated to address.

In response, the Executive Team decides to implement a Health and Safety Committee (HSC) at each of its 10 correctional facilities. These multidisciplinary, cross-functional teams will be permanently established by each warden and will be chaired by an experienced, respected, and skilled leader in each facility. The warden will submit a report on the HSC's efforts and results on a quarterly basis to the DOC's operations chief. In addition, the

operations chief will work with human resources and other members of the Executive Team to monitor the efforts of the facility HSCs.

To begin the process of establishing HSCs, the operations chief communicates with the wardens and requests their input on using facility-based teams to address workplace safety and wellness-related issues involving staff, inmates, and visitors. The wardens support the benefits of having such teams and view them as collaborative avenues to address issues that affect the facility users. The operations chief then holds a meeting with the facility wardens and the wardens' designated HSC chairpersons to present the overall goal of the teams and to reinforce the commitment to staff and inmate safety and the expectation that facilities are safe, secure, and in accordance with health and safety codes. Each warden is given oversight responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of the HSC in his/her facility and to measure its ongoing productivity. Each HSC chairperson (chair) is charged with managing the team members in his/her facility, facilitating a meaningful and productive process, guiding the team to achieve outcomes, and inspiring members to be higher performers not just on the team but also in relation to the HSC efforts in the facility. The HSC members in each facility are to represent all facets of their facility's operations and will be provided time away from their regular full-time duties to participate in HSC activities.

At 1 of the 10 facilities that will have an HSC, the warden, HSC chair, and senior leaders identify appropriate members to serve on the HSC. These 12 team members represent correctional line staff, supervisors, managers, program and treatment staff, and staff from maintenance, food services, health services, labor unions, fiscal services, and human resources. The diversity and skills of the members are taken into consideration to achieve a balanced, competent, and committed work team.

At the first HSC meeting, the warden discusses the importance of the team's work. Members are offered an opportunity to address the warden and to ask any questions. The warden openly gives the chair the authority to manage the HSC team members and activities and to seek and procure resources as needed. The warden leaves the first meeting and allows the chair to assume the leadership position and begin the team-building process.

The chair facilitates the introduction of team members and reinforces their experience, skills, and value after they introduce themselves. The chair and the team members then begin the process of developing a mission statement. This process takes time but is critical to the HSC's ultimate success. A mission statement is developed, all agree on it, and the team is now laying the foundation for its purpose and direction. The facility HSC members promote their positions on the team, and the mission statement is promulgated throughout the facility to encourage other staff and inmates interested in meeting the mission. As an example, the Medium Security Correctional Facility (MSCF) mission statement, forged by the HSC members, states the following: "The mission of the MSCF–Health and Safety Committee is to enhance facility safety and security for staff, inmates, and visitors by developing strategies and programs for supporting good health and well-being."

After developing an agreed-upon mission statement, the HSC has more team-building work to do. The team meets to set goals so that there is consensus among members regarding what needs to be done, how it can be done, who will do each activity to optimize everyone's skills, what is a reasonable timeframe for each goal, and how to ensure that the team stays focused and works together. The team members establish operating principles to define their values and to guide them in conducting business. These operating principles and values cover honesty, trust, integrity, open communication, respect, inclusiveness, professionalism, regular attendance, active participation at meetings, commitment to and achievement of goals, and so forth. The principles form the basis for effective working relationships and team cohesion. The team members establish a process for making decisions that involves a

recommendation or proposal offered, followed by team discussion and a majority vote for approval/disapproval. The team defines appropriate boundaries of scope and action. These include not attempting to circumvent OSHA regulations, deny the contract provisions of the labor unions, interfere with the privacy rights of staff engaged in the employee assistance program, or ignore HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) protections for staff and inmates. In addition, the team members begin identifying tasks that each member can be depended on to achieve, based on their skills and experience.

To further clarify the team-building process, the chair reviews the stages of team development. The four critical stages the HSC needs to be aware of are the forming, storming, norming, and performing stages through which all teams inherently must transition. The team recognizes that it is presently in the forming stage and understands that the storming stage is part of a process to achieve team effectiveness and not a time of failure or lost hope. Getting through the often-turbulent storming stage means moving in the direction of being a higher performing team.

The chair also addresses the roles of team members related to task and process as well as some communication styles of each. Through this introspective review, team members understand individual and group communication dynamics and often-used terms that illustrate their understanding of the value of both. For instance, when a member focuses on task and offers an emphatic opinion that "this has to be done," another member ensures that a process perspective is considered to include the thoughts and feelings of others. Being aware that an effective team involves the balance of these two dynamics encourages dialogue and respect among members.

Of course, not all meetings are pleasant and productive, and not all members embrace the roles and opinions of others. The storming stage is characterized by discord and frustration; often, members do not follow the agreed-upon operating principles in meetings. The chair, recognizing this stage, begins each meeting with a review of the mission, values, and operating principles of the team. The chair emphasizes that opinions and expressions are welcome, but that they need to be professional and helpful to the team. Mindful that a couple of members lack commitment to the team and are not attending the meetings, the chair speaks to them individually to assess their willingness to continue in this critical teamwork. At least one member does not feel comfortable engaging in discussion for fear that another team member will dismiss or disparage any feelings or opinions offered. Another member routinely checks e-mails during the course of the meetings and often misses important comments and discussions. The chair initially addresses these nonproductive activities, and gradually other members begin to verbally reinforce the behaviors that were productive to the team. In time, the members are satisfied with their HSC involvement and they and their peers recognize the fruits of the team's efforts.

The measure of team success is not based solely on the team members getting along with each other. The warden is interested in the team's efforts in enhancing worker and inmate safety and well-being. As the HSC becomes more cohesive, the strategies and procedures offered by the team members, as well as those solicited from the facility staff, inmates, and visitors, begin to show a positive impact. The facility conducts a survey regarding staff job satisfaction and solicits ideas to enhance the quality of work life, many of which are implemented. Enhanced staff training regarding emergency response is implemented, and the number of staff injuries involving responses to "codes" (i.e., emergencies) is reduced. Staff begin using protective gloves when conducting cell/dormitory shakedowns, which results in fewer cuts and injuries. Incidents of MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) are reduced due to the HSC's recommendations regarding a protocol that addresses health services staff screening of inmates, more frequent linens/clothing exchanges for the inmates, and the simple use of hand sanitizers. Employee wellness is reinforced with the establishment of staff workout areas and programs geared toward

good nutrition and weight control. Smoking is banned inside all areas of the facility, and staff are offered smoking cessation support. Inmates attend presentations on how to manage conflict while confined and participate in programs that address idleness and engage them in productive activities. Visitors receive a brochure that encourages them to report any concerns related to the well-being of their confined friends and family members. Family members increasingly report suicide-related concerns, resulting in staff intervention and a reduction in inmate suicide attempts and self-harm. By developing performance measures as one of its many goals, the HSC is able to monitor and benchmark the success of its efforts over time.

The HSCs at each facility continue to be productive and successful vehicles for reducing staff and inmate injuries. The results have reinforced the significance of teams, teamwork, task forces, committees, and workgroups to engage staff in developing solutions and strategies that can have a major impact on moving organizations to achieving higher performance and excellence.

Summary

This chapter was written with a compelling need to be quite clear about mission, vision, values, and strategic directions while affording respect to individual contributions. Leaders must walk the talk on behavior and have a culture that encourages staff to model the same values that senior managers display and encourages all to challenge assumptions. And finally, there must be evidence-based practices that use data to justify decisionmaking.

The process of team building is not easy, but the benefits are immense for moving an agency toward excellence. People working at any level of team development are encouraged to use this information to enhance the way they work together to meet team and organizational goals.

References

Amabile, T.M. 1998. "How to Kill Creativity." *Harvard Business Review* 76(5):76–87.

Benne, K., and P. Sheats. 1948. "Functional Roles of Group Members." *Journal of Social Issues* 4(2):41–49.

Covey, S.R. 1989. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Covey, S.R. 1991. *Principle-Centered Leadership.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Katzenbach, J.R., and D.K. Smith. 1993. "The Discipline of Teams." *Harvard Business Review* 71(1):111–120.

Lencioni, P. 2000. *The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2002. *Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2004. *Death by Meeting.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2005. *Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2006. *Silos, Politics, and Turf Wars.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2008. *The Five Temptations of a CEO.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lloyd, S.R., and I.M. Halasz. 1999. *Building Teams: Skills for the Effective Team Leader.* Washington, DC: American Media, Inc., and the American Correctional Association.

Marrow, A. 1969. The Practical Theorist: *The Life and Work of Kurt Lewin.* New York: Basic Books.

Pell, A.R. 1999. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Team Building.* New York: Alpha Books.

Rehm, R. 1999. *People in Charge: Creating Self Managing Organizations.* Gloucestershire, England: Hawthorne Press.

Tuckman, B., and M.A. Jensen. 1977. "Stages of Small-Group Development Revisited." *Group Organization Management* 2(4):419–427.

Book Summary

The information in *APEX Resources Directory Volume 2* is designed to expand on several topics in the Achieving Performance Excellence (APEX) Guidebook series and to enable readers to easily access the myriad documents and resources at the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Information Center. Using the resources provided here will enable your organization to move along the path of higher performance.

The NIC Information Center and Corrections Community website contain crucial information in the form of NIC publications, other correctional resources, news updates, and discussion forums and cover issues such as research, policy, standards, training, and facility planning. Help and research assistance are provided for those working in corrections, and the opportunity to collaborate with others in the field is provided through forums and networks.

A detailed communications plan is a necessity, especially in corrections. The seven-step plan described in chapter 3 can be adapted for use to communicate with stakeholders about any issue and is specifically written to enable facilities to communicate their plans for starting an APEX Initiative.

Focus groups can be used to gather data to enable change and to help open communication channels, elicit feedback, and engage stakeholders in the process. Different focus groups help target different perspectives on an issue as well as involve different sets of stakeholders. The guide for focus groups in chapter 4 will help an organization start and develop its own groups so that it can gather and use the data to enable higher performance, creating buy-in with stakeholders along the way.

Finally, team development is one of the best ways to move an organization to higher performance, inviting creativity, innovation, and progress through the savvy management of an organization's greatest resource—its people. Building teams effectively, moving teams to higher levels, and the step-by-step process for doing so, as well as a team-building case study, are provided in chapter 5.

Bibliography

Amabile, T.M. 1998. "How to Kill Creativity." *Harvard Business Review* 76(5):76–87.

Benne, K., and P. Sheats. 1948. "Functional Roles of Group Members." *Journal of Social Issues* 4(2):41–49.

Billson, J.M., PhD. 2009. *The Power of Focus Groups: A Training Manual for Social, Policy, and Academic Research.* Barrington, RI: Skywood Press.

Billson, J.M., PhD. n.d. "Conducting Professional Focus Group Discussions: A Practical Guidebook." Unpublished document prepared for the National Institute of Corrections, Technical Assistance Number 10B5202.

Covey, S.R. 1989. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Covey, S.R. 1991. *Principle-Centered Leadership.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Debus, M. 1995. *Handbook for Excellence in Focus Group Research.* Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development, Healthcom.

Katzenbach, J.R., and D.K. Smith. 1993. "The Discipline of Teams." *Harvard Business Review* 71(1):111–120.

Krueger, R.A. 1994. *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research,* 2d ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Lencioni, P. 2000. *The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2002. *Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2004. *Death by Meeting.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2005. *Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2006. *Silos, Politics, and Turf Wars.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. 2008. *The Five Temptations of a CEO.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lloyd, S.R., and I.M. Halasz. 1999. *Building Teams: Skills for the Effective Team Leader.* Washington, DC: American Media, Inc., and the American Correctional Association.

Marrow, A. 1969. *The Practical Theorist: The Life and Work of Kurt Lewin.* New York: Basic Books.

Pell, A.R. 1999. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Team Building.* New York: Alpha Books.

Rehm, R. 1999. *People in Charge: Creating Self Managing Organizations.* Gloucestershire, England: Hawthorne Press.

Slater, R. 2004. *Jack Welch on Leadership.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Torres, C., and D. Fairbanks. 1996. *The ASTD Trainer's Sourcebook Teambuilding.* New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies.

Tuckman, B., and M.A. Jensen. 1977. "Stages of Small-Group Development Revisited." *Group Organization Management* 2(4):419–427.

Welch, J. 2000. *GE 2000 Annual Report.* Fairfield, CT: General Electric Company, *www.ge.com/annual00/index2. html,* accessed November 17, 2011.

Afterword

The APEX Guidebook Series

APEX: Building the Model and Beginning the Journey

Culture and Change Management: Using APEX To Facilitate Organizational Change

Achieving Performance Excellence: The Influence of Leadership on Organizational Performance

Understanding Corrections through the APEX Lens

Applying the APEX Tools for Organizational Assessment

APEX Resources Directory Volume 1

APEX Resources Directory Volume 2

About the Authors

Janet Mancini Billson, PhD, is the director of Group Dimensions International and an adjunct professor of sociology at The George Washington University. A sociologist with a strong background in both research design and group dynamics, Dr. Billson has developed a reputation as a research consultant, a skilled moderator, and a highly motivating trainer. She has conducted social policy research since 1981, serving a wide variety of clients on education, development, health, environment, and policy issues. She conducted training workshops in focus group research in the United States, Japan, Canada, Colombia, Indonesia, Uganda, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, and Zimbabwe. She conducts the annual focus group training for the World Bank's International Program for Development Evaluation Training in Ottawa, Canada.

Nancy Cebula is the owner of and principal consultant with People in Charge. She has been working as a change agent since the 1970s, from early work as a juvenile probation officer to large systems change work as an organization development consultant. She works with clients in the public and private sectors in the United States and internationally. Nancy is a coauthor and contributor to several books, including *Futures that Work: Using the Search Conference to Revitalize Companies, Communities, and Organizations.* The focus of her work is to help groups of people work together to build strong and vibrant organizations through participative planning, work design, change management, and organizational learning.

Theresa Lantz has more than 35 years of experience in the correctional field. Beginning her career as a correctional officer, she served in many public service roles, including counselor, training director, NIC program specialist, warden, and deputy commissioner, culminating with her appointment as the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Correction for more than 6 years. Since retiring from full-time public service in 2009, Theresa has been a criminal justice consultant on training, expert witness issues, facility operation and audits, and project development.

Elizabeth Ritter has worked with at-risk youth as a mentor and teacher in the United States and internationally since 1976 through community programs, internships, nonprofit volunteer work in schools and orphanages, and at a state-run wilderness program for delinquent teens. She is a teacher of middle school through college students and an adult educator and trainer. Her focus is on differentiating curricula to enable higher achievement and to reach those with disabilities, learning challenges, and behavior disorders through various learning modalities and on helping students set goals and monitor their daily progress. She teaches writing and is also an editor and writer for People in Charge.

Tom Ward has more than 35 years of experience in organizational development, change management, and program and operations management in public, private, and nonprofit organizations. His recent work has involved consulting work with senior management teams and policy as well as operational staff in the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Navy, and the National Archives. Areas of consulting and research emphasis include large-scale organizational change, development of high-performance executive leadership teams, project and change management, workforce engagement, organizational work culture, and design and delivery of leadership development programs.