The Paradoxical Principles of the Coaching Conundrum: Individual thriving and triumphal learning

Andrew J May M.S.
Why I am here..

I have a passion for building teams

• Why do some teams work and other’s fail?

• How does one go about making a good team? Where do you start?

• Are there common principles that transcend the contexts of teams?

• I have limited time and resources so where should I spend those building my team?

• Are there mutually exclusive principles that one must choose between when building a team or are the paradoxical principles that need to be balanced?

Working hard for something we don’t care about is called stress. Working hard for something we love is called passion. –Simon Sinek
What is a team? What is a paradox?

Team Definition from Harvard Business

A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

Paradox Definition from Merriam-Webster

- a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained may prove to be well founded or true.
He has always cared more for truth than for consistency. If he saw two truths that seemed to contradict each other, he would take the two truths and contradiction along with them. His spiritual sight is stereoscopic, like his physical sight: he sees two different pictures at once and yet sees all the better for that. –GK Chesterton
Paradox List - Offense vs. Defense

Homogenity vs. Heterogenity
Individual success vs. team success
Intrinsic Motivations vs. Extrinsic Motivations
Autonomy vs. Cohesion
Group Think vs. Dissent
Tough accountability vs. responsive empathy
Intensity vs. Consistency
6 Principles of Building a Championship Culture
by Jeff Jannsen

1. Credible Leaders
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
Picking Credible Leaders: Homogeneity (Same) vs. Heterogeneity (Different)

Homogeneity

- “Great minds think a like.”
  - Greek Proverb
- “A small group of determined and like-minded people can change the course of history.” – Mahatma Gandhi
- “The coming together of like-minded individuals through action is what’s needed to see widespread change for us, our planet & its creatures.”
  — Ian Somerhalder

Heterogeneity

- “If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn’t thinking.”
  — George S. Patton
“Groupthink can become a serious issue- old ideas stay after they’re useful. And new ideas too often don’t get a fair hearing.” — Elizabeth Warren
Pros of Homogeneity

**Pros**

- Speed in simple & stable environments
- No outside input needed
- Cohesion
- Lack of Divisiveness
- Rapid growth
- Example: Bacteria and Hair Growth
Pros of Heterogeneity

Pros

- Diversity, more able to adapt to difficult changing circumstances
- Able to achieve more complex outcomes in complex environments
- Greater range of skill sets and abilities for more varied circumstances
- Like Steel vs. Iron
- All Bigmen team
Heterogenity-fostering dissent

“Polaroid fell due to a faulty assumption. Within the company, there was widespread agreement that customers would always want hard copies of pictures, and key decision makers failed to question this assumption. It was a classic case of groupthink—the tendency to seek consensus instead of fostering dissent. Groupthink is the enemy of originality; people feel pressured to conform to the dominant, default views instead of championing diversity of thought.” -Adam Grant
Ultimately, being a part of a team means competing, working, living and winning and losing together. And in the end, a teammate's nationality, his language, his taste in music or his religion aren't sources of division, but in fact mediums of greater friendship, understanding and success.
Which is it?

Answer: BOTH! They are opposites on a spectrum

Start with Heterogeneity → End with Homogeneity

Start with rigorous debate → End with decisive unified action

Start with Meiosis or sexual reproduction → End with Mitosis or Asexual reproduction

How can you utilize the paradox of homogeneity & heterogeneity in your work?
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1. Credible Leaders
2. Clear and Compelling Vision (Motivation)
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
Extrinsic Motivation vs. Intrinsic Motivation

Daniel H. Pink *Drive*

- Motivation 1.0-Essential Survival Needs
- Motivation 2.0-Carrot/Stick Philosophy (Extrinsic)
- Motivation 3.0- Autonomy, Mastery, Purpose (Intrinsic)
Motivation 3.0 or Intrinsic

PURPOSE

AUTONOMY ← MASTERY
Which is it?

Answer: BOTH! They are opposites on a spectrum

Start with extrinsic → End with Intrinsic
Algorithmic task more extrinsic → Heuristic tasks more Intrinsic
Short task Extrinsic → Long-term Intrinsic

Examples: Microsoft Encarta, Social Media
6 Principles of Building a Championship Culture

1. Credible Leaders
2. Clear and Compelling Vision (Motivation)
3. Core Values (What do you value?)
4.
5.
6.
4P’S
- PLAY HARD
- PLAY TOGETHER
- PLAY SMART
- PLAY PHYSICAL

BASKETBALL CULTURE

FAMILY
The paradox of individual success vs. team success?
How does the individual success vs. Team success fit into the motivation paradigm?
Individual vs. Team

PURPOSE

TEAM

INDIVIDUAL

AUTONOMY

MASTERY
Which is it?

Answer: BOTH! They are opposites on a spectrum

- Recruit for team success → End with individual recognition
- Start with team big picture → End with individual role description
- Win/Lose as a team → Empathize with the individual
6 Principles of Building a Championship Culture

1. Credible Leaders
2. Clear and Compelling Vision (Motivation, Purpose, Meaning)
3. Core Values (What do you value?)
4. Standards of Behavior
5.
6.
Standards of Behavior:

Bring the general & abstract into practical reality

- One simple practice for each value
6 Principles of Building a Championship Culture

1. Credible Leaders
2. Clear and Compelling Vision (Motivation, Purpose, Meaning)
3. Core Values (What do you value?)
4. Standards of Behavior
5. Committed and Unified Team
6. Aligned Systems
Committed & Unified Team

“The difference between involvement and commitment is like ham and eggs. The chicken is involved; the pig is committed.”

Martina Navratilova

“If you hire people just because they can do a job, they’ll work for your money. But if you hire people who believe what you believe, they’ll work for you with blood and sweat and tears.”

–Simon Sinek
Last Paradox: How do we get this championship culture to stick?

Intensity vs. Consistency

"THIS ISN'T WHAT I HAD IN MIND WHEN I SUGGESTED PAINTBALL AS A TEAM-BUILDING EXERCISE!"
Consistency wins!

It's the **consistency** that matters over intensity in anything.
Only going to a weekend seminar doesn't make you a leader.
Meditating once in a while doesn't make you peaceful.
What counts is practicing skills consistently.

“That which we persist in doing becomes easier to do, not that the nature of the thing has changed but that our power to do has increased.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
Questions?

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