

How to Structure a Flexible Workforce

As the workforce moves towards a more open structure to increase efficiency of its resources there are some important things to consider. It is easy to fall into the trap of creating an overly complex and rigid structure from which to manage businesses, projects and tasks. When dynamic teams are deployed to execute a given objective it is important to also establish an open management style.



A dynamic team is defined as a group or team is brought together on a temporary basis to execute the defined mission within a provided time and budget. Some of the unique issues of dynamic teams are as follows:

- Team members come and go
- Work tasks are often reassigned to new team members
- The number of players involved is more than using traditional methods
- Point to point communications and exchanges become more difficult and confusing to the process if not managed correctly
- Team information flow is accelerated

- Task management needs to be divided between a management view and execution view
- Traditional file sharing methodologies do not work for dynamic teams
- Security of information needs to be handled in a dynamic way

Dynamic teams are a much better utilization of an entities resources, they allow the use of external players to contribute in unique ways. Dynamic teams have been shown to create more innovative solutions at a reduced cost and within shorter periods of time. However, rigid project planning is not the way to implement a dynamic team, this rigid process can be very detrimental to the dynamic teams execution, these teams have a fluid and ever changing set of interactions, problems, and solutions that need to be relayed to the right entity at the right time. Some pros and cons to consider when establishing the open management style and systems to monitor and control such are critical to the success of the dynamic team.

Pros to Consider

- Efficient Structure
- Dynamic Organization capabilities
- Deadline monitoring
- Capture of all communications, issues, content and final work product
- Risk mitigation

Cons to Avoid

- Rigid structure that inhibits creativity
- Limits on spontaneity
- Too much conformity
- Information overload

Implementation of this new way of thinking and working requires people to abandon some of the preconceived notions that more structure is the answer to increased productivity. Better solutions come from dynamic solutions that are sourced from diverse sources in managed way. In this regard managed is not a physical manager dictating the interactions, but a system that facilitates and monitors the interactions provided needed information at exactly the right time.

About the author: David Smith is an MBA graduate of Columbia Business School, a Professional Engineer, studied Electrical Engineering at the University of Washington, developer of multiple software products, and the founder of Qikspace (A personal information management productivity tool).