VALUE IN YOUR TEAM

At one point or another, each of us have worked with others on a team: either on a sports team, on stage as part of a musical production, on a school project or in the context of work, like supporting.

For many people the idea of working in a team context is daunting, frustrating and downright unenjoyable. All of this doesn't mean that working on a team is easy. We've all probably had our share of team experiences where slackers who don't pull their own weight take the fun out of teamwork. But this doesn't mean we shouldn't figure out and practice how to build effective teams.

This month we will spend some time talking about why building a strong team is an important aspect of serving and supporting. Here are four initial reasons why unified teams are important.

1 **Working alone makes it harder to get early and continual feedback, therefore decreasing the opportunity for early successes.** Feedback is critical in achieving big and small victories; the earlier that you can get feedback, the less likely that you'll waste time going down the wrong path and earlier you'll know to correct your course.

2 **Working alone reduces learning.** One part of this is related to the first point, where there are fewer people with a shared context to challenge your ideas. Another is that without the support and unity of our teams we become like squirrels: distracted and unable to serve to our best potential because our role becomes about immediate successes rather than long-term stability.

3 **Working on a team increases accountability.** Peer pressure is a powerful force. Particularly if you're working with people whom you respect and don't want to let down, the motivation to help your team succeed can override the dips in motivation that you encounter on days when you're not at your best.

4 **Working on a team increases the "bus factor" for a project.** The bus factor refers to the number of team members that can be hit by a bus (or gets sick, leaves the company, goes on maternity leave, etc.) before a project comes to a complete halt; a higher bus factor reduces risk on a project. A team is not a team if it's future rests on the shoulders of one or two people!

A In your opinion, what is one of the greatest strengths of your team?

B In your opinion, what is one thing you would like to see your team work on?

Seeing as the theme of the month is, "finding value in your team", we encourage you and your team to get together for some form of social gathering.

Take some time and talk about what you might like to do. This could include a 'formal team building" event (if so ask around to see if an external person would help plan), it could mean going for drinks or out for a round of bowling.

If we truly believe that our teams should function as a unified movement, we need to be diligent in making the time to invest and build into each other.

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