Aaron N. Cutshall, MSCIS, MSHI
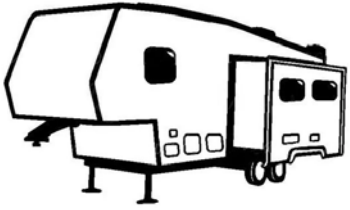
http://www.sqlrv.com

TOP SECRET

SQL Team Six

How to Build Effective Teams

Just who is this guy?

SQL RV

healthfirst
Health Insurance for New Yorkers

Enterprise Data Architect

< > PASS
SQLSATURDAY

Speaker – various events

B.S. Computer Science

M.S. Computer Information Systems

M.S. Health Informatics

Doctorate in Healthcare Administration (Aug 2023)

35+ Years

Something to consider…

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."

Helen Keller (1880–1968)

American educator, advocate for the blind and deaf, and co-founder of the ACLU

Agenda

- Why worry about team effectiveness?
- The six major impacts to team effectiveness:
  - Chain of Command
  - Team Cohesion
  - Standard Operating Procedures
  - Training
  - Mission Objectives
  - After-Action Review
- Afterthoughts

Why Worry About Team Effectiveness?

- Tons of books written on the subject
- The impacts that team effectiveness can have:
  - Goals/Objectives
  - Quality/Performance
  - Morale/Cohesion
  - Burnout/Turnover
  - Cost Effectiveness

Why Worry About Team Effectiveness?

- Improvements must happen at all levels
  - Upper Management
  - Middle Management
  - Team Members
- African Proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

Questions?

Chain of Command (Management)

Chain of Command (Management)

- Common definitions of "management":
  - President (one who presides over or governs others)
  - Director (one who directs or gives directions to others)
  - Manager (one who manages or administers others)
- Compare that to some other terms:
  - Leader (one who inspires others to follow)
  - Coach (one who helps team members improve)
  - Mentor (one who counsels or guides others)
- Examples
  - Toxic Manager
  - Effective Leader

Chain of Command (Management)

- Toxic Management
  - Top 10 characteristics
    - Arrogant
    - Autocratic
    - Irritable
    - Maladjusted
    - Lack of Confidence
    - Incompetent
    - Hierarchical
    - Unrealistic Expectations
    - Symbols of Personal Authority
    - Discriminatory
  - Causes the following problems:
    - Low Morale
    - Low Productivity
    - Conflict
    - Stagnant Innovation
    - High Turnover Rate

Chain of Command (Management)

- Effective Management
  - Top 10 characteristics
    - Honesty & Integrity
    - Confidence
    - Inspire Others
    - Commitment & Passion
    - Good Communicator
    - Decision-Making Capabilities
    - Accountability
    - Delegation and Empowerment
    - Creativity and Innovation
    - Empathy
  - Creates the following benefits:
    - High Morale
    - High Productivity
    - Team Cohesion
    - Encourages Innovation
    - Low Turnover Rate

Chain of Command (Management)

A Boss

- Drives employees
- Depends on authority
- Inspires fear
- Says "I"
- Places blame for the problem
- Uses people
- Takes credit
- Commands
- Says "Go!"
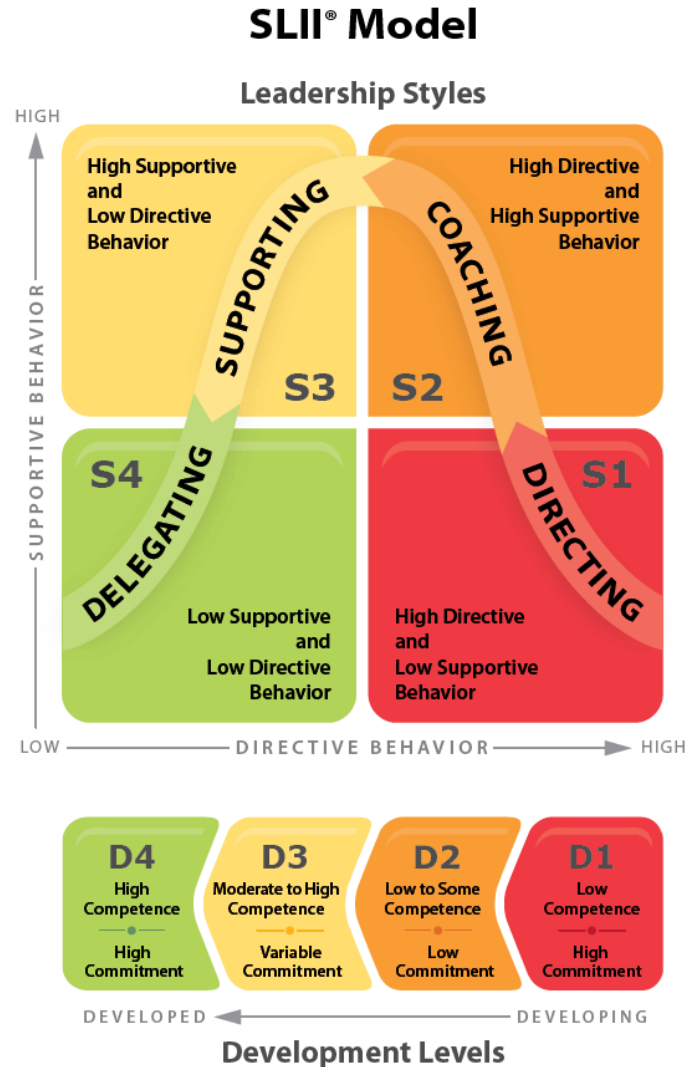- Cares about who's right

A Leader

- Coaches employees
- Depends on goodwill
- Generates enthusiasm
- Says "We"
- Fixes the problem
- Develops people
- Gives credit
- Asks
- Says "Let's go!"
- Cares about what's right

Chain of Command (Management)

Leadership Styles:

- S1: Directing
- S2: Coaching
- S3: Supporting
- S4: Delegating

SLII® Model

Leadership Styles

HIGH

SUPPORTIVE BEHAVIOR

SUPPORTING

COACHING

High Supportive and Low Directive Behavior

High Directive and High Supportive Behavior

S3

S2

S4

S1

DELEGATING

DIRECTING

Low Supportive and Low Directive Behavior

High Directive and Low Supportive Behavior

LOW ———— **DIRECTIVE BEHAVIOR** ————→ HIGH

D4
High Competence

High Commitment

D3
Moderate to High Competence

Variable Commitment

D2
Low to Some Competence

Low Commitment

D1
Low Competence

High Commitment

DEVELOPED ←———— ————→ DEVELOPING

Development Levels

Development Levels:

- D1: Enthusiastic Beginner
- D2: Disillusioned Learner
- D3: Capable, but Cautious
- D4: Self-Reliant Achiever

Chain of Command (Management)

- Trust your team:
  - Explain what needs to be accomplished and when
  - Let them determine *HOW* it should be done
  - Let them lead discussions and express themselves freely
  - Everyone participates and listens to each other
- Earn your team's trust:
  - What you say, show, and act should be *consistent*
  - Your behaviors and reactions should be *predictable*
  - Explain what is going on and why for full *transparency*
  - Everything you say and do should exhibit *honesty*
  - In all circumstances, your character should represent *integrity*

Chain of Command (Management)

leaders
who don't listen
will eventually
be surrounded
by people who
have nothing to say
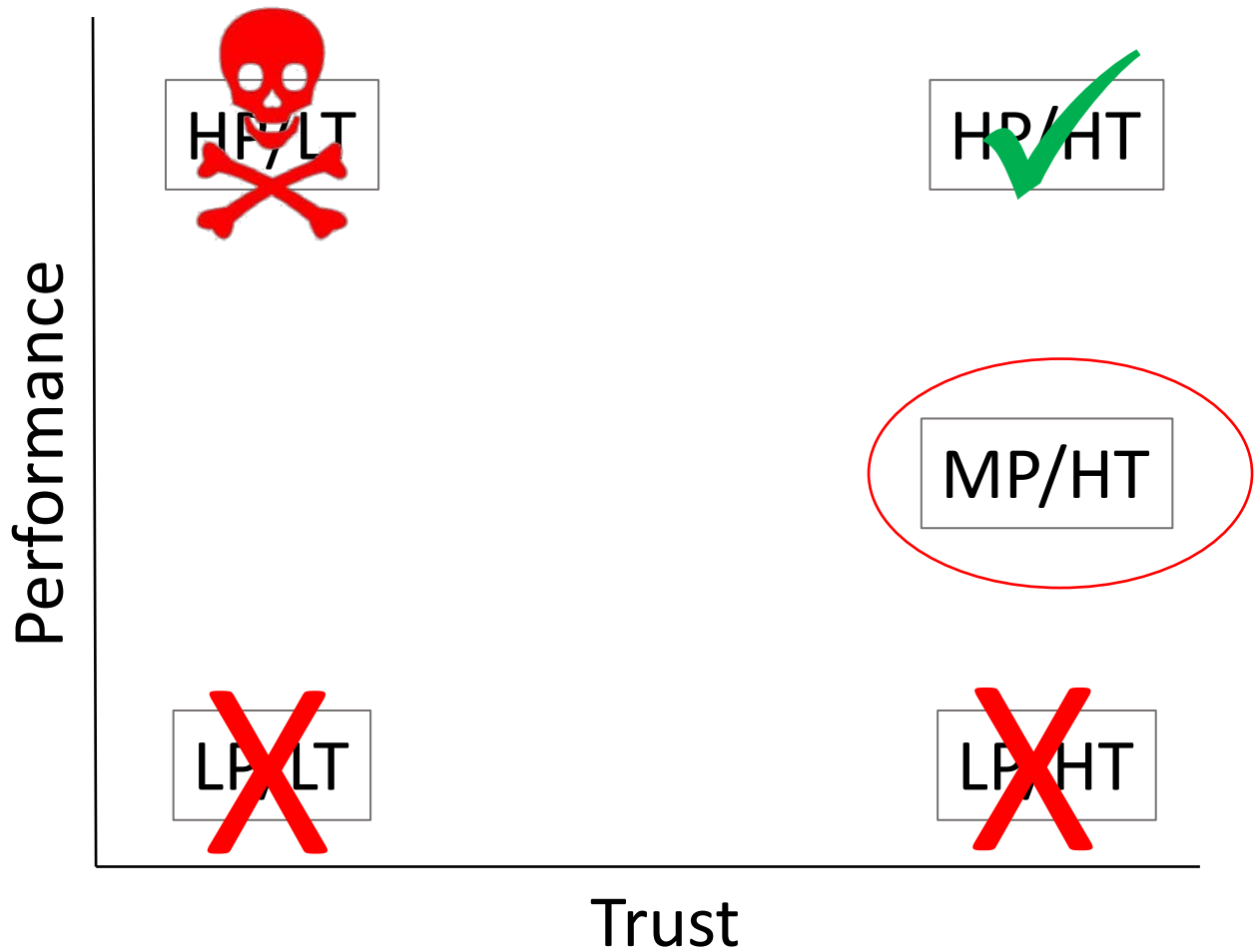
Andy Stanley

Questions?

Team Cohesion

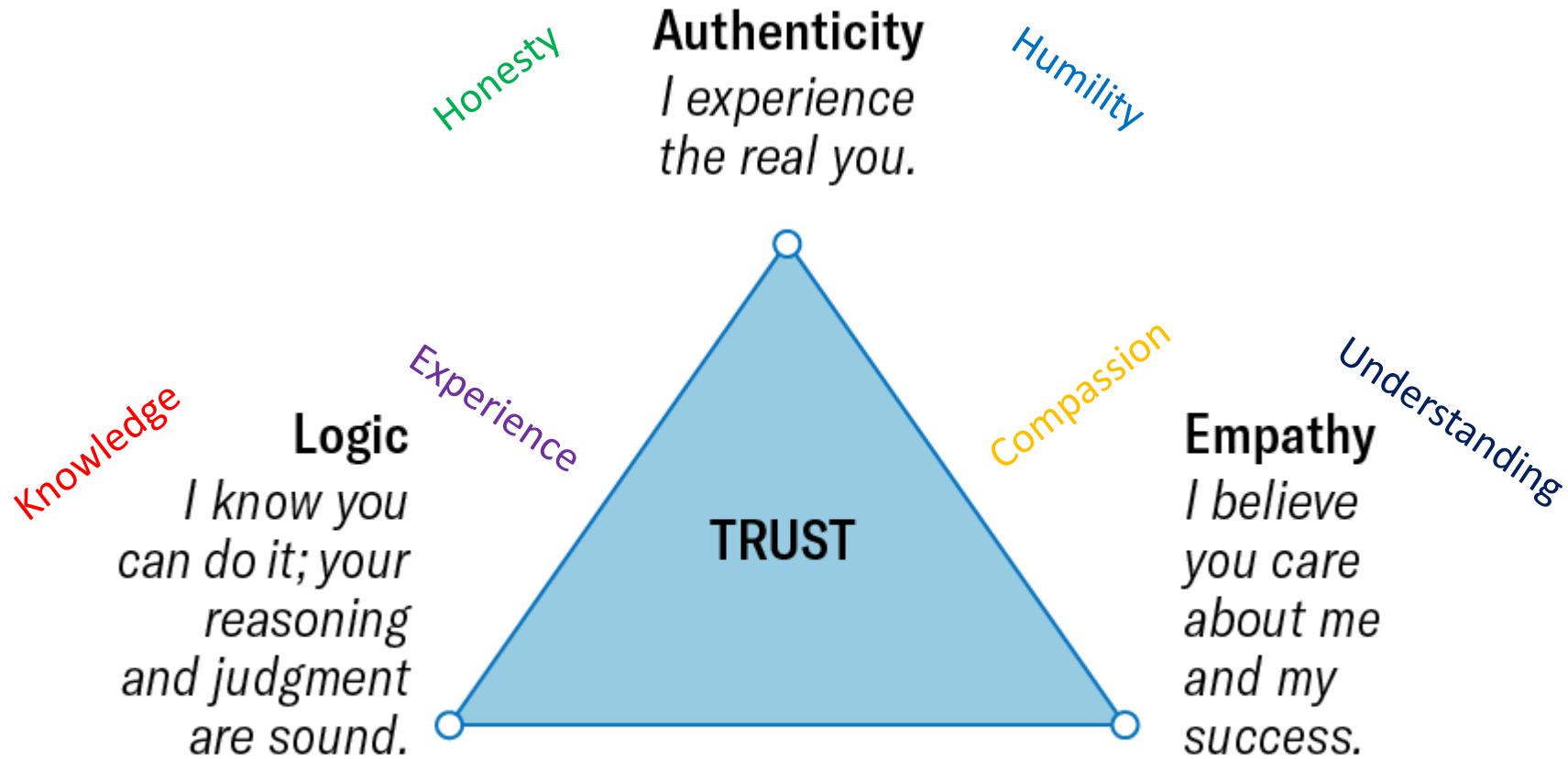# Team Cohesion (Performance vs Trust)

- Seal Team Six
  - Interviewed by [Simon Sinek](#)
  - Wanted to know what made that team the best of the best
  - He boiled it down to two measurements: Performance and Trust
- Performance:
  - How good you are at your job
  - All sorts of metrics to measure this
  - The only metrics looked at by management
- Trust:
  - What kind of person you are on and off the job
  - Practically no metrics to measure this
  - This constitutes the bulk of team morale

Team Cohesion (Performance vs Trust)

Team Cohesion (Trust Triangle)

Authenticity
I experience the real you.

Honesty

Humility

Logic
I know you can do it; your reasoning and judgment are sound.

Knowledge

Experience

Empathy
I believe you care about me and my success.

Compassion

Understanding

TRUST

From: "Begin with Trust," by Frances Frei and Anne Morriss, May–June 2020

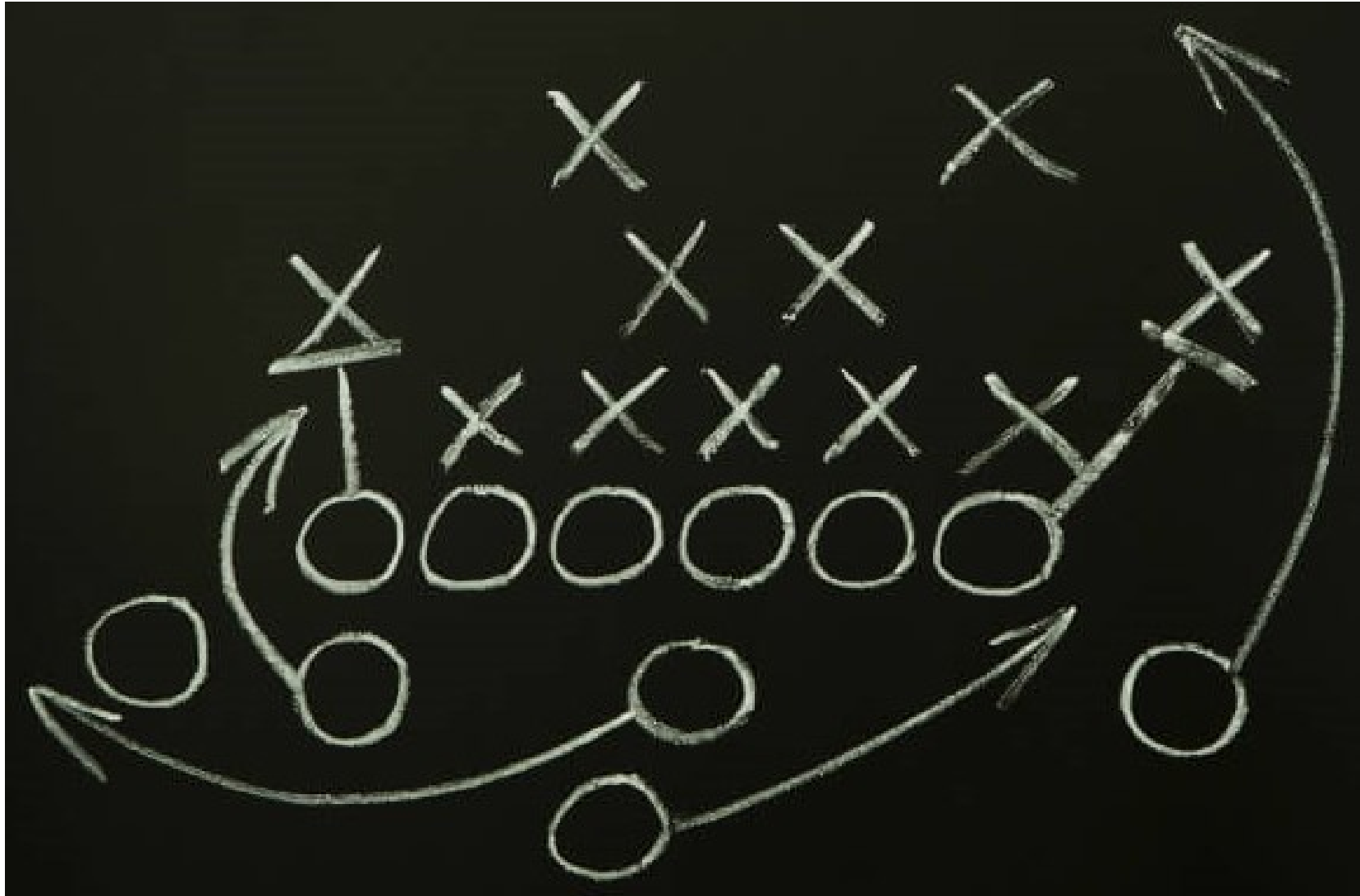# Team Cohesion (Team Morale Pyramid)

Team Cohesion (Team Morale Pyramid)

Questions?

Standard Operating Procedures

Standard Operating Procedures

- Policy
  - A formal, brief, and high-level statement or plan
  - Embraces general beliefs, goals, objectives, and acceptable procedures
  - State required actions and may include pointers to standards
  - Further defined by standards and guidelines
- Standard
  - A mandatory action/rule designed to support & conform to a policy
  - A standard should make a policy more meaningful and effective.
  - A standard must include one or more accepted specifications for hardware, software, or behavior

Standard Operating Procedures

- Guideline
  - General statements, recommendations, or administrative instructions designed to achieve the policy's objectives by providing a framework within which to implement procedures
  - A guideline can change frequently based on the environment and should be reviewed more frequently than standards and policies
  - A guideline is not mandatory, rather a suggestion of a best practice. Hence "guidelines" and "best practice" are interchangeable

Standard Operating Procedures

- Procedures:
  - Describe the process: who does what, when they do it, and under what criteria
  - Represent implementation of Policy
  - A series of steps taken to accomplish an end goal
  - Documented as a quick reference in times of crisis
  - Help eliminate the problem of a single point of failure
  - Also known as a SOP (Standard Operating Procedure)

Standard Operating Procedures

- Effective Guidelines and Standards
  - They must be written and reviewed/revised regularly
  - They must be consistently applied across the board
    - The standard itself is not as important as its consistent application
    - Work from one person should be indistinguishable from another
    - Standards should be enforced across the board
    - Sub-standard work should not be accepted
  - Provide clear objectives and expected results
  - Should be readily accessible and referenced often

Standard Operating Procedures

- Asset Management
  - Equipment must be maintained and in good working order
  - Tracking should be performed on all material
    - Code Management System (Git/TFS/etc.)
    - Documentation written and regularly maintained BEFORE release
  - Utilize consistent tools across the enterprise
- Prepare for future growth
  - Minimize labor and overhead
  - Minimize costs, especially on maintenance
  - Allow for repeatable processes
  - Minimize production downtime

Standard Operating Procedures

- Protect from knowledge loss
  - Improve effectiveness of training
  - Allow for interchangeable personnel
  - Minimize time for personnel to "ramp-up" to speed
- Control quality and consistency of software development
  - Reduce "over-coding" and trim "code bloat"
  - Increase code reuse to make it more effective
  - Improve consistency from start to finish
- A good SOP will foster better teamwork
  - Improve communications, productivity and creativity
  - Encourage a climate of cooperation and collaborative problem-solving
  - Higher levels of trust, support, job satisfaction and commitment

Questions?

Training

Training – Why?

- Attract and retain great employees
  - It is perceived as a benefit
  - It builds company loyalty
  - It increases company reputation
  - It brings in good people who are willing to learn
- Create promotable and more valuable employees
  - Keep employees motivated and engaged at work
  - Save and earn money from effective employees
  - Support succession planning and reduce turnover
- Improve company overall
  - Enhance operational efficiency
  - Lower operational costs
  - Exceed industry standards

Training – Basic

- Books and online training
  - Several options for free or low-cost books or e-books
  - Numerous webinar/video options available online
  - Allows team members to progress at their own rate
  - Provides multiple methods of learning for various styles
- User Groups
  - Often by tool, platform, or vendor
  - Provides a means to learn from others
  - Often low-to-no cost with high value content
- Conferences
  - Usually vendor sponsored with low-to-no cost training
  - Example: PASS Summit, SQL Saturday, SQL Bits, etc.
  - Some conferences cost more yet still economical

Training – Advanced

- Vendor provided training
  - Not usually free but generally provide high value content
  - Many are designed as self-paced learning
  - Some are classroom or "boot camp" environment
  - Provides highest value in shortest amount of time

- Industry provided training
  - Generally for industry or subject matter (ex. PMP, TOGAF, etc.)
  - Independent of vendors; applicable in many environments
  - Useful for areas not dependent on platforms or tools

- Certifications
  - Vendor or industry specific (ex. Microsoft, AWS, Google, etc.)
  - Provides a guide about specific knowledge or skill level
  - Improves the value and promotability of employees
  - Multiple certifications within a team benefit the entire team

Training – Final Notes

- Training effectiveness
  - Same training approach may not be for everyone
  - Certifications show good test-taking ability
  - Application of principles learned is the best measure

- Put training to use
  - Use it or lose it
  - Apply to current projects and initiatives
  - Remind management of benefits of training
  - Refresh training as technology or industry changes

- Management responsibilities
  - Training is not valuable if not implemented
  - Consider team training – not just individual
  - Be open to new ideas as a result of training
  - A well-trained team is a company asset

Questions?

Mission Objectives

MISSION: OBJECTIVES

Mission Objectives (Hierarchy of Goals)

Mission Objectives

- SMART Goals
  - First introduced by Dr. Edwin Locke in 1968
  - Further developed by Peter F. Drucker
  - Used as a framework to set realistic goals
- S - Specific
- M - Measurable
- A - Attainable
- R - Relevant
- T - Time-Bound

Mission Objectives

- Specific
  - Goal must be clear and concise as possible
  - A detailed written plan must address the 5 Ws:
    - What – What is the result to be? What are the steps? What materials are needed?
    - Why – Why is this goal required? Why is this goal worth the effort?
    - Who – Who will be involved? Who is responsible for it? Who can approve it?
    - When – When are the various steps required? When will the goal be accomplished?
    - Where – Where will the tasks be performed?
  - Everyone involved should be familiar with the plan before it begins

Mission Objectives

- Measurable
  - A goal must be consistently measurable in some way
  - Some ways of measuring goals:
    - Money – Either in money saved or money earned
    - Time – Generally involves saving time for processes or operations
    - Activities – Identify if certain activities or tasks are accomplished
    - Numbers – Some form of numeric reckoning
      - Example: Increase in production rates by 20% in 4 weeks
      - Example: Decrease in quality issues by 50% by a certain date
  - Requires an understanding of the current situation for accurate comparison
  - The measurement should also be realistic with realistic time-frames

Mission Objectives

- Attainable
  - A goal must be realistic and achievable
  - A balance must exist between ambition and practicality
  - Consider resources
    - People with the appropriate skills that are available
    - Materials that are available or can be easily obtainable
    - Money to hire personnel, purchase materials, rent facilities, etc.
    - Time available to achieve the goal
  - Should goal be broken into several more manageable goals?
    - Each sub-goal should still follow the same process
   - There should be value obtained at each sub-goal

Mission Objectives

- Relevant
  - Goal must align with overall mission objectives
  - Is it something that is truly needed?
  - Identify the value obtained from the goal
  - Is the value worth the effort and cost?
  - How long until the result is worth the investment (pay-off period)?
- Time-Bound
  - Goals without a deadline will never be achieved
  - Goals with too far of a deadline will generally get delayed
  - Goals with an arbitrary or too-short of a deadline will not be effective
  - Realistic deadline is required to ensure focus on completion

Mission Objectives

- The Iron Triangle: Time + Money + Scope = Quality
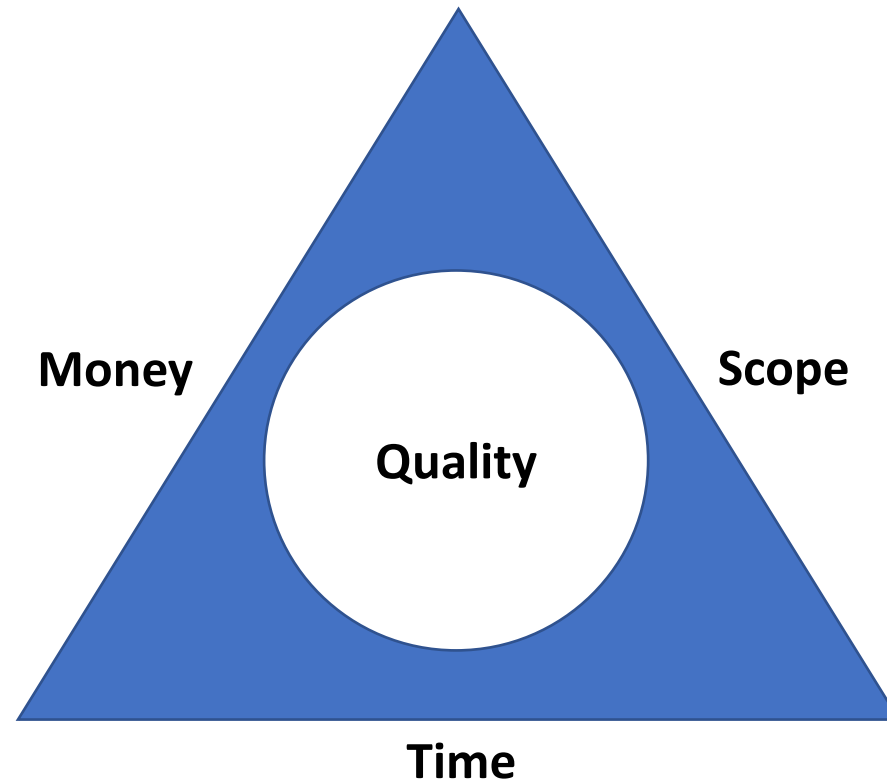
Questions?

After-Action Review

After-Action Review

- Should be performed after each major milestone or goal
- Discussion that should answer the following
  - What did we expect to happen?
  - What actually occurred?
  - What went well and why?
  - What can we improve upon and how?
- Offers the following benefits:
  - Allow for strengths to be identified to be leveraged in the future
  - Make it easier to discover areas of weaknesses and ways to improve
  - Help identify what surprises were encountered
- Have a dedicated note taker that's not from the team

After-Action Review

- Tips for an effective AAR
  - Make it a priority
    - Should be done right away
    - Should be considered the final step to any project
  - Assign a single owner for all ARR sessions
    - Should be someone from outside the team as a neutral moderator
    - Typically, someone from the PMO
  - Include everyone involved with the project
    - All viewpoints are needed for a complete picture
    - Those in the trenches know the details
    - Don't treat it as a team member performance review
  - Review the project's entire lifespan
    - Map out the actual schedule with milestones
    - Compare that to the planned schedule

After-Action Review

- Tips for an effective AAR (cont.)
  - Ask the right questions
    - Leverage the 4 main questions
    - Dig into the "why" and "how" questions
    - Do not assign blame – such sessions are never productive
    - Be considerate of those who made unintended mistakes
  - Write an After-Action Report
    - Summarize what was learned and what should be changed in the future
    - Include everything: the good, the bad, and the ugly
    - Everything should be detailed then distributed to the team and management
  - Implement all necessary changes
    - Don't repeat the mistakes of the past
    - Take lessons learned and update processes and procedures based upon them
    - If necessary, include notes from previous reviews in project briefings

Giving Individual Feedback

- Timely feedback is more effective than waiting for the performance review

- Make use of the SBI Feedback Model
  - Situation: Describe the specific situation in which the behavior occurred
  - Behavior: Describe the actual, observable behavior (just fact, no opinions)
  - Impact: Describe the results of the behavior (underscore positive behavior)

- Make feedback a 2-way process by encouraging factual discussion

- Effective feedback will encourage the following:
  - Stop: Things that are less good and which should be stopped
  - Start: Things which are not currently being done but should be started
  - Continue: Things that are productive, good, and should be continued

- Foster their commitment to their work and the organization

Receiving Individual Feedback

- Given and received appropriately, feedback will help you be better
- Consider the source
  - Give less weight to those with less impact or are being merely negative
  - Give more weight to those with greater impact
- Tips to receive feedback effectively
  - Be an active listener – be engaged by actively listening to what is said
  - Be respectful – watch your emotions and body language
  - Ask clarifying questions – don't be afraid to be specific
  - Show appreciation – both positive and negative feedback can be helpful
  - Do not take negative feedback personally – it should not be an attack!
  - Make a decision – decide on how you will act on the feedback to improve

Questions?

Afterthoughts

- Agenda
  - Why worry about team effectiveness?
  - The six major impacts to team effectiveness:
    - Chain of Command
    - Team Cohesion
    - Standard Operating Procedures
    - Training
    - Mission Objectives
    - After Action Review
- How will you incorporate these principles
  - To be a better leader?
  - To be a better teammate?
  - To be a better person?

Afterthoughts

- The Golden Rule is about respect
  - Treat others as you want to be treated
  - Show the same respect to the janitor as you would the CEO
- Final thought by J. W. "Bill" Marriot concerning employees:
  Motivate them, train them, care about them, and make winners out of them. We know if we treat our employees right, they'll treat the customers right. And if customers are treated right, they'll come back.
  - Take care of your employees
  - Employees will take care of customers
  - Customers will take care of business

Afterthoughts

- The official Navy SEAL motto: Ready to Lead, Ready to Follow, Never Quit

Helpful Resources

- [The Situational Leadership II Model](#)

- [Simon Sinek: Performance vs Trust](#)

- [How to Write SMART Goals](#)

- [How to Give Constructive Feedback Using the SBI Feedback Model](#)

- [How to Master the Art of Receiving Feedback](#)

- [Bill Marriott: Success is Never Final](#)

Questions & Comments

BONUS:
A **TON** of free eBooks from Microsoft, RedGate and SentryOne!

PRESENTATION FEEDBACK:
- Your thoughts needed
- Improve presentations
- Make this event even more valuable!!!

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