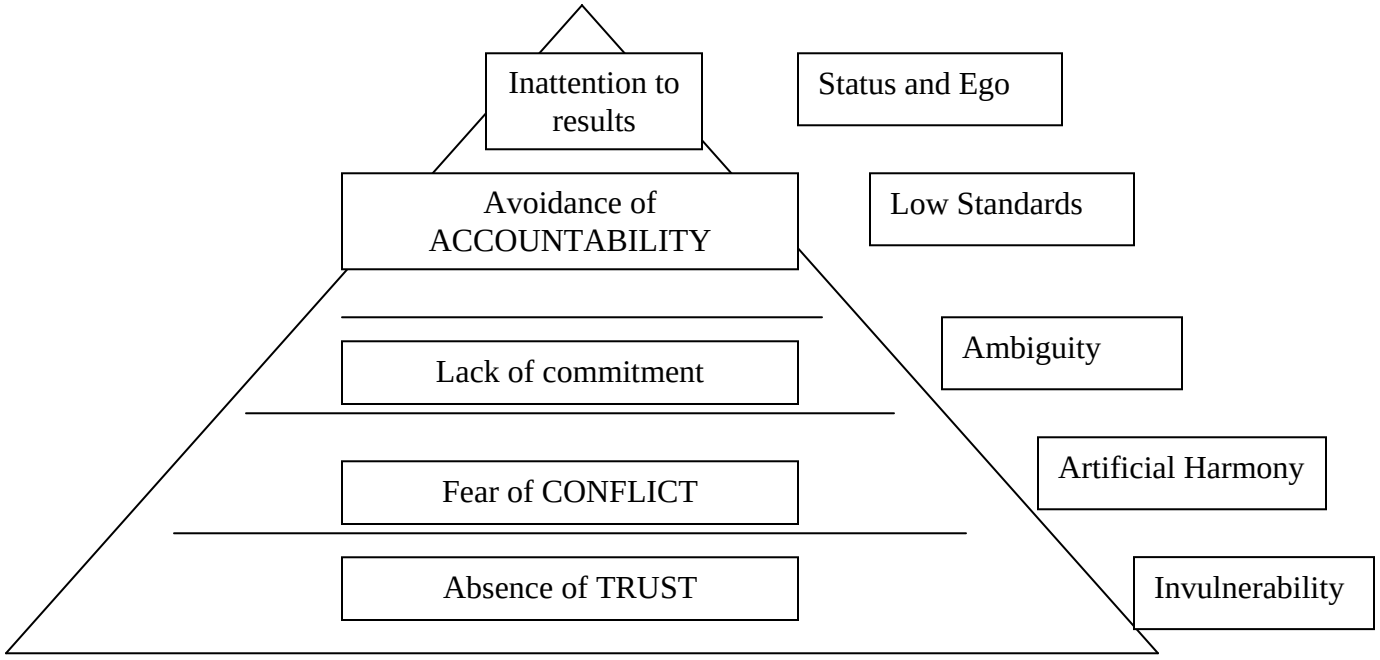
The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

By Patrick Lencioni



Positive Approach:

1. They trust one another.
2. They engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas.
3. They commit to decisions and plans of actions.
4. They hold one another accountable for delivering against those plans.
5. They focus on the achievement of collective results.

*It sounds simple, it's because it is simple, at least in theory. In practice, however, it is **extremely difficult** because it requires levels of **discipline** and **persistence** that few teams can muster.*

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

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Instructions: Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to your team. It is important to evaluate the statements honestly and without over-thinking your answers.

3 = Usually
2 = Sometimes
1 = Rarely

1 ____ Team members are passionate and unguarded in the discussion of issues.
2 ____ Team members call out one another's deficiencies or unproductive behaviors.
3 ____ Team members know what their peers are working on and how they contribute to the collective good of the team.
4 ____ Team members quickly and genuinely apologize to one another when they say or do something inappropriate or possibly damaging to the team.
5 ____ Team members willingly make sacrifices (such as budget, turf, head count) in their departments or areas of expertise for the good of the team.
6 ____ Team members openly admit their weaknesses and mistakes.
7 ____ Team members are compelling, and not boring.
8 ____ Team members leave meetings confident that their peers are completely committed to the decisions that were agreed on, even if there was initial disagreement.
9 ____ Morale is significantly affected by the failure to achieve team goals.
10 ____ During team meetings, the most important and difficult issues are put on the table to be resolved.
11 ____ Team members are deeply concerned about the prospect of letting down their peers.
12 ____ Team members know about one another's personal lives and are comfortable discussing them.
13 ____ Team members end discussions with clear and specific resolutions and calls to action.
14 ____ Team members challenge one another about their plans and approaches.
15 ____ Team members are slow to seek credit for their own contributions, but quick to point out those of others.

Scoring. Combine your scores for the preceding statements as indicated below:

Dysfunction 1: Absence of Trust	Dysfunction 2: Fear of Conflict	Dysfunction 3: Lack of Commitment	Dysfunction 4: Avoidance of Accountability	Dysfunction 5: Inattention to Results
Statement 4 ____	Statement 1 ____	Statement 3 ____	Statement 2 ____	Statement 5 ____
Statement 6 ____	Statement 7 ____	Statement 8 ____	Statement 11 ____	Statement 9 ____
Statement 12 ____	Statement 10 ____	Statement 13 ____	Statement 14 ____	Statement 15 ____
Total 0	Total 0	Total 0	Total 0	Total 0

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Members of teams with an absence of trust…

- Conceal their weaknesses and mistakes from one another
- Hesitate to ask for help or provide constructive feedback
- Hesitate to offer help outside their own areas of responsibility
- Jump to conclusions about the intentions and aptitudes of others without attempting to clarify them
- Fail to recognize and tap into one another's skills and experiences
- Waste time and energy managing their behaviors for effect
- Hold grudges
- Dread meetings and find reasons to avoid spending time together

Teams that fear conflict…

- Have boring meetings
- Create environments where back-channel politics and personal attacks thrive
- Ignore controversial topics that are critical to team success
- Fail to tap into all the opinions and perspectives of team members
- Waste time and energy with posturing and interpersonal risk management

A team that fails to commit…

- Creates ambiguity among the team about direction and priorities
- Watches windows of opportunity close due to excessive analysis and unnecessary delay
- Breeds lack of confidence and fear of failure
- Revisits discussions and decisions again and again
- Encourages second-guessing among team members

A team that avoids accountability…

- Creates resentment among team members who have different standards of performance
- Encourages mediocrity
- Misses deadlines and key deliverables
- Places an undue burden on the team leader as the sole source of discipline

A team that is not focused on results…

- Stagnates/fails to grow
- Rarely defeats competitors
- Loses achievement-oriented employees
- Encourages team members to focus on their own careers and individual goals
- Is easily distracted