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Suggestions for Using “Goal and Role Clarification”

Objectives:

- Articulate and define the team's mission
- Determine what goals follow from this mission
- Clarify roles and responsibilities in order to accomplish these goals

Intended Audience:

- Members of any functional work team or task force
- Any manager, facilitator, internal or external consultant, HR professional, or trainer who is helping the team define its purpose and clarify who does what

Processing the Activity:

- Ask each team member to fill out the mission statement first. This process can be done easily on virtual and global teams. Remind people that the mission is overarching and general, not a specific objective. For example, the mission of a diversity council might be to build a culture of inclusion.
- Record each team member's statement on an easel in front of the group.
- Look for points of agreement and build on those. Reword till all agree with the statement.
- Next, ask each person to list the top three goals that logically follow from that mission statement.
- Go around the group and again, on an easel, list all suggestions. Indicate repeated suggestions with checks in a different color marker from that with which you are writing.
- Discuss all suggestions and decide on the top three.
- Based on that outcome, have each person write down his or her responsibilities and those of other team members as the person sees them.
- Then, in rotating one-on-one rounds that last about 15 minutes each, have people negotiate their roles and expectations with one another.

Questions for Discussion:

- Are there any semantic or language issues that are getting in the way of defining our mission? If so, how can we say things so all people support the statement?
- Of all the goals listed, which will help us get closest to accomplishing our mission?
- Is there any role or responsibility that is still not clear after negotiations?

Caveats, Considerations, and Variations:

- This is a lengthy process. Rarely do groups have the luxury to do it all at once. But you can break it up into parts that break naturally. The mission statement definition may take one or two sessions: Defining goals can take one, and defining roles and responsibilities another. If you do this at a team-building retreat rather than on work time, it can be done in one session.
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