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BusinessWeek

MY LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE December 20, 2007, 3:38PM EST

How to Build a Winning Team

Guest columnist Nikos Mourkogiannis says a group's success ultimately depends on its balance. He offers a simplified framework to get the right mix

by Nikos Mourkogiannis

What does it take to put together a winning team in business?

Volumes of articles and books have been written on the topic over the years, offering advice on how to avoid the dysfunction that often renders teams ineffective. We have all been part of groups that failed, either because of hidden agendas or personalities that didn't quite mesh.

In my experience as an executive and a consultant, I've come to believe the personal style of team members has the greatest influence on a group's success. More important than any technical skill a team member brings is the ability to work closely together, free of backbiting and political maneuvering. The key is having the right mix on your team.

THE FOUR TYPES OF EMPLOYEE

By and large, there are four archetypes of people in companies: magicians, warriors, sovereigns, and lovers. You can easily define them using the Jungian framework introduced by psychologist Robert Moore and mythologist Douglas Gillette.

- **Magicians.** They are the rational yet imaginative souls in your organization. They think a new idea or insight is the only thing that can move the world. In truth, they're obsessed by ideas. Their answer to feeding the troops is to pull a rabbit out of a hat. These types of people think a mere argument over an idea equals action.
- **Lovers.** For them, everything comes down to human relations. They're pragmatic but emotional. They focus on building the winning coalition. They are obsessed not by ideas but by feelings. They consider agreement an action.
- **Sovereigns.** They are the emotional and imaginative types. They focus on the big picture and judge everything on whether it leads to where they want to go. They redefine what people consider is possible. They are obsessed by beliefs. And they consider direction a form of action.
- **Warriors.** They are rational and pragmatic. They're focused on the next battle and can only see clearly what's directly in front of them. They hold people accountable to systems and the fairness of those systems. They're obsessed by facts. For them, action is finding the critical factor to get something immediately accomplished.

Apple's ([AAPL](#)) [Steve Jobs](#) is clearly a magician. Watching him [introduce a new product on stage](#) (BusinessWeek.com, 7/6/07) is like watching a master magician pull a rabbit out of a hat. Microsoft's ([MSFT](#)) [Bill Gates](#), with all his competitive juice to dominate his industry, is a warrior. IBM's ([IBM](#)) Tom Watson, who plastered the walls of Big Blue with "Think" signs, was a magician. Could anyone think of GE's ([GE](#)) [Jack Welch](#) (BusinessWeek.com, 12/7/07) as anything other than a warrior? Indeed, one of the most fascinating campaigns in all of business is the attempt by Welch's successor to transform a warrior company like GE into a hothouse of ideas. [Jeff Immelt](#), whose "imagination at work" vision for GE is an extreme departure from the Welch years, will have a hard time of it without more magicians on his senior team.

MAINTAINING THE BALANCE

Obviously, this framework is a simplification, but there are logical implications for any leader assembling a team. The most effective teams maintain a balance by having a healthy variety of types in key roles because each type is good at doing different things. A mix of magicians, warriors, lovers, and sovereigns will get you the best team possible.

When one type dominates, friction and conflict can occur: a fall-off of creativity, a lack of flexibility, risk aversion, and paralysis. That's why the most effective leaders know who they are and surround themselves with people who complement their strengths and offset their weaknesses. The warrior needs a magician, a sovereign, and a few lovers. What often happens in organizations is you get a group of warriors, and they don't like the magicians so you don't have any of them on your team.

Clearly, there is beauty in balance. That is the place where individual team members become more sensitive to each other's needs. Too many magicians and your team will be pondering opportunities all the time, but will lack decisive action, even though the thinking will be excellent. Why? Because magicians are more concerned with having it done "right," rather than having it done. They're especially vulnerable to pursuing superior technology at the expense of something that customers would buy. And a group of them in a room will look more like a debating society than a high performance team. Too many lovers and you have another set of problems. These employees value consensus to the detriment of results. They hold far too many meetings. They do too much talking and not enough acting. The lover excessively relies on outside advice and often appears to lack both competitiveness and edge.

THE RIGHT MIX FOR YOUR TEAM

Too many warriors, on the other hand, will experience difficulty if anything in the environment changes. They won't be proactive and will consequently miss opportunities competitors may exploit. They appear as a parade of soldiers, and they can be innovation-challenged. Too many sovereigns will often pull an organization in too many directions at once, or will radically change direction often. Sovereign-dominated teams will have no center of gravity and will keep many unresolved business issues up in the air all the time. They appear fragmented, with poor communication, and they often struggle with strategy and direction.

That said, some companies require a predominance of one type or another to effectively pursue certain strategies or values. Magicians are the best fit for innovation-based companies in which discovery is crucial to success. Warriors are ideally suited for highly competitive environments that demand a conquering-the-world mindset.

Do you have the right mix on your team?

With Richard Rawlinson and Simon Gilles, vice-presidents at Booz Allen Hamilton.

Question 1.1: What do you look to yourself as one of the four archetypes of people mentioned in the article? Is it different from what your team leader or partners think about you? (within 50 words)

Question 1.2: In your opinion, what is a winning team? If you are a team leader, what do you think the right mix for a winning team? (within 100 words)

Please refer to the attached article: Operations Tour: The US Postal Service. 請以中文或英文簡短回答以下問題（注意答案的字數限制）。

- Q1. (15%) Why is it important for the postal service to have a high volume of mail to process? (up to 20 words ; 最多 20 個字)
- Q2. (15%) What caused productivity to increase? (up to 20 words ; 最多 20 個字)
- Q3. (20%) What results were achieved by the postal service's changes? (up to 30 words ; 最多 30 個字)

The US Postal Service

OPERATIONS TOUR

"Neither rain, nor snow . . ."

The US Postal Service is the largest postal service in the world, handling about 41 percent (630 million pieces a day) of the world's mail volume. The second largest is Japan's, which handles only about 6 percent of the world's mail. The US Postal Service is huge by any standard. It employs over 760,000 workers, making it the largest civilian employer in the United States. It has over 300,000 mail collection boxes, 38,000 post offices, 130 million mail delivery points, more than 300 processing plants to sort and ship mail, and more than 75,000 pieces of mail processing equipment. It handles over 100 billion pieces of first-class mail a year, and ships about 3 billion pounds of mail on commercial airline flights, making it the airlines' largest shipper.

Processing First-Class Mail

The essence of processing the mail is sorting, which means organizing the mail into smaller and smaller subgroups to facilitate its timely delivery. Sorting involves a combination of manual and automatic operations. Much of the mail that is processed is first-class mail.

Most first-class mail is handled using automated equipment. A small portion that cannot be handled by automated equipment must be sorted by hand, just the way it was done in colonial times.

The majority of first-class mail begins at the advanced facer canceling system. This system positions each letter so that it is face up, with the stamp in the upper corner, checks to see if the

address is handwritten, and pulls the hand-addressed letters off the line. It also rejects letters that have the stamp covered by tape, have no postage, are third-class mail, or have meter impressions that are too light to read. The rejects are handled manually. The remaining letters are cancelled and date stamped, and then sorted to one of seven stackers.

Next the letters go to the multiline optical character readers, which can handle both printed and pre-barcoded mail, but not hand-addressed mail. The optical reader sprays a barcode on the mail that hasn't been pre-barcoded, which represents up to an 11-digit ZIP code. For hand-addressed mail, a camera focuses on the front of the letter, and the image is displayed on a remote terminal, often in another city, where an operator views the image and provides the information that the optical readers could not determine so that a barcode can be added.

Barcode readers then sort the mail into one of 96 stackers, doing this at a rate of more than 500 a minute. The mail goes through another sort using manually controlled mechanical equipment. At that point, the mail is separated according to whether it is local or out-of-town mail. The out-of-town mail is placed into appropriate sacks according to its destination, and moved to the outgoing send area where it will be loaded on trucks.

The local mail is moved to another machine that not only sorts the mail into local carrier delivery routes, it sorts it according to delivery walk sequence!

(continued)



Small parcels, bundles of letters, and bundles of flats are sorted by a bundle-sorting machine.

Productivity

Over the years, the Postal Service has experienced an ever increasing volume of mail. Productivity has been an important factor for the Postal Service in keeping postal rates low and maintaining rapid delivery service. Two key factors in improved productivity have been the increased use of automation and the introduction of zip codes.

Mail processing underwent a major shift to mechanization during the 1950s and 1960s, which led to more rapid processing and higher productivity. In 1978, an expanded zip code was introduced. That was followed in 1983 by a four-digit expansion in zip codes. These changes required new, automated processing equipment, and the use of barcodes and optical readers. All of these changes added greatly to productivity. But even with these improvements, the Postal Service faced increasing competitive pressures.

Competition

In the late 1980s, the Postal Service experienced a slowdown in the volume of mail. Some of this was due to a slowing of the economy, but most of it was the result of increasing competition. Delivery giants FedEx and UPS, as well as other companies that offer speedy delivery and package tracking, gave businesses and the general public convenient alternatives for some mail services. At the same time, there was a growing use

of fax machines and electronic communications and increased use of alternate forms of advertising such as cable TV, all of which cut into the volume of mail.

Strategies and Tactics Used to Make the Postal Service More Competitive

To meet these challenges, the Postal Service developed several strategies to become more competitive. These included reorganizing, continuing to seek ways to keep costs down, increasing productivity, and emphasizing quality and customer service. Here is an overview of the situation and the strategies and tactics used by the Postal Service.

The Postal Service began working more closely with customers to identify better ways to meet their needs and expanded customer conveniences such as stamps on consignment. With the help of business mailers, the Postal Service continued support for rates reflecting customer work-sharing features, many tied to automation, to give customers more flexibility. At the same time, the Postal Service began forming Customer Advisory Councils—groups of citizens who volunteered to work with local postal management on postal issues of interest to the community. In 1990, the Postal Service awarded two contracts to private firms to measure first-class mail service and customer satisfaction. In 1992, the Postal Service stepped up its quest to become more competitive by reducing bureaucracy and overhead in order to improve service and customer satisfaction, and to reduce the need to increase postage rates.

To help accomplish these goals, the Postal Service underwent a reorganization. Layers of management were eliminated and overhead positions were cut by about 30,000. Five regions and 73 field divisions were replaced by 10 areas, each with a manager for customer services and a manager for processing and distribution. Ten customer service areas were established, with managers for customer service and processing and distribution in each area, as well as a marketing and sales office. The new structure allowed postal managers to be focused, improved communications, and empowered employees to meet customer needs. The Postal Service also took other steps to improve service. In 1993 it implemented improvements in processing and mail delivery at major postal facilities, expanded retail hours, and developed a more user-friendly Domestic Mail Manual. In cooperation with business customers, the Postal Service began to develop new services to meet specific mailer needs and to overhaul and simplify its complex rate structure. It also awarded contracts for two more external tracking systems, one to measure satisfaction levels of business mailers, and the other to measure service performance of third-class mail.

The reorganization eliminated some programs, cut costs, attracted new business, and reduced the US Postal Service's projected deficit.

國立中央大學工業管理研究所九十七學年度碩士在職進修專班入學考試試題卷

考試科目：工業管理實務

共 頁，第 頁

考試時間：90 分鐘

第一題（每小題 10 分）

- (a) 請描述何謂寄售(Consignment)。
- (b) 採用寄售模式對於上游寄售人(貨主或供應商)的優點為何?
- (c) 採購組織之主要決策內容為何?
- (d) 資訊方案導入失敗之原因通常為何?
- (e) 何謂獨立需求?何謂相依需求?

國立中央大學工業管理研究所九十七學年度碩士在職進修專班入學考試試題卷

考試科目：工業管理實務

共 頁，第 頁

考試時間：90 分鐘

第二題

(1) Please translate the below paragraph into Chinese (中文翻譯).

Over the years, manufacturing companies in Taiwan have been successful in original equipment manufacturing (OEM) arrangements. However, competition from suppliers in other Asian economies has been rising. To sharpen their edge for staying ahead of competitors, Taiwanese companies have moved to upgrade their OEM production by moving to other aspects of the product development cycle. The move towards the front end of the production cycle can be seen by the shift from OEM to original design manufacturing (ODM) arrangements. Some manufacturers are also moving to the back end of the cycle by becoming involved in the development of brand name products (OBM).

(2) Considering the transformation from OEM to ODM or OBM, please select any three issues from below for discussion (以中文討論).

- marketing and branding
- intellectual property
- business process
- quality
- flexibility
- price
- quick response
- customer relationships
- potential risks