

## **Key Area-4**

### **Building and Leading Teams**

#### **Introduction:**

In every profession, the diverse skills of the members are needed, so, if one can make use of every opportunity to engage in teamwork, it will be easier to achieve success.

Good leadership asks for the ability to perform both as an individual and together with the colleagues or employees leading to an effective teamwork.

In modern schooling, the role of the school heads as a leader is not confined to day to day administrative work only but involves interacting with all the teachers and other staff members who happen to be having different mindset which makes them resist most of the changes that a school head tries to bring about. Hence, the need for developing a team is critical for any school to achieve its educational goals.

It is very important for any of the teams to perform continuously. But at times, teams' performance goes down. It can be either due to the loss of vision or due to the unidirectional flow of the ideas or the order most of the time; because of which other members of the team might lose the zeal to perform as before. So, it is one of the most important qualities of a leader to be ready to even '*follow*' others at times when it is felt necessary for the sustenance of the team. Hence, this key area will not only focus on team building but also on its sustenance for achieving long time goal.

This key area addresses the values and skills required to build and sustain effective teams. It will not only help the school heads to understand the 'team' but also its formation, collaboration, group dynamics, conflict resolution, effective communication and in the process, create opportunities for leadership quality development in team members.

## UNDERSTANDING TEAM

### Learning Objectives:

Through this session, the participants will be able to understand the meaning of team, process of formation, its purpose and significance in successful functioning of the school.

### ACTIVITY 1.1

#### Understanding Team

#### Conducting the activity:

**Method:** Large Group Discussion (Plenary) followed by small group activity to bring forth the concept of 'Team.'

#### *Suggested Steps:*

- The facilitator, in this session, gets the participants to share their experiences as group as well as team members (could be from any life experience like- while playing a football match and the like). Further, the facilitator leads them to share on what made them more successful- as a group or as a team. Were there any instances of conflicts between certain people that were creating divisions within the team and creating small groups within a team?
- While the facilitator steers the group through all these questions, s/he is expected to jot down the responses of the group on the board. After the brainstorming session on the above, the facilitator leads the group to consolidate the answers on the board, as key factors that promote success in teams and factors that inhibit the performance.
- The facilitator then leads the group to reflect on some additional questions listed below, and notes the responses on the board.

### **Reflective Questions:**

- Have you ever come across a situation at your school, when you observed that some teachers focus on their own success, and hamper the performance of the group as a whole?
- Do you think working in a group is the same as working in a team?
- While working together for something, have you ever felt that poor communication affected your group's progress?
- Based on your experiences how do some members affect the group's ability to move forward through resistance to change?
- What according to you are most desirable, people need to learn to work together, or continue performing individually?

### **ACTIVITY 1.2**

#### **Playing Team Building Game**

The facilitator, in this session, gets the participants to volunteer for a game called- 'Stick Drop' (a modified version of the game 'Pencil Drop').

*Things required for the game: - 7 volunteers, one stick (nearly 8 inches long), 6 strings, 1 water bottle.*

- Tie one of the ends of the 6 strings at the middle of a nearly 8 inches long stick.
- Tie another ends of the strings around the waist of 6 volunteers.
- Ask the volunteers to form a circle facing their backs to each other i.e. they cannot look at the centre of their circle.
- Ask the 7<sup>th</sup> member of the volunteers to place the water bottle in the centre of the circle formed by other volunteers.
- Ask the 7<sup>th</sup> member of the volunteers to guide others to move back and forth or side wise or lower down in order to drop the stick into the water bottle placed on the floor below at the centre.
- The volunteers are not allowed to use hands or look towards the water bottle during the course of game.

This game can be played as a standalone fun challenge or different groups can do this at the same time as a race or do turn wise.

### **Let us Sum Up:**

The facilitator in this session gets the participants to share their experiences right from the beginning of the game and steers them in the following manner-

- At the beginning of the game, may be many of you were not that convinced about dropping the stick into the water bottle; Isn't it?
- Here in the in this session (through the game), you must have realised that there are some differences between a 'team' and a 'group. (Here in this activity, when the volunteers were first asked to come forward for the game, they can be regarded as different individuals coming together to form a group).
- As the game advanced, the 7<sup>th</sup> member took you in to his/her confidence and shared the vision which was actually to drop the stick into that bottle. And all of you followed the instructions. So, it shows that there shall be a vision or a goal for a group to turn into a team.
- Let's reflect on the instances like- communication of the team leader (7<sup>th</sup> member of the volunteers), blind faith /trust of you all the members on your leader, this is how a team is built and a goal which looks almost impossible at times can also be reached due to team effort.

While the facilitator steers the participants through this summing up session, s/he is expected to bring forth the connection between the learning out of discussion during the plenary session and the experience through the game.

### **Key Messages:**

- At times, a team can lost some of its energy and motivation so its performance may decline. So, forming sustainable team is very important for any organization's perpetual success.
- Team building is about providing the skills, training, resources and on top of all these, 'vision' that your team need, so that they can work with zeal.
- 'Team' helps to achieve 'Dream.'

**Key Words:**

Group versus team performance, team building, clear communication, motivation, vision, trust.

**References:**

National Centre for School Leadership, NIEPA. (2012). *Programme on School Leadership and Management*, New Delhi, India: Retrieved March 19, 2020 from <http://ncsl.niepa.ac.in>

Pencil Drop, Team Building Activity, Retrieved: March 19, 2020 from <https://gustavus.edu>

## **GROUP DYNAMICS**

**Learning Objective:**

The objective of this game is to get the members work as a team; demonstrate the importance of teamwork and interdependence, and also to show that a good communication makes things possible for a team. Hence, the expected outcome by the end of this session is that the participants will be able to understand how people act and react to each other, which will help them understand group dynamics.

### **ACTIVITY 2.1**

**Group Dynamics:****Conducting the activity:**

**Method:** Small group activity followed by Large Group Discussion on Group Dynamics.

**Suggested Steps:**

The facilitator, in this session, gets the participants to volunteer for a game called- '**Crossing the River**' (a modified version of the game 'Acid River').

**Requirement for the game:** 6 Participants, 7 card boards as ‘rocks’ (for 6 players) and rope/chalk/marker to mark the banks of the river.

### **How to Play the Game:**

The game can be played inside a big hall (training hall). The participant marks the distance between the rivers by two parallel lines which the members of the group will go through. Then divide group(s) you have into 2/3 teams of equal number of players.

- ❖ Each team can use only 1 extra cardboard in addition to their numbers. (For e.g. 7 pieces cardboards for a team of 6).
- ❖ After marking the place to play and after giving the necessary materials, the information about the game is given- ‘The goal of the game is for the entire team to cross the river using the cardboards without stepping or touching the water.’
- ❖ If a player in the team is unbalanced and falls or touches the ground, then the whole team starts from the beginning or loses the game.
- ❖ At first, the player 1 (one) who is at front have to keep his/her cardboard on the floor (marked as river) and step on it, then the other players will follow the same till the last player. After all of them have stepped on to the cardboards (on the river surface), the last player needs to use idea to raise his platform and pass it on to facilitate the first player to take a step forward again. Again, the last player leans on the front platform (being shared by the player in front of him/her) and raises the last platform (cardboard) for passing it to the first player to help him move forward. The first team to cross the river wins.

### **Let us Sum Up:**

The facilitator in this session gets the participants to reflect on the game that they played or witnessed in the last activity. For summing up the session, s/he steers the group through the questions like-

- ❖ What are the things required for winning the game, ‘River Crossing?’ (Being a team game, it requires group coordination, team work and communication amongst the members).
- ❖ What do you think are the benefits of playing this game? (This game creates the opportunity for group members to communicate, contribute to the goal and encourages team work).
- ❖ Does the perspective of all the team members remain same from first to last? (Because, as the team moves into the middle of the river, everyone’s perspective may change- some are in front, some in back and no one can see the same thing, or have the same information, as everyone else).
- ❖ Who actually leads the game till the end? (In the beginning, it seems like the player number one is leading the game; but as the game advances, the person at the back who is the least likely to lead must now take charge and tell everyone what to do, because he is the one who can simultaneously see the whole stretch of river clearly and make his move to pass the last cardboard while instructing others how to make next move).

Once the whole picture of the game is re depicted, the group is given a background on why the activity was done. This activity (game) is done to understand group dynamics.

### **Reflective Questions:**

- ❖ In the light of the game, please express, how do individuals seem to be a “leader” or “follower” changes their roles at times?
- ❖ Are there situations that come up at our schools, where we may be required to change our roles?
- ❖ What according to you are the advantages of shared leadership?

**Key Messages:**

- ❖ Taking turns for leadership roles not only gives everyone an equal opportunity to lead but also the sharing leadership can lead to success.

**Key Words:**

Group dynamics, shared leadership, group coordination, team work, communication.

**References:**

National Centre for School Leadership, NIEPA. (2012). *Programme on School Leadership and Management*, New Delhi, India: Retrieved March 20, 2020 from <http://ncsl.niepa.ac.in>  
*River Crossing*, Retrieved March 20, 2020 from <https://www.teambuildingactivity.com>

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