

Assessment Task 1: Knowledge Test

Provide your response to each question in the box below.

Q1:	Answer the following questions: 1.1. What are team dynamics? Write your answer in 50-100 words. 1.2. What are the three (3) important dimensions of team dynamics? 1.3. How can the group dynamics support or hinder team performance? Write your answer in 50-70 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐
Team dynamics are the behavioral relationships between members of any team. They make up how individual and team behaviour affects the whole team. How the team communicates, interacts, and works together impacts on how successful a team is in meeting its goals. There are 7 characteristics of team dynamics that make a winning team: shared purpose, trust and openness, willingness to correct mistakes, diversity and inclusion, interdependence and a sense of belonging, consensus decision making, and participative leadership. Three important dimensions of team dynamics are: - Team cognition – focuses on team decision-making and how teams evaluate situations - Team cohesion – refers to the social connections or bonding that occurs between team members - Team conflict – occurs when there are disagreements between team members. Both disagreements about tasks and also conflict within relationships between team members.			
Q2:	Answer the following questions: 2.1. Explain the process/method of designing team-building activities in 150-200 words. 2.2. How can you establish and maintain open communication processes? Explain the process/method in 200-250 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

Identify the development need – know why you are running the activity in the first place. Clarify the purpose of the activity by asking what problem am I trying to resolve, how will the activity solve the problem, what features does the activity need to have to solve the problem.

Clarify the goals of the activity – be very clear about the expected goals and aims of the activity. Based on the problem you identified in step 1 identify three primary objectives for your event.

Design the activity – research activities that you feel will help to achieve the goals. This can be done using external agencies if you are not comfortable doing it yourself.

Identify success measures – based on your goals, develop a set of KPIs that will reflect whether or not your activity achieved what it set out to do. Make sure the KPIs are measurable.

Consult your team – ask your team for feedback about the activity you proposed.

Consolidate your success – keep a meticulous record of what happened during the activity, how your employees interacted with the activity, and what the outcomes were. Track as many metrics as possible as is necessary to gain a full picture of the results.

Share communication ground rules with your employees – explain that people can't use offensive language in the workplace or make incendiary comments that may be interpreted as racist, sexist or discriminatory. Make sure your employees understand that open communication doesn't mean verbalising every thought. Everyone must act in a professional manner.

Explain key concepts to your team – give your employees a list of acronyms that you are commonly use and explain what the letters actually mean.

Schedule team meetings – involve your entire team in weekly meetings. Make sure you schedule meetings at appropriate times so you don't constantly cancel or reschedule.

Provide employees with regular updates – workers will feel more in tune with the company if they hear about developments from you rather than hear whispers on the grapevine.

Institute an open-door policy – leave your office door open if you can do so without disrupting your work. You can encourage your employees to come to your office with questions and concerns, but they are more likely to do so if they see an open door.

Q3:	Answer the following questions: 3.1. Explain any five (5) strategies that can support team cohesion, participation and performance in 200-250 words. 3.2. How can you use the suggestion box to involve individual's and team member's in planning, decision making and operational aspects of team tasks? Write your answer in 100-150 words.	Satisfactory response Yes ☐ No ☐	
3.1 1. Process to help team members solve problems and make good decisions. Teams make decisions using problem-solving techniques. The process largely rests on the selection of a course of action following evaluation of two or more alternatives. - Recognise the problem – Teams must see and recognize that a problem exists and that a decision needs to be made to move forward. - Define the problem – teams must map out the issue at hand. - Gather information – teams need to gather information relevant to the problem to verify that the problem was defined correctly and to develop alternative solutions. - Develop alternative solutions – teams that are effective in problem solving take the time to explore several potential solutions. Brainstorming, ask questions, explore. - Select the best alternative – the team needs to determine the alternative that best addresses the problem at hand. 2. Involve individuals and team members in planning, decision making and operational aspects of team tasks - Suggestion box - Employee surveys - Leadership teams 3. Team member accountability Accountability in the workplace means that all employees are responsible for their actions, behaviours, performance and decisions. It is linked to an increase in commitment to work and employee morale, which leads to higher performance. 4. Feedback Feedback is a basic need. Humans have needs that relate to perceptions of themselves and how they function within society. A work team can offer a deep feeling of belonging if the feedback given to a member is positive and encouraging. The messages need to support the acceptance of the person for their qualities and what they are able to contribute to the team. This type of feedback acts to support that individual's commitment to the team directly and hence increases their efforts. 5. Team Participation – encourage team members to participate in and to take responsibilities for team activities. Leaders should facilitate two-way communication and promote open communication or discussions in team activities that allow the team members to become			

involved.

3.2

A suggestion box is a system for employees to give their suggestions and feedback. It can help to create employee commitment and satisfaction. Employees who don't have the confidence and may be hesitant to speak up are able to share their ideas.

The suggestion box can be a physical box, or it can be digital like an email. Make sure you check the suggestion box regularly so that you can make timely decisions, and to let employees know that you have received the suggestion and appreciate their input. If you are going to use the idea you can let them know, or if it is not the right time for the idea, you can let them know that you have made a record of it. This will encourage team members to continue to make suggestions. If you do use their ideas, they will feel like they are valued and have contributed to the business.

Q4:	Answer the following questions: 4.1. What does creating consensus in team setting mean? Write your answer in 30-50 words. 4.2. How can you use the following strategies for gaining consensus within your team? • Brainstorming • Multi-voting Write 50-100 words each.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

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Consensus is an agreement made by all members of a group, rather than a majority or a select group of representatives. Creating consensus in a team setting means the group work together to find an acceptable decision that all team members support, with no member apposed to it.

Consensus includes:

- Pooling opinions
- Listening effectively
- Discussing ideas and differences
- Not getting all you want
- Coming to an agreement that everyone “can live with”.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a simple and effective method of generating ideas in a group. It begins with a facilitator defining the problem or the topic. Then, each team member suggests ideas either in turn or as ideas arise and those ideas are written on a board or flip chart. Team members should not criticize or evaluate any idea during the brainstorming session. After the team generate the ideas, the group refines the list by asking for explanations, combining ideas, and if necessary, prioritizing ideas from most effective to least effective.

Multi-voting

Multi-voting can reduce a list containing a large number of items to a manageable few. At the beginning of the process, each member gets a number of votes equal to no more than one half or one third of the total number of items listed. Members cast their votes for the items they perceive as best on the list, but may cast only one vote per item. Items receiving votes from half or more of the group are circled. The process repeats, with members casting limited votes for the best of the remaining circled items. The team continues multi-voting until it reduces the list to three to five items.

Q5:	Answer the following questions: 5.1. Explain the following types of conflict management processes in 150-200 words. a) Mediation b) Conflict coaching c) Team interventions 5.2. What are the five (5) strategies of conflict resolution? Write your answer in 150-200 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

Mediation

Mediation is a way of managing conflict that uses an impartial person to help team members to resolve their disagreements. The intention is to ease workplace tensions before they escalate into something more damaging. It differs from disciplinary and grievance procedures by offering a more informal and flexible approach.

Conflict coaching

Conflict coaching is defined as a set of skills and strategies used to support peoples' ability to engage in, manage, or productively resolve conflict. In this process, the conflict coach works one-on-one with a coach experiencing conflict with another person. Conflict coaching enables the coach to talk about the conflict with a neutral third party (the conflict coach), consider options for managing the conflict, and design an approach to discuss the conflict with the other person. Conflict coaching can be used as a stand-alone process, or can be practiced with each of the parties in separate meetings during mediation.

Team interventions

Team Interventions Team Interventions is a process in which members of a team work together with a facilitator to diagnose task, process, and interpersonal problems within the team and create solutions. The goals of team interventions: integrating goals of individual and group with goals of organization.

The Thomas-Kilman Model identifies two dimensions when choosing a course of action in a conflict situation, these are assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness is the degree to which you try to satisfy your own needs. Cooperativeness is the degree to which you try to satisfy the other person's concerns. This identifies five different strategies for resolving conflict:

1. Avoiding – ignore or sidestep the conflict, hoping it will resolve itself or dissipate.
2. Accommodating – essentially involves taking steps to satisfy the other party's concerns or demands at the expense of your own needs or desires.
3. Compromising – finding an acceptable resolution that will partly, but not entirely, satisfy the concerns of all parties involved.
4. Competing – try to satisfy their own desires at the expense of others involved
5. Collaborating – finding a solution that entirely satisfies the concerns of all parties.

Q6:	Answer the following questions: 6.1. Why is it important to encourage team members to examine their purpose in the team? Write your answer in 50-70 words. 6.2. What approaches can aid the team members to discuss their roles. Prepare a list of any five (5).	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

Encouraging members to examine the purpose of the team, how it proposes to function and what it is expected to accomplish will increase the understanding of the role of the team itself, and each member of that team is better than asking an external source to relay this information. Allowing the members with the chance to debate the team's role, enables them to adapt their purpose and come to a mutual understanding. Approaches that aid team members to discuss their role may include: • team meetings • workshops • value exploration exercises • project scoping sessions • visualising exercises			

Q7:	Answer the following questions: 7.1. What is an employee performance plan? Write your answer in 30-50 words. 7.2. Explain different steps in writing a performance plan in 150-200 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

An employee performance plan is a formal business document that explains goals set for a particular employee. It also outlines potential performance issues hindering the employee's progress in reaching those goals. Performance plans have a generally poor reputation as they are often a sign of impending termination. However, they are meant to encourage employees to do better.

They offer employers a way of helping their employees who are struggling in their position. Instead of directly reprimanding or even terminating them, they propose a helpful plan and offer supporting materials for further aid. Performance plans have specific requirements, however, for more effective outcomes.

1. Identify performance or behavioral issues that need improvement - the intent of issuing a PIP stems from problems with employees. These problems can either be performance-related, behavior-related or a mixture of both. When creating a performance plan for your employee, identify the issue needed for correction.
2. Explain the level of performance and behavior expected - you need to explain expectations or set specific, measurable goals for them to reach. For example, if performance is measured by meeting a task quota, reinforce the quota minimum for the employee. Your employees need a basis for improvement or a specific goal to reach.
3. Supply helpful suggestions for employee improvement - once you've set expectations for your employee, go a step further and provide helpful resources for improvement. These resources often include additional training, informational resources such as manuals and even physical tools depending on the role.
4. Schedule progress meetings with the employee - once you give your performance plan to your employee, you need to meet with them on occasion and discuss their performance. Within the plan, set a schedule for meetings or at least a loose time frame in which the employee can schedule better times for themselves.
5. Outline consequences for not meeting standards - all performance improvement plans need to have a time frame for improvement. Explain in your plan that consequences are handed out to those who fail to meet requirements. Provide further detail by outlining those specific consequences and what they include

Q8:	How can you use the RACI matrix to set accountabilities for the team members? Write your answer in 100-150 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

Accountability means that all employees are responsible for their actions, behaviors, performance and decisions. It's also linked to an increase in commitment to work and employee morale, which leads to higher performance.

When there is no accountability, there will be low team morale, unclear priorities across the team, employees become less engaged, goals are not met, low levels of trust, and high turnover.

It is important to make accountability a core part of your culture and a core value of your team.

One method that can be used to set accountabilities for the team members is to use the RACI matrix accountability framework. It ensures all individuals involved with the project are assigned a role every step of the way.

The roles are broken into four levels of accountability:

Responsible – those who are responsible for completing the task at hand.

Accountable- those who are ultimately for the completion of the task. This person is also responsible for delegating the work to be completed.

Consulted – these individuals are typically the subject-matter experts. They are involved in the specific state of the project in a consulting and advisory capacity.

Informed – these are the individuals who are kept up-to-date on progress at each stage of the project.

Q9:	What is the 'feedback sandwich' technique? What is its purpose? Write your answer in 50-100 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

A feedback sandwich is where constructive feedback, or potentially negative feedback, is put between two statements of positive feedback. The technique starts by giving an individual some praise with a positive statement, followed by the what needs to be improved, and concluded with a positive statement.

It is designed to keep the esteem of the person receiving the feedback elevated, whilst also encouraging them to improve. It demonstrates to employees that you see their performance strengths as well as their performance weaknesses.

Q10:	How can you use performance counselling in identifying and resolving work performance problems? Explain the steps in 200-250 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐
1. Identify the problem – the problem needs to be recognised and described in clear and concise terms. 2. Assess and analyse the problem – what is the seriousness of the problem and how long has it existed? What is the degree of discrepancy between the individual's current level of performance and the expected level. Obtain valid, reliable and unbiased information about the performance state. 3. Set up a meeting – organise a meeting with the individual to discuss and examine the issue. Clearly, state the intention of the meeting and give notice to the individual of the meeting. 4. Meet with the team member – meet with the individual in a private location far from distractions and interruptions. It is good to arrange an impartial and objective observer at these types of meetings. They can record objective notes of the meeting and mediate if the situation becomes too emotional. Inform the team member that you and the organisation is concerned about their performance at work. Establish the problem in context by explaining it and defining it with specific terms. The individual must understand precisely what the issue or concern is, why it is an issue, how it affects the workplace and why you are concerned. Describe the outcomes you want from this meeting. 5. Jointly devise a solution – the resolution should be mutually reached because if a team member has a say in the solution, the likeliness of the acting on it increases. 6. Monitor and review – Organise an additional meeting with the individual to examine and discuss their performance against the established action plan. There is no time limit on the second meeting, but It is practical to allow sufficient time for the individual to demonstrate improvement in their work.			
Q11:	Answer the following questions: 11.1. What are the three (3) important aspects of collaboration? Write your answer in 70-120 words. 11.2. Why is it important to encourage collaboration among teams? Write your answer in 100-150 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

Brainstorming – collaboration allows team members to come together on a common platform and work towards the achievement of a common goal by thinking, brainstorming and offering various perspectives to provide solutions.

Providing value – working towards the same goal inspires the team members with a strong sense of purpose. The team sees value in working together as the common goal gives them a meaningful reason to work together, along with receiving mutual benefits for the company as well as the team.

Equal partaking – collaboration provides every team member with the equal opportunities to participate and communicate their ideas.

It is important to encourage collaboration among teams because:

- It promotes self-analysis – collaboration challenges people to think, articulate and receive clarity about their competencies. It helps them to see their strengths and weaknesses.
- It results in problem solving – when a variety of knowledge and skills are pooled, it creates a talent pool that is vast and more competent, able and experienced.
- It makes you look at the bigger picture – when you have several people from different backgrounds working for you, you will need to know how to leverage those differences and identify how they can complement each other.
- Continuous learning – when teams are collaborating, they are essentially learning new things from each other.

Advantages of collaboration are:

- Pooling of talent and strengths
- Development of employee skills
- Speed up solutions
- Increase efficiency
- Enhance employee retention and job satisfaction

Q12:	Why is it important to follow-up unresolved issues, concerns and problems raised by team members with line management? Write your answer in 50-70 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

Behaviours that arise from an obstructed team can be destructive and counterproductive to both the team itself and the productions of the team. Behaviours can include:

- A decrease in energy and enthusiasm
- A feeling of helplessness
- A loss of purpose
- An increasing amount of one-sided discussions
- Pessimism
- Mistrust and dishonesty
- Interpersonal attacks

These behaviours can be avoided if team leaders follow up on unresolved issues.

Q13:	In some circumstances, following up a problem might reveal that the proposed solution has not actually addressed the problem and that it is still an issue for the team. How should you address the unresolved issues, concerns and problems raised by stakeholders? Write your answer in 50-100 words.	Satisfactory response	
		Yes ☐	No ☐

The team leader must:

1. Re-examine the issue – are the same factors triggering it? Why has it not been fixed?
2. Discuss the problem with the stakeholders to get a better understanding of it.
3. Determine why the original intervention has not had the wanted effect.
4. Evaluate the risk and probability of the issue.
5. Find an establish the action most appropriate.

The follow-up element of intervention can also involve a debrief session aimed at facilitating the team to be able to identify better and solve issues confronting them in the future. This could be a casual reflection session, formal feedback or any other way that is suitable to the team and its tasks.