

Leading the Group Dynamics

Ari Tikka @ Agile Saturday 29.10.2011

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Who says?

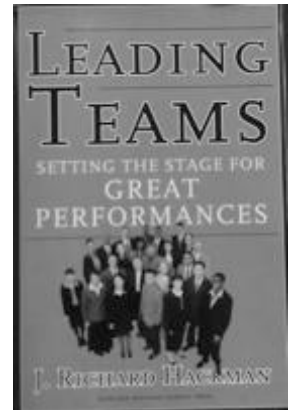
- Lifelong interest in the mind
- Structural dynamics
- Embedded software
- Organizational therapist
- Agile and Lean consultant
- Intensive Zen meditation



All models are wrong, some are useful. (GPE Box)

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J. Richard Hackman Leading Teams



- A real team
 - Bounded, Stable, Interdependent, Authorized
- Compelling direction
 - Challenging, Clear, Consequential
- Enabling structure
 - Composition, Norms, Complete tasks
- Supportive context
 - Information, Education, Resources, Rewarding
- Right coaching
 - Effort, Strategy, Knowledge&Skill

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Group?



Consists of individuals.

Who have concerns:

- Own survival, group survival, ecosystem survival
- Collaborative games – competitive games
- Short term – long term



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Teamwork is an individual skill



- Individuals do have concerns, whenever they enter a group
- What kind of questions do they have?
- What questions did you have in mind when entering this workshop?

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Principal task

- What should we be doing NOW?
- A question
 - At any time remind: "What is our principal task?"
- Use any means to find or document the best current understanding

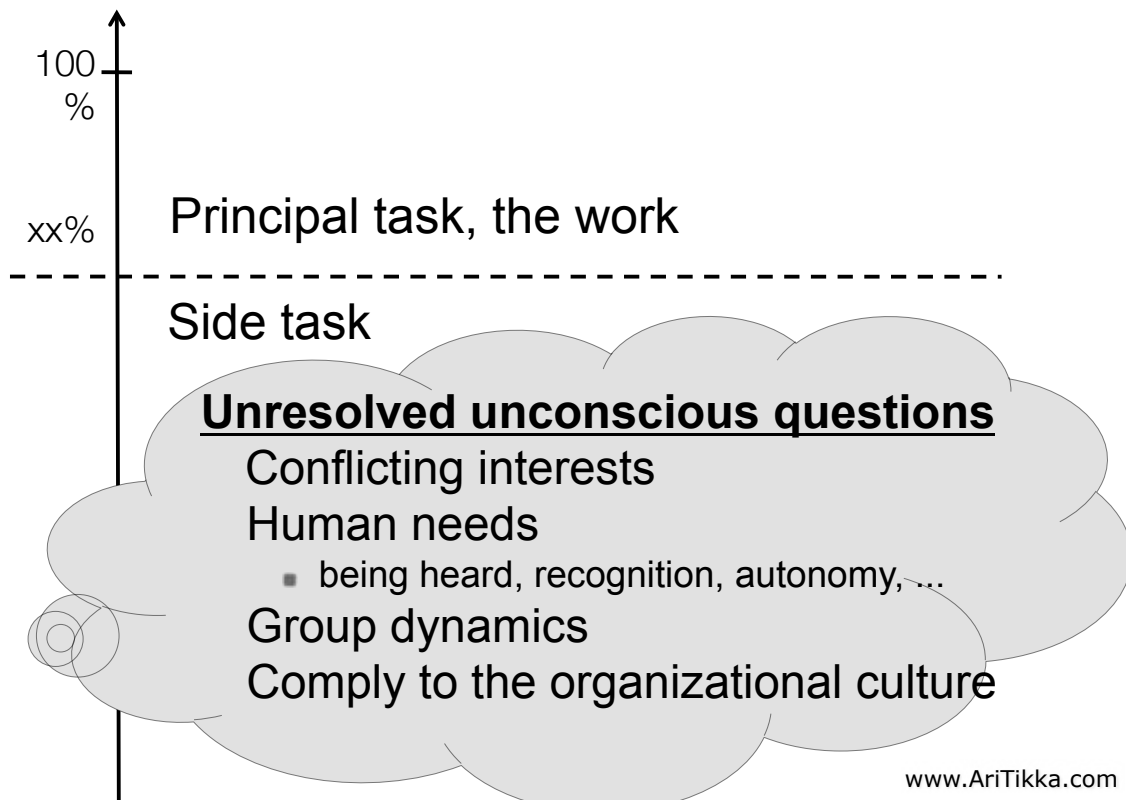
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So things get
done

BUT...

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Where is the energy going?



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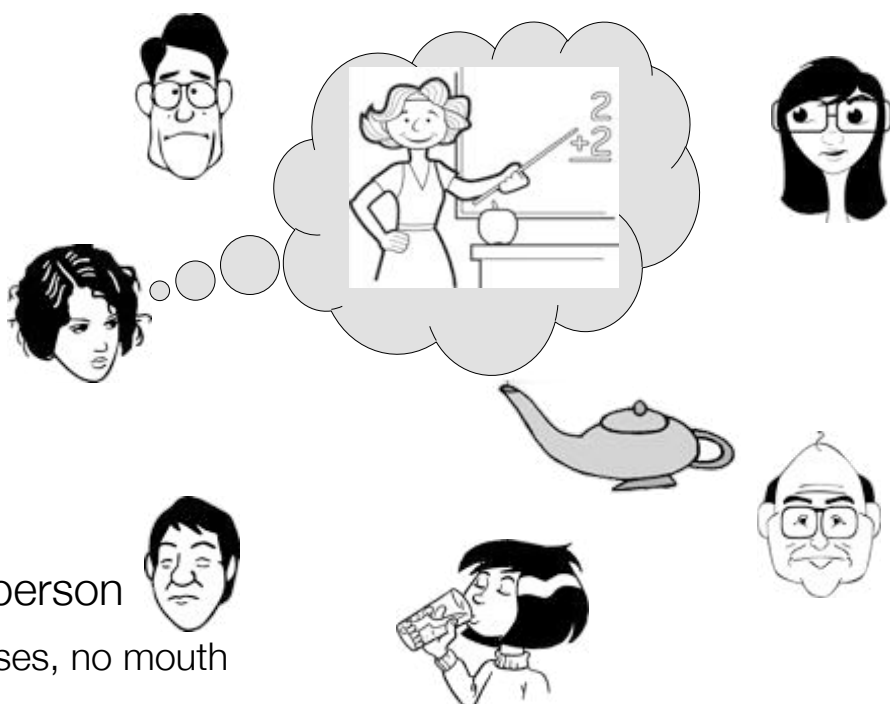
Group dynamics?



- Yet another person
 - No own senses, no mouth
 - W Bion after WWII

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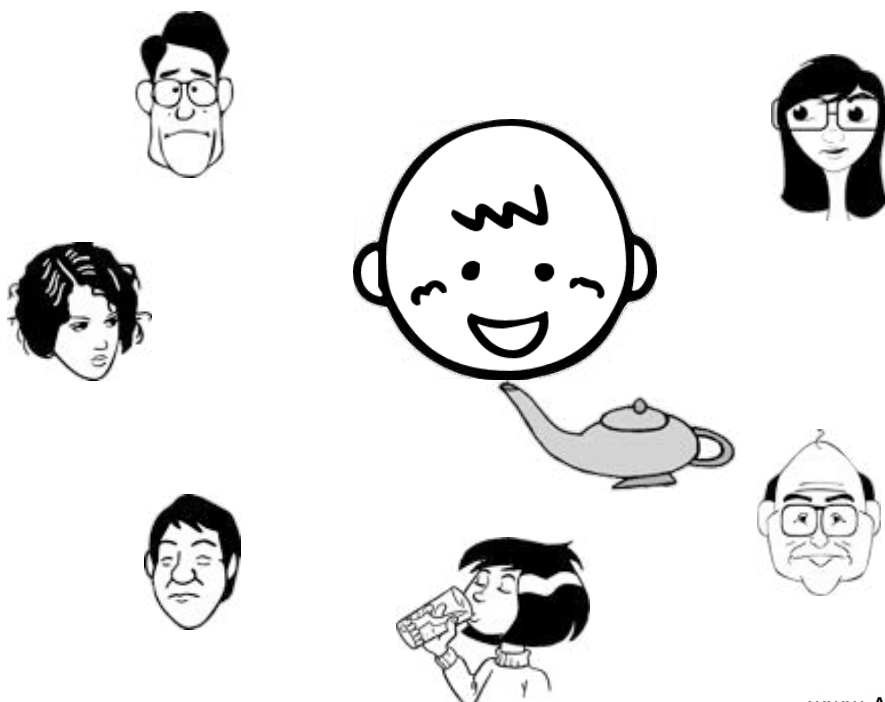
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Group development?



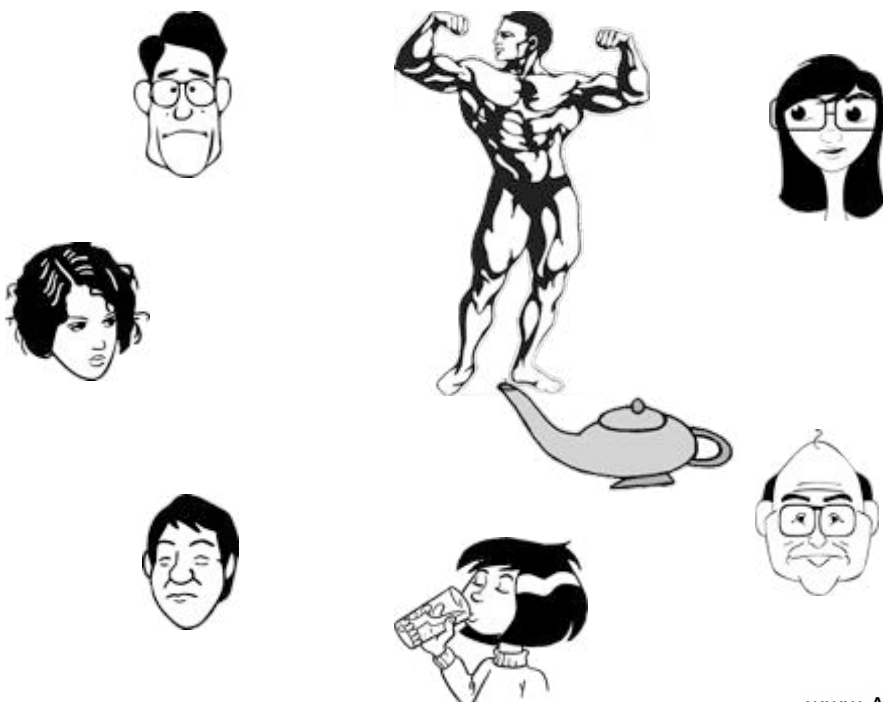
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Group development?



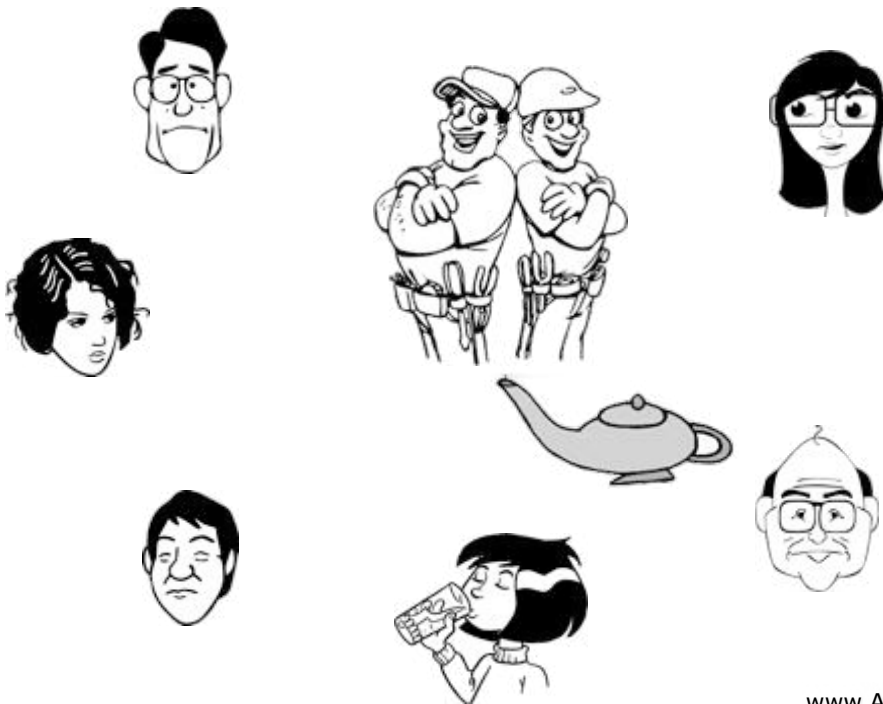
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Group development?



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Group development?



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Group development?



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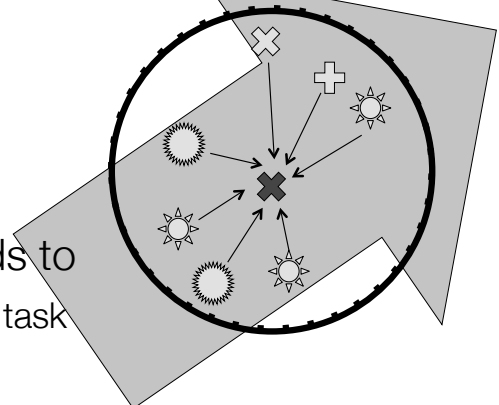
The states

- No group (in the group dynamic sense)
 - Often OK. Individuals may be good in co-operation
- The group moves back and forth the states, slowly or quickly, according to conditions
 - Childhood – dependency (Forming)
 - Adolescence – individuality (Storming)
 - Youth – harmony (Norming)
 - Maturity – work group (Performing)
 - Ending – mourning (Adjourning)
- The group only gets to Maturity after going through all previous ones. Only after solving the questions.

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Childhood – dependency (Forming)

- Dependency
 - In order to have the safety and alignment to grow, the group depends on a single leader it has chosen.
 - What is this group (now)? Is it worth joining? Am I good enough?
- Competition of leadership
 - Pressure to take leadership
 - Challenging leader candidates
- The (situational) leadership needs to
 - Clarify the boundaries and principal task
 - Create, safety, trust and interaction



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Childhood – dependency (Forming)

- Offering to lead is a precious gift to the group. Offering support for leadership is a precious gift too.
 - Leadership competition may be mixed with “storming” of the next phase. Always remember to think if there is a question of leadership competition.
- The group and/or leader may like the dependent state too much, and try to keep there.
 - Culture and personalities
- The group may become wounded, if it experiences to be left without enough support
 - Underperforming, quarreling
 - The group may grow depressed, if left without care for a long time
- As the (situational) leader you will adjust dependency. Better be conscious.

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Adjust dependency

- How can I adjust dependency?
- How has the trainer adjusted dependency?
- Have I seen good leaders consciously adjust dependency?

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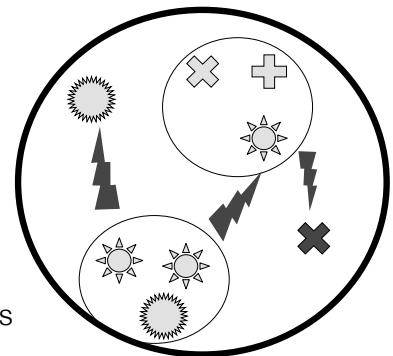
How to care?

- A real team
 - Compelling direction
 - Enabling structure
 - Supportive context
 - Right coaching
-
- J. Richard Hackman: “Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances”

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Adolescence – individuality (Storming)

- When enough safety and learning has been created, needs of individuality are surfacing
 - Conflicting needs and interests
 - Uncomfortable feelings
- Forming of subgroups
 - People always join bigger groups through subgroups
- The (situational) leadership needs to
 - Solve conflict constructively
 - Value difference
 - Stand the criticism and people taking distance
- Scapegoat phenomenon is possible when leadership can not endure conflict
 - The safest target for critique is strong leadership



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The most important task
of the parents of teenagers
is to stay alive.

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Feedback

- Prepare – think and plan
 - What do I want to happen – or not happen
 - Is it worth of the trouble for all involved

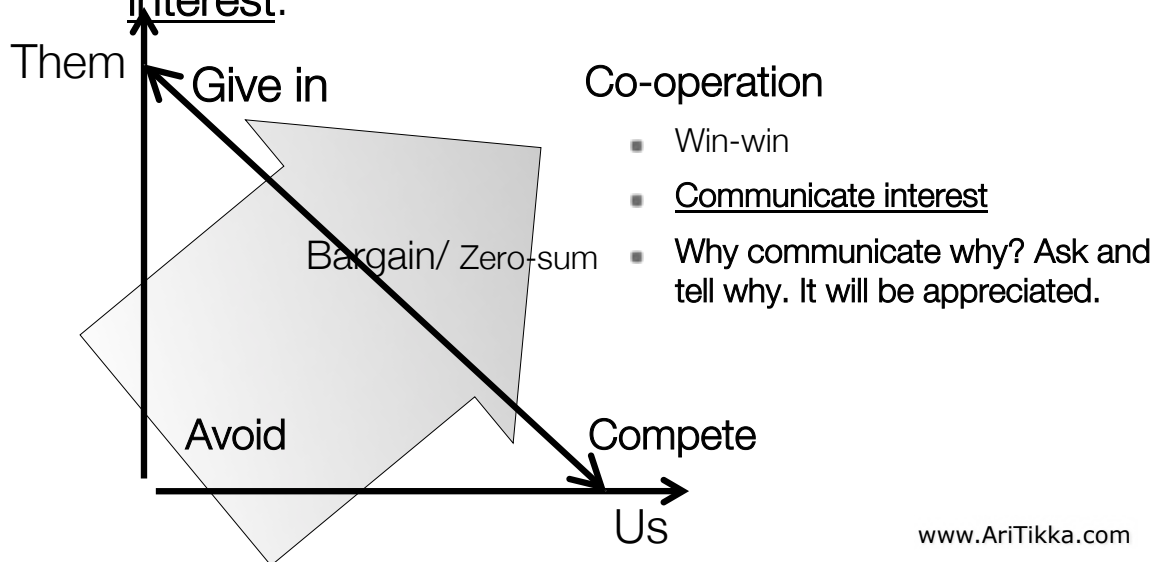
- Create opening
- What happened
- State impact
- Make a request

- Positive feedback - appreciations

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Conflict resolution

- From avoiding to bargaining to co-operation by moving communication from position to interest.

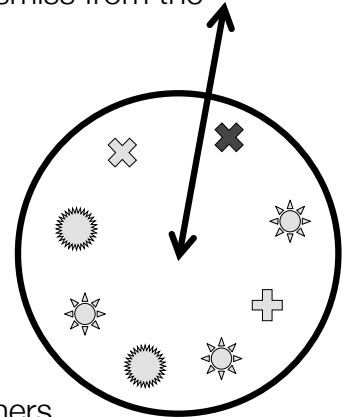


Sources of conflict

- Recognizing the source helps to choose good actions.
 - System
 - Lack of clarity
 - Position
 - Values
 - Personal
- E.g. if source is system, offering help for personal behavior is offending.

Youth – harmony (Norming)

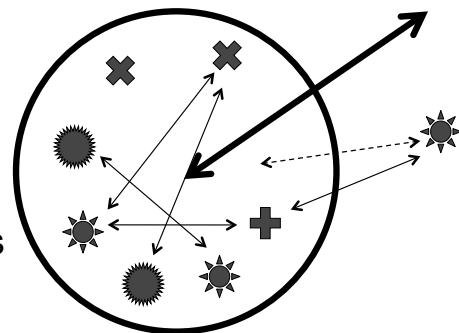
- The questions of joining have been solved so far
- Strong pressure to assimilate, to dive into the harmony of the group
 - Even the leader feels difficult to take distance from the group
 - Taking distance is punished by threatening to dismiss from the group
- The group sees itself good. All problems are outside.
- The (situational) leadership needs to
 - Enjoy and appreciate the harmony
 - Arrange feedback to the group
 - Take the group back to the principal task
 - Take care of own ability to separate and help others



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Maturity – work group (Performing) 1/2

- The work works
- Leadership functions
- Interaction functions
- The group is able to make decisions
- The group is capable to reflect itself
- The group is able to face the outer reality
- Ability to manage time
- The members endure frustration and are able to control feelings
- Creativity, openness and acceptance
- Freedom to choose between individuality and assimilation as needed



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Maturity – work group (Performing) 2/2

- The (situational) leadership needs to do all good things as in the leadership literature...
- Practicing bears fruit - from the beginning
 - Workload and competence is shared
 - Everyone in the group is a responsible leader
 - Everyone in the group is a peer coach
- The group will go back to square 1 at all changes. Experienced team will find the Mature state faster.

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Ending – mourning (Adjourning)

- Ending is sad
- Unprocessed endings make it more difficult to invest in the next group
- Close to ending
 - Different, even extreme, feelings surface and exist at the same time
 - Difficult to concentrate to the principal task
 - There is pressure to continue the group, even when it is dying
- The leadership needs to
 - Arrange time and space for mourning and expressions of feelings
 - Celebrate and appreciate
 - Help to finish the work

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Books

- J. Richard Hackman: Leading Teams. Setting the Stage for Great Performances
- Christopher M. Avery: Teamwork Is an Individual Skill
- Marshall B. Rosenberg: Non-violent Communication
- Sam Kaner: Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making
- Moore. The Mediation Process