



COLLECTIVE WISDOM INC

None of us is as smart as all of us.

The Shirt Pocket Guide to Team Building Robert Brown, Ph.D. Collective Wisdom, Inc.

When my oldest granddaughter turned three, I invited her to join the family team. This was our discussion as she sat on my lap.

“Do you want to be on the family team?” I asked.

She nodded her head.

“Everyone on the family team has jobs. Do you have a job?”

She shook her head, “No.”

“Everybody in the family has jobs the same number as how old they are. I’m 65 so I have 65 jobs. How old are you?”

She held up three fingers and said, “Three.”

“That means you have three jobs. Do you know what they are?”

A look of concern came over her face. “No.”

“Then I will tell you. Your first job is to play and have fun. Is that okay?”

That was okay.

“Your second job is to learn things. Is that okay with you?”

That was okay too.

“Your third job is to be safe.”

She looked disappointed.

“But you know what? Keeping you safe is one of my jobs. We have the same job and we can do it together.”

That was perfect. She now gleefully holds my hand as we walk across parking lots; doing our jobs together.

She didn't know, but I did, that I was using the Rudy Williams' Four Part teaming model to help my granddaughter feel like a full member of our family. She now has six jobs and is doing great.

I first learned the model from Rudy himself. The model is simple, only ten words, but I kept using different words and the parts in different order. Under Rudy's direction, I created the shirt pocket card and finally learned to do it right. Here is what is on my card:

Compelling Task 1	Sense of Membership 2
Personal Reward 4	Influence on Team 3

To create a team, you start with compelling task. That's what I did with my granddaughter; she really wanted to be more grown-up in the family. Most places, the task is compelling because it contributes to the company mission and vision and employees feel emotionally engaged in their work. When creating a team, I ask each potential member to rate the task on a scale of 0-10 and explain why the task was given that score.

Second is a sense of membership. This is the most complicated part of this model and the most powerful element of a true team. My granddaughter easily belonged on our family team because she is so cute. Most co-workers don't have the same advantage. Sense of membership means that everyone on the team knows why he or she is a valued member of the team, *and* everyone on the team knows why everyone else is a valued member of the team. If someone on the team shouldn't be on the team, you don't have a team until this person improves or is removed. Sometimes when forming a team, I ask potential members why they should belong on the team and other times I tell each one why I choose them. Either way,

this is done together so that everyone on the team knows the right people are included and the not so right are moved to other places.

The influence on the team part is easy in a family; the older you are, the more you have influence, especially if you're the grandma. Our family has a rule that anything that happens at grandma and grandpa's house stays there: Meaning we can bend rules that would be a bit stricter at home. On business teams, there cannot be quite the same latitude. What works for one has to work for all. The idea is to make it clear and easy to influence how the team works. "Rules of engagement" are discussed and agreed upon. Some teams write them up and regularly review how they're working.

Last is the universal, "What's in it for me." Personal rewards must to known and provided. Our granddaughter has this down. I'll be lying back in my recliner when she walks up, puts her face next to mine, smiles and asks, "Will you play twenty questions with me?" How can I refuse?

Although I have never explained this model to my family, I use it at home all the time. A bit here and another bit there and I have a well-oiled family team, every member working hard to ensure the welfare of everyone else. We haven't discussed it, but I truly believe our family vision, and thus our compelling task, is to enable all of us to reach our potential as people.

In the workplace, the same outcome can be achieved, along with increased profits and quality. According to Gallup surveys, compared to workgroups, teams produce better results on just about any measure you can think of. When I run weeklong process improvement workshops, I create a team using this model during the first morning and enhance it as we go through the workweek.

You can do the same with your family, your bowling team, your work group. There is no climbing ropes, falling into each other's arms or singing songs. You simply create the structure and maintain it.

You start by asking potential members, "Should we form ourselves into a team?" Then discuss if you have a mutual vision or outcome that creates compelling work for each person. You may not have one, and thus don't need to become a team. If you have a core group that has a common and compelling purpose, you then go to step two and determine if everyone has a role to fill, and the interest and ability to fulfill it. This is the tough part. No one should be on the team who cannot contribute what is needed. In a family, this can be dicey, especially if you have teenagers; but do your best. You may have to limit family mutual goals to having one dinner together during the week.

Influence on the team can be an exercise in creativity. One family I know limits parental lectures to only three minutes at a time and no more than three times a day. Businesses can be a bit more generous, but no less understanding of reasonable limits.

Personal rewards should be quick and often.

Leading a team build with the four part teaming model is a reward itself, especially if one of the members is a granddaughter who is the best hugger in the world.