VENTURING MAGAZINE

LeaderThoughts #13 by Michael Brown   **November 2013**

Situational Team Leadership

Teams are a big part of what we will deal with as leaders. Much of what we will do will be as part of a team or leading a team, and we need to understand how teams work, how to be part of a team (sometimes called **followership**) and how to lead a team. One of the main ways of dealing with teams is the application of **Situational Leadership** (covered in LeaderThoughts #4) to teams, sometimes called **Situational Team Leadership**. Of course, this entails several concepts.

First off, we need a better understanding of teams. We are many times part of groups, large and small. We may be part of various groups and orgs, such as local clubs or professional associations or the like. Our crews are groups. Our VOAs are groups. Many of these groups may have subgroups, such a committees or subcommittees (to be covered in a future Thought).

But a group is not necessarily or automatically a team. This is a mistake many make. They could be a team, but it's not automatic. I have been part of many groups, but not all of them were teams. They may have been very successful, but this was because we had a good group of people working to achieve an end, but we weren't necessarily a team. One time I was kicked out of a group, and when I asked why, I was told that one of the main reasons was I "wasn't a team player". I mentioned this to another individual who was part of that group, and their first response was "what team?" That was telling. The group we were part of was NOT a team. So how could one be accused of "not being a team player"?

A team is **more** than a group brought together to address some issue or matter. They come together to **collaborate** on the solution or the shared goal of the group. If the group is just a bunch of individuals, each working on their own task (as given by the leader), with little or no interaction between the members, there is no collaboration. Thus there is no effort between the members of the group to achieve their shared goal. There is no teamwork, and so there is no team. This doesn't necessarily mean the goal of the group is not achieved or not achieved well. But it could have been much more successful had this collaboration gone on.

One thing that is important is accessing the group you are part of and see how good of a team it is. There are a variety of models. Blanchard et al uses the **PERFORM** model, and this used to be used in Wood Badge (if it still is, I have no idea). PERFORM is:

- Purpose and Values
- Empowerment
- Relationships and Communication
- Flexibility
- Optimal Productivity

- Recognition and Appreciation
- Morale

These terms are pretty self-evident. I find it funny that when I review these items and assess some of the groups I have been part of, those I felt had a good teamwork element were those groups that succeeded in meeting most if not all of these elements. Those groups that I felt had an absence of teamwork lacked many of them (if not most of them).

Teams, teamwork and assessing teams are all big topics and will be touched on in future notes, but in this one we focus on one method of team leadership: **Situational Team Leadership**. We actually deal with a couple of concepts: the **Team Development Model** and the **Team Leadership Model**.

Actually, there are several different concepts of Team Development. Different authors have put forth different stages that teams go thru in their lifetime. There can be, depending on the author, four to six stages. In NYLT and Wood Badge, we use four: Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing. This is not original, and is based on the original set developed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. Except that Tuckman added a fifth stage: Adjourning. Blanchard et al has five stages: Orientation, Dissatisfaction, Integration, Production, and Termination. In the Blanchard model, we also track productivity and morale of the group. In Wood Badge, they used to call the stages Orientation, Dissatisfaction, Resolution, and Performance until going with the Tuckman terms.