A Framework for Engaging Conflict in a Diverse Workplace

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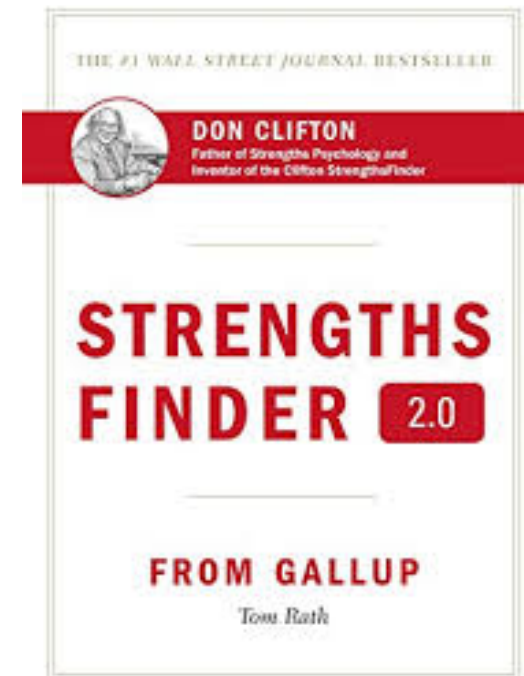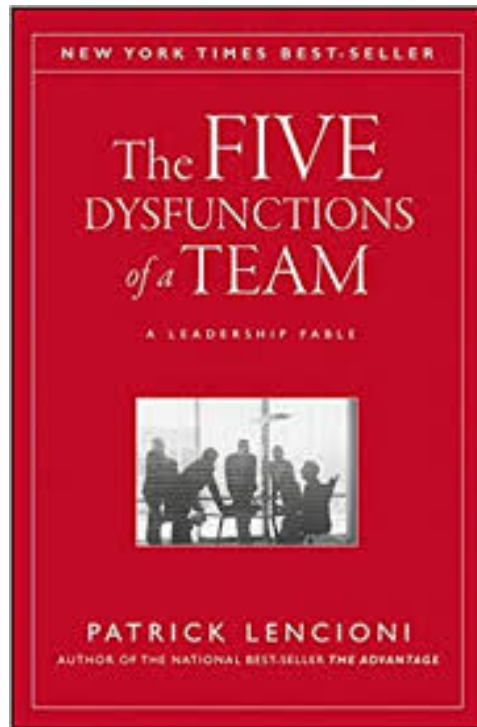# Scenario

❖ Overnight formation of a large team (25+)

❖ Three major state-wide initiatives ($18+ million / year)

❖ Lack of clear roles, responsibilities and accountability

❖ Personality conflicts

❖ You can imagine how this affected performance and morale …

Tools

Team Assessment

❖ 15 items

❖ Qualtrics

❖ Summarized results for discussion with leadership of nine (9)

❖ Examples:
  ❖ *"Team members openly admit their weaknesses and mistakes."*
  ❖ *"Team members end discussions with clear and specific resolutions and calls to action."*
  ❖ *"Team members challenge one another about their plans and approaches."*
  ❖ *"Team meetings are compelling, and not boring."*

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Lencioni's Team Model

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A QUICK OVERVIEW OF THE MODEL

As difficult as teamwork can be to achieve, it is not complicated. And so, if I can't describe it in a page or two, then I've probably made it too complex. Here goes.

The true measure of a team is that it accomplishes the results that it sets out to achieve. To do that on a consistent, ongoing basis, a team must overcome the five dysfunctions listed here by embodying the behaviors described for each one.

▲ **Dysfunction #1: Absence of Trust:** Members of great teams trust one another on a fundamental, emotional level, and they are comfortable being vulnerable with each other about their weaknesses, mistakes, fears, and behaviors. They get to a point where they can be completely open with one another, without filters. This is essential because . . .

▲ **Dysfunction #2: Fear of Conflict:** . . . teams that trust one another are not afraid to engage in passionate dialogue around issues and decisions that are key to the organization's success. They do not hesitate to disagree with, challenge, and question one another, all in the spirit of finding the best answers, discovering the truth, and making great decisions. This is important because . . .

▲ **Dysfunction #3: Lack of Commitment** . . . teams that engage in unfiltered conflict are able to achieve genuine buy-in around important decisions, even when various members of the team initially disagree. That's because they ensure that all opinions and ideas are put on the table and considered, giving confidence to team members that no stone has been left unturned. This is critical because . . .

▲ **Dysfunction #4: Avoidance of Accountability:** . . . teams that commit to decisions and standards of performance do not hesitate to hold one another accountable for adhering to those decisions and standards. What is more, they don't rely on the team leader as the primary source of accountability, they go directly to their peers. This matters because . . .

▲ **Dysfunction #5: Inattention to Results:** . . . teams that trust one another, engage in conflict, commit to decisions, and hold one another accountable are very likely to set aside their individual needs and agendas and focus almost exclusively on what is best for the team. They do not give in to the temptation to place their departments, career aspirations, or ego-driven status ahead of the collective results that define team success.

That's it.

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Overcoming Dysfunction #1: Building Trust

❖ Definition of vulnerability-based trust

❖ Courage to act for the larger good, rather than self-preservation

❖ Exercise #1: **Personal histories**
   - ❖ *Where did you grow up?*
   - ❖ *How many siblings do you have, and where are you in birth order?*
   - ❖ *What was the most challenging experience of your childhood?*

❖ Exercise #2: **Behavioral Profiling**
   - ❖ *"An objective, reliable means for understanding and describing one another"*
   - ❖ *A common vocabulary can make it safer to give feedback*

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Team Reference Guide
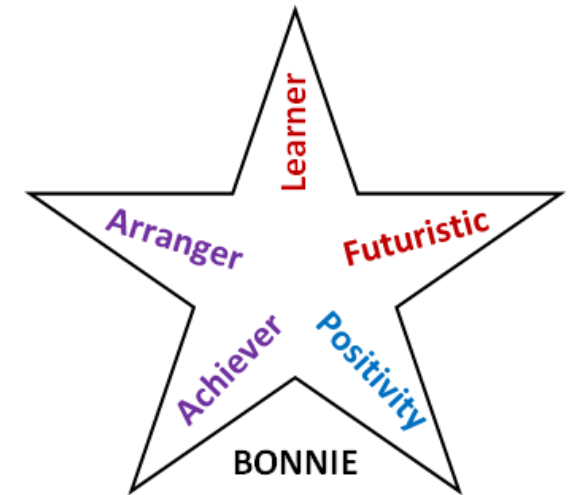
Overcoming Dysfunction #2: Mastering Conflict

❖ Define productive conflict vs. destructive conflict

    ❖ *Achieving shared goals vs. pursuing personal agendas*

❖Exercise #1: **Understand everyone's viewpoint and comfort with conflict**

    ❖ *What factors have shaped your outlook on conflict?*

    ❖ *Can we adjust to rules of engagement that will work for this team?*

❖Exercise #2: **Practice**

    ❖ *Everyone is responsible for creating an environment conducive to productive conflict*

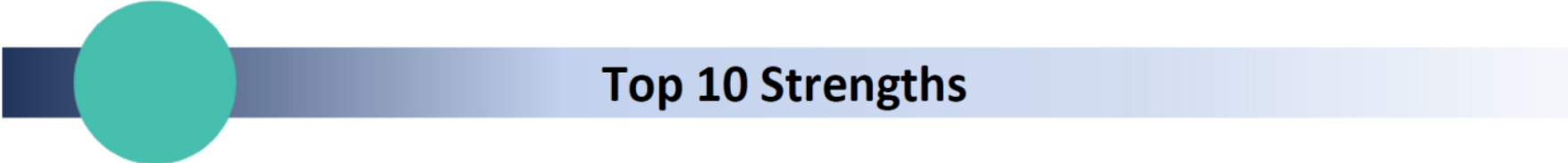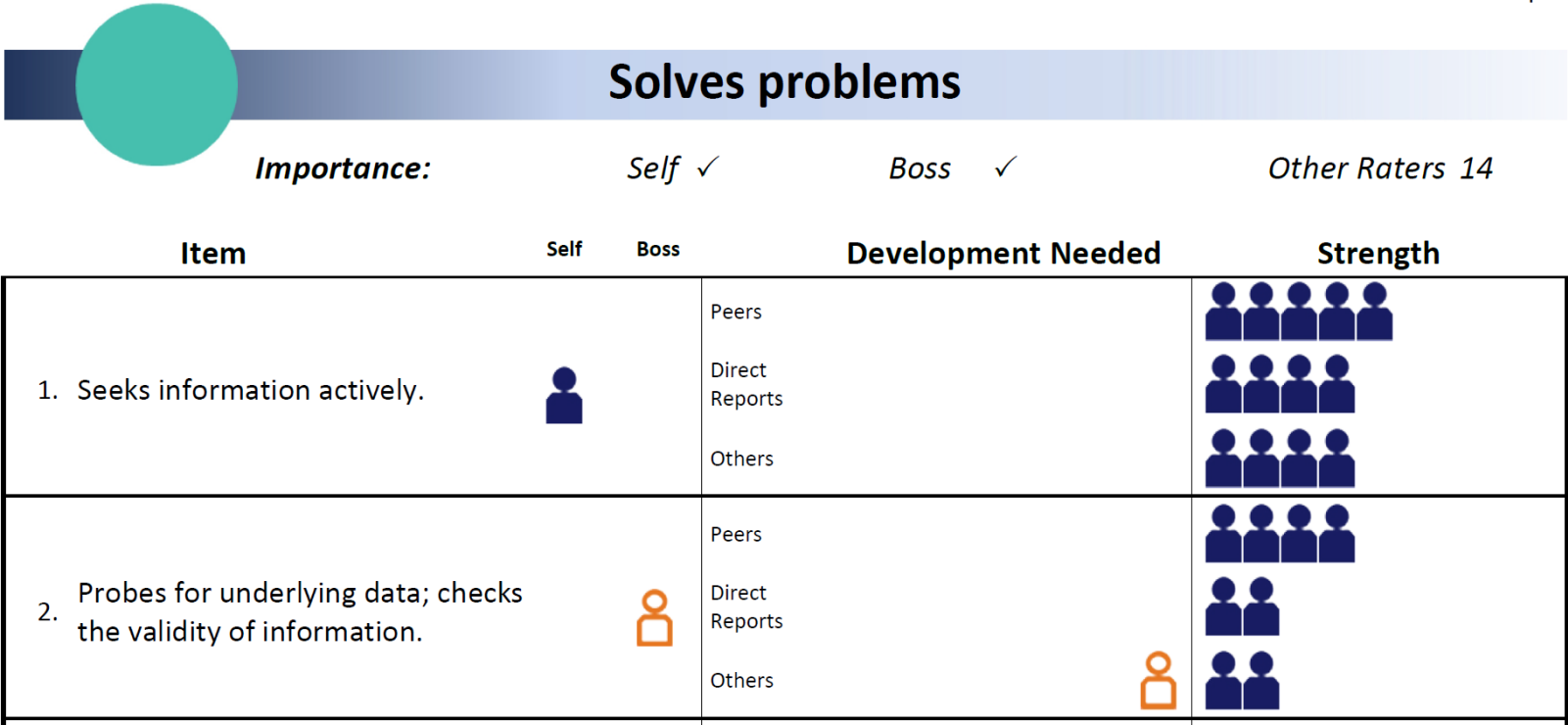   ❖ *"Mine" for conflict, at times, because those who dislike it manage to avoid it*

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Mining for Conflict

Skillscope®
Center for Creative Leadership

Pat Sample

In addition to your self-ratings, this report includes your ratings from:

1	Boss
5	Peers
5	Direct Reports
4	Others
15	All Raters

Solves problems

Importance: *Self* ✓   *Boss* ✓   *Other Raters 14*

Item	Self	Boss	Development Needed	Strength
1. Seeks information actively.	👤		Peers Direct Reports Others	👤👤👤👤👤 👤👤👤👤 👤👤👤
2. Probes for underlying data; checks the validity of information.	👤		Peers Direct Reports Others 👤	👤👤👤👤 👤👤 👤👤

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Individual Feedback Sessions

Top 10 Strengths

The ten items listed below are the items most often identified as strengths by your raters. They are listed in rank order. The "All Raters" column shows the number of raters who identified this item as a strength. The "Self" column shows how you rated yourself on that item.

Item	Competency	All Raters	Self
1. Seeks information actively.	Solves problems	13	

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Group Discussion

Top 10 Development Needs

The ten items listed below are the items most often identified as <u>development needs</u> by your raters. They are listed in rank order. The "All Raters" column shows the number of raters who identified this item as a development need. The "Self" column shows how you rated yourself on that item.

Item	Competency	All Raters	Self
20. Consistently generates new ideas.	Takes risks, innovates	6	