MISSION CRITICAL - TEAMBUILDING
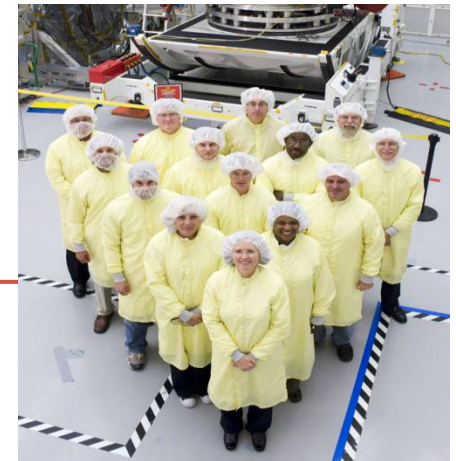

Even NASA makes time for this with scientists, engineers, and project teams!

Photos courtesy of NASA (nasa.gov)

Your Facilitators

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With special thanks to
Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville
School of Business

Today's Interactive Discussion

Team Building (Soft Skill) Value Proposition

NASA's Expensive Lesson

Team Building Mechanics

Leading Virtual Teams

Trust, Ownership & Empowerment

Managing Team Dynamics

Team Communications in the 21st Century

Why are we talking about team building?

Our Value Proposition:

- Successful high-performance teams have two distinct components:
  - ❖ prerequisite technical (hard) skills
  - ❖ complementary people (soft) skills
- Technical leaders & teams often **resist** "touchy-feely" team building
- Whether co-located or teaming remotely, leaders & teams must:
  - ❖ build trust
  - ❖ empower others
  - ❖ provide feedback
  - ❖ manage conflicts
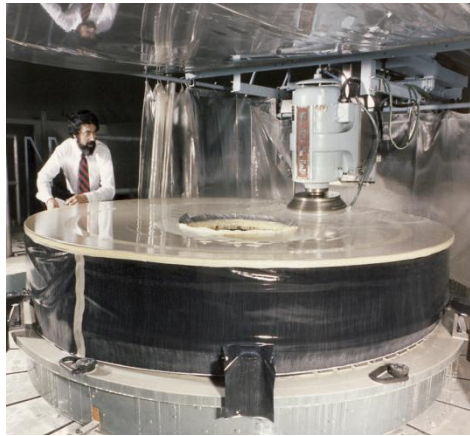
Teambuilding is for everyone!

Learning from Failure

"There is no secret to success.
What exists is the result of
preparation, hard work,
and learning from failure."

Colin Powell

NASA's Hubble Telescope

Goal: launch an atmosphere telescope to capture and return visual data

Metric requirement: 0.007 arc-seconds

- Equivalent to aiming a laser in Saint Louis and hitting a target in Chicago the size of a quarter

Results: A TEXTBOOK LAUNCH!

- Telescope deployed! Powered up!
- Metric requirement met!!
- BUT, fuzzy visual data returned and it was rationalized as normal!?

SUCCESS?

No, not really…!

Photos courtesy of NASA (nasa.gov)

What happened?

- Equipment failure
- Leadership failure
- Hostile management of contractors
- "Safe to say" culture nonexistent
- Technical problems rationalized & unreported
- Schedule and budget pressures
- Testing inconsistencies ignored
- Consistent overruns
- Flawed risk management
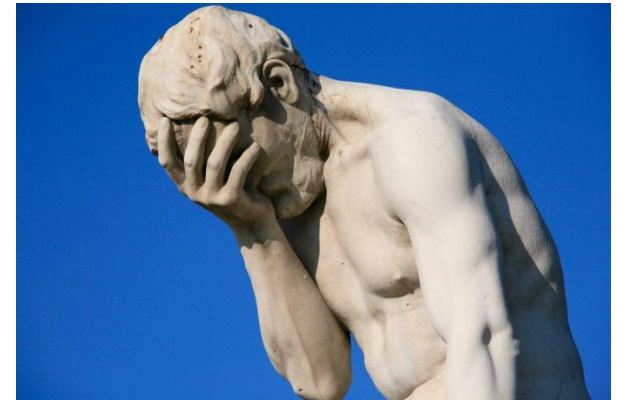
SOCIAL SHORTFALL?

Wisdom from NASA

Sophisticated Review Boards thoroughly investigated:
- ❑ *Hubble's* flawed mirror
- ❑ *Columbia's* disintegration
- ❑ *Challenger's* explosion

"In every case, these investigations named *'social factors'* as the ultimate causes, not the obvious technical errors."

Charles Pellerin (NASA, Director/Astrophysics)

Bottom line:

Project Managers must look beyond technical expertise to social factors in order to create the best possible foundation for a successful project.

Build and develop a TEAM

Tuckman's Stages of Team Formation

Forming

Storming

Norming

Performing
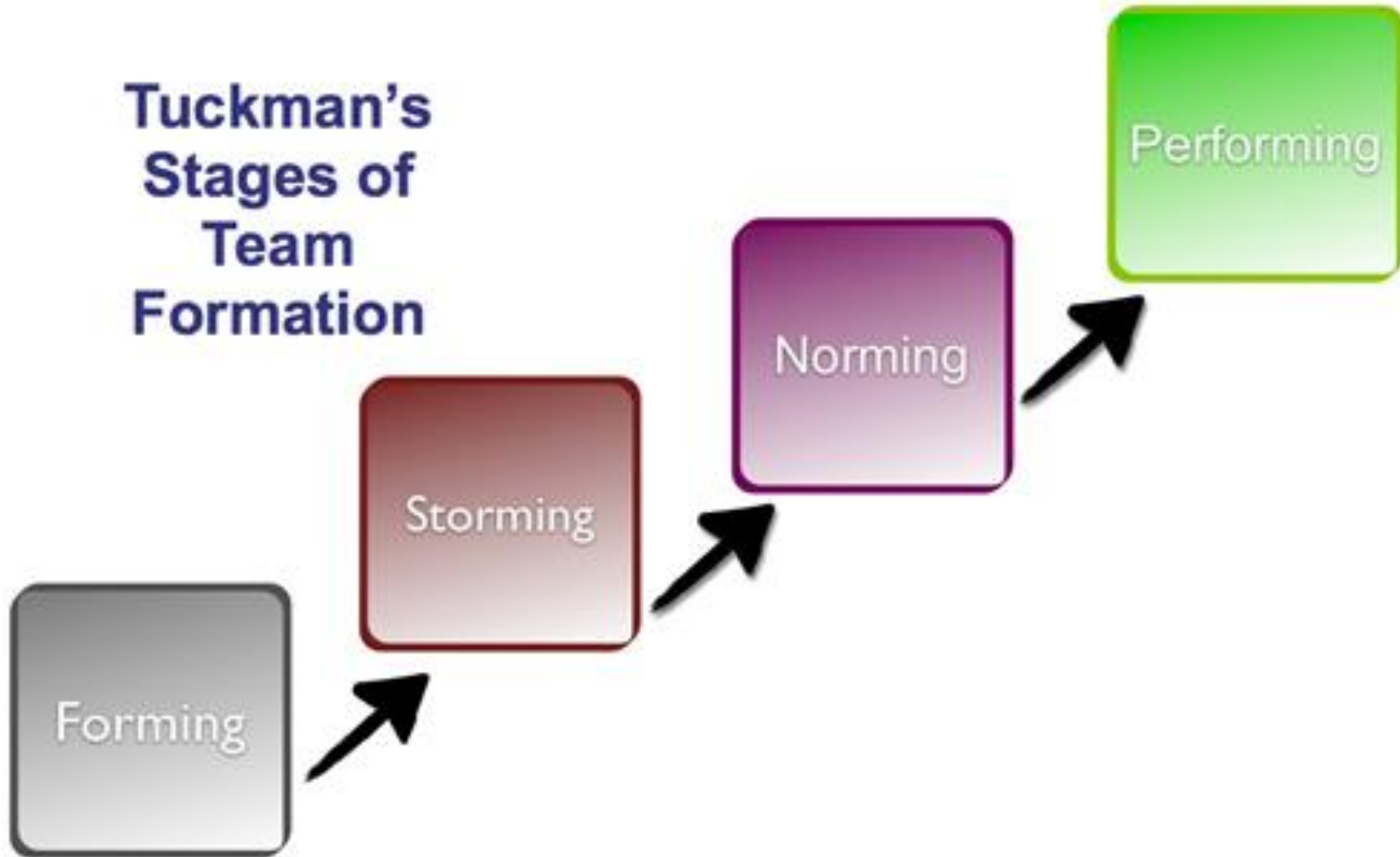
Forming

- Polite stage
- Team members introduced
- Positive interaction Initial meetings
- Project, roles and responsibilities introduced
- No one offended yet…

Storming

- Honeymoon over
- Project work and technical decisions
- Control clashes
- Quality improvement resistance
- Attitude fluctuations
- Defensiveness
- Disunity

Norming

- Constructive criticism
- Collaboration
- Membership acceptance
- Team cohesion
- Ground rules and boundaries to work the plan
- Trust developed

Performing

- Working the plan
- "Safe to Say" culture firmly in place
- Team members make contributions
- Results motivated
- Tasks accomplished effectively and efficiently

Leading Virtual Teams

- Just like any team, communication is critical!
  - Virtual teams require a lot more of it!
- Utilize all forms of communication
  - IM, telephone, WebEx, Video Teleconference, text messages, etc.
- Tailor communication so everyone contributes:
  - Bring out quiet, introverted thinkers
  - Avoid letting extroverted team members dominate meetings
- Early face-to-face meeting of all team members
  - It's easy to be unpleasant to someone you've never met
  - When team members put a face with a voice, bonding can occur
  - Annual face-to-face meetings are recommended
- Successful leaders conduct regular one-on-one meetings

Trust - Ownership - Empowerment

- Ensure **ALL** team members "buy-in" to project or mission
- Initial face-to-face meetings help build trust and respect
- Open & honest communications necessary to instill "transparency" for leader and team members
- Leader cannot micromanage team members
  - ❖Must empower them with clear "charter"
  - ❖Help them remove barriers as they occur
- "Tag-up" on regular one-on-one meetings for status & help
- Create a sense of "shared destiny" within the team

The Concern of Conflict

Conflict happens and arises from differences in not only information and logic, but in beliefs and emotions. Expect it!

Level set expectations by establishing:
  ❖ **Mission statement**
  ❖ **Ground rules**
  ❖ **Attack the issue, not the person**
Establish roles and responsibilities in the beginning of a project.

Notes:

A degree of conflict in a team may be a healthy indicator.

Different personalities -- how do you handle the:
  ❖dominator
  ❖rambler
  ❖silent controller

Listening is key. Never show favoritism.

Negotiation. Develop an attitude of resolution.

In your team, is it safe to voice an alternative opinion?

Sustainability of the team over time

Building sustainable and flexible **working relationships** to create an effective working environment starts with the project team but does not end there.

There are many skills to use when building relationships.

But more importantly it is useful to understand the individual types of people in the team and the attributes they bring to it:

> Analytical
>
> Amiable
>
> Emo
>
> Driver

High performing teams usually have a number of attributes which are common to them and include –

Support, Trust, Patience, Commitment, Humour, Compatibility, Cooperation, Adaptability(Flexibility), Friendship, Courage, Enthusiasm, Unselfishness

Communications Revolution

From Baby Boomer to Millennials

- Social networking (driven by mobile devices) bigger than email
  - ❖800 million Facebook users with over 100 billion connections
  - ❖300 million Twitter users with 1 billion tweets every 4 days
  - ❖488 million mobile devices v 417 million PCs shipped in 2011

- Real need for private, secure social network for employees of a company to collaborate and share.
  - ❖Should cross all departments, levels, geographies, and business applications while enabling project teams to make changes quickly & more efficiently.
 - ❖Issues about security are a major concern.

Collaborative tools increase productivity but there is some risk…

1. Improve "linear" communications with managers & others by an ongoing exchange of ideas

2. Status updates without being tied to date or time or location

3. Mimicking same social networking tools used in personal lives may engage more people…or it may not…

4. Provides more horizontal view of company by accentuating reduced need for upper management input

5. Task assignments and other updates could occur more efficiently, be visible to whole team, and promote accountability

6. Tools may help resolve support issues more quickly

7. On-boarding new hires more efficiently with access to people and content

*Are you a Baby Boomer or a Millennial? What do **YOU** think?*

Mars Rover Landing-Team Success

Photos courtesy of NASA (nasa.gov)
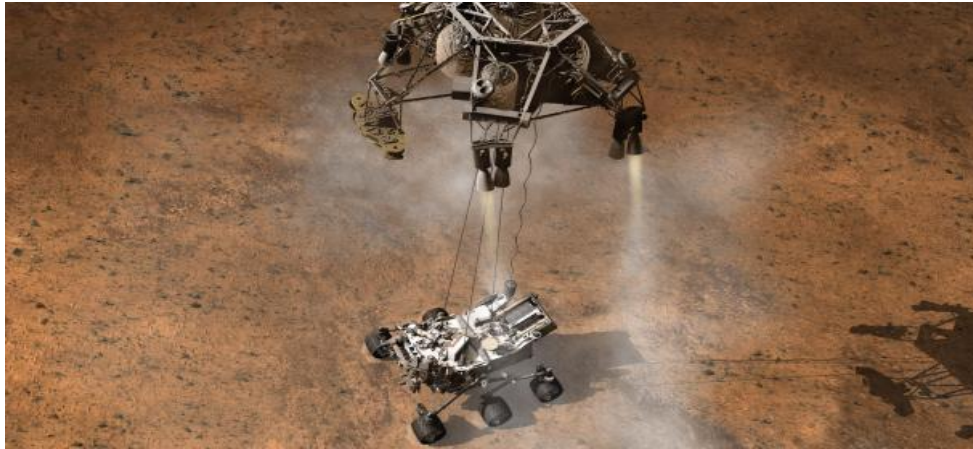
"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

Henry Ford

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- *Project Management Institute Body of Knowledge*, 4th Edition, PMI.
- NASA online: *Catalog of NASA-Related Case Studies* (2011)
- *How NASA Builds Teams* (2009) Charles Pellerin
- SocialTimes, "Things You Can't Do at Your Office Without Yammer", by Neil Vidyarthi
- Yammer, Inc.

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- In addition, the very real experiences of this team of presenters to provide best practices gained over the test of time.