

Mastering Management



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Team building translates into success

SUMAN SAHA

EVERY organisation wants to attain its business objectives successfully. So, they focus on running their business as a team because it promotes synergy between people. But working in a team does not ensure success unless it is effective, says management experts.

“An organisation has to pursue common goals based on certain values,” says Soheli Ahmed, general manager and head of business of Rahimafrooz Renewable Energy. “So, the company needs to be run as a big team for successful attainment of its broad business goals.”

Team building is a common practice for most organisations because it brings members together both horizontally (between subordinates) and vertically (between managers and subordinates), says Nisbat Anwar, head of business development project of HR Kites.

“The benefit of running an organisation as a team is the same as the benefits derived from a high performing cricket team with great line-up in batting, bowling and fielding,” says Akhter Uddin Mahmood, head of human resource (HR) of Nestle Bangladesh.

Sayedta Tahya Hossain, HR director of Lafarge Surma Cement, says most employees of an organisation want to work as a team as it ensures higher success rates.

“If the organisation works in a team with effective leaders, it can easily measure progress and share knowledge,” she adds.

Business experts, however, say the effectiveness of a team can be under threat unless the emergent conflicting issues are not resolved.

“When a group of people from different backgrounds work together, conflicts are bound to emerge among team members due to their differences in understanding,” says Soheli. Then, the effectiveness of the team will be at risk unless the conflicting issues are resolved in a win-win spirit, he adds.

In real life, team success rarely happens by itself without focused team building efforts and activities. As it happens, there seems to always be space for problems to show up.

For example, different personalities, instead of complementing and balancing each other, may give rise to conflicts or in worse cases, people of similar personalities may start fighting for authority and dominance in certain areas of expertise, says Humaira Aftoon, assistant manager for organisation excellence of HR Kites.

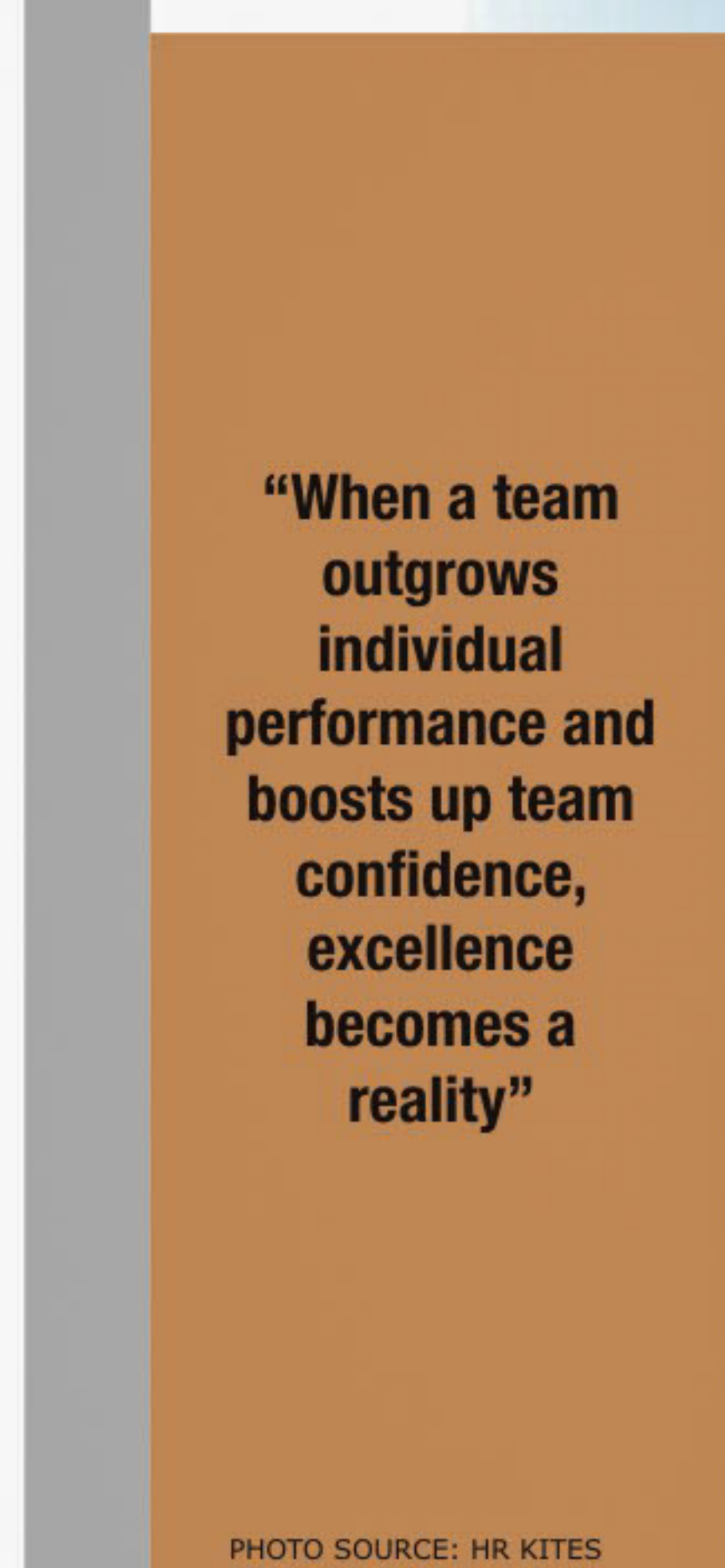


PHOTO SOURCE: HR KITES



ager for organisation excellence of HR Kites.

There may be a lack of trust and openness, which might block critical communication lines and lead to a loss of coordination at individual effort levels.

Though there are different departments where teams are working to achieve a certain goal, their achievements totaled actually brings about the success of the company, says Sayeda.

An organisation needs to go through some processes to build an effective team. They include clarifying the common goal, inculcating the same value in its members enabling them to understand the commercial and social impact of the target, orienting them to cultural expressions, encouraging adoption of similar behaviour, demonstrating positive attitudes and aligning individual traits towards attaining a common goal, says Soheli.

“In Bangladesh, many local companies still tend to consider teambuilding training programmes as

fun, equivalent to picnicking,” says Humaira. “Till date, many of them are unaware of the fact that there are proven processes and tools of aligning members of a team to a common goal.”

“The first factor in team building is the appreciation of diversified skills and different personalities,” says Humaira. “Because this action helps team members compensate for each other’s weaknesses by deploying their strengths in full. Also, differing personality types balance and complement each other.”

“While building an effective team, an organisation should treat its business functions with the same earnestness as a cricket team puts all-out efforts behind building a world class team,” says Mahmood.

The only difference between the above situations is that in cricket, it is mostly a win-lose situation, but in business, we have only one choice -- it should be a win-win situation for customers, consumers and even competitors,

says Akhter.

All employees of an organisation coming from different backgrounds have to work collectively and in a concerted manner to attain common goals and values, says Soheli.

So, in order to build an effective team in an organisation, certain measures could be practiced, such as, orientation of common practices, culture and values for the newcomers, establishing an open culture so that team members can open up and share issues and fuse positive culture and values with the work process to reflect a proper blend of commercial and social goals, says Soheli.

Nisbat, who also worked as the head of HR of Teleconsultant, says prior to team building, a company must analyse its strengths and weaknesses by concerned experts if it expects tangible outcomes from the exercise.

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Pointers for young leaders

An HR consultant marks exactly what is needed for career success

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EACH employee wants to climb up the career ladder. So, they strive to discover the secret to reaching the finish line. However, a career expert says hard work, an eagerness to learn and readiness for change management are key issues for young professional in proving their potential.

“The young talents have to work hard and prepare to adapt and manage change management to lead the organisation,” says Saood Bin Masood, managing director of HR Kites, a leading human resource solution provider in Bangladesh.

He urged young professionals to put themselves in a continuous process where they create an environment of learning and development.

HR Kites is engaged in providing consultation, executive searches, off-the-shelf and customised training and HR organisation services to different sectors, like fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) makers, telecommunications, banks and financial institutions, pharmaceuticals, media, energy, retail, development organisations and educational institutes.

Young professionals should attempt small and cost effective ideas everyday to have a Kaizen effect for business growth because it is underpinned with the values and habits demonstrated, says Masood, who held several senior roles successfully in top FMCG brands in Bangladesh and the US.

Kaizen, Japanese for ‘improvement’ or ‘change for the better’, refers to philosophy or practices that focus upon continuous improvement of processes in manufacturing, engineering, supporting business processes, and management, according to Wikipedia.

“You should have to maintain a ‘CANDOR’ to let the team know that you are willing to listen and provide solutions to problems,” Masood



Saood Bin Masood

adds.

Every act or initiative of the employee has an impact on the company’s reputation and success. It also affects performance of the bosses. So, young professionals need to see the “big

picture” and energise others to work accordingly, he urges.

“Young leaders should focus on effective communications,” says Masood. “It is essential for establishing credibility as well as gaining

team support.”

Masood, who has closely been working with Bangladeshi talents at all levels in the global context for over 14 years, asks young managers to appreciate themselves as well as the team members for success and appreciation.

Young talents should lead the organisation by setting examples, managing stress positively, and energising self and others to achieve common goals, he says. Leaders do not need a designation, and leadership is a choice, not an option, he adds.

“A young professional can be the best team player by saying ‘please’ and ‘thanks’.” Masood says it is very important for professionals to be engaging and an active listener, rewarding people for excellent performance and coaching team members.

“Team members need to be allowed to take sensible risks and should be given the freedom to learn from their mistakes. The concept of ‘idea+action= change’ should be encouraged.”

Masood urges young professionals to be respectful and ask smart questions directly.

He also urges them to keep the team fully informed on project goals, priorities and those all-important deadlines. “They should dream less for a cozy car, and ‘nice-to-have’ bosses and peers, if they want to be a good to great leader.”

“Life is a journey; not a destination.” He urges future corporate leaders to dream and act big, leading team formation.

Masood concludes on a positive note, “One small deed is bigger than big plans. The time is in favour of positive changes for people and organisation growth that is underpinned to ‘walk-the-talk’ of corporate values’ and practicing good habits.”

“Lead and follow your role model for a better you, and a better Bangladesh.”

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