

# Fit Focus Designed Team: The Foundation of the Paradigm Shift

John Blake, M.Ed.

October 20, 2011

I was recently asked the core value of team building.

“I would start with Fit Focus Designed Team discussion.”

Why? Team issues crumble under the simplicity and depth of these three profound and foundational truths. As a consultant for the Birkman Method and a trainer of the Grip-Birkman, it's easy to be swallowed by overly complex assessment. The assessments provide direction setting wisdom to the recipient, and the team can finally embrace a common language of communicating around their all-too-familiar struggles. The value, however, is not in any assessment by itself. It is not in the common language an assessment provides. It's not even in the safety of a team build to provide space needed for critical conversations.

The power is when we understand the *core paradigm shift in transforming from “I” to “We.”*

The truth is simple: the unifying power of any training or assessment without the embrace of the FFDT principles is void. It won't happen. And therefore, I will not start a training with any group without the introduction including FFDT.

## **1. Fit Focus – your significance is settled.**

Our search for significance drives self-centered and self-glorifying position jockeying. The ladder mentality consumes us as we strive to prove ourselves through positioning of tasks, great performances and business growth. We want to make sure that our actions for the organization match our internal passion, creating a conflicted understanding of our proper placement within the realm of team - which all-too-often is welded with the image of stepping on someone to gain our own glory.

Instead, this idea frees teams to not only understand but to embrace the idea that there is nothing I can do or say to increase your current status. You are a team member. You've been hired. You've been selected to be part of the business goals. It sounds so simple. Instead, however, teams struggle over the name at the top of the report, or who will be the presenter in the next meeting. They politicize conversations and relationships to leverage their value and contribution, bastardizing organizational work through often undetected insecurities of self-worth.

## **2. Design – you have a unique role to play.**

Insecurities, past failure, and lack of skill or experience often overshadow the beautiful inclusion of each person into the beautiful symphony of our organizations. Team members too often become bystanders as they remain paralyzed by the inability to embrace a challenge which may set feel insurmountable or daunting. Sometimes it may be the vastness of the need and strategic plan where we feel gravely overmatched, or maybe the view of personal self-pity or insignificance leaving us pointing out other- more qualified people- to fulfill the plan. The haunting of words “You're not ready yet” or “This isn't a good fit for you” leave next generation leaders as consumers in today's teams and organizations. Leaders who fail to equip the up-and-comers, who neglect to

release team members, who feel the vision is only theirs to fulfill over time devalue the true opportunities of the team.

The shortcomings of such thinking are clear. Each person must embrace and fully utilize their skills, training, and experience in completing the organizational goals. And the connection to the organizational goals from the individuals must be seen, embraced, and celebrated. Each person has a role to play. We must allow people to soak in the excitement of getting in the game – and never allow them the opportunity of complacency or false sense of insignificance on the sidelines of spectatorship.

### **3. Team – everyone must commit to building unity.**

Unity is a choice and a process. It is not a one-time-end-all-decision. It is an active battle ground being fought today. For many, it's simply easier to function alone. It's quicker. It's more efficient, and perhaps even more effective for a narrowed view of purpose. However, it's not the plan of any team. I am not called to be the team. You are not called to be the team. **We** are called to be the team. And therefore, we must operate in our own uniqueness fulfilling the organizations' purposes.

We often are confronted with conflict, and forming sides of support is translated into gossip and partnerships which leave many people wounded without attempted healing, support, or restoration. We hide behind success, tasks, or humor to present the flimsy front of unity. It fools only those who choose ignorance, and hinders the charisma and full-functionality of many teams today.

\*\*

These three principles start the "I" to "We" paradigm shift. Often, in discussion, I'll come back to these principles. As consultants, coaches and trainers, rather than giving a team build training as an opportunity for self-discover and unintended entitlement of "this is how I am unique," we now have set the stage for a shift in our thinking.

When we embrace the FFDT at a heart and team level, the impact of all training is suddenly more than an assessment or quality teaching. It is a Fit Focus creating, Design owning, and Team transcending opportunity for impact.

Is it truly foundational and necessary?

Yes. It is.

John Blake is an Organizational Development and Change Management consultant. With over 12 years consulting experience, he has spoken at conferences, and consulted and trained nationally and internationally in seven countries including the Czech Republic and Uganda. With a Master's of Education in Human Resource and Organizational Development from the University of Georgia, his passion is to powerfully release each individual's full potential to accomplish the goals of the organization. He lives in Dacula, Georgia.

For more information, email: [John.Blake@jlblake.com](mailto:John.Blake@jlblake.com); phone: 678-283-8789