

## “Working effectively as a team...what does it take??

First you hear the National Anthem and then...”.Plaaaaayyyyyy Ball” Yup, It is that time of the year when our thoughts turn to that All-American past time, Baseball!! Many of us have played, are playing, are watching our kids play, the grandkids play or are catching the Tigers play (ok, well maybe not that far). And then you see some teams do pretty well and then well, then there are the Tigers!!

My work over the past 10 years has brought me face to face with hundreds of teams. Baseball teams, volleyball teams and hockey teams. Banking teams, manufacturing teams and education teams. Leadership teams, team leader teams and administrative teams. Church teams, medical teams dental teams. I know you are getting the picture. So, I have asked the question, “What makes a team successful? What are the characteristics? Below is a quiz that aligns with the responses that I have received.

Apply it to your team. What are you finding out? (By the way, this works for families also)

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| 1. Our team feels they have the ability to express feelings about something, discuss the pro’s and cons and then do something (looks like conflict sometimes!!) | yes | no |
| 2. Our team feels involved in something meaningful  | yes | no |
| 3. Everyone had to do their job to get success  | yes | no |
| 4. We all listened to each other  | yes | no |
| 5. Leadership moved around based on the work that needed to be done   | yes | no |
| 6. We had a common goal   | yes | no |
| 7. There didn’t appear to be egos on the line   | yes | no |
| 8. We had fun and enjoyed ourselves   | yes | no |
| 9. We were learning along the way.....  | yes | no |
| 10. We had successes....wins!!!   | yes | no |

Scoring – every yes gets one point. The closer you are to “10” the closer your team is feeling that they are working well together and doing meaningful work and having success!! Yes, every team is different and there may be other things that do help to bring success, but the behaviors listed above provide a strong foundation for growth and development.

Geese really provide us a strong example for working as a team. As you see them flying back to Michigan in their “V” formation they fly that way because as each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. This “V” formation adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own. Honking is the geese’s language for saying, “keep up the good work”. If a goose gets sick and falls out of line, two geese fall out of formation, follow the goose down to help and protect her. They stay with her until she is able to fly again or is dead, and then they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their group.

So, as you are playing ball (or watching it) and see the geese flying overhead think about what makes a team really work!!!! Play Ball!!! Honk, Honk!!!