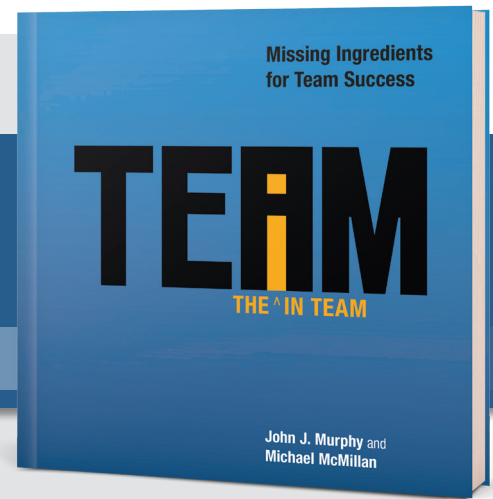


Is Your Team Ready to Add the Missing Ingredients for Success?

# The I in Team

by John J. Murphy and Michael McMillan

## Discussion Guide



Human behavior is driven by something we refer to as attitude, the way we think and feel. Most people see this correlation. We see a behavior we like and we quickly conclude that this person has a good attitude. We see a behavior we do not like and we conclude it is driven by a poor or negative attitude. It seems obvious. We face it every day. So all we have to do is change the attitude and the subsequent behavior and results will improve, right?

Wise team leaders understand that attitudes are not something we are born with. Attitudes are learned and developed, just like habits. They are like computer downloads, many of which cripple us subconsciously like viruses of the mind. Yes, we have the power to change them but to change an attitude in any sustainable way we have to change the assumptions that drive it. It is here at the assumption level that habits originate. We have to change the way we see things.

Great teams take time to ask what if, why, and why not. We exercise our intuition, our imagination, and our ingenuity—all critical i's to high performance teamwork. We learn to suspend judgment and open our minds and our hearts, allowing us to “wake up” and become aware of information and insights we never saw before. In doing so, we gain intelligence, another critical i in teamwork. We experience paradigm shifts, a reprogramming of the habitual mind. We shift from me-opic to we-opic vision, transcending independent thinking and unleashing interdependent power. We let go of insecurity and limiting beliefs and develop trust within the team. In doing so, we uncover win-win solutions, mutually beneficial results that defy the assumptions of scarcity. There is no better way to do this than through healthy, cooperative teamwork, the very process of challenging one another to find a better way for everyone. There is no “i” in team...there are many.

1) In what ways do we demonstrate a “we-opic” vision at our company? Why is this important?

2) **Inspiration:**

The book outlines the **SMART** system for goals:

**Specific**

**Measurable**

**Attainable**

**Relevant**

**Timed**

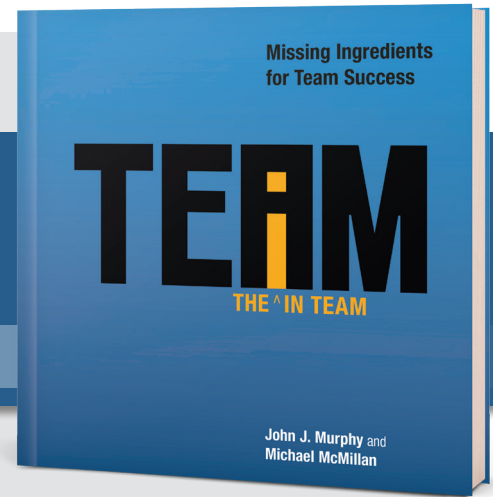
Name some ways your team’s goal or mission is SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timed). What inspires you most about this mission?

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**3) Interdependence:**

What is interdependent thinking and why does it play an important role in building a great team?

**4) Intelligence:**

Does your company use AAR, After Action Review, in order to see what's working and not working? Think of a recent scenario and use the AAR questions below to see how well your team performed.

- What did we plan to do?
- What did we actually do?
- What worked?
- What did not work?
- What do we need to change going forward?

**5) Intuition:**

Give an example of a time when you let your intuition guide you. What was the outcome and how did it change your perception about out-of-the-box thinking?

**6) Ingenuity:**

The metaphor in the book of the umbrella (like the mind) being more effective when its open, highlights the need for ingenuity within a company. Think of a situation where everyone brought different ideas to the table and how your team went about negotiating a win-win solution. How did your team use everyone's individual interests to build a "we-opic" vision?

**7) Individuals:**

What does teamwork mean to you and what unique gifts or talents do you have to offer the team?

**8) Interaction:**

What are some examples of how we can give direction to another team member in a way that is empowering, rather than micromanaging? Why is this important in assessing performance?

**9) Innovation:**

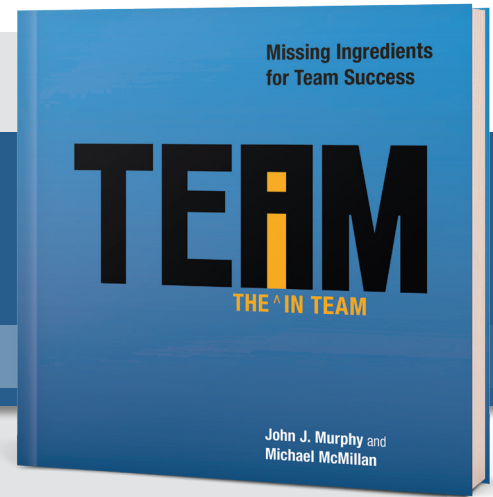
Creativity is our most powerful asset. What are some new and more creative ways your company can stay relevant in the face of today's ever-evolving business environment?

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**10) Information:**

As exhibited by the example of the blindfolded participants using Tinker Toys to build a specific model and being unable to complete their task, what does a lack of information do to team members? What are some ways your team makes certain they are clear on what to do and when?

**11) Integrity:**

What are the expectations of your team every day and how can those expectations be made clearer?

**12)** Revisit your company's/team's mission statement and if you don't have one, write one. Does it need to be updated? Clarify your mission, vision, and values. What are your guiding principles? Is your organization aligned with its mission? Make sure your policies, procedures, designs, work flow, metrics, and systems reinforce these words.

**13) Influence:**

Good, bad, or indifferent, attitudes can spread quickly and influence your team. Think of a time when one person's bad attitude spread like a contagious disease in your office. Think of ways bad attitudes can be stamped out and positive attitudes can prosper within your corporate culture.

**14) Investment:**

We learned that we reap what we sow and therefore, a good return on investment is determined by investing in our team members. We also learned that investment can take many forms:

- Useful and accurate information and intelligence systems
- Relevant benchmarking opportunities—best practices
- Continuous training and education
- Quality equipment, tools, software, systems, and supplies
- Meaningful incentives and rewards
- Effective leadership, mentoring, and coaching

In which of these areas do you think your company does well and where could it improve and why?