Necessity of Paying Attention to the Team Building Role in the Success of Project-Driven Organizations

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Abstract

Team building is discussed as the main mechanism of human resource management in project-driven organization. In these organizations, when people do teamwork, the results are quantitatively and qualitatively improved. Thus formation of work teams can be a start to respond to this new need. Individuals in purposive work teams are able to make decisions faster and react faster to environmental changes and continue their way with rapid affairs correction. In this paper, team building role has been studied as a factor affecting the success of project-driven organizations.

Keywords: Team building, project-driven organization, human resource, teamwork

1. Introduction

Creation and management of teams are as old as human civilization. In fact, teamwork is the primary means of success of people in their history. With some accuracy, the role of an effective teamwork is visible wherever a bunch of people have been successful in doing a great job such as overcoming natural disasters or wars. From the time of Hawthorne studies on the importance of social phenomena, many managerial theories have been provided for increasing the efficiency of group identity and participation in the work environment. In fact, many of the issues of human relations are based on the theories of teamwork.

Although today researchers believe that due to the complexity of the work environment and changes, the process of group creation needs management expertise (Reinschmidt & partners. 2005).

A person alone cannot be successful in doing things like designing, building, and accomplishing a construction project. In fact, each project is divided into several small tasks, and each of these tasks is done by professionals, architects, engineers, contractors, consultants and officials of procurement (Fischer. 2001).

Sustainability of the project depends heavily on the sequence of the work of the experts and as a consequence, different tasks that are performed by professionals while are related to the role of each of these professionals, also have a lot of continuity. The integration between the different parts of a project inevitably enters behavioral concepts such as participation, communication, understanding barriers into an industrial business. Walker (1996) states the main tasks of project management as follows: satisfaction with the work done, satisfaction coming from the beauty of the design, being according to the schedule, not increasing project costs. Effective teamwork is one of the key factors in the successful completion of these tasks. Research has also shown that these five tasks are appropriate metrics to measure the success of a project (Cleland. 2003).

With the increasing number of international and multinational projects, teamwork faces new dimensions and challenges. Coordination between specialized groups of different industries and in different geographic locations is one of these challenges. Here, the main responsibilities of project leaders to create the team need maximum use of management skills, so as to bring together different people with different expertise. The situation of team at each stage depends on that the project is in which step of its life cycle. For example, in the design phase, the members typically include architect engineer, structural engineer, surveyors, and other professionals such as groundwater or soil mechanics expert and an expert on legal and contract. Usually, contractor and subcontractors are added to the team in the

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performing stage. When each of the projects' stage is completed, thus some of the other team members will not be need anymore. Each project will be finished one day, and each member of the project may not be together in future projects. This is one of the disadvantages of project teams, and the employees of these teams are all temporary (Maylor, 1995).

2. History of team formation

As late as 1970, various activities were done individually based on work division, but gradually between 1970 and 1980, various activities were merged together in the form of jobs and general jobs were created, and then from late 1980 to 1990 was the height of formation of functional work teams at different levels of the organization. From the 1990s onwards, almost 78% of the work was done by teamwork (Soltani et al, 2004).

3. Definition of team

Several definitions have been given for team, some of which are referred to here:

- Team is a group of people working together towards a common goal (Larsen, 2002).
- Team is a group of two or more people who interact directly with each other and coordinate the tasks in order to achieve the objectives (lattice et al, 2003).
- Katzenbach and Smith (1993) stated that "team is a small group of people with complementary skills and are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and an approach that consider themselves to be accountable.

4. The difference between group and team

In a working group, the communication between team members is very small, while in a working team, the communication between team members is quite large and there are many opportunities for discussion. In a working group, there is no support from the people of the group to the members; while in a working team, there is a great support from the people of the group to all the members. A working group usually does not have a common goal and each member of the group may be joined to the group with different motivations and aims; while members of a working team have a shared vision that all members have faith in it and believe it. In a working group, instead of asking members to determine which method is the best approach and also valuing their suggestions, the individual members will be told what to do; while team members participate in determining team goals through using their unique intelligence, knowledge and skills (Shahroodi, 2004).

5. Types of team

Teams usually are classified according to their goals and they can be divided to three classes (Babania Mansou, 2005):

1. Problem-solving team
2. Self-organized team
3. Specialist team

The best teams are those that are small in terms of their size and the director should not allow members to reach more than 12 people and if the organization or desired unit is large, the manager is required to form a main team that has some subsets or sub-units. The aim can determine the final destination of the team but the teams that are supposed to have excellent performance must have a structure and a leader to guide them and attract their attention and effort to a special idea (Babania Mansou, 2005).

6. Goals of teams

The purpose of creating teams is to increase collaborative problem-solving and improve the effectiveness of group efforts. Examining different researches shows various benefits and purposes for team work (Johnson & partner, 1991).

- providing better ways for collaborative problem-solving process
- Effectiveness of communication among team members
- A technique to use contrary toward construction
- Enhancing creativity in members' performance
- Creating an atmosphere of trust among group members
- Defining ethical values of workplace to guide behaviors of members

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• Maximum use of members' skills and abilities to achieve the best performance

• Creating synergies

• Deciding with a better quality

• Increasing job satisfaction

• Strengthening participation morale

• Increasing members' incentive.

7. Stages of team formation

Team formation and development is a dynamic process. Most teams find themselves constantly changing and may never reach a constant stage. But experts believe that most of the teams go through their evolutionary process. Based on the model of Tuckman, teams go through four stages (forming, storming, norming and performing). Stephen Robbins added adjourning to the development process from the perspective of Tuckman, which seems to complete Tuckman's model. These steps are:

1. Forming: is a process in which group members are brought together for the first time. All people are polite and passive. Conflict is rarely observed directly and people more rely on those who appear as a leader.

2. Storming: In this stage, the characters will overlap. No one accepts things easily. More importantly, very little communication occurs and no one has a listening ear and some people are still reluctant to free discussion.

3. Norming: After these two steps, it is norming turns. At this stage, subgroups identify group benefits and group conflicts are reduced. Everyone feels safe to express their opinions freely and group discussions are followed easily in the group. At this stage, work methods are imposed and group recognizes it.

4. Performing: Reaching this stage is the maximum development of teamwork. At this stage, team states a system that allows the free exchange of ideas and points of view and a high degree of intra-group support for decision-making is formed. Also, members' ability will be transformed from being to understand and help each other in performing necessary tasks. At this stage, the danger that threatens the group is group thinking.

5. Adjourning: In this phase the team prepares for its disbandment. The most pressing task is not to promote job. Instead, attention is focused on ending activities (Stephen et al, 2000).

An important point that can be noted in the forming stage is that the teams have their own evolutionary process. This process is completed when the leadership role of the team changes from totalitarians to coordinator in parallel with the maturation of the team. Also, it is worth mentioning that groups do not always go from the first stage to the next stage of the proceedings clearly. In fact, in some cases multiple stages are formed simultaneously (Rahmanpourn, 2003).

8. Basic principles of teamwork

Institutionalizing working teams is possible by promoting a culture of teamwork, and this important will also be obtained by teaching and strengthening the principles of teamwork. Knowing these principles and criteria, and explaining and describing and applying it as far as it become institutionalized in the mind and soul of employees and managers is the most important way to achieve efficient and effective work teams. The basic principles of a good team work are as follows:

1- Spirit of cooperation: The most important principle in achieving synergistic is collaboration and cooperation. Inter-group interactions that occur between members of the group are the first principle of having the spirit of cooperation, so that if group members do not believe in it, the integrity of the band members will soon be shattered.

2- Flexibility: the main goal of flexibility is to achieve group compatibility in line with constructive interaction between groups. In the studies of organizational behavior, it has been shown that those people are successful and continuously growing that in pace with the development of human capabilities are successful in flexibility and adaptability. They are also diligent in re-directing their activities and others' in untried paths that lead to a higher level of achievement.

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3- Commitment: commitment to the group and commitment to goals and commitment to the team's conditions may be the exact meaning of commitment. Commitment to team work and work in difficult conditions is more important and decisive and perhaps testing the commitment of members is in difficulties. The commitment of the members of the team will be stronger when it is based on moral and natural values and is also as a result of conscious choice; because, coercion and force acts contrary to commitment. What seems noteworthy is the fact that a commitment to work and team work is not related to individuals' ability and intelligence, although the knowledge and awareness of members increases commitment to a high and higher range.

4- Competency and education: Successful working teams have members that are competent and educated. Increasing knowledge and awareness with the spirit of supremacy that is committed to ethical values leads to competency and education. Maybe it can be said that, the main character of competent people is that they always tend to be excellent and do not accept any moderate. These doctrines are also in religion schools that encourage their followers toward competency. Thus, reminds them that their progress in relation to other people is not the main criterion of success, but their progress in respect to their capacity and potentials are major criteria for success.

5- Purposefulness: working teams are formed for specific missions, which can be called team objective. Depending on its activity, group goals can be short or medium term. The classification according to the time of achieving goals is not the most important was of classifying, but factors such as prioritization, management level and required workload are also very important.

6- Order: following of the nature and system of creation from a natural order is a good model for the human chain to be ordered along with great and unique creation. Necessity of discipline in all activities, especially the team activities is not hidden and it is clear that in terms of teamwork, responsibility of each participant, specific time to perform their tasks, multitask cooperation date and other details should be precise and continuous. On the other hand, order within the group causes the functional integrity of the group. Having group order requires a spirit of order and regularity of each member of the group, and perhaps the most important element of a person's regularity is having a disciplined mind and regulatory thinking.

7- Hard working: fulfillment of efforts and the results of experience testing will be associated with the joy of success when it is associated with hard working. Edison states that: "99% of all innovations and explorations of the world depend on continuous effort and just one percent is due to chance." And he adds that: "Be sure that there are always more luckier people in the world than you that the one percent will not be yours." The percentage of achieving hard working is in individuals' own power and can choose to be active and hard worker or wait for luck and fortune (Momeni, 2007).

9. Ten Rules for teamwork

To work as a team, there should be mental and theoretical supports as basic principles that based on them we can start and continue the work, which includes the following:

1. The principle of accepting values of teamwork: accepting the values of the team would help the team members to maintain their integrity.

2. The principle of delegation to team members: Delegation as a basic principle helps the team to believe in it in diverse fields and decide as soon as possible without going through different stages.

3. The principle of responsibilities of team members: according to this principle, team members should practice and be equipped with collective and group responsibility.

4. The principle of fair judgment in the team: judgment in the team is a matter that if you do it good, team members' morale and motivation strengthens.

5. The principle of holding morale and motivation meetings: The nature of teamwork requires that team members and their leaders have regular meetings in order to better bring minds together.

6. The principle of commitment to the team: in order to maintain and sustain teamwork, individual commitment to the team goals, perspectives and principles of teamwork is required.
7. The principle of unified communications: Much of teamwork is establishing communication between team members. If a team is excellent technically and has skills, but is poor in communication skills, the team will not last.

8. The principle of accepting difference: usually members of the working team are different in terms of cultural, intellectual, expertise, and skills; it is important that the teamwork accept difference as an important principle. In such a case, individual's tolerance is improved and teamwork becomes durable.

9. The principle of team creativity: the principle is that teams must constantly monitor the dynamics of a group or team, be creative and generate new ideas.

10. Performance evaluation: what causes team members to continue their path is evaluation. Practical mechanisms of design should be created, thereby measure the attitudes, emotions, problems, and performance of teamwork and to remedy anywhere there is a disadvantage (Soltani, 2004).

10. Five enemies of teamwork

There are two things in team works of project-driven organizations: first, genuine and real working team is still elusive in most organizations and second, organizations fail in team work and good team building because they unknowingly get involved in five dangerous pesticides. These pests are completely stuck together and cannot be separated, but each of them can cause too much damage to teamwork. These pests include:

10.1. Distrust

The members of mistrust team:

• Hide their weaknesses and slides from each other.

• are reluctant to ask for help or give beneficial feedback.

• are reluctant to help the areas outside their areas of responsibility.

• neglect to get knowledge of others' skills and experience and exploiting them.

• Have hatred and envy.

10.2. Fear of confrontation

Those teams that, are afraid of confrontation:

• have boring meetings.

• avoid detection of the views and opinions of all team members.

• They waste their time and energy by paying out and trying to prevent possible confrontations between people.

10.3. Lack of commitment

Teams that escape commitment:

• get confused in detection of movement direction and setting priorities.

• Loose opportunities one after the other, because of unnecessary delays and excessive exploring.

• They are afraid of the mistakes and failures, instead of getting trained by them.

10.4. Avoiding responsibility taking

Teams that escape responsibility taking:

• create resentment among team members due to the different measures of performance.

• ignore basic skills and commitments.

• make the team leader's responsibility too heavy and make him the sole focus of discipline in the team.

10.5. Disregarding the results of the work

Maximum weaknesses and flaws of each team is that its members pay attention to things other than collective purpose of the group. A team that wants to measure its performance must actively seek certain goals and address specific conclusions. Some members of the team are contented and satisfied just to be members of groups. Although, these people may be eager to achieve certain results, but they do not bother and sacrifices themselves for their achievements. Proposed suggestion to overcome these pests is that team members, being aware of their human flaws, create
opportunities for growth of natural tendencies including creating confidence, confrontation, commitment and dedication, responsibility taking and accountability and considering goals and results of the work (Luncheon, 2004).

11. Factors of working team efficacy

Although the factors that determine the success of a team is great, but some are more effective. Teams' inefficiency may be the product of a combination of poor people. The most important step is to build a team; a team that its success is virtually guaranteed. There are always many cases that disrupt group dynamics and can cause inefficiency of team. As organizations focus more on the concept of teamwork, there is more need to consider how different people interact with each other (Spiegel, 2001).

These factors include the following:

1. Leader:

Leader is one of the most important factors in the success of the team. Non-effective leader will destroy team productivity. A knowledgeable and courageous leader must be able to provide different levels of performance and management. He must be able to control team meetings and involve almost everyone in the negotiation in order to achieve an acceptable result (Bradley, 1997).

2. Communication:

Communication within the team is another factor that affects the success of the team and problems in this area can occur in different ways.

3. Consistency of the team:

It is an integral part of team effectiveness. In a cohesive team, the spirit of being together and supporting each other can be seen clearly. The coherence of the team helps members in the rapid finding of resolution of conflicts. The higher level of team cohesion is, the group takes the same approach.

4. Personality diversity of team members:

The fourth success factor is the personality diversity in teams. A number of studies have demonstrated the effect of variation of team on successful group performance. Generally, these studies suggest that in complex problems, teams with different people and different abilities and technical knowledge are more effective than teams that are almost identical in these respects (Bradley & partner, 1997).

An effective team must have a healthy mix of extroverts to establish enough communication within the team. Team cohesion is affected by thinking-oriented against emotional people. Thinking-oriented team members often attack emotional by insisting on expressing their judgment and create special pressure in group feelings. In contrast, emotional members are well aware of team spirit and try hard not to destroy team harmony. Team cohesion does not deny the existence of conflict. Because it is conflict that helps the judgment of the ideas. A cohesive team is a team that is capable to solve conflicts without creating prolonged conflicts and achieve synergy that is the result of teamwork.

12. Critical success factors in working teams

Peters and Kapenz have argued that teams can be successful if they can fulfill their main needs.

The most important of these critical success factors are:

- Encourage and Sustainability
- Changing the culture
- Training
- External support.

Also, Berlin et al state that the team's success or failure depends on demographic (situational) variables. According to them, this area contains a network of support systems that surround the team. These support systems include:

- Senior management support and commitment to the concept of teamwork
- Middle managers and supervisors direct support of team
- setting team goals and priorities
• Designing a performance measurement system (determining the methods of measuring teams and members)

• Designing educational system

• Designing a reward system (performance-based payment)

• Integration system (tools and methods that deal with coordination among team members and the teams)

• Organizational Structure

On the other hand, Richardson considers the efficiency and success of teams in the following factors:

1. Transparency of team goals and how to transfer it to other people: The first and most important aspect of a goal is its transparency. Transparency emphasizes on having specific operational goals that should be expressed at the highest possible certainty.

2. Appreciating team members: This means that organizations must not only identify their role, but also their technical service should be appreciated where they perform better.

3. Aligning operations with items 1 and 2: In addition to clarifying goals and appreciating individuals, instilling a sense of importance and value of work done by individuals. If people do not feel good about doing things, we cannot expect to have success.

4. Encouragement and punishment system: Rather than promoting competitive activities, reward and punishment system of the organization should encourage collective attempts. Promotion, increased salary and other incentive measures should be based on their effectiveness as a team member.

5. Existence of honesty and trust between team members: lack of confidence, directs mental focus and energy of the team to another direction outside practical targets. Team gets a political state and connections might become reserve and injured. Thus, sharing of knowledge and insight that is the most important advantage of team, loses its importance.

6. Result-based structure: Another key and effective factor in team's effectiveness and success is the structure of the team itself. The importance of structure is not being or not, but its importance is in having an appropriate framework to achieve performance goals (Rahmanpoor, 2003).

13. Team building in organization

Team building is based on mutual trust and sincere cooperation among members and groups that work for the manager. An effective team has solidarity among purposeful and self-organized members. Managers, as leaders of groups, should try to create favorable team features in groups being formed under his control. In fact, they should focus their ability to perform the following factors:

• Creating coordination and agreement between desires and goals

• Linking group works with members

• Workflows and tasks among members

• Ensuring good inter-group communication

• Encouraging inter-group meetings in order to solve the existing problems (Rezaei Nejad, 1996).

14. Terms of using working teams in organizations

According to Danlon, one of the causes of dissatisfaction about the performance of team is that team is used in a place where individuals alone can do the job more efficiently. So a team approach is required when a job cannot be supplemented by the efforts of individuals alone. Esni and Rynard have counted the favorable conditions of applying team as follows:

• The desired work is complex.

• A lot of creativity is needed.

• High learning of workforce is necessary.

• High commitment is desirable.

• Performing task requires cooperation.

• Task or goal is multitask (Haghighi Fard, 2008).
15. Advantages of applying working teams in organizations

Griffin argues that applying teams will have the following benefits:

Benefits for employees: freedom of action of employees in the team provides them the opportunity to grow and gain profit by self-management.

Benefits for the organization: increasing yield and improving mutual interaction of members, leading to increased innovation, creativity and flexibility; given the current complex environment, these factors lead to organizational effectiveness (Haghighi Fard, 2008).

16. Performance of working teams in organizations

The truth is that teamwork is quickly replacing traditional organizing methods in organizations and the body of knowledge that surrounds the teamwork has grown considerably in recent years and a lot of theories have been proposed about team performance. But many similar approaches have been developed to measure team performance. In this section, in order to achieve an operational definition, relevant researches are reviewed and finally the factors affecting the performance of teams are presented.

17. The concept of working teams' performance

In a model, Yen suggests that organizational strategy, human resources and external environment of the organization have the greatest impact on the performance of the team (Yen & Charlene. 2006).

Towaszik has considered performance at three individual, group, and organizational level. The output and products' characteristics of team such as quality, quantity and being timely, accuracy and cost are recognized under the name of team performance. On the other hand, characteristics of teamwork processes such as skills, leadership, organization and communication are defined as team efficiency. However, some researchers have used team performance and team effectiveness interchangeably.

Working teams are established in a quite explicit task structure and most of the members are experts and roles are divided and dependencies are determined by the needs and requirements of the job that must be done. Several guides, through which members' share in the results are determined, have significant impact on the performance description models and team effectiveness.

18. Measuring the performance of working teams

Higgs argues that the composition of team and complexity of the work have the greatest impact on team performance and output. In his opinion, in a situation that job is complex, heterogeneous composition and homogeneous composition in a situation that job is simple and routine have a positive impact on performance (Haghighi Fard, 2008).

Performance evaluation provides a condition for teams to measure the effectiveness of their activity, employee motivation and reward and payment systems (Chang, 2002).

Importance of measuring performance for the working teams is:

• Performance measurement criteria have a focusing and inciting effect on the processes of team.

• Performance measurement provides necessary feedback to make decisions, diagnose problems and intervention.

• Performance measurement is the basis of continual improvement and team learning (Hunt. 2001).

Some other researchers have used a simple two-dimensional approach to the evaluation and have distinguished the team performance and team effectiveness. Katzenbach and Smith have used team effectiveness model to define a high-performance team. There are a limited number of individuals with complementary skills together to achieve a set of practical targets that all are responsible for them. This definition considers commitment, accountability and skills as the three affective components of teams and based on this model, the effectiveness assessment tool was developed (Katzenbach. 1998).
Based on the model of Heckman, Thompson provides working teams' effective performance evaluation criteria as follows: productivity is probably the most important measure of team success. Team efficiency requires that the team have a clear purpose and be able to adapt itself according to new information acquired with changing the objectives and priorities of the organization.

Although this criterion is sufficient for many, the second criterion of team performance is team's satisfaction and well-being. Sometimes the team achieves its goals, but the relationships are so fragile that they do not allow members to work together fruitfully in the future. If the team effort is supposed to happen only once, maximizing team satisfaction may not be necessary. But the majority of the teams that have come into existence will remain for a significant period of time. So if team members are not satisfied with the performance of each other, team performance will be impaired in the long term. In short, if people want to have a team working with each other, the team will be successful.

The third overall measure of team work success is individual growth. Simply, teams should provide opportunities for improvement and growth of individual needs and team members' needs must be more satisfied by experiencing team work. This does not mean that the teams have been created to serve the needs of individuals, but teams create opportunities to challenge the individual members.

The fourth measure of teamwork success is organizational benefits. Or that the team is heavily involved in their interests. It occurs more about teams with a high degree of autonomy; usually this situation occurs when the goals of teams are contradictory with the aims of other units. In some cases, different teams within an organization may re-discover things that already have been developed by the organization. That is why they are not able to learn anything outside the group. Integration lies at the heart of this matter. It is important that the teams understand the goals of the organization to be able to effectively move toward it. Teams need to be integrated with other organizational units (Thompson, 2002).

19. Factors affecting the performance of working teams

According to what was said, the reality of teamwork is observing some principles in a long time. Success is not just having believed in an elegant and sophisticated or advanced theory, success is interlacing super intelligence or perseverance and discipline. Due to the severity of their human nature, teams succeeded in works. Specialized team members with an awareness of their human failings, provide growth opportunities for faith creating, commitment, accountability and focusing on results approaches (Luncheon, 2003).

Researchers have not yet reached a collective agreement on key factors affecting team performance. Alberait states that if the performance of a team is more effective than a traditional group, each members of the team should commit himself to the mission of the team and cooperate with each other to achieve it (Zamani, 2006).

Kritner presents a model of the range of team activity effectiveness and factors affecting it. This model has the ability to be generalized to all working teams. In this model, factors determining team effectiveness are classified in three groups of individual, organizational and work factors and by looking separately at these three factors, we cannot expect an effective performance.

• Individual factors:
Including: job satisfaction, mutual trust, good communication, less unresolved conflicts and good job security.

• Organizational factors:
Including: the stability of the organization, supportive and coordinating management, appropriate reward, consistent objectives and priorities

• Work factors:
Including: clarity of objectives, good leadership, work independence and proper work challenge and having competent and experienced employees

Huckman believes that the best teamwork models are those that simultaneously deal with both internal processes of the team and things that happen outside the organization (Huckman, 1990).
20. Basic principles for success in project-based organizations:

• Relationship
• organizing
• Problem solving / decision-making
• Team building and team work

20.1. Team building and teamwork

Team project should contain the best personnel in the organization and creating a team and the cooperation between them from different working areas seems important and necessary. This team should have consultants from outside and inside the company so as to benefit from both business and technical knowledge. If possible, team members should be deployed in a place so as to be able to have relationship and cooperation with each other. Since the primary objective of the project is to create consistency and integrity between different business sectors, the existence of a close collaboration between these sectors is known as a natural prerequisite. Effective communication and expectations management at different levels seems essential, so that employees become fully informed of the objectives, activities, changes, and project scope. Teams can therefore be used as an important resource for project success. They are also an effective tool for managers to improve employees’ engagement, expand their moral excellence and diversity of the workforce, and also lead to more development and more success of projects.

21. Conclusion

Working teams are evolved form of participative management that nowadays organizations are dependent on them to improve quality, increase productivity, and satisfy customers. Thus, existence of working teams in organization in individual level, provides the opportunity for employees' growth and gaining benefits through self-management due to their freedom of action. Teams have become increasingly popular in organizations; because they do work better than individuals when there is a multiple-skills task that needs judgment and experience. Teams have more flexibility in changing environments and are accountable. In project-based organizations also existence of working teams leads to enhancement of performance and improvement of members' interaction, increase in innovation, creativity and flexibility; according to the current complex environment conducive, these factors lead to organizational effectiveness and in general, applying working teams in organization lead to achieving organizational goals with higher effectiveness and efficiency, reduction in organizational communication and are as a means to overcome the weaknesses of formal organization.

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