

# THE ELDERS AND WORKING AS A TEAM

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*“When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to our own work.”*

***Nehemiah 4:15***



It is necessary for the church to work and live in harmony as a team, willing to serve a mission for the glory of God. Elders, as leaders, should promote and encourage a positive environment so that each church member feels useful and motivated to carry out the task assigned to him.



# I. Some important definitions



## Team vs. Group

- **Team:** All the members of a *formal* organization of persons who possess skills and specific knowledge, and whose individual abilities are dedicated to the fulfillment of a common goal.
- **Group:** All the persons that make up a *formal or informal* union.



## a. Work team

Is a set of individuals *formally* assigned or self-assigned according to their specific skills and competence, to fulfill a certain goal under the direction of a coordinator or leader.



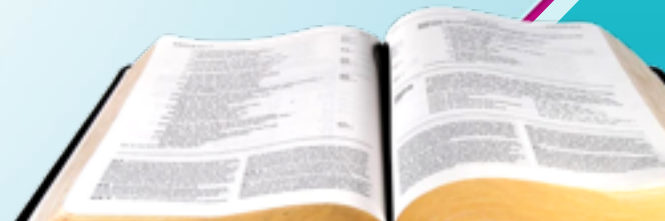
## **b. Working as a team**

It is a series of strategies, procedures and methodologies used by a work team in order to reach a specific common goal.



## c. When is a group of persons a team?

- When its members feel that they mutually need each other to act.
- When the collective talent of everyone is an advantage.
- When the members performs their individual task with responsibility and dedication.





- When the skills and talents of everyone are appreciated by all.
- When each person has their work defined according to their ability.
- When success, just like failure, is shared by all.



- When there is cooperation among group members.
- When everyone respects and values the place of each member.
- When all responsibilities are valued no matter how small they may seem.



- When everyone knows their place within the group.
- When the spirit of competition in the group is banished.
- When all strive to attain the same common goal.



- *“All teams are a group, but not all groups are a team.”*

*Anonymous*

- *“All eagles are birds, but not all birds are eagles.”*

*Anonymous*



## **d. What a team should know**

- Who are we?
- Where do we come from?
- Where are we?
- Where do we want to be?



- How will we get there?
- What resources are available to us so that we may reach our destiny?
- How near are we to our goal?



## **II. The place of each member in a team**



King David left us an example of how to organize a team to achieve great results. The way in which he organized his work team shows us how we must organize ourselves when our goal is to fulfill the will of God.





*“David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people. Joab son of Zeruah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelek son of Abiathar were priests; Seraiah was secretary; Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Kerethites and Pelethites; and David’s sons were priests\*.”*

*2 Samuel 8:15-18*

**\*chief rulers —KJV**



# Sound advice

- Know the gifts and talents of those you are leading.
- Encourage them to discover all of their own potential.
- Give each one the opportunity to develop new talents.



- Assign responsibilities taking into account the skills of each person.
- Do not assign responsibilities for which a person is not trained.
- Periodically evaluate the team's work and try to make the best possible use.



- Do not encourage a competitive spirit within the group.
- Evaluate each member according to the activities assigned to them.
- Do not compare team members with each other. Remember that each one fulfills an important role in the collective success.



- Also compliment those assigned to minor tasks because they are vital to the overall success of the team.
- Delegate responsibilities; you are not capable of doing it all.



- Remember that other leaders are also very capable.
- ***Do not*** be partial one way or the other.
- ***Do not*** encourage forming subgroups for that will end up dividing the team.



# Object lesson

*“Whenever things don’t go right I think of Jamie Scott. Jamie was trying out for a part in a school play. His mother said he’d set his heart on being in it, though she feared he would not be chosen.*”



*One day the parts were awarded, and his mom went to pick him up after school. Jamie rushed to her, eyes shining, and then said those words that remain a lesson to me. 'I've been chosen to clap and cheer.'"*

*Anonymous*





# **III. Attitudes that destroy teamwork**



It is wonderful when harmony reigns in teamwork; but results can also be disastrous when the team suffers disadvantage due to some given issue or when selfishness and opportunism infiltrate the team.



# **Behavior (from leaders) that presents a threat to teamwork**

- Leading the team for personal glory.
- Believing that they are the only ones that can guide the team successfully and not trusting anyone else.
- Not listening to the opinions of the members of the team.



- Believing that only they can be right and others are always wrong.
- Taking personal credit for success and blaming the team if there is failure.
- Treating the team members as if they were inferior.
- Imposing their own views and not allowing for anyone else's perspective.



- Feeling superior to the rest of the team.
- Not knowing what is their rightful place within the team.
- Promoting a competitive spirit within the team.
- Having disregard for any other leader.



- Being obsessed with having power and seeking it at any cost.
- Not recognizing that their vanity is the enemy of teamwork.
- Not realizing that their lack of humility in admitting their own mistakes is a threat to teamwork.
- Not delegating responsibilities.
- Not evaluating the work periodically.



# **IV. Ellen G. White and teamwork**



*“God’s servants are to work together, blending in kindly, courteous order, ‘in honor preferring one another.’ Romans 12:10.”*

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*“There is to be no unkind criticism, no pulling to pieces of another’s work; and there are to be no separate parties. Every man to whom the Lord has entrusted a message has his specific work.”*


*Ibid.*



*“Each one has an individuality of his own, which he is not to sink in that of any other man.”*

*Ibid.*





*“Yet each is to work in harmony with his brethren. In their service God’s workers are to be essentially one. No one is to set himself up as a criterion, speaking disrespectfully of his fellow workers or treating them as inferior.”*

*Ibid.*

*“Under God each is to do his appointed work, respected, loved, and encouraged by the other laborers. Together they are to carry the work forward to completion.”*

*Ibid.*



**Recapitulating  
what we studied**



1. When is a group of persons a team?
2. What should a team know?
3. What presents a threat to teamwork?



*“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”*

*Romans 12:10*

