

**"Great leaders draw lasting lessons from transforming events."**  
- Pasternack and O'Toole, quoted in *Strategy + Business*, Fourth Quarter, 2002, p. 92.

## Our Mission

To help individuals, teams and organizations reach their potential through innovative coaching, team development and management consulting.

## Cook & Company Areas of Concentration

Coaching

Assessments

Team Building

Consulting

Training

Workshops &  
Retreats

Mergers &  
Acquisitions

Ethical  
Performance

## Evaluating and Improving Team Effectiveness

By Gary M. Cook

This issue focuses on improving team effectiveness, primarily teams responsible for leading organizations.

In our work with teams, the biggest obstacles to teams being really effective have tended to be lack of clear focus and lack of clear alignment with team goals and acceptable behaviors. A couple of examples:

In one technology company with which we recently consulted, there was a clear emphasis on sales by the CEO, but a real lack of focus by the senior team on the necessary business processes – e.g., financial, operational, technological, legal, etc. – necessary to support pre-sales efforts, sales closing, and service after the sell. The company continues to struggle.

In another technology company, the senior team has real difficulty managing its interpersonal relationships across the group. While the problem was originally seen as one or two dysfunctional personal relationships, it now seems to be clear that there are no defined standards of team behavior which every member is expected to meet.

So how does a CEO or VP-HR deal with these issues in the most cost-effective way?

Cook and Company has created several proprietary on-line assessment instruments to help our clients cost-effectively establish where a team is in terms of functionality, what behaviors are

important to the team, and how well the team and its individual members are performing against its goals and the behaviors. Using these tools and the power of an on-line, confidential input process, organizations can save from 30% to 60% over traditional approaches on the first assessment process, and over 70% on subsequent assessments. At the same time, their employees can save a considerable amount of time that they would otherwise need to contribute to make these processes effective. Thus, scarce resources can be spent on performance improvement rather than just performance assessment.

These instruments are described in more detail below:

### BehaviorScope™

BehaviorScope™ is an on-line process designed to operationalize company values. It translates the existing value set into clear and precise descriptions of behaviors which exemplify the identified values. BehaviorScope™ replaces the more time consuming and expensive process of meetings and focus groups, allowing companies and teams to arrive at a consensus of what it means to "live the values" in a much shorter time frame.

### ValueScope™ Level I, Level II

ValueScope™ is an on-line approach to assessing performance with respect to company

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 cookcompany.com](mailto:contact@cookcompany.com)

values. It is designed to help both individuals and teams understand how well they are doing in exhibiting behaviors that support company values. It assumes values and related behaviors have been defined. ValueScope™ Level I incorporates assessment from 3-5 co-workers, while ValueScope™ Level II incorporates a full 360-degree assessment with correspondingly more in-depth analysis. Can include follow-up action planning workshops and/or performance coaching

### **TeamScope™ Level I, Level II**

TeamScope™ is an on-line assessment designed to help both individuals and teams evaluate their alignment against one or more sets of factors such as strategic goals, operational objectives, company values and/or non-quantifiable measures such as those found in the Balanced Scorecard approach. It can be tailored to any set of performance criteria and can include open-ended questions. What differentiates Level I from Level II is the length and complexity of the factor sets being evaluated. Can include follow-up action planning workshops and/or performance coaching.

### **LeaderScope™ Level I, Level II**

LeaderScope™ is an on-line assessment that is tailored to the leadership characteristics, behaviors, competencies and performance which an organization wants to inculcate and develop in its managers. A typical factor set is strategic goals, where the assessment poses questions regarding the extent to which he/she demonstrates progress toward those goals. Since LeaderScope™ is customized to reflect the specific corporate culture in which its managers operate and includes behaviors for high performance in that particular industry, results yield specific action items that can be woven into an individual's performance review and leadership development plan. Both levels involve 360-degree feedback, but Level II offers

more open-ended questions and presents leaders with a more detailed analysis of the results.

### **JobScope™**

JobScope™ is an on-line, cost-effective assessment designed to identify the functions that make up a particular position, the order of importance of those functions to high-level job performance, the competencies required to perform those functions, the current level of performance against those competencies, and gaps that exist in meeting that level of performance. The results of the JobScope™ process can then be used to identify critical training needs. What differentiates the JobScope™ process is that, being done on-line, it can be administered across a broad range of positions and/or employees in those positions and on a confidential basis. It is also extremely customizable, and can be used to identify differences in training needs among various factors such as length in job, job complexity, differing sites, scope of territory, prior training, etc. It is a particularly effective process when an organization needs to quickly assess training needs for one position across the entire organization.

Longer descriptions of our Assessment Products can be found on our website at [www.cookcompany.com](http://www.cookcompany.com).

We'd like to hear about your team experiences and stories, good and bad. If you have a perspective or particularly powerful vignette, please let us know at [contact@cookcompany.com](mailto:contact@cookcompany.com).

A great deal has been written over the last ten years on teams and how to improve their effectiveness. One of the best books in the field is still Jon Katzenbach's original book, "The Wisdom of Teams," followed closely by his second book on the subject, "Teams at the Top." For those of you who have a strong interest in the subject, I recommend both books.

### **Next issue:**

In our upcoming Cook & Company Commentary, we'll talk about creating team alignment—when it is needed, how to do it, and what to expect from it

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