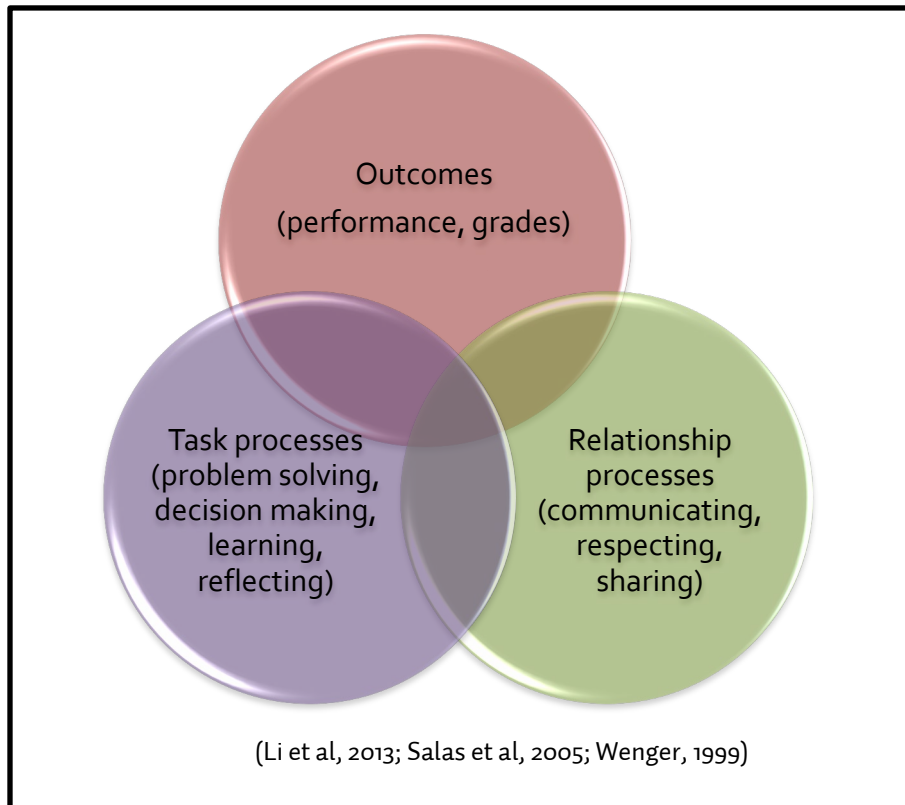


WHAT IS YOUR OBSTACLE? OUTCOME, PROCESS or RELATIONSHIP

High performing teams successfully manage three different kinds of dimensions for success:



To be effective, teams must frequently and effectively shift focus between addressing their OUTCOMES, PROCESS and RELATIONSHIPS.

But sometimes progress gets stalled out - there's an obstacle in the way. First, trust that experiencing obstacles is okay – it's perfectly normal! And it's part of the road to success. What matters is how you effectively approach and address those obstacles.

So when your team feels “stuck”, identify where the obstacle is.

1) OUTCOMES: Tasks or goals that you aim to complete together (deliverables, content)

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOME OBSTACLES:

- ❖ *lack of clarity on assignment requirements and expectations*
- ❖ *lack of clarity on course material*
- ❖ *inability to access, interpret or analyse information (e.g. technical constraint)*

ADDRESSING OUTCOME OBSTACLES

Consider the following questions:

- **What information do we need to proceed?**
- **What understanding do we each have on what is expected for deliverables?**
- **Who can provide us with information/clarity, and what specific questions do we need answered?**
- **What technical constraint is preventing us from gathering data/information, and how and when can we get past that constraint?**

2) TASK PROCESSES: Methods, strategies or tools used to complete your task

EXAMPLES OF TASK PROCESS OBSTACLES:

- ❖ *unclear workplan*
- ❖ *differing expectations on timing of work*
- ❖ *scheduling challenges*
- ❖ *unclear decision-making processes*
- ❖ *unproductive meetings*
- ❖ *unchecked assumptions around who is doing what, when, how*
- ❖ *undefined roles and responsibilities*
- ❖ *unclear process of contribution, integration of contributions, or editing*

ADDRESSING TASK PROCESS OBSTACLES

Consider the following questions:

- **Have we developed a clear workplan with timelines for each step?**
- **What is the understanding that we each have of our roles?**
- **When and how is each person expected to contribute within their role(s)?**
- **How regularly are we conducting check-ins on the efficiency of our progress?**
- **How are we using the facilitator role to guide our team process, before, during and after our meetings?**
- **Have we explored all possible options for meeting times that will work for the whole team?**
- **What is our process for sharing and editing each other's contributions?**

3) **RELATIONSHIPS: Ways of relating to each other**

EXAMPLES OF RELATIONSHIP OBSTACLES:

- ❖ *Feeling unheard, disrespected, unacknowledged, unsupported, unsafe or undervalued*
- ❖ *Differing learning, working and communication styles*
- ❖ *Differing performance expectations*
- ❖ *Broken trust or lack of trust*
- ❖ *Lack of transparency or hidden agenda*
- ❖ *Lack of engagement/avoidance*
- ❖ *Unwillingness to take responsibility for action/inaction*
- ❖ *Power struggles*
- ❖ *Miscommunication or unwillingness to communicate*
- ❖ *Strong emotional reaction that is unaddressed/unresolved*

ADDRESSING RELATIONSHIP OBSTACLES

When there are differing ideas, opinions, values or beliefs, misunderstandings and disagreement can occur. It is often the relationships that suffer. Why? It is human nature to want to be accepted for our ideas, our contributions, and our ways of conducting ourselves. When we are met with disagreement or resistance, we react by protecting ourselves. We defend, build up our side of the story, and justify why we are “right”. The result: a disagreement becomes an argument - a battle over who is right, and who is wrong. Over time, being right or wrong often gets taken personally, and this takes a toll on relationships, not just the relationship between those in conflict, but those surrounded by the conflict.

“When the elephants fight, it’s the grass that suffers” - African proverb

Consider these questions BEFORE to meeting with your team, so that you have a clear understanding of what you’d like to share.

- **What is important to me about this situation?**
- **What needs to be said that is not being said?**
- **What need do I have that is not being met?**
- **What do I want that I do not have now?**
- **What are my concerns/fears?**
- **What are my expectations?**
- **What are my hopes?**

Then, ask yourself...*Am I ready to have this discussion?*” Remind yourself to stay curious...

- **What do I not know about the situation that I’d like to understand?**
- **How can I contribute to my team while staying open to the ideas of my team members, even when we see things differently?**

Consider calling your Team Coach to have a coaching conversation to support you to tackle the relationship obstacle.