6. PROJECT TEAMS

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6.3 Fostering the team

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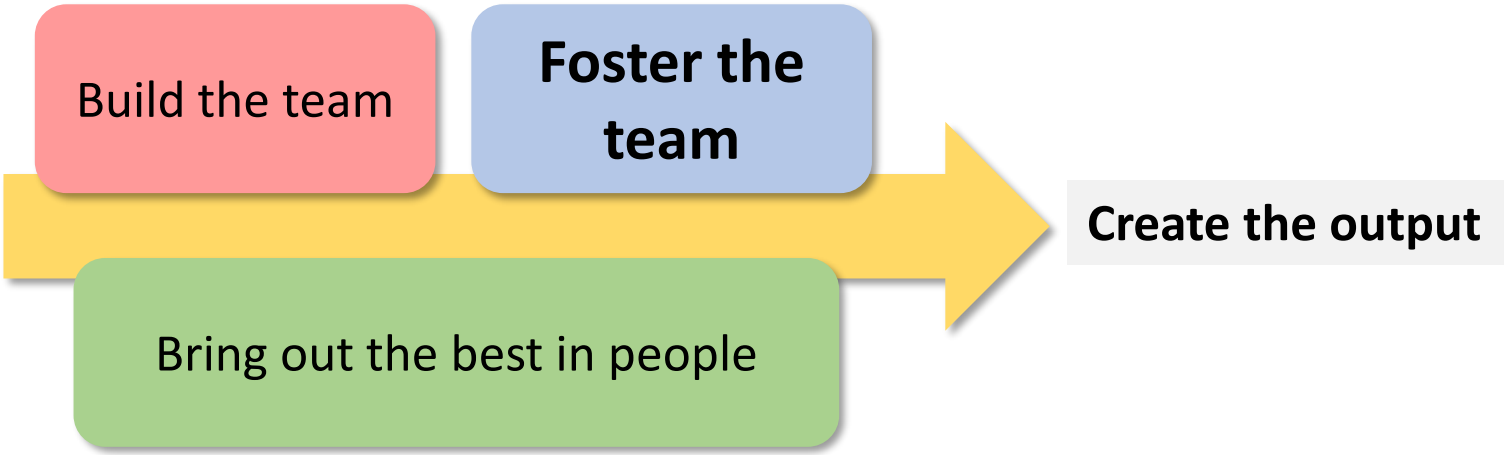
The three priorities



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Characteristics of a successful project team

Everyone shares a sense of common purpose.

There is enthusiasm for beneficial change.

People believe in what the project aims to achieve.

People have skill-sets which can be applied to more than one kind of task.

Support and defend

Ensure each others' well-being

Have efficient support systems

Enjoy some good-natured fun

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Getting the team to gel

Off-site team-building event

- Get own team, customer people and partner people to know each other
- **Consider it part of the storming stage of team development**

Reinforce with regular social events and training exercises

- Have clear objectives for why you are doing it
- **Seek advice from managers and participants beforehand**
- Don't make it too physically or mentally challenging
- **Be sure it's inclusive, and be sure everyone is likely to enjoy it**

Opportunity to observe

- how people interact
- **who might present management challenges**
- how people work in teams

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Seeking top team performance

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Handling mistakes

Experimentation and innovation are encouraged, except where stringent regulations and standards prevent that.

There is a ‘no blame’ culture, but people must be open and honest.

The occasional failure is seen as the price for making breakthroughs.

People grow in intellect and character through set-backs.

Mistakes are regarded as opportunities, to encourage creativity and risk taking.

Analysis shows how a mistake or failure can be avoided in the future.

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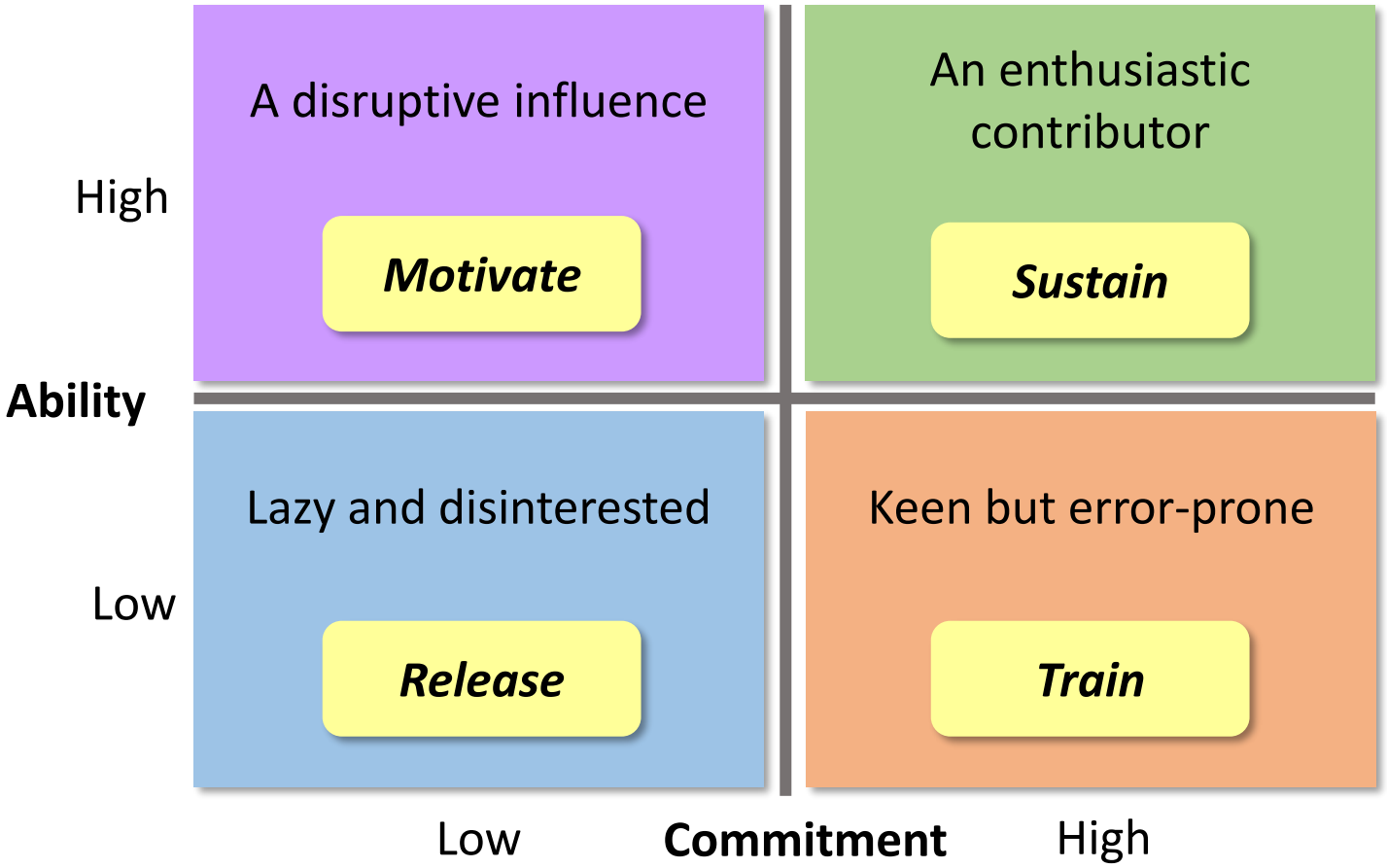
Types of follower



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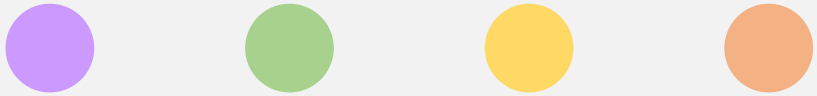
Optimum collaboration

Approach A

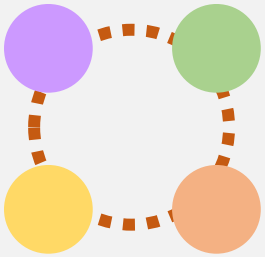


Team members work on the problem individually, then convene at the end to agree their solution

Approach B

Team members work closely together to arrive at a collective solution

Approach C



Team members work individually but come together frequently to swap ideas, and at the end to agree their solution

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Keeping the team focused

People understand the objectives of the project

Individual roles and assignments are clear

People are well-briefed on project status and progress

Individual workloads are fairly shared out

People's well-being is a priority

People are helped to cope with set-backs

Poor performance is not tolerated

Team successes and achieving milestones are celebrated

Rewards recognise teams rather than individuals

There are effective processes for people to join and leave the project

Support systems are efficient

The end of the project is managed properly

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Seeking harmony and insight

Inclusivity = welcoming everyone

Diversity = embracing difference

Equality or equity = treating everyone the same

Team members must bring the necessary

Competence
Skills, know-how, qualifications, enthusiasm

They can also bring:

Ways of living (experience of living as a certain type of person, or within a kind of community)

Mental or physical attributes (special abilities due to say autism, appreciation of the needs of particular groups)

Gender (understanding its effects on outlook, behaviour, physical and emotional needs)

Social background (knowledge of cultural values, traditions and preferences)

Age (experience, wisdom, needs of different age groups)

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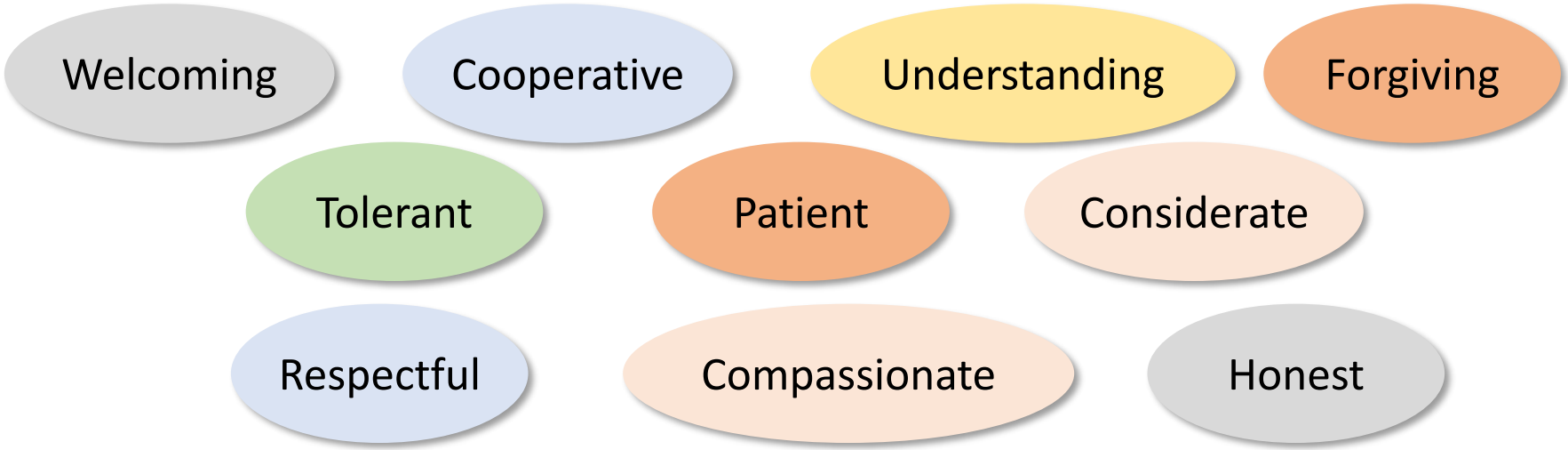
Promoting a positive atmosphere



Make appropriate and reasonable allowances and adjustments

Provide adapted and equivalent facilities

Train people in how to work together harmoniously

Be careful not to marginalise the majority

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Making room for light relief

“We are not here to make friends. We are here to make a job.”
Dr Herman Bruns, Chief Engineer, Leyland Technical Centre, 1980.

Teams perform better if the members like each other.

Managers can reveal their funny side – but do not act the fool.

Laugh with people, never at people.

On the whole, people prefer clear, down to earth, information about what it’s all about, rather than fun days and simulation games.

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