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DIMENSION

# FYI<sup>®</sup>

## For Teams

Based on the Team Architect<sup>®</sup>

FOR TEAM MEMBERS, TEAM LEADERS,  
AND TEAM COACHES

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

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# Dimension : 17

## Measurement

### **Definition:**

Team uses a performance measurement system to track results; members understand success measures and use feedback to improve team performance.

### **Addresses the question:**

Does the team have adequate process and outcome measures to guide its work?

### **A Dimension in the TASK SKILLS Factor**

The effort necessary to execute successfully.

*Measure what is measurable, and make measurable what is not so.*

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) – Italian philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician

### **Items**

- 17. The team regularly tracks measures of its performance.
- 35. Performance improvement feedback to one another is common on this team.
- 53. Success measurements are open and known to all on the team.
- 71. This team is effective at creating process measures to keep itself on track and get early warning.

### **Unskilled**

- Team does not have a process in place to measure its performance
- Team does not have well-defined outcome metrics
- Team does not have well-defined process metrics
- Team members do not give one another feedback regarding their performance
- Team does not debrief successes and failures as a group
- Team metrics are not aligned with organizational priorities
- Metrics are only known by the leader or a few select team members
- Team members are unclear about who is responsible for what
- Team has metrics but they don't measure the right things

- Team members are distrustful of measures; they fear they might be used to assign blame
- Team leader does not use metrics to hold members accountable for performance
- Team has metrics but they are cumbersome and too complex
- Team members are not committed to the goals or performance metrics

## Skilled

- Team measures are aligned with vision and strategy
- The team creates clear measures for key processes, tasks, and outcomes
- Metrics are robust and measure both internally and externally, including the customer
- All team members can explain the measurement system to someone outside the team
- The team believes that measurement is positive and constructive, not punitive
- Mistakes are treated as learning opportunities on the team
- Team members buy into and are committed to team metrics
- Performance metrics clearly assess performance against team objectives and goals
- The team debriefs its successes and failures as a group
- The metrics used are reliable and valid
- Performance metrics indicate the team's strengths and weaknesses
- Team has a method for publishing progress on performance criteria
- Team members take the measurement results seriously and take specific actions that lead to improvement

## Overused

- Team spends too much time on measurement at the expense of productivity
- Measurement becomes a goal and a pursuit of its own
- Team members are too direct with each other; feedback is harmful
- Team is too aggressive in its pursuit of measures
- Team does a disservice to the soft issues, the "people stuff," because it is so focused on numbers and hard data
- Team members are always looking over one another's shoulders and inspecting each other's work
- Team agonizes over every measurement, leading to analysis paralysis
- New team members have a hard time getting up to speed in a measurement-rich environment

**Note on overused strengths:** Overused skills and disproportionately used strengths tend to have the negative effects listed above. To decrease those negative consequences, you have two alternatives. You can scale down or use the strength less, or you can compensate for it with another skill or behavior. In practice, it is very difficult to get an individual or a team to use a strength less. In most cases, the best path is to develop compensators. Team Architect® Dimensions that can compensate for overusing this dimension and compensating skills from the Leadership Architect® Library's 67 Competencies are listed below.

*(Note: Team Dimension numbers are listed in parentheses. Competencies are listed in numerical order by competency number.)*

### Compensating Team Dimensions:

- Thrust Management (1)
- Thrust Clarity (2)
- Delivering the Goods (18)
- Team Leader Fit (20)

### Compensating Competencies:

- 36. Motivating Others
- 50. Priority Setting
- 53. *Drive for Results*
- 60. *Building Effective Teams*

### Some Causes of Poor Performance

- Team is too busy to take the time to develop metrics
- Team is too busy to review performance against metrics
- Team members are disorganized
- Team members are inexperienced
- Team members do not manage time well
- Team members avoid conflict associated with giving feedback on performance goals
- Team members are unmotivated
- Team doesn't have access to measurement technologies
- Team leader permits performance to slip; ignores missed performance goals
- Organization has a weak performance culture
- Senior leaders or sponsors aren't asking for the measures
- Team members may think performance measures are inaccurate

## The Map

The old adage is true: don't expect what you don't inspect. Inspection means comparison to a standard. It means measurement. It focuses attention and resources on whatever's being measured. Measurement helps people decide where to allocate their time and effort. Measurement guides decision making. Measurement lets everyone know where they stand. Measurement that is visible and applied to everyone levels the playing field because everyone participates in the scrutiny. Measurement allows a corrective feedback loop to help team members correct their efforts as quickly as possible. Measurement helps direct equitable rewards. Measurement ensures that team efforts are aligned with the grander vision and plan. Measurement enables the team to pursue a path of continuous improvement. Measurement makes team discussions and problem-solving activities more on point and less on opinion. It highlights mission-critical tasks. Measurement creates a culture of accountability. For most, measurement is motivating. Bottom line: the time it takes to design, apply, and track processes, tasks, and outcomes will pay huge dividends in the more effective use of team resources and increased team results.

## Some Remedies

- 1. **Measure the right things.** How do we know we're doing well? How do we measure success? Determining what is important to measure can be a daunting task for any team. In most teams, there is likely a wide array of things that can be measured. The challenge is in finding the right things. It's natural for teams to get sidetracked measuring what is readily accessible or easily quantifiable. To ensure that the team is using meaningful measures of performance, the team's first duty is to establish its key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs are a set of progress indicators to measure data against, a sort of team success gauge. They help the team assess progress toward declared goals. Indicators can be financial or non-financial, short-term or long-term, and will vary from team to team. For a call center, a KPI might be average hold times. A human resource team may consider employee engagement rates or turnover important success measures. Sales teams look at lead conversion. When determining what are the right KPIs for your team, use the following criteria: (a) the measure must reflect the team and organization's goals, (b) be key to team success, and (c) they must be measurable. Reduce the volume of possible measures down to the critical few and focus on analyzing those thoroughly and consistently.
- 2. **Use the right combination of measures to get a complete picture of team performance.** Measuring outcomes is generally easiest for a team.

Outcomes are usually very visible products and/or services everyone can see and readily measure. Most teams can easily get their attention wrapped around outcomes. Yet outcomes don't happen in a vacuum. To ensure the outcome measures are valid, clarity around the tasks and processes that lead to those outcomes is critical. Start with the end in mind and work backwards. Determine the critical tasks needed to achieve the outcome and how to measure for effectiveness. Then identify the processes employed to complete those tasks and monitor for continuous improvement as needed. Some things to keep in mind about the different levels and types of activities to measure include:

- Outcome measures quantify the end product or output of processes and tasks performed by the team. They are generally viewed as the primary products or services of the team and are most closely associated with the team's results. The prime judge of outcome metrics is the customer. Was it what the customer wanted and needed or ordered? Was it on time? Was it delivered in a customer-friendly way? Did it work? Did it last?
- Task measures assess the extent to which the bulk of the work associated with meeting customer needs and fulfilling business requirements is effective. Teams have to decide which tasks are the most important ones to measure. Tasks to measure should be those identified as having the most value in moving the strategy forward. Without this kind of prioritization, the team can get overloaded with measuring minutia.
- Process metrics evaluate the collection of steps to complete tasks. The starting point for identifying process metrics is to identify those processes linked to the team's primary services or desired team results. What process steps are necessary to produce the tasks and outcomes above? These steps can be identified by flowcharting a team's process. There are several flowcharting software packages available. Important to see are the number of steps, how long they take, how much each costs, and how much each adds value to producing the outcomes. Real fine-tuning occurs at the process step level.

Outcome, task, and process metrics should each be considered equally when determining what constitutes superior performance. The key for implementation is to put them together into a measurement process that is participative, well supported, and monitored for success.

- **3. Avoid common measurement pitfalls.** Team studies have tracked both successful and unsuccessful measurement systems. Understanding why team measures often fail can help build perspective when developing

team measurement systems from scratch. Following are some common measurement pitfalls:

- Metrics that are too complex to understand.
- Measures that take up too much time to complete.
- Measures of things that really don't make much of a difference to team success.
- Measurement systems with no consequences.
- Metrics that are only of interest to managers.
- Measures that the team cannot improve upon.
- Metrics that only measure outcomes, not the path to get there.
- Metrics that only measure process, not the outcomes.
- Metrics that chill initiative and creativity.

Once the team has created a draft of their measures, do a check against these pitfalls. Re-work as needed.

- **4. Build a sense of ownership for team measures.** The most direct way for team members to feel a sense of personal ownership over performance metrics is to be included in the development of those metrics. Team members are more likely to accept and be committed to the metrics when they are part of the process. The more a decision impacts team members, the more they should be involved. For team members to readily accept accountability for the metrics, they need to buy into them. Be able to explain the system to a visitor, customer, or business partner. Teams that really understand and own their measurement system willingly go over their feedback or measurement reports in detail. They want to know where they stand at any point in time. Teams that don't understand or buy into metrics skim over the information or avoid it entirely. Engaging team members in the development of team metrics builds clarity. Clarity on metrics should be as important as clarity on thrust or the team's goals. Make sure the measurement system models how team members think about their collective work.
- **5. Create a clear line of sight between individual members' work and team/organizational success measures.** A sense of ownership begins when team members can see that their work directly affects the organization. When they see that their contributions are important, why the work of the team matters, how the team fits into the value chain. Creating a line of sight is about translating strategy into job-specific tasks. About linking individual work to team and organizational objectives. When the work is aligned, individual measures of success are rolled up to team measures of success and help move the organization forward. An effective measurement system draws a clear line of sight between the business strategies, the

customer needs, and the team's strategy for accomplishing its portion of business objectives. Connecting these elements gets the team and the business to work together, creates mutual buy-in and support for goals, and ultimately synchronizes performance. A proven method to connect individual, team, and organizational performance is through the balanced scorecard approach. A balanced scorecard is a widely used performance measurement that provides a mechanism for translating organization-wide success measures down to, first, business units, then to support units or departments, and finally to teams or individuals. When determining team performance measures, a team can use the general scorecard categories of customer perspective, business processes, learning and growth, and financials as a guideline. Include customers' perspectives so the team looks outward. If the organization is pushing for streamlined processes, team business process measures can be built around continuous improvement. And so on. The end result of using a balanced scorecard approach should be consistent focus across all levels of the organization.

- **6. Learn to measure the unmeasurables.** Output. Goods. Services. Things with a number attached to them. Things that are quantifiable. When we seek to measure, we instinctively gravitate toward those things that are more readily quantifiable. How many widgets were produced? Were they quality widgets? Did they come in under budget? Some things are just easier to measure than others. In a knowledge-based work world, developing and tracking hard measures is, well, hard. Hard-to-measure teams are a reality. Many times these are teams in support functions, staff functions that support the line business. Areas like research and development, marketing, human resources, finance. Rather than hard-to-measure teams throwing up their collective hands in defeat, find ways to quantify the seemingly unquantifiable. Identify the products or services the team provides. Then do a functional analysis. Break down team functions into tasks, identify the expertise needed to perform them, and the output created. Define expectations for what constitutes success using standard measurement criteria like quantity, quality, timeliness, and cost. When selecting measures, make sure they are ones that are sensitive to team performance. Try to combine with other or existing measures for less effort, but be sure that it's possible to isolate team impact. If this seems too ambitious to start, use benchmarking as a way to begin quantifying performance. Find out who is the best at a comparable function and study them. Ultimately, to show value to the organization, teams need to be able to provide a ready answer to the question: What evidence exists that the team has performed in a way that benefits the organization?

- **7. Measure the “what” as well as the “how” of team performance.** Call center hold times decreasing by 30% based on team sponsored initiative. Quality errors down 10% due to process redundancies uncovered by the team. Sales increasing \$2 million year-over-year because of the team’s push for a consultative selling methodology. KPIs. Quantity, quality, timeliness, and cost measures. All focus on external business results. All focus on what the team delivers. But what’s delivered is driven by how the team functions. How it operates. How it behaves. The deliverables won’t be there if the team doesn’t function. Implement process metrics to assess how it operates, to get at the “how” that drives the deliverables. Noise and friction in the team, whether caused by one or more members behaving badly or by pervasive lack of trust, chill collaboration and slow productivity. Teaming competencies are drivers of team effectiveness. Competencies such as priority setting, peer relationships, dealing with ambiguity, and listening. If team members lack skill in these areas, team results will suffer. Look at the competencies needed individually and then in aggregate across the team. Measure the gaps. Does the team succeed because of or despite members’ participation? How is the team perceived outside? Political land mines abound for teams that don’t play nice with others. As part of measurement, assess how the team is being perceived. Use 360° feedback as a measure of team performance on the “how.” Include this kind of measure in team key performance indicators.
- **8. Review existing measures regularly.** Measurement should be a prominent topic at regular team meetings, whether face-to-face or via conference calls and Webcasts. The whole reason for having teams is to improve organizational performance. If a team’s charter and measurement system are appropriately aligned, members will talk about measures as if they were running their own business. Consider using a technique where each team member is responsible for monitoring a measure and facilitating discussion of the measure, progress, barriers, etc. at the team meetings. This approach will help to teach team members to keep an eye on the measurement system and instill accountability. Use the sessions to stimulate problem solving that leads to improved performance. Also, use the sessions to make sure the measurements are really adding value to the team and to ensure the method or tool used for measurement is still effective.
- **9. Encourage the use of constructive feedback.** Teams that trust each other are transparent. They are high on integrity. Tell it like it is. When people know they are valued and respected, they have broad shoulders and can more easily take criticism because they know it’s offered with the best intentions, to help the individual and the team do better. At the outset,

establish a high-candor-feedback protocol in the team—between members and between the leader and the team. Make feedback the norm, a constant in team interactions. In that way, when the team analyzes performance measures and debriefs either successes or failures, it looks forward as well as backward. The team should ask individually and collectively: What could I/we have done better/differently to bring about a more positive result? And, for successes, feedback is equally important. Actions and behaviors that enable success should be surfaced and cataloged to leverage in the future. Without an atmosphere of transparency, team feedback goes underground. Members become frustrated with underperforming members and may demonstrate passive-aggressive behaviors. In that atmosphere, trust erodes. Transparent feedback, on the other hand, helps team members adjust what they are doing along the way and make midcourse corrections that will bring about a positive outcome.

- **10. Use technology to harness the information to be measured.** To reap the full benefit of measurement, it's important to automate and use technology when possible. Technological applications allow for a deeper, more comprehensive tracking of data. Reports that slice and dice data in a myriad of ways can yield valuable information for the team. Automating measurement also frees up team resources for other, more valuable, duties. Some KPIs, like tracking customer satisfaction survey results, can be measured with something as simple as a spreadsheet. Others, like account penetration, business unit sales revenues, or speed to answer, may require a more sophisticated business intelligence (BI) application. BI applications provide historical, current, and predictive views of business operations, most often using data that have been organized in a data warehouse. Measurement technology such as Gartner's Business Activity Monitoring works best for real-time measurement. This type of technology provides real-time information about the status and results of various operations, processes, and transactions. In a call center, for example, Business Activity Monitoring software can track how long a call has been in queue and route it to an alternate destination after a specified time frame. This type of measurement enables a team to make well-informed business decisions, quickly address problem areas, and take advantage of emerging opportunities.

## Suggested Readings

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## Translation to the Leadership Architect® Competency Library

In order for a team or individuals on a team to perform well in this area, these are the competencies that would most likely be in play. Aside from a team improvement plan where everybody works on the same thing, some individual team members may need to work on some of these competencies. A critical number (but not necessarily all) of team members would have to be good at:

### Mission Critical:

- 35. Managing and Measuring Work
- 52. Process Management

### Important:

- 27. Informing
- 47. Planning
- 50. Priority Setting
- 53. *Drive for Results*

### Nice to Have:

- 13. Confronting Direct Reports
- 34. Managerial Courage
- 56. Sizing Up People
- 60. *Building Effective Teams*

In addition to the ten tips listed for this dimension, there are additional tips that may apply from *FYI® For Your Improvement*. Below are the four items from the Team Architect® that make up this dimension. The item number appears to the left of each item. Immediately below the text of each item are competency and tip numbers from *FYI®*. The competency is listed first (from 1 to 67), followed by the tip number (1 to 10). For example, 33-4 refers to competency 33 (Listening), tip number 4. The tips are generally written for individual development, so some adaptation might be needed in the team context.

- 17. The team regularly tracks measures of its performance.  
29-6; 35-1,2,5,6,7; 50-2; 52-3,8; 53-3
- 35. Performance improvement feedback to one another is common on this team.  
13-2; 19-3; 27-2; 29-1,6; 34-3; 35-7; 56-4,7; 60-8
- 53. Success measurements are open and known to all on the team.  
27-2; 35-1,2,5,6,7; 50-2,3; 52-5; 56-4
- 71. This team is effective at creating process measures to keep itself on track and get early warning.  
32-2,3; 35-2,6,7; 52-3,5,8; 53-1,3

# FYI® For Teams

With jobs getting bigger, organizations getting increasingly complex, and virtual workforces becoming the norm, it is the **team**—not the individual—that holds the key to business success.

*FYI® for Teams* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition is designed to help organizations create and sustain high-performing teams. Based on the research that has identified the key behaviors critical for high-performing teams, *FYI® for Teams* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition provides 200 easy-to-implement development tips for improving team effectiveness.

## POWERFUL NEW AND ENHANCED CONTENT ADDED TO THIS 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION INCLUDES:

- A **Work Team Effectiveness** chapter that explores the importance of teams, introduces the T7 Team Effectiveness Model, and offers a comparative review of other well-known team effectiveness models.
- **Updated Team Development Remedies** that provide suggestions for actions that teams can take to enhance effectiveness.
- A new list of **Suggested Readings** in each chapter, selected from hundreds of research studies, articles, and books—sources that can easily be transferred into your team development plan.
- **Quotes** to provide food for thought and inspiration.
- A **Development Plan** with an easy-to-use form where you can record your team's development needs and action plan.
- An added focus on **Virtual Teams** in each chapter that addresses the special conditions required for virtual team effectiveness.

*FYI® for Teams* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition is a companion to the Team Architect®, a solution that provides organizations with a proven assessment methodology and development program to increase team performance and overall organizational effectiveness. Anchored by the T7 Team Effectiveness Model, organizations can:

- Promote a consistent, universal language around what constitutes a high-performing team.
- Identify the strengths and development needs of teams.
- Build capabilities aligned with effective team behaviors.

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