

The Kolbe Concept within a Team Context

The team had been newly formed some two months earlier, following the merger of two hospital groups in an area of South London, UK. Team members had been drawn from the two groups following a competitive selection process and comprised of five operational heads of service; two supporting services and the Team Leader.

With the demanding agenda, the team were under extreme pressure to perform and deliver the expectations of the merger, bringing about improvements in services through a programme of rationalisation and cost efficiencies. The Kolbe Concept© was drawn on to assist both the development of a better understanding of each member and how productivity and efficiency could be enhanced.

Europe's leading Kolbe Specialist, Dr Stephen Booy, ran a Kolbe TeamSuccess©Seminar, providing an understanding of Conation and the make-up and components of the Kolbe Concept©. Each team member was provided with feedback on their Kolbe Conative Actions and how this related to the talents perceived to be required for the role that they had.

Applying Kolbe to Reality

The following day, a Kolbe Workshop provided the opportunity to practise the application of this new knowledge and how it would help the team's productivity and effectiveness. The team selected a critical subject that they were faced with and started to discuss it. The team was made up of four members who initiated in Fact Finder or Follow Thru; three Quick Starts; and a Mediator*.

Immediately, the three Quick Starts, which included the Team Leader, started to brainstorm the topic, vigorously writing up a host of ideas and options on a flip chart. It was easy to see that they felt that this was going well and were bouncing ideas off each other. However, they were oblivious to the growing tension in the room from the remaining team members. After some ten minutes, Stephen halted the proceedings and asked the team to take stock of what was happening. The Quick Starts were taken aback by the airings of frustration that were stated by the Fact Finders. These members could not comprehend the enthusiasm with which the others were developing strategies and concepts without giving any consideration to background, historic experiences or any evaluation of some basic factors. As a result, they felt totally uneasy and anxious as they were not participating in the debate, especially with the clear enthusiasm being shown by their new Team Leader for this approach.

The unsettled team members felt less stressed when informed that their concerns were wholly natural and that their questioning and search for elements of justification of the emerging topics was a critically important aspect of the team's strengths. The Team Leader expressed his surprise in the realisation that over half of his team had not been able to contribute to progression of the subject, but was now able to empathise with the Fact Finder's in the team as to the reasoning behind their concerns.

Trying New Ways of Working Together

The Kolbe Specialist provided a different approach to the progression of the project,

asking the Quick Start team members to move to a separate room and to carry on with their brainstorming and development of options and strategies and to then determine the best six approaches. The Fact Finders would then work as a sub-team to develop a criteria of evaluation which could then be applied to the range of options that would be generated. Each criteria should be equipped with a measurable factor to ensure as much objectivity as possible. To aid the learning experience within the workshop, one of the Fact Finders was asked to join the Quick Starts and to act as an observer.

After an hour, the sub-teams were brought back together and each presented their outcomes. Both sub-teams were considerably impressed with the results that had been generated and could see how the selected options could be applied to the criteria and measurements that had been developed. From this basis, the team worked out an Action Plan to take the project forward, encompassing the best blend of Conative talents in various sub-groups.

All members felt that they had effectively contributed to the progression of the project and through the understanding of their Conative team make-up provided by The Kolbe Concept, could now respect the value of their differences.

Learning Experiences

During the de-brief on the Workshop, a number of learning factors were recognised, but two were considered critical:-

1. The **Fact Finder** observer who had been with the Quick Starts reported how four of the final six best options had only emerged during the last few minutes of the sub-teams deliberations, when the team seemed under great pressure. He was convinced that they would not have emerged if the Quick Starts had not had the opportunity to go through the full brainstorming activity which generated over 60 ideas.
2. The **Team Leader** confirmed that the project subject selected to consider during the workshop had been testing the team for some time but more progress had been made in the few hours of the workshop than had been achieved over six weeks of discussions, deliberations and meetings.

This experience demonstrates the value of The Kolbe Concept in aiding team effectiveness and productivity, especially when under pressure. But, it is critical to recognise that a team will need to learn and practise how to work in a way that takes advantage of the new knowledge provided by their Kolbe Profiles and Kolbe Team Synergy Management Reports.

Notes:

1. Mediator is one of the Kolbe Natural Advantages[®] indicating a person with three or more of the four Kolbe Action Modes[®] within the Responding Zones of Operation.
2. The trademarks listed in this paper are the trademarks of the Kolbe Corp.