

‘Imagine your team working with the *SPEED*, **purpose** and intensity of a pit team.’



**Ray Collis &
John O' Gorman**

*Plus 400 teams
across 12 industries*

www.pitstop2perform.com

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*Dedicated to Michael Schumacher
and his family.*

*My philosophy is never to think you have achieved it! Always
looking for the millimeters/seconds ... find it on lap 50 of the
third day!*

Michael Schumacher¹

*‘You never really know how quick you are
before you reach F1™.’*

Jean Alesi, Driver²

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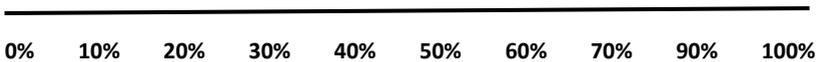
INTRODUCTION

The Big Question

Let's jump straight into a dialog about performance. That means asking the BIG question:

**What % of your organization/team's full potential
is presently being exploited?**

(circle the point on the scale below)



This is the BIG question at the heart of the performance debate. Take a moment to answer. Then ask your colleagues. However, be prepared for a surprise!

Research across 47 markets and 12 industries shows that most teams are performing at just 57% of their full potential. For some managers, the unexploited 43% is a major performance loss - a source of frustration and a waste of talent, energy & resources. For others, it offers the promise of significant future performance gains that could take their organization or team to the next level.

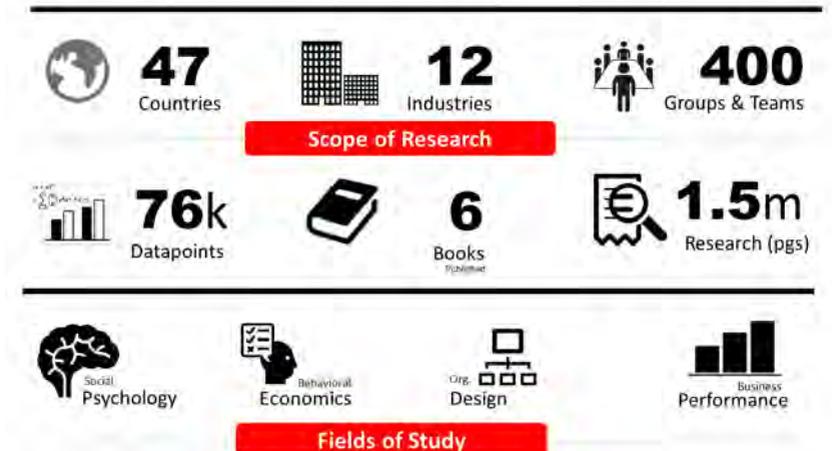
What motivates you: performance losses or the prospect of performance gains? Either way, this book is for you.

A Clear Objective: 7-25%

Based on research with teams in some of the world's largest organizations the objective is to identify performance losses and transform them into gains of 7-25%. This is made possible by a systematic mental-model and process developed through research with 400 teams in some of the world's biggest organizations.

Research & Science

Written specifically for the busy executive, this book can be read in about 75 minutes. It leverages insights from the performance-obsessed arena of F1™ to bring to life the latest research from social psychology, behavioural economics, organizational design and business leadership. The research underpinning this book is summarized below:



A Performance First

This is the first book and meta-model in the world to integrate behavioural dynamics and team design with business strategy and execution. It is also the first to focus on performance losses and a means of transforming them into gains.

Your Next Lap

If, after reading this book, you would like to delve deeper into the: pitstop meta-model, there are pitstop workshops, client programmes, partner programmes and performance analytics.

There is also a further six books in the Pitstop series. This includes an expanded edition of this book, called Pitstop for Performance™ containing 15 toolkits packed with insights and benchmarking data to help managers transform performance losses into gains.

For more information please visit us at www.growthpitstop.com or follow us on twitter at @GrowthPitStop. Also, if you have any ideas or questions about your own organization's performance journey, we would love to hear from you.

SECTION 1

PERFORMANCE LOSSES & GAINS



INTRODUCTION

The big question is a great place to start a conversation about performance. So, if you skipped the introduction, here it is again:

What % of your team's full potential is being exploited?

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 90% 100%
(% of full team potential exploited)

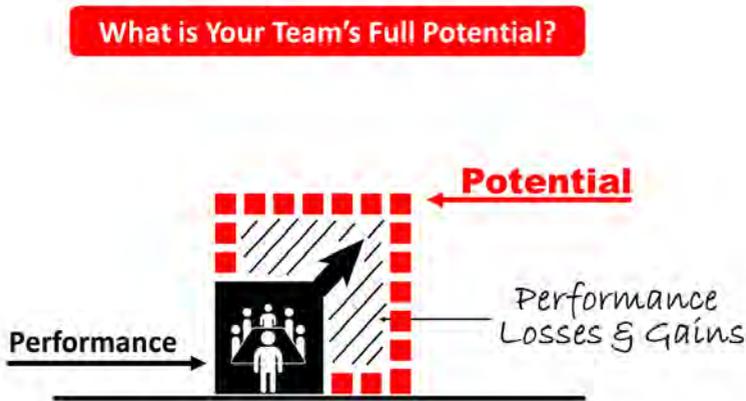
Take a moment to write your answer above. Then, we recommend that you ask your colleagues the same question. If your organization or team is like most others, then expect the average of all the responses to be about 57%.

There is an important piece of mathematics behind the BIG performance question. Called Performance Losses it is the motivation behind this book and the subject of this section.

PERFORMANCE LOSSES

Process losses is the term used to explain why so many organizations and teams fail to live up to their promise. Technically speaking, these losses are the difference between the performance and the potential of an organization or team. In other words, the gap between the actual output or effectiveness of an organization / team and what it is capable of. The concept of process losses is very important, but somewhat esoteric. To

better engage managers, we replace the word 'Process' with 'Performance' and talk, not just about losses, but gains too.



Let's calculate the rate of performance losses or gains for your organization or team. This is easy to do. Just take your answer to the BIG question (on the previous page) and subtract it from 100%. Write the answer in the panel below:

100% minus your score: ___% = ___% Performance Losses/Gains

As you will recall, teams in our research say they are realizing 57% of their potential. That puts the average figure for performance losses or gains at 43% (i.e. 100% - 57% = 43%). That 43%, or the equivalent figure for your organization/team, is something to get excited about and exploiting it is the objective of this book. Before we get started however, let's get comfortable and familiar with the concept of performance losses or gains.

How to calculate Your Performance Gains/Losses



LOSSES OR GAINS

We are often asked about the dichotomy between Performance Losses and Gains. For example: Are they the same thing? Well, to explain we will turn to a motivational speaker and a behavioral economist. The latter will make the case for talking about Performance Losses, the former will make the case for Performance Gains.

(a) Performance Gains

Tony Robbins is the American motivational guru. A best-selling author in the self-help / personal motivation genre, Robbins fills-out large conference centers on the subject of 'maximizing your potential'. His message for teams would be about performance gains – as shown overleaf.

MESSAGE: **A**

Imagine your team realizing its full potential...

Delivering a **greater performance** for the organization while also **bringing out the best** in its people....

A great place to work where passion talent & people thrive'.



Performance Gains talk about potential, hope and aspiration. It is a positive psychology 'be all you can be' message. Now, let's contrast that with the economics professor.

(b) Performance Losses

Daniel Kahneman is the Nobel Prize winning father of Behavioral Economics. Kahneman, no doubt believes in potential, but after decades of research he also knows that our decisions are skewed more towards the prevention of loss, rather than the exploitation of gains. He also knows that we are biased towards the short term, rather than the long term. That would put him firmly in the Performance Losses camp, with a message such as that labelled B overleaf.

The Performance Losses message is one of underperformance, inefficiency and waste. The company is paying wages and people are doing their work, but to have them performing at a fraction of their full potential is a waste of time, money and resources, as well as talent, energy and ideas. Just as tackling waste and

inefficiency in other areas of business is essential, so too is minimizing performance losses within teams. Given that labour is one of the biggest overheads in any business, the zeal for reducing performance losses should be as great as (if not greater than) that for cutting costs in any other area (e.g. energy or materials).

MESSAGE: B

What is team under-performance costing you?

 Money	 Time	 Resources
 Ideas	 Energy	 Talent

It is important to note that; while the term ‘performance losses’ appeals to managers with spreadsheets and calculators, the concept goes beyond numbers³. It is not just the organization that is losing, but the people too. Their natural energy and creativity is being suppressed by the culture of the organization, dysfunctional teams, bureaucratic processes, and so on. Put in the language of the occupational psychologist, the losses associated with poor team work impact on performance, behavior and well-being.

*Research consistently shows that teams under-perform...
...having a team is often worse than having no team at all.
Richard Hackman⁴*

GAINS OR LOSSES – YOUR CHOICE

Pause for a moment to re-read the two messages – marked A and B. Which one resonates most with you – gains (message A) or losses (message B)? Are you with the motivational speaker, or the professor? Mark your choice below:



Message A

You are motivated by:
Performance Gains



Message B

You are motivated by:
Performance Losses

The choice between A and B is a philosophical choice. There is no right or wrong answer, it is just a matter of what best motivates you. What about us (the authors)? Well, we like to focus on the positive and passionately believe in the potential of individuals and teams. So, we prefer Message A. However, we sometimes find that we are more passionate about the potential of teams than their managers. When this happens we dutifully switch from talking about performance gains to calculating performance losses. This generally adds extra urgency and adrenaline into the performance debate.

One member of the Growth Pitstop™ partner community has another way of explaining the difference between performance losses and gains. For her it is more about intent, than it is about language. As she puts it: ‘they are gains if you are actively working to improve team performance, but they are losses if you are sitting by and doing nothing’.

There is a growing body of knowledge to explain why performance losses happen and how they can be turned into gains. However, it is information that is widely dispersed and not necessarily easy to find. It is not to be found in one book, one book shelf, or even one section of the library. The research has many authors and emanates from many diverse disciplines. Principal among these are social psychology, behavioral economics, organizational design and of course traditional business management and leadership. There are others too, notably team coaching, change management and business agility. No one discipline has all the answers when it comes to teams. A multi-disciplinary perspective is key to the robustness of the model of performance underpinning Pitstop to Perform™.

Team Performance is both a fascinating and a complex subject. The objective of this book is to present highlights from the latest research, science and data on the subject, but to do so in a way that you can put into action with your team. The objective is not to just to educate you about team performance, but to empower you to challenge the status quo. It will help you to systematically engage your team in the exploitation of its own performance losses and gains. In the Appendix you will find details of the research in this book and others in the series.

The precisely-timed, millimeter-perfect choreography of a modern pitstop is vital to help teams to turn their race strategy into success.

F1.com

THE STORY OF PERFORMANCE

To most effectively communicate the science of team performance we are going to tell the story of two teams:

- **One is high performing** – it is highly coordinated, efficient and cohesive. It has been carefully set up to ensure that the right people are in the right roles, doing the right work and so on. We call this the top team, not just because it is playing ‘at the top of its game’, but because it is at the top of the model. There are substantial performance gains from this team’s work.
- **The other is underperforming.** It has been pulled together, with little attention to size, composition, or purpose. It is rife with conflict, unclear on its purpose and struggling to do its work effectively. We call this the ‘bottom team’ because it is to be found at the bottom of the model and at the bottom of the scale in terms of team performance. This team is rife with performance losses.

The story of the two teams/organizations will bring to life the latest research and insights into performance gains and losses. What makes it even more fascinating is that it is also a story of how the basis of competition can change in an industry, business or sport. The teams we will study belong to one of the most high-pressure and performance obsessed fields of human endeavor – the fastest track sport on earth; F1™. They tell the story of how the requirements of winning have shifted in recent decades.

NEW BASIS OF COMPETITION

In 1984, the formula for winning in F1™ was turned on its head. For the first time, stopping (or to be more precise pit stopping) during a race helped the driver to win. In a sport where milliseconds separate the winner from the rest, it was a fundamental shift in the basis of competition. F1™ had long been about fearless and somewhat egotistical drivers competing in a gladiatorial style battle on the track. Once the race started, success or failure was in the hands of the driver and the driver alone. Now, with the introduction of the pitstop, teams finally had a role to play in the driver's race performance. The sport went from being about a great driver and a great car, to include having a great pit team⁵. Today, this transition from champion driver to winning team is also underway within most organizations. The story of teams in F1™ offers inspiration for organizations where the basis of success is shifting from individual to collaborative.

Never think that success is down to your own performance alone... The flowers of victory belong in many vases.

Michael Schumacher⁶

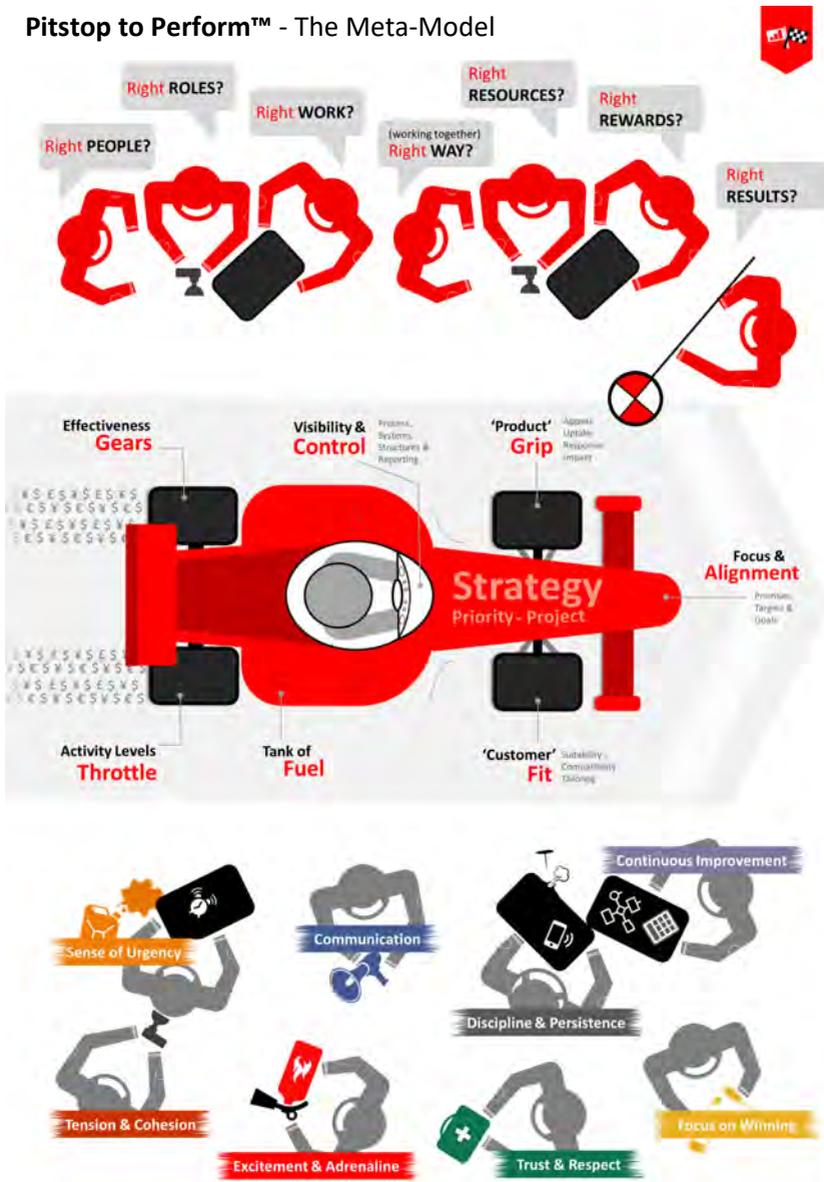
Performance in business, as in F1™, is a complex equation of driver, team and machine (shown overleaf). The driver, well that is you! The car is the various projects, initiatives, strategies and priorities that you are driving. Your pit team are the people who must keep them on the road, monitor their progress and make any adjustments required for success.

Traditionally the focus has been on the driver or the car – that is the leader and the strategy of the organization. However, it is becoming increasingly evident that this focus represents a significant blind spot. According to data from such authoritative sources as; Harvard⁷ and McKinsey⁸, this driver or car only view of performance misses out on as much as 50% of the success of an organization. A total view of performance must focus on all 3 elements of driver, machine and team. This is the total performance equation. The question is: Where will you focus?



In the quest to identify performance losses and transform them into gains, organizations must continually work on all 3 factors in parallel; driver, machine and team. That is the key message at the core of the Pitstop to Perform™ meta-model as shown overleaf. Built upon the principles of mental modelling and cognitive reframing⁹ the model explores performance in the context of a pitstop with a total of 22 performance variables across; driver, machine and team.

Pitstop to Perform™ - The Meta-Model



...I flick the pages and look at the pictures. If I see no diagrams, no graphs and no models I can usually make an accurate prediction that the book is of the old school.

Neill Rackham¹⁰

In this book, we will explore an area that, although most often neglected, represents the greatest source of performance losses for many organizations. That is the complex subject of team performance. As evidence of the potential that exists in this area, let's return to the story of teams and the role of the pitstop in F1™. We will return to the model as we progress.

A simple visual image is one of the best ways to help a group see the same thing at the same time. Many of the most influential ideas in the field of strategy have been expressed in memorable visual frameworks.

Chris Ertel & Lisa Kay Solomon¹¹

PIT TEAM SCIENCE – A HISTORY

F1™ has pioneered many technologies that are today a standard feature of the everyday motor car¹². But the sport's obsession with design and innovation doesn't stop there. It has also been rigorously applied to the performance of not just machines, but people too. This is immediately evident to anybody who looks into a pit lane during a championship race. As Sam Michael, former Sporting Director, McLaren Mercedes puts it; '*...the pitstop has... become like another car development area...*'¹³ The sport has transformed teamwork from an art to a science. When it comes to team performance, F1™ started before the professors and consultants. Indeed, for almost four decades F1™ has been innovating its own laboratory of team performance – the pit lane.

Considering the millions of dollars spent on designing, manufacturing and developing a modern Formula One™ car... it's paradoxical that one of the most important parts of a Grand Prix comes when the car is stationary.

Mark Gallagher¹⁴

Today's F1™ pit teams are an inspiration. In just 2 seconds, 20 people surround the car, change all 4 tires and make any other adjustments required to maximize the driver's chances of winning. Now imagine your team working with the same focus, intensity and determination to win!

The choreographed precision of today's pit teams sets a new bar for team performance, but it hasn't always been that way. In the earlier years of racing, pit stops were clumsy and slow. In the 1950's and early 1960's drivers got out of their cars for a drink and a cigarette, as three people in overalls shuffled around the car with wrenches, hammers and an oil can. All this happened at the side of the track as cars whizzed by – dedicated pit lanes are a relatively new addition to racing. It is laughable by today's standards, but in those early days what happened in the pit lane didn't much matter. It was not connected with winning, indeed it was more likely to lose the race, than win it. On August 15, 1982, all that changed.

Aug. 1982:

The 1st Real

PITSTOP



It was mid-way through the Austrian Grand Prix. Brazilian driver Nelson Piquet had just pulled into the pitlane and the first pitstop of the modern era unfolded. Today, we have seen it a hundred times, the choreography of a pit team in action. But on that summer day in Austria, spectators looked on in amazement at the first planned mid-race fuel and tyre pitstop ever. It was a radical innovation that enabled Piquet and his team to win¹⁵. The brainchild of Brabham’s Technical Director Gordon Murray, this extraordinary pitstop would have made Frederick Taylor, Henry Ford or Edward Demming smile¹⁶. There were clever tools, efficient processes, specialised work teams and of course a stopwatch! All the other F1™ teams quickly followed suit and that is how the pitstop became a model of team performance. More than 30 years later it still offers inspiration for teams.

PitStop Evolution: From Art to Science



<i>Machine</i>	Simple	Complex
<i>Its involves:</i>	3 Individuals	Team of 20+
<i>Speed:</i>	Minutes	Milliseconds
<i>Measurement:</i>	No Data	Big Data

How do you change the tyres quickly? How do you put the fuel in quickly...? We videoed the mechanics changing tyres, analysed it frame by frame, and I redesigned the hubs, bearing carriers, threads, nuts and wheel guns...

Gordon Murray, father of the modern pitstop¹⁷

LESSONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Race teams invest countless millions in building high performance racing machines – each year developing ever more sophisticated models. What is less well known is that they apply similar efforts in respect of team (and in particular pit team) performance. They have turned collaborative people performance into a science. By contrast, most organizations bring groups of people together and expect high level of performance, but leave the rest to chance. Unlike Gordon Murray, they pay little attention to the roles, processes or tools that are required for high performance. They don't pay enough attention to issues of team size, composition, structure and process. That is why F1™ offers so many lessons for organizations that want to design teams capable of performing complex demanding work in high-pressure environments.



'Many people wish that their corporate team could operate at the level of F1™... Now they can...

Derek Daly¹⁸

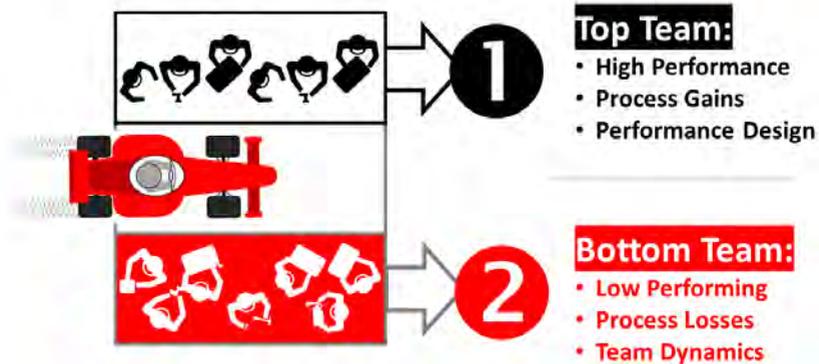
When it comes to pit team performance in F1™ nothing is left to chance. The processes and tools are continually adapted and pit teams practice and train assiduously. For all those involved continuous improvement is not a byword, it is a relentless quest for the millisecond advantage. Now the science and sophistication applied to pit teams since the 1980s, can be applied to teams in business and elsewhere. Are you ready to apply it to your team?

In the pages that follow, we combine inspiration from F1™ with Growth Pitstop™ research into 400 teams and the latest findings from the leading academic institutions and big consulting houses.

A TALE OF TWO TEAMS

The meta model is a tale of two teams. The top of the meta-model shows the high performing ‘dream team’, with the dysfunctional rag-tag team at the bottom.

The Meta-model is a Tale of **Two Teams:**



As we said a little earlier, the car at the centre of the performance meta-model represents the various projects, initiatives, strategies or priorities that you are driving. Your pit team is the people who must keep them on the road, monitor their progress and make any adjustments required for success. If your team is like that at the top of the model (i.e. high performing) then the chances of winning are high. On the other hand, if your team is struggling and dysfunctional (like that at the bottom of the model) success may be a long way off.



If the top of the meta-model is the ideal, then the bottom is closer to the reality for most teams. Most teams can find themselves somewhere between the two. Let's explore where your team is, starting first with the top of the model and then moving to the bottom.

TOP OF THE META-MODEL

Look at the top of the model (shown below). There are high levels of symmetry, co-ordination and interdependence. The right people are in the right roles and they have the right tools too. It just looks right.



Each team member has their own role, yet they are completely interdependent. One person has the wheel gun, one person takes off the wheel and another puts it on. This happens at all four wheels. No matter how great the individual contribution of any team member is, the team cannot win unless everybody does their job well. Performance is a shared responsibility for all team members and all share the same definition of winning – to complete the fastest pitstop, so as to safely release the car and driver back into the race with the maximum chances of winning. It is the high level of interdependence and mutual accountability that qualifies the pit team to be designated a ‘real team’¹⁹. This is a team that exhibits the performance gains associated with

effective teamwork. We would naturally expect performance losses to minimal. But it is not an accident, this has been achieved by design.

Pitstops have evolved from slapdash chaos to precisely-timed perfection²⁰. A great pitstop involves the right people in the right roles, doing the right work, working together in the right way, with the right resources and most important of all; focused on the right results. That is a lot to get right, as we will explore in Section 2: Team Performance Design. It does not happen by accident. Building and maintaining a high performing team is not easy. Indeed, it will require a lot of hard-work and discipline from all those involved, as well as a degree of emotional intelligence and self-monitoring.

The top of the meta-model shows real teamwork in action. It is what all teams should aspire to. But just as there are not that many pit teams, there are not that many high performing teams either. That leads us to the bottom of the meta-model. The other end of the team performance spectrum.

All of F1™ is about teamwork - it is not about an individual sport anymore. A typical grand prix team is about 650 people and those people work on multitude of different aspects of the car.

Sam Michael, Fmr. Director, McLaren Mercedes²¹

BOTTOM OF THE MODEL

The bottom of the meta-model contrasts with the high performing team at the top. It is a team in name only – a pseudo team. This is a group of Individuals, where everybody does their

own thing. People are pointing in every which way, chaos and confusion are the inevitable consequences.



These people are 'co-acting' in the same space, but exhibit independence, rather than interdependence²². The behaviors on display are not conducive to effective teamwork. There is competition rather than collaboration, with poor co-ordination and communication. Waste, conflict, fire-fighting and even sabotage are evident. The extent of performance losses within this team calls into question its very existence because all too often 'bad collaboration is worse than no collaboration at all'²³. The team isn't winning, neither are the people on it. This is a team in name only - a pseudo team²⁴. Instead it is acting like a crowd or a group.

'Groups are commonplace, but good teamwork is rare... Why is it that people spend so much time playing or working in groups that are not productive, effective, or cohesive?'

Gordon Curphy & Robert Hogan²⁵

Traditionally everything from a committee to a working group was classified as a 'team'. But the types of teams shown in the diagram are not all the same. They vary in size, structure and purpose. Most important of all, they vary in terms of performance. Under a new classification system, many of what we have traditionally called teams would be called something else; a 'Crowd', a 'Group', or a 'Team'²⁶.

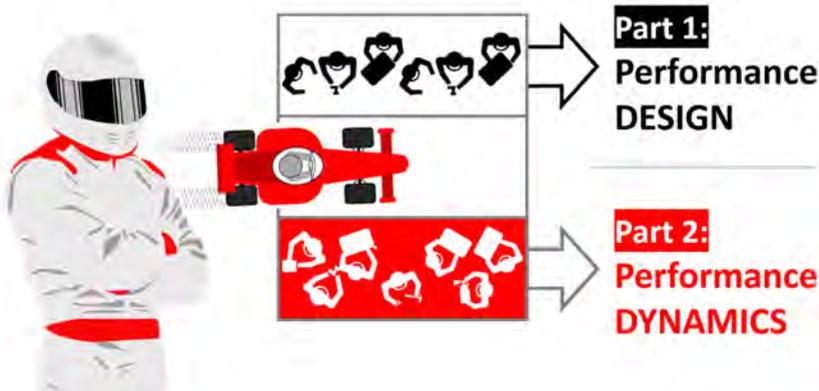


Rather than simply calling every unit of collaboration a 'team', people working collaboratively are to be found at different stages of the journey to becoming a real team and in particular a peak performing team (shown above). However, few will make it up hill in terms of performance and fewer still will be able to stay there for long without a continued focus on design and dynamics – that is the top and the bottom of the pitstop meta-model.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Pit teams make their work look easy, but it is not. In racing as in business, effective teamwork requires:

- **Performance Design** - ensuring that the right people are in the right roles, doing the right work and so on. This is the top of the model and is the subject of Part 1.
- **Performance Dynamics** – fostering the attitudes and behaviors that are required for effective collaboration. This is the bottom of the model and the subject of Part 2.



You cannot create real teams by convening a set of people and calling them a team. Instead, it takes careful thought and planning about the work the team will do, its composition, and the way it will be launched and developed.

Ruth Wageman, Debra A. Nunes, et al.²⁷

Part 1:

PERFORMANCE DESIGN

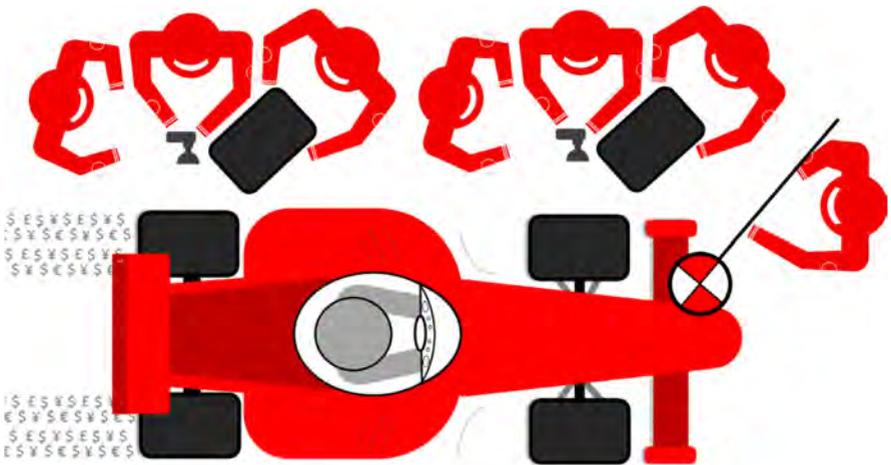
Exploring the top of the model, including:

- The characteristics of high performing teams
- How to design/ set-up teams for success

Right people in the right role, doing the right work, etc.



SECTION 2: HIGH PERFORMANCE



INTRODUCTION

A high performing team is a beauty to behold. Just watch a pit team in operation on race day. Such precisely choreographed teamwork, despite the pressures involved, is nothing short of inspirational. But what most people don't see (and what the race cameras don't show) is the amount of planning and preparation that goes into achieving and sustaining such a level of performance.

High-performing teams do not naturally occur. They are not accidental either. Whether it is at the racetrack or in the executive suite, bringing a group of intelligent and experienced people together does not make for an effective team. Indeed, far from it. The performance of a pit team, or indeed any team, depends on getting a lot of things right. Indeed, at least 7 things – as shown at the top of the meta-model. These are:

- RIGHT PEOPLE
- In the RIGHT ROLES
- Doing the RIGHT WORK
- Working together in the RIGHT WAY
- With the RIGHT RESOURCES
- And the RIGHT REWARDS
- To achieve the RIGHT RESULTS.



At first glance, this may seem like a straight-forward formula, however, when it comes to teams; 'getting it right' isn't easy. Indeed, teams as often get it wrong as right. When assessed

against the 7 factors listed above, most teams are simply not set-up for success.

Most teams are designed to fail rather than succeed. Quite simply, they don't have the right people in the right roles doing the right work and if they do, they are not working together in the right way, with the right resources, or towards the right results. If these things are wrong, rather than right, a team will inevitably underperform. Most likely it will only perform to the **standard of a group, or a crowd**. It certainly won't achieve the status of a high performing team. To expect otherwise would be foolish yet this is happening every day within organisations. It is this mismatch of expectations and results that has given many teams such a bad name.

It is difficult to get it right. ...everybody has to do the perfect job to do the perfect pitstop, obviously!

John Carrey, Lotus Race Team Pit Crew²⁸

PERFORMANCE BY DESIGN

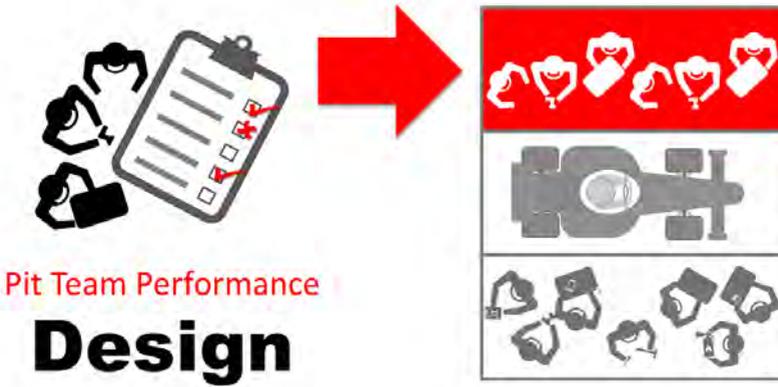
Decades of research into high performing teams presents both good and bad news. The bad news is that managers cannot make their teams perform. However, the good news is that they are far from helpless. Managers can set their teams up for success by getting the design right. That means ensuring that the right people are in the right roles, working in the right way and so on. Team performance is a matter of **design, rather than control**.

No leader can make a team perform well. But all leaders can create conditions that increase the likelihood that it will.

J. Richard Hackman²⁹

We design buildings, machines and products. We plan projects, budgets and even holidays. But when it comes to teams we do little of either. It is as if teams did not need to be planned or designed. It is this failure to plan for, or design, teams that is at the root of so much frustration and underperformance with respect to teamwork.

Most teams evolve with little thought and planning. Some are planned carefully at the start, but are slow to adjust and adapt to reflect changes in; the nature of work it must do, the environment in which it operates, or the stage of the team's own lifecycle. For most managers, the concept of designing a team for performance is revolutionary and new.



Team design requires quite a radical departure from the traditional approach adopted by managers. It also requires the abandonment of some fundamental (and fundamentally mistaken) beliefs about team performance. Principal among them is the belief that putting a team of good people together is enough to create a team.

Managers carefully hire or select people (often at considerable cost) to join a team. Chosen, based on their past achievements as individuals, they are put working with other similarly talented people. What happens next? Well, in most cases that is left to chance! The expectation is that if the ‘right people’ are selected they will naturally perform as a team. More often than not, the result is disappointment for all involved.

You cannot create real teams by convening a set of people and calling them a team. Instead, it takes careful thought and planning about the work the team will do, its composition, and the way it will be launched and developed.

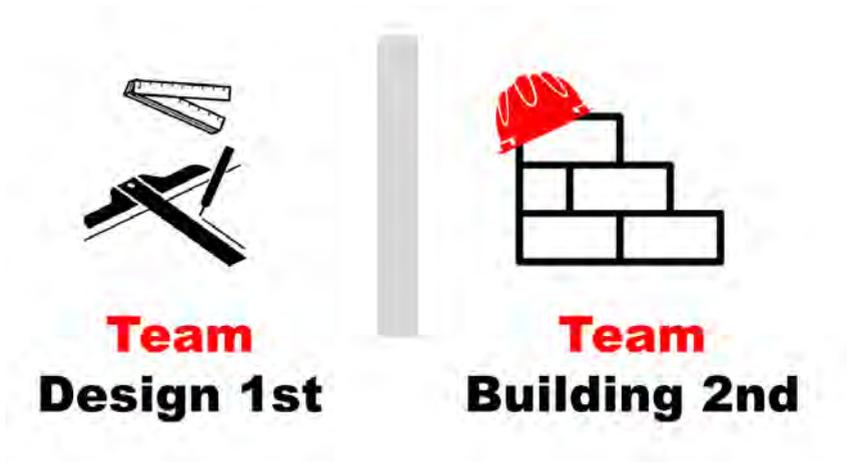
Ruth Wageman, Debra A. Nunes, et al.³⁰

There is more to team performance than simply bringing a group of capable individuals together and calling them a team³¹. That is a point that can't be repeated often enough. Even if you get the right people on the team, that is only one of a total of seven considerations in designing for team performance. Those people must be in the right roles, doing the right work and working towards the achievement of the right results. That is what team performance design is all about.

PUTTING DESIGN FIRST

Organizations have long invested in team-building events and games, but, not surprisingly struggle, to quantify the return on investment on these activities. The new science of team performance and design explains why. The reality is that; traditional team building and training while useful, will inevitably

struggle in the face of flaws in team design. Hence the message for managers is: **design comes first and team building second.**



It is the manager's job to ensure that the right people are in the right roles, that the team has the right purpose and so on. This is a surprise for those managers who have traditionally focused on team-building or managing interpersonal relations within teams. Team games, social nights or training programs have a role to play, but they cannot be expected to fix problems, such as; the wrong people in the wrong roles, or the lack of a clear and compelling purpose for the team. That requires working on team purpose, structure, process and so on. Just like building a house you need to start with the design first.

Sometimes the reason for the failure is that the team spent too much of its time in a group kumbaya and not enough on the task at hand.

Rich Karlgaard & Michael S. Malone³²

SET-UP FOR SUCCESS

Is your team set-up for performance and success? To find out answer the 7 questions below:

	Absolutely Disagree = 1, Absolutely Agree = 5
1. Do you have the right people ?	1 2 3 4 5
2. Are those people in the right roles ?	1 2 3 4 5
3. Are they doing the right work ?	1 2 3 4 5
4. Are they working together in the right way ?	1 2 3 4 5
5. Have they got the right resources (information, tools, etc.)?	1 2 3 4 5
6. Are they motivated with the right rewards/incentives ?	1 2 3 4 5
7. Is the team focused on /delivering the right results ?	1 2 3 4 5

The above questions are a powerful summary of a large tract of the research into team performance – what we label the ‘design school’ (See Appendix A). Let’s add up your team’s design score:

Score	What it means:
28-35:	Your team is set up for success. As a manager, your role is to ‘coach’ the team for success.
22-27:	A lot of the basics are in place to enable your team to perform, however keep working on improving the 7 factors to enable even higher levels of team performance.

15-21:	There are a number of factors missing, it will be almost impossible to boost performance, or team cohesion until they are addressed.
<15:	Your team's design is seriously flawed and must inevitably represent a significant barrier to the creation of a cohesive or high performing team.

If some of the essential 7 design factors are missing, your team's performance will inevitably suffer. Moreover, your attempts at driving performance are likely to fail, until they are addressed. The message for managers of underperforming teams is **change your expectations** regarding performance, or alternatively change the design of your team.

The Reality of Teams

The 7 design factors are interconnected. That is why design issues tend to come in twos, or threes. Indeed, 3 is the average from our research, or as one of our partner colleagues puts it ‘you get three (design issues) for the price of one’. That means either there is an outright problem, or at least confusion / uncertainty with 3 design factors. Little wonder then that most teams underperform. Although this is a worrying finding, it is not all bad news. If managers work on the basics of their team’s design, improved performance is almost inevitable.

Because of the frequency of design issues within teams, we say that the top of the model isn’t normal. It is not natural for a group of people to come together and to work in such a closely coordinated manner. It is extraordinary, rather than ordinary - the result of careful stewardship, as well as design. Moreover, it is the result of the wholehearted commitment of all involved.

GETTING IT RIGHT

There is no such thing as **the perfect team** – high performing teams work at it continually. For example, a pit team will practice a pitstop about 70 times a week and the same again on the weekend of a race. Moreover, even great pit teams occasionally get it wrong. The issue of performance design and re-design is ongoing.

What is 'right' is very much situationally dependent, moreover it changes continuously over time. What is 'right' for one team may not be 'right' for another. The focus should be on what is **right for your team**, for your organisation and what it must achieve. What is 'right' **depends** on whether your team is a real team, what type of team it is, its size, and so on. It also depends on the stage that your team is at in its development. For example, whether your team is at the start, the middle or the end of its functional life.

The issue of design is not once-off, but rather ongoing. The requirements, in terms of right people, in the right roles, doing the right work and so on, will change over time in response to the demands placed on the team from its stakeholders and its environment. **Teams must revisit their design on a regular basis.** Indeed, the best teams do this after every key project, workshop, or even meeting, using the questions about 'right people, right roles and so on' to reflect on performance and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Managers often see design as being a private matter - something for them to do alone. However, the highest performing teams are in fact **co-created where team members** are involved in discussions about design. The result is greater buy-in among team members, as well as insight from those closest to the action. Such design discussions are another approach to what is sometimes called team commissioning³³.

Design challenges don't fix themselves. Even if they settle down for a while, they will eventually come to the surface again. We struggle to find any team from our research where a design problem righted itself without intervention. It seems to be a universal rule that if left unattended they get worse rather than

better. For example, even if a 'problematic' team member leaves, the fundamental underlying issues that resulted in the problem not being proactively addressed will likely manifest in some other aspect of the team's management or design.

Every team is different, but the shared secret of teamwork is that it has to be worked at. Becoming a better team requires that you ask difficult questions, make tough choices and take action.

Khoi Tu³⁴