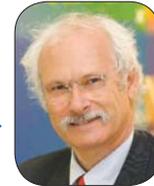


Teamwork

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Dear readers,

When I was a dental student one colleague told me: "Let's do teamwork". I asked back: "What does this mean?" and got the answer "You work, I team!". Of course I declined, because this was a total misinterpretation, or in other words the abuse of the team idea. During my whole life I have seen the team idea working perfectly towards success. In a team there is a group of highly motivated individuals who have different knowledge and skills and are working together towards a common objective. To be successful, communication is key! Open mind, open architecture or at least open office doors help a lot to develop the team function, which must be complemented by trust and openness. Say what you think and do what you say is the mantra. I will quote a few examples below. When I moved to Berlin to become chair of a new department in a new institution, we had to define the teaching philosophy, to create teaching materials and robust structures to run the department, in order to fulfill the task of the three basic duties of an academic department: research, teaching and service (patient treatment). This task was impossible for a single individual (me). Therefore I was able to create a team approach by having a group of very motivated young dentists who wanted to change things towards a modern and effective dentistry being taught to our students. The tasks and responsibilities were shared as well as the credit for positive accomplishments. After a relatively short two years the Dental Clinic North of the Free University of Berlin was known as an excellent institution.

When I moved to the industry to become a manager, by definition the whole product development was performed by teams, where the best people for the task were selected from the different departments and assembled into a development team. With the high level of discipline and structure which is common for a well-functioning enterprise, we were successful year after year.

Some years ago I had the pleasure to listen to Bertrand Piccard who in March 1999 together with Brian Jones was the first to surround the globe in a balloon. Both spent 21 days in the 5 m long and 2 m wide carbon composite capsule, suspended from a gigantic hot air/helium balloon. It was all about team work. The two in the balloon depended on a control center which helped them make the right technical decisions as well on two meteorologists that gave them directions for which altitude to get the best winds. I remember that he told us the following story when asked how foolish he could be to hire two meteorologists (since no two meteorologists have the same opinion) he rerouted the question to the meteorologists that responded "It is the wrong question since we are 3!". Baffled, the person who had asked the question wanted to know who the third one was then. The answer was, "We together are the third one!"

Finally just a few weeks ago I was impressed by another great team which is very successful. Greg Sawyer, an engineer who suffers from a melanoma has joined the University of Florida cancer researchers.

Merging their knowledge and his, they came up with printing soft scaffolds which can harbor real tumors in vitro. Using this system they can observe how cells of the immune system interact with the tumor in order to

destroy it and how the tumor reacts to this attempt. Using the team approach they can test, in vitro, proposed cancer drugs and therapies very efficiently and closer to reality. This team is so successful that national grant money will flow in to fund their operations and they will build here in Gainesville a center for soft matter printing and cancer research.

Finally I want to remind you of the successful team that is producing the Stomatology Edu Journal. Many people with different skill sets are involved to create a semi-annual journal in print as well as on the internet. From finances to acquiring manuscripts to running the peer review process in order to create an appealing layout, a team of experts is at work for you readers to guarantee a high quality outcome! It is my task as Editor-in-Chief to thank them all!

Sincerely yours,
J-F Roulet
Editor-in-Chief