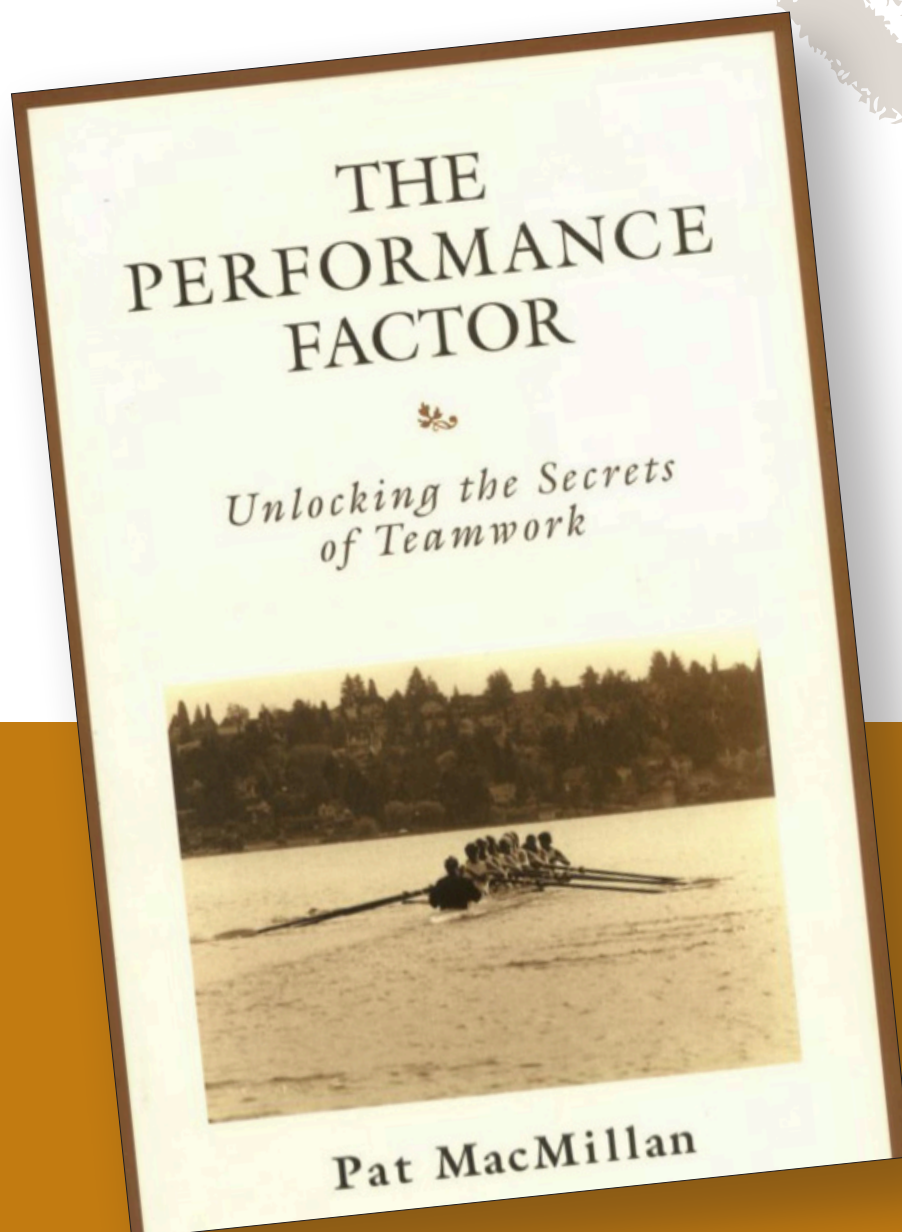


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## The Performance Factor | *Pat MacMillan*

The Performance Factor: Unlocking the Secrets of Teamwork  
B&H Publishing Group, 2001. 336 pages.

*Leaders in today's organizations must be able to build effective teams, start stalled ones, and fix broken ones. Leaders wanting to become a master mechanic of team effectiveness must understand what lies "under the hood" of a high performance team.*

*The Performance Factor* will help you understand the context that makes teams a critical ingredient in every organization's business model, the characteristics of high performance teams, and provide a set of practical applications for increased team performance.

While the context of leadership has changed dramatically, the content of leadership has endured the test of time. The authors' Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership remain not only relevant to today but also critical to a leader's success.

### 1

#### Part 1—New Century, New Rules, No New Rulebook!

Teams and teamwork are not passing fads but a fundamental shift in how organizations approach work. However, unthinking implementation of teams without a clear understanding of the underlying principles, careful design, and adaptation to organizational needs can create cynical attitudes among the participants and render teams useless in the pursuit of organizational objectives.

*A team is a group of people committed to a common purpose who chose to cooperate in order to achieve exceptional results.*

The primary distinction between a team and any other type of group is the **results**. Teams achieve exceptional, synergistic results on a consistent basis. Without evidence of synergy on a regular basis, you probably have merely a group or a team in a slump. Cooperation is a choice made by each individual team member. This decision is based on his or her perception of whether or not cooperation is the best way to achieve a desired goal. Therefore, teams are "volunteer" organizations.

*Team leaders must help members come to grips with what they can realistically accomplish if they get their collective act together.*

### 2

#### Part 2—Characteristics of a High Performance Team

##### The Characteristics of a High Performance Team

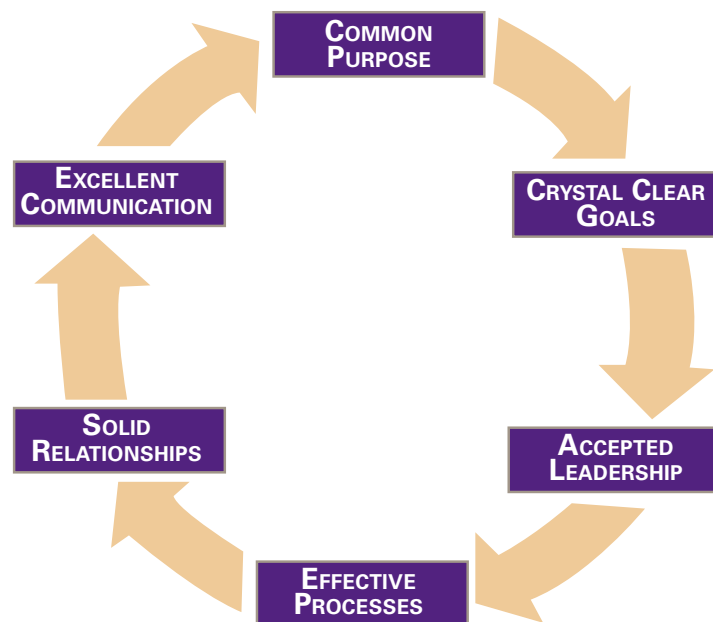
High performance teams have six characteristics that allow them to consistently achieve exceptional levels of results.

- Common Purpose
- Crystal Clear Roles

## The Performance Factor | *Pat MacMillan (cont'd)*

- Accepted Leadership
- Effective Processes
- Solid Relationships
- Excellent Communications

### The Characteristics of a High Performance Team



*The only boss of a team is the task; if you want your team members to serve the task, the leader must learn how to serve them.*

### Clear, Common Purpose

The most critical component in building a high performance team is a clear, common, compelling task. The goal of a high performance team is not merely to get along, but get aligned, and, through that, to get results.

The power of teamwork flows out of alignment between the interests of individual team members and the mission of the team. To achieve such alignment, team members must see the team task as:

- Clear – *I see it.*
- Relevant – *I want it.*
- Significant – *It's worth it.*

## The Performance Factor | *Pat MacMillan (cont'd)*

- Urgent – *I want it...now!*
- Achievable – *I believe it.*

***Successful team leaders ensure that everyone is going in the same direction, even if for different individual reasons.***

### Crystal Clear Roles

When any complex task is divided, the roles assigned to various parts of the process must have the following qualities:

- Clear – the different roles on an effective team are crystal clear.
- Complete – ensure the roles in total cover the whole task.
- Compatible – match roles to individual skills, interests, and experiences.
- Complementary – make sure one role is “not in the way” of another.
- Consensual – the team should be clear about everyone’s role and in agreement about it.

The overarching attitude for team members is a thoughtful balance between individual responsibility and mutual accountability that conveys, “This is *my* part of *our* job.”

***The process of achieving role clarity is accomplished through discussion – lots of it.***

### Accepted Leadership

Acceptance can’t be demanded from followers. It must be volunteered. Team leaders who call high levels of commitment out of their followers are invariably seen by those followers to be servant leaders. It is one’s belief system that allows him or her to assume the role of a servant team leader:

- They appreciate the collective brilliance of a team.
- They believe in the power of diversity.
- They see team leadership as a role from which to serve, not a position to be served.
- They see leadership and power as something to be released and shared rather than something to be held and controlled.
- They understand teams are all about tasks and that they must master the delicate balance needed between the task, the team, and individual team members.

The team leader must lay aside his or her mantle of positional leader and take on the role of a servant leader, serving the task of the team as well as the individual members.

***The pressure to get work done in this no-time, high-urgency world tends to eliminate any thought of taking a few moments to ask, “How are we doing and how can we do better?” Team leaders have the power to create time for evaluation by reminding the team that it’s OK to call time out to ask those questions.***

## The Performance Factor | *Pat MacMillan (cont'd)*

### Solid Relationships

Solid team relationships provide the climate needed for high levels of cooperation and are characterized by the following 6 qualities:

- Trust
- Understanding
- Acceptance
- Respect
- Courtesy
- Mutual Accountability

*Effective team leaders understand the relational qualities needed for high levels of team effectiveness and work diligently to build team cultures that foster those qualities.*

You can't mandate trust; you can only attempt to create an environment and opportunities that will facilitate its development among the members of your team.

### Excellent Communication

Astute and persistent teams understand that:

- Communication is the very means of cooperation.
- Communication appears to be deceptively easy.
- We tend to focus most of our energy on the sending part of communication and little on the receiving side.
- Clear communication inevitably leads to conflict.
- Teams must sit down on a regular basis and assess the quality of their communication.

*The limits of teamwork will be defined by the quality of communication among team members and between the team and the larger organizations.*

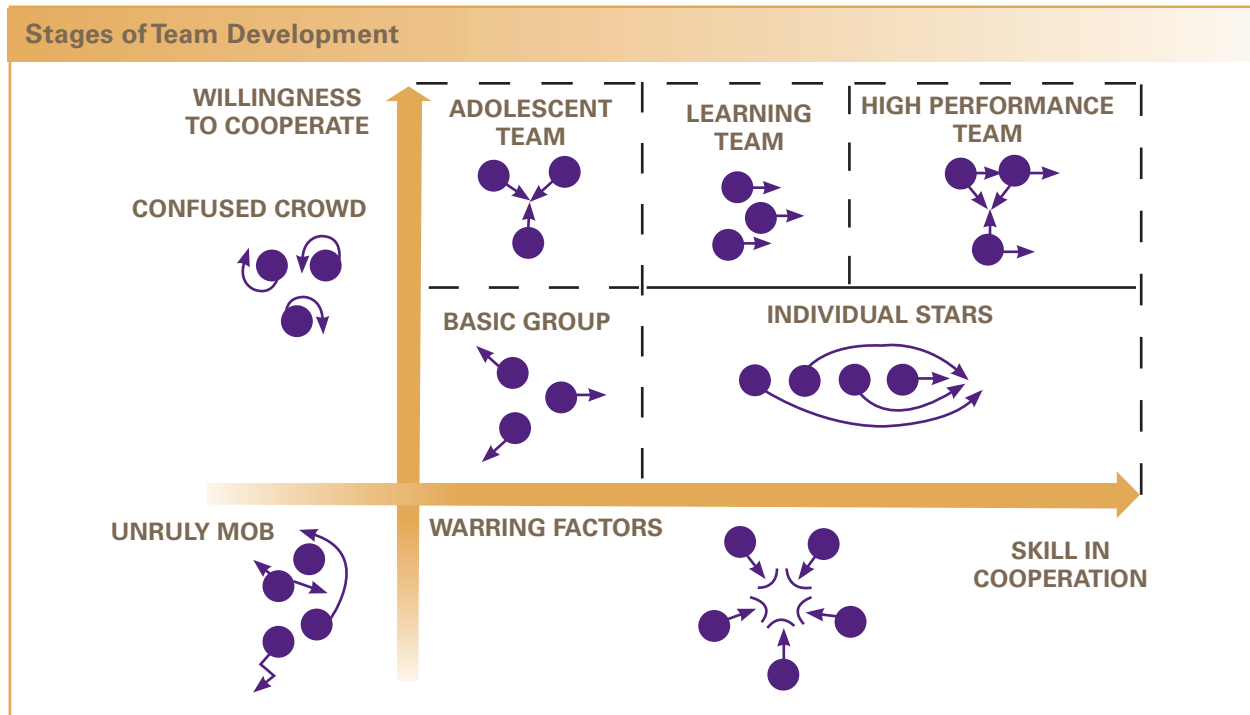


## Part 3—Turning Principles into Practice: Building the Team

### The Path to High Performance Teamwork

There are two dimensions to cooperation: willingness to cooperate and skill in cooperating. Interaction between these two dimensions describes different stages of team development. Growth from one stage of development to another is not guaranteed. Seventy percent of all groups stay groups and never attains true "teamhood." The path to high performance must pass through each of the other stages of team development.

## The Performance Factor | Pat MacMillan (cont'd)



*The path to greater team effectiveness is helping your team understand that there are different stages of development and that growth from one stage to another is a critical step in team development.*

The following stages present a simplistic picture of a complex issue. In reality, a group may exhibit characteristics of more than one stage.

### Basic Group – Person-Centered

The major distinction of group (versus a team) is that the results are additive. Each additional person adds one more unit of output – the same amount of output the individual could produce alone.

### Adolescent Team – People-Centered

This stage takes the first step toward teamwork. The focus is on getting to know the other team members – their strengths, weaknesses, and unique contributions to the team.

### Learning Team – Process-Centered

This is generally the second step of team development. Trust and willingness has grown to the point that the team begins to discuss process or skill areas.

### High Performance Team – Purpose-Centered

This team balances the tensions between people and tasks, individual initiative and collaboration, and clear division of labor and commitment to the whole task.

## The Performance Factor | *Pat MacMillan (cont'd)*

### Individual Stars – Self-Centered

This group demonstrates a high skill level to cooperate, but they are not willing to subordinate individual goals, interests, and needs to the cooperative effort.

### Confused Crowd – Reasonably High Willingness, Very Low Skill

Even though the motivation is positive, members are stepping on one another's toes and running in circles to cooperate. Less gets done together than if the individual were working alone.

### Warring Factions – Very Low Willingness, Reasonably High Skill

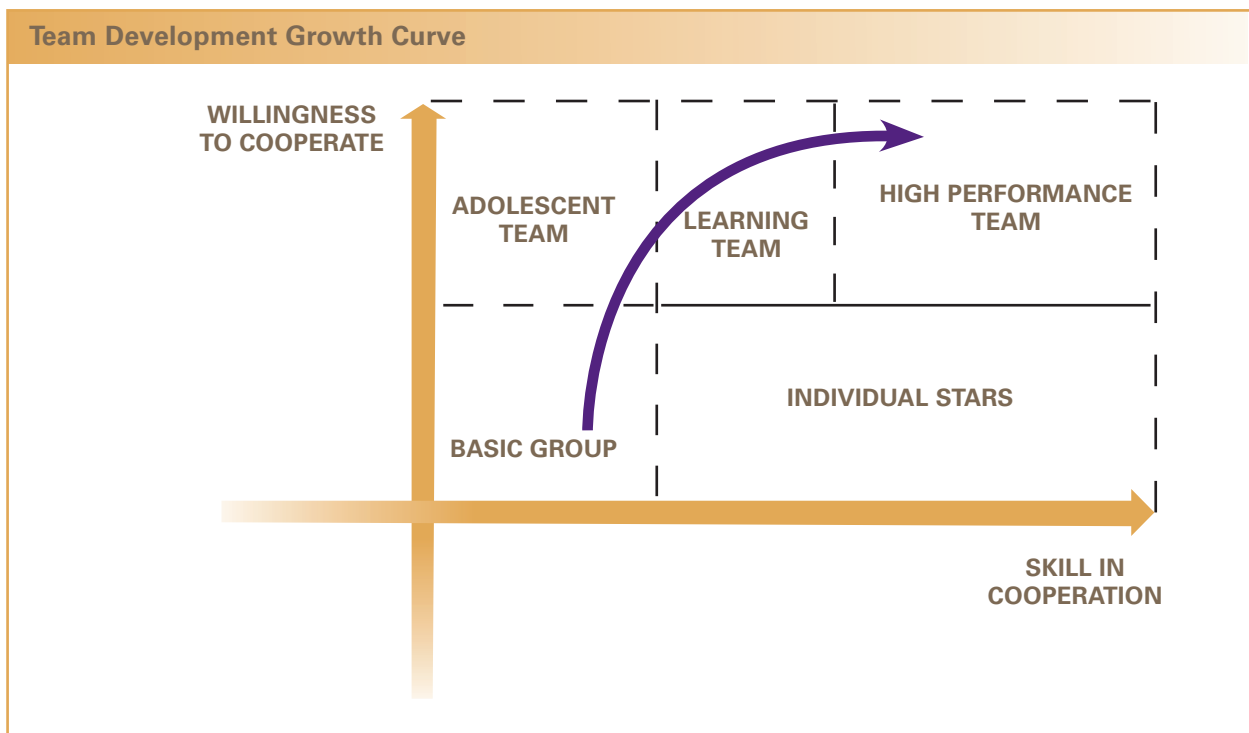
Competition or lack of trust creates hostile, competitive environments. The result is a group of interdependent people acting independently.

### Unruly Mob – Very Low Willingness, Very Low Skill

This situation is anarchy at worst, chaos at best.

### Achieving the Summit of High Performance Teamwork

Team development only occurs as the team becomes more willing to cooperate and more skilled in their cooperation.



## The Performance Factor | *Pat MacMillan (cont'd)*

Skill is motivated by willingness, and willingness is motivated by some good answers to four key questions – questions that must be asked both individually and collectively:

### Individually

1. Alignment – Why am I here? Is this group going where I want to go? Can I do better with this group than I can alone?

Focus: Individual team member

2. Relationship – Who are you? Why are you here? Are you committed? Are you competent? Can I trust you?

Focus: Other team members

### Collectively

3. Task – What shall we do?

Focus: Team task

4. Strategy – How shall we do it?

Focus: Strategy

### Turning Principle into Practice: Building the Team

Every team, regardless of whether its life span is defined by a two-hour meeting or a ten-year project, needs to be crystal clear about its mission and team member roles. Additionally, it must be equipped with any mission-critical skills necessary to accomplish the task at exceptionally levels of performance.

***Like an athletic coach or symphony conductor, team leaders are responsible for the design and implementation of the training that will allow them to perform at exceptional levels.***

Teams are the load-bearing beams of organizational structure in today's environment. The six team characteristics described in *The Performance Factor* have proven to be exceptionally effective in designing and training teams that consistently deliver exceptional results. It is a straightforward, easy-to-remember model that will allow you to navigate the world of teams and teamwork with confidence.

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## The Performance Factor | *Pat MacMillan (cont'd)*

### Recommended Resources

1. Auxano Founder and Team Leader Will Mancini talks about the Church as a redemptive tribe in this 7-post series. **Read** the first post as Will asks a pivotal question: *Are you managing a program factory or leading a redemptive tribe?*
2. **View** author Pat MacMillan's model of the High Performance Team.
3. **Read** why author Pat MacMillan encourages leaders to avoid the tendency to "go along to get along"
4. How do you put together a team of leaders to guide a church through a new ministry initiative or project? Auxano's Vision Room Curator Bob Adams answers the question **here**.

### Amazon Links

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## Go Ahead Actions for Vision Clarity

by Jim Randall

### Vision Clarity Connection

Mastering the relationship between vision clarity and team alignment is paramount to successfully building a high performance team. As MacMillan states, *"The most critical component in building a high performance team is a clear, common, compelling mission."*

### Go Ahead

What is keeping your team from becoming a high performance team? The first step is to determine your "default team" development stage. During your next team meeting take the following Team Development Assessment. Assign your team a score within each stage from zero to five, with **zero being "never exhibit these characteristics"** and **five being "consistently exhibit these characteristics."** Discuss your scores.

Team Development Assessment

	Score 0-5	Stage	Characteristic	Example
Unhealthy Team		Individual Stars	Self-Centered	2004 Men's Olympic Basketball Team <i>"did not play as a team"</i>
		Confused Crowd	Reasonably High Team Willingness, Very Low Skill in Cooperation	FEMA and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina Response <i>"disorganized and unprepared"</i>
		Warring Fractions	Very Low Team Willingness, Reasonably High Skill in Cooperation	Steve Job vs. Bill Gates <i>"professional rivals"</i>
		Unruly Mob	Very Low Team Willingness, Very Low Skill in Cooperation	1992 Los Angeles Riots <i>"disparity and anger"</i>
Healthy Team		Basic Group	Person-Centered	Basic Military Unit <i>"do your job, follow orders"</i>
		Adolescent Team	People-Centered	2010 Miami Heat: James, Bosh, & Wade <i>"each person has a role and interacts with others"</i>
		Learning Team	Process-Centered	John Wooden's Teams: Pyramid of Learning <i>"building blocks for success"</i>
		High Performance Team	Purpose-Centered	Nascar Pit Crews <i>"in sync and on the same page"</i>

Where does your leadership team get trapped? Review the High Performance Team Wheel. Determine three action steps that will help your team operate in the healthy stage of being a high performance team.



## More About Jim Randall

As Chief Management Officer and Lead Navigator for Auxano, Jim Randall has guided churches all over the country as a “vision strategist.” After serving as the primary developer of ministries at a 2000 attendee church, Jim became one of the founding officers of Auxano in 2004.

Jim’s expertise lies with developing ministries based upon clarified vision. He brings a breadth of leadership and church growth knowledge from his proficiency of coaching senior pastors and multiple church staffs in the vision arena, especially around organizational clarity, ministry alignment, and team synergy. Jim has demonstrated achievement as a strategic thinker with a unique ability to bring a group of people to a deep sense of personal ownership and passion.

His education includes a Master of Arts in Religious Education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a B.S. in Religion from Liberty University. Jim lives in Merritt Island, FL with his wife, Jane and son, Jared.

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Auxano is the only vision clarity consulting group that will guide your team through a God-ward and collaborative process called the Vision Pathway. To learn more, visit [auxano.com](http://auxano.com) or check us out on [Twitter](#) and our [Auxano](#) and [VisionRoom](#) Facebook pages.

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