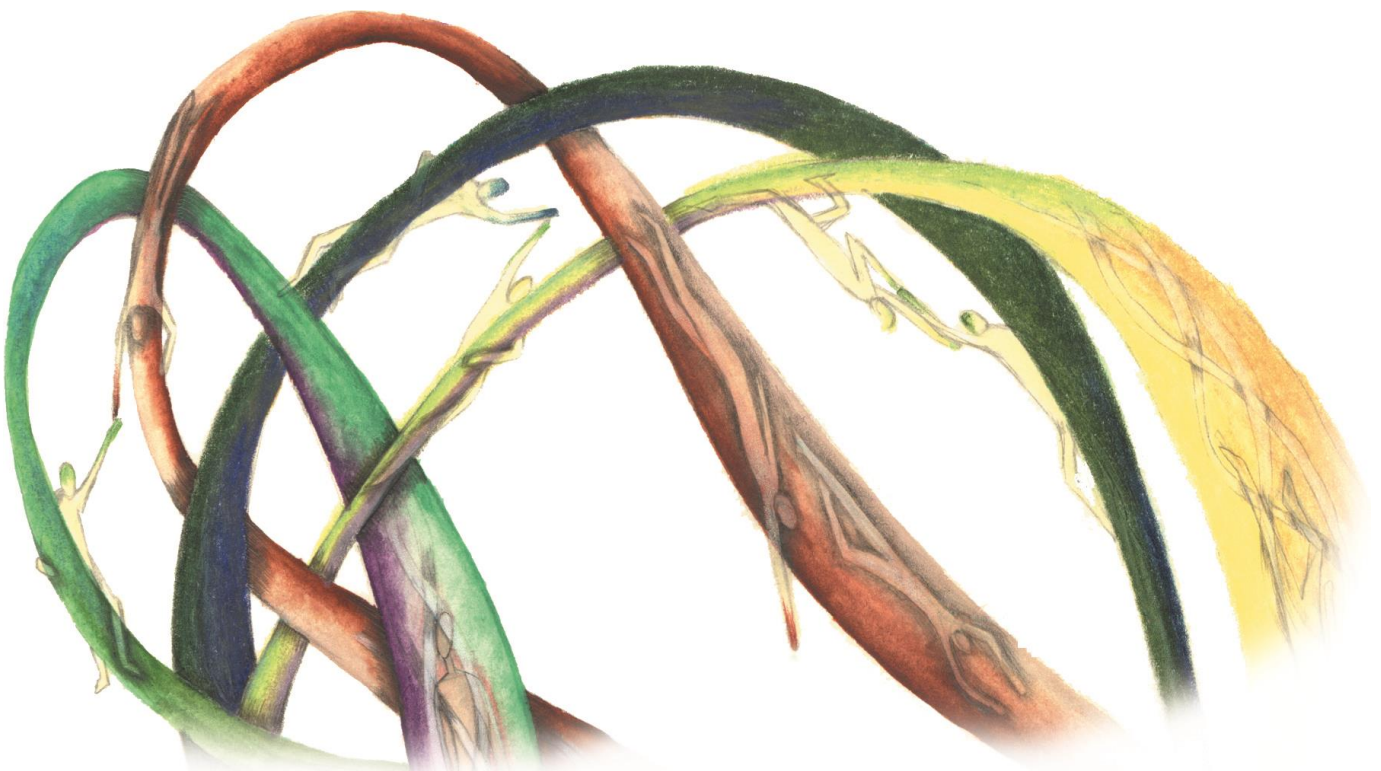




DEVELOPING A CIRCUIT LEADERSHIP TEAM



Training booklet

Edited by Julia Wills: District Training Officer, Southampton Methodist District

The **Methodist** Church 

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to be used by Circuit Leadership Teams either as a one day event or by taking sections and working on them at CLT meetings. It is recommended that the exercises are engaged in by the whole CLT together.

The material could be adapted for use with any church team, the only exercise that would need to be re-worded is **'The Task of the CLT'** in section 3: Commitment to the Task (p17).

I hope that you will find the material self explanatory and easy to use. I would strongly recommend that everyone who plans to lead a group buys themselves a copy of Patrick Lencioni's book **'The Five Dysfunctions of a Team'** on which the material is based. My thanks go to the Table Group (tablegroup.com) for their permission to use the model.

A version of the training booklet is available in the **'Training/Learning Opportunities'** section of the District website: <http://www.southamptonmethodistdistrict.org.uk/> which you are welcome to download and print off.

I am very grateful to The Rev David Read, The Rev David Coote and the Rev Cecil King for their insights, wisdom and help in producing this training pack.

Julia Wills: District Training Officer, Southampton District, October 2012

THE AIM OF DEVELOPING A CIRCUIT LEADERSHIP TEAM

To make your team more effective and thus be able to focus on what God is calling you to do.

THE OBJECTIVES

It is hoped you will achieve those aims by:

- Identifying the weaknesses and barriers to progress within the team and finding ways to overcome them
- Clarifying roles, goals and processes
- Developing strategies for effective and efficient working
- Listening to God

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OPENING DEVOTIONS

Welcome

Call to worship

Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. (Psalm 105:1-4)

HYMN: What shall our greeting be: sign of our unity

**What shall our greeting be:
sign of our unity?
Jesus is Lord!**

**May we no more defend
barriers he died to end:
give me your hand, my friend.
one Church, one Lord!**

**What is our mission here?
He makes his purpose clear:
one world, one Lord!
Spirit of truth, descend;
all our confusions end:**

**give me your hand, my friend.
Jesus is Lord!**

**He comes to save us now:
to serve him is to know
life's true reward.
May he our lives amend,
all our betrayals end:
give me your hand, my friend.
Jesus is Lord!**

Fred Pratt Green (1903 – 2000)
(StF 691) Words: c Steiner & Bell Ltd.

Almighty and creative God we give thanks to you for all that you have given to us and for all that you have done for us. In your faithful and enduring love you call us to serve you and in obedient response we seek to do your perfect will in the power which is given to us in Christ who strengthens us.

We thank you for the opportunity to be sharers in your Kingdom-building work and of making known your good news to all the nations.

From the beginning you saw that it was good for us to live in relationships of mutual support and encouragement and taught us to bear one another's burdens so fulfilling the law of Christ.

With joy we offer ourselves to each other and to you, trusting in your promises and relying on your grace.

Forgive us when we have failed to serve you as we should.

When we have sought to defend barriers between us, rather than to seek reconciliation:
Lord forgive us

When we have closed our minds and hearts to the words of others and to the promptings of your spirit rather than to listen:

Lord forgive us.

When we have betrayed others and failed to trust rather than give loyalty and inspire confidence:

Lord forgive us.

As we come together today may we know your grace and forgiveness and your strength to live and work as you would have us do. By your spirit enable us to grow together that through the leadership we offer to our Circuit/s your purposes will be fulfilled in our generation.

Lord's Prayer

Comment: As we journey through our 'training day' we will come across many Bible passages that illuminate our thinking. At the heart of all we do is God: Father Son and Holy Spirit – a harmonious 'Trinity'. At the heart of this course is the conviction that an excellent leadership team will be clear in purpose and aware that although individual skills and commitment are important, when a team comes together and works together what can be achieved is greater than the sum of all the individual parts. When this happens the goal of the team is more likely to be achieved and God: Father Son and Holy Spirit is glorified!

Hymn: Christ from whom all blessings flow

Christ, from whom all blessings flow,

**perfecting the saints below,
hear us, who Thy nature share,
who Thy mystic body are.**

**Join us, in one spirit join,
let us still receive of thine;
still for more on thee we call,
thou Who fillest all in all.**

**Closer knit to thee, our Head,
nourished, Lord, by thee, and fed,
let us daily growth receive,
more in Jesus Christ believe.**

**Never from thy service move,
needful to each other prove;
use the grace on each bestowed,
tempered by the art of God.**

**Love, like death, hath all destroyed,
rendered all distinctions void;
names and sects and parties fall;
thou, O Christ, art all in all!**

Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788)
(StF 676)

WHY DO TEAMS NOT FUNCTION WELL?

LENCIONI'S FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

In his book **'The Five Dysfunctions of a Team'**, Patrick Lencioni demonstrates how easy it is for teams not to function well if they don't start in the right place. The model below illustrates his theory. The point that he's making is that if we don't get the groundwork right to start with, then effective teamwork will not follow.

(Image ©The Table Group, Inc. All rights reserved.
From *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by
Patrick Lencioni)

1: Absence of Trust

The fear of being vulnerable with team members prevents the building of trust within the team.

The Role of the leader to develop the team: *Go first with vulnerability*

An absence of Trust leads to ...

2: Fear of Conflict

The desire to preserve artificial harmony stifles productive conflict about things we believe in.

The Role of the leader to develop the team: *Allow/encourage people to express conflict*

If team members are unwilling to engage honestly with one another it leads to ...

3: Lack of Commitment

The lack of clarity or buy-in prevents team members from making decisions they will stick to.

The Role of the leader to develop the team: *Ensure clarity and closure*

If team members are unwilling to commit to a decision it leads to ...



4: Avoidance of Accountability

The need to avoid discomfort between members prevents team members from holding one another accountable for their behaviours and performance.

The Role of the leader to develop the team: *Confront difficult issues*

If we are unwilling to confront one another and hold one another to account, then it leads to ...

5: Inattention to Results

The pursuit of individual goals and personal status erodes the focus on collective success.

The Role of the leader to develop the team: *Focus on collective outcomes*

A FUNCTIONAL CIRCUIT LEADERSHIP TEAM

For a Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) to work effectively and efficiently, we need to recognise those five dysfunctions and find ways to 'turn them on their heads'. The end result will be that the CLT works together for the good of the Circuit and to the glory of God.



1: DEVELOPING TRUST

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:8-10)

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. (1 Corinthians 12:17-20)

INTRODUCTION

As the bible quotes above make clear, trusting one another is part and parcel of our calling to follow Christ. However, we don't always find it easy. Trust within a group is about being willing to be open and vulnerable to one another, to believe that every team member has the other members' best interests at heart and is equally committed to the task of the group. With that sort of trust among members, getting on with the job in hand is easier because the normal blockages have been removed.



So developing trust within the group is a foundation stone to functional and effective team working.

EXERCISES

Here are some suggestions for ways to build up trust between teams. Even when a team has been meeting for a long time, it is surprising how little we know about each other.

Resources Needed: Flip chart paper and pens, pink and yellow post it notes.

Personal Histories (20 minutes)

This first exercise offers a simple way into discovering a little more about the team members and possibly finding some 'shared history'.

Ask each member share their response with the rest of the team to the following two areas – take each theme separately (*leader goes first!*) *Make sure you leave enough time for everyone to speak:*

1. Talk about your name – how you came by it, how you feel about it
2. Share your most memorable spiritual experience

To Trust or Not to Trust (20 Minutes)

Individually, think of a group that you have been a member of where you felt there was trust among the members (it could be any sort of group, work, friends, family, church etc). Why do you think you trusted one another? How did it feel being part of that group?

1. On a pink post it write a couple of words in answer to the question: **What causes us to trust?**

Now think of a group where you felt there wasn't trust. Why do you think that was? How did it feel being part of that group?

2. On a yellow post it write a couple of words in answer to the question: **What causes us not to trust?**

Collect the post it notes onto two sheets of flip chart paper, one headed '**What causes us to trust?**' and the other headed '**What causes us not to trust?**'

Spend a few minutes reading what everyone has written and then brainstorm onto a flip chart words which you think would engender trust in the team.

Finally spend a couple of minutes reflecting in silence on the question: '*How do I help to create that trusting relationship in the team?*'

What does a good CLT look like? (an extra suggested exercise)

We all come with our own preconceptions of what a CLT should be doing and what an excellent one will look like. So it's important to air those views at the beginning and possibly make some preliminary clarifications and ground rules.

First, in pairs spend five minutes dreaming dreams about what you think a good CLT would look like. Together make a list of your ideas.

In the whole group share your thoughts and spend a few minutes discussing the following:

1. What do you agree on?
2. What from the 'pair discussion' lists are we not currently doing?
3. Agree five potential areas for future action or desired change

You are not asked to do anything about these lists at present, but they might form the basis of future discussion either in this training event or at a future date within the CLT.

Belbin's Nine Team Roles (30 minutes)

Something that is vital to the healthy life of a team is to recognise one another's gifts and graces. We all shine more in some areas of life and work than in others. We are not expected to be experts in everything, but it helps if we are allocated tasks that play to our strengths rather than to our weaknesses.

One of the most robust pieces of research into team roles was conducted by Meredith Belbin. His findings are well used by many examining how they work as teams. As a result of his work we can recognise that there are many roles people naturally fall into when working together and that without all those roles being filled by someone the team may not work very effectively or efficiently.

Before you look at the grid, fold the page so that you cannot see the 'Allowable Weaknesses'. Take a moment to look at the descriptions of the team roles as identified by Belbin (on p 11) and see which ones best describe you when you are a **part of the CLT** (we tend to take on different roles in different groups).










Make sure you take a look at these descriptions to see which ones *best describe you when you're working with others in the CLT*. Go for the best fit but also the worst example ie what you're *not* like too.

Once you have identified which roles you most naturally fall into, you can read the 'Allowable Weaknesses'!

It's clear that although people naturally fall into some roles more easily than others they can in fact fulfill any of the roles if required to. Look again at the descriptions and decide which roles you might be able to fill if it were needed.

Once you've done that then compare your results with those of other team members. As a team, note on flip chart paper what roles members of your team have identified as those that they can contribute.

1. Looking at this, what does it tell you about your team as a whole?
2. Recognising the roles that are found in the team, consider how you relate to each other in these roles. Is there potential for good working together? Is there potential for conflict? How will you deal with the 'allowable weaknesses' in one another?
3. Are there different ways that you can allocate responsibilities to members of the team to draw on the strengths identified by their roles?
4. What action can you take to ensure that roles which the team needs but are not currently found in the team can be drawn in? (eg draw more people into the team or decide which members of the team can develop other roles in addition to their natural ones)

Team Role		Contribution	Allowable Weaknesses
Plant		Creative, imaginative, free-thinking. Generates ideas and solves difficult problems.	Ignores incidentals. Too preoccupied to communicate effectively.
Resource Investigator		Outgoing, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores opportunities and develops contacts.	Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.
Co-ordinator		Mature, confident, identifies talent. Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively.	Can be seen as manipulative. Offloads own share of the work.
Shaper		Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles.	Prone to provocation. Offends people's feelings.
Monitor Evaluator		Sober, strategic and discerning. Sees all options and judges accurately.	Lacks drive and ability to inspire others. Can be overly critical.
Teamworker		Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens and averts friction	Indecisive in crunch situations. Avoids confrontation.
Implementer		Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work that needs to be done.	Somewhat inflexible. Slow to respond to new possibilities.
Completer Finisher		Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects.	Inclined to worry unduly. Reluctant to delegate.
Specialist		Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated. Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.	Contributes only on a narrow front. Dwells on technicalities.

You can find out much more detail about Belbin Team Roles at the Belbin website www.belbin.com. You can also get access to marked questionnaires there and all sorts of reports and insights. If you believe that this tool could be useful for you why not explore further.

2: EXPRESSING DISAGREEMENT

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (*Ephesians 4: 15-16*)

This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. (*Acts 15:2*)

Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him. ‘Never, Lord!’ he said. ‘This shall never happen to you!’

Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.’ (*Matthew 16:22-23*)

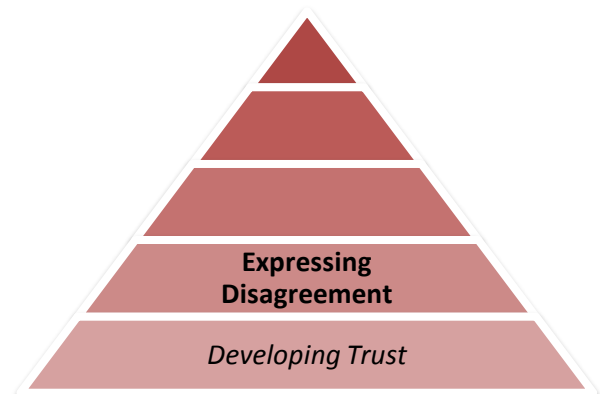
INTRODUCTION

There is a tendency in church meetings to be ‘nice’ no matter how we actually feel about what is being said. We think the Christian way is to seek to agree with one another even if it means we go and shout at the cat when the meeting is over. Or, worse, express annoyance and disagreement to other members of the church outside the meeting about decisions that we apparently supported.

Often the prevailing conviction is that we should avoid disagreement and definitely not encourage any sort of conflict among members.

However, Lencioni maintains that it is only by ‘mining for conflict’ ie openly encouraging it and engaging with it, that we can truly be honest with one another and thus ‘own’ any decisions made, even if they are not the ones we would naturally have chosen.

We can see from the bible passages above, that conflict was ever present among the followers of Jesus, and even Jesus himself was known to express his feelings pretty strongly from time to time!



EXERCISES

The following exercise offers you some ways of thinking about conflict and disagreement.

Thoughts on Conflict (30 minutes)

We're going to use a tool called the Human Rainbow (also sometimes known as the 'conflict spectrum'). 'Human Rainbow' is a good term to use because:

- The rainbow has a variety of colours
- The colours fade into each other – and our views are not always clear-cut

So the rainbow helps us see a variety of opinions.

This is how it works:

- There's no right or wrong place to stand – it's up to you
- It's important to decide where you're going to stand before the signal to move – so that you are not swayed by the group
- Different people may decide to place themselves at similar places on the rainbow for different reasons

The notes that follow give some points along the rainbow, but it's important that each person imagines the whole spectrum of responses and makes their own decision about where to stand.

First time – what you believe about handling disagreement in a specific context *other than your CLT*

At one end of the rainbow: You believe that open disagreement and even heated discussion help to reveal where people disagree and that this helps you make good decisions

At the other end: You believe it is wrong to hurt people's feelings by disagreeing with them even if that means you don't say what you really think.

Around the centre: You believe decisions are best made after discussion – so long as we don't upset anyone

When all have had time to decide, move to your chosen positions without consulting each other.

When all are in position:

- Share with the whole group what you observe about the group
- Chat with one or two people near to you about why you chose that position;

Now repeat the process thinking about your CLT

Discuss with your CLT members:

- What have we learned from the Human Rainbow about how we as a CLT handle conflict?
- Do we want to change the way we handle conflict in our CLT?

De Bono's Six Thinking Hats

(10 minutes introduction or 60 minutes for the full exercise)

We all use different types of thinking, usually without realising it. For example, we may react emotionally or objectively, or just be critical of every suggestion that's made. Most of us have one or two thinking styles we tend to use most of the time without even thinking about it! Without our realising it, a discussion in a CLT can be affected by the approach each member brings with them. So – difficult subjects don't get tackled properly and are not resolved. Edward de Bono offered a way of approaching difficult subjects. Using his 'Six Thinking Hats', team members can step out of their usual thinking style and assess a situation more objectively.

Look at the 'Thinking Hats' on the opposite page and ask yourself which 'Hat' you tend to wear most often. And whether there are ones you'd never wear. De Bono points out that no thinking style (or 'Hat') is any better or worse than any other, but a balanced team needs all 'Hats' so that together the members can consider all the aspects of whatever issues they are facing. This encourages collaborative working.

In de Bono's method members of the team step out of their usual thinking styles and all wear the same colour 'Hat' at the same time, firmly directed by the person leading on that occasion. This helps the team as a whole to be more objective.

1. Look at the six hats, keeping in mind what you learned about yourself in **the Belbin Team Roles** exercise, which of the hats do you most naturally tend to wear at a meeting (particularly a CLT meeting)? Try to be as honest as you can be. You may, of course wear more than one hat.
2. Then share your thinking with the rest of the group – does everyone agree with your conclusions? Would other members of the group be inclined to think that you also wear other hats?
3. **At a future CLT Meeting when you are faced with a difficult issue to discuss**, try using the process as described opposite, and see if it helps you to come to any decisions. It's important that the group facilitator is clear and firm about which hat you are all wearing at which stage, and that every member sticks to that hat until told to change. You may well want to use large sheets of flipchart paper to note your reactions at each stage.

The Six Thinking Hats



The White Hat

White Hat thinking focuses on data, facts, information known or needed.



The Black Hat

Black Hat thinking focuses on difficulties, potential problems. Why something may not work.



The Red Hat

Red Hat thinking focuses on feelings, hunches, gut instinct, and intuition.



The Green Hat

Green Hat thinking focuses on creativity: possibilities, alternatives, solutions, new ideas.



The Yellow Hat

Yellow Hat thinking focuses on values and benefits. Why something may work.



The Blue Hat

Blue Hat thinking focuses on manage the thinking process, focus, next steps, action plans.

The Six Thinking Hats Approach

The Six Thinking Hats method could be used in a sequence first of all to explore the problem, and then develop a set of solutions, and finally agree on an approach.

Step 1: Present the facts of the case (white hat)

Step 2: Encourage people to share their gut feelings about the project (red hat)

Step 3: Generate ideas on how the case could be handled (green hat).

Step 4: Evaluate the merits of the ideas:

- List the benefits (yellow hat)
- List the drawbacks (black hat).

Step 5: Get everybody's gut feelings about the alternatives (back to the red hat).

Step 6: Summarise, agree a decision, next steps and an action plan and adjourn the meeting (blue hat).

3: COMMITMENT TO THE TASK

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

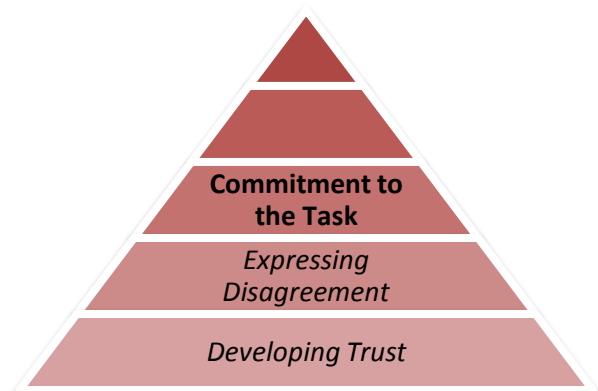
Then Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders, leaders, judges and officials of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. ... 'Now then,' said Joshua, 'throw away the foreign gods that are among you and yield your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.'

And the people said to Joshua, 'We will serve the LORD our God and obey him.' (Joshua 24 1a, 23,24)

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (Acts 13: 2-3)

INTRODUCTION

If a team have not built trust among one another and are thus unwilling to engage in disagreement or even conflict then conversations at meetings are unlikely to be totally honest. Members may appear to have agreed with decisions but may well go away and express disagreement or unhappiness about what has been decided. This means tasks will be done in a half hearted way, possibly with resentment or even not done at all, leading to frustration all round.



However, if the team has been able to air reservations and issues openly and has reached a mind that is honest, then it is more likely that everyone will be more genuinely committed to the task in hand.

A team that is committed is a team that knows what is expected from them – there is clarity about the task and 'buy in' from everyone. That doesn't mean that every team member will agree with decisions that have been made, but that they have made their points and feel they've been listened to. The important question to ask is 'are we clear about what we have agreed?'

If you read Acts 15 you'll read about apostles who disagreed strongly about issues but knew that the important task was to build God's Kingdom, so they were prepared to discuss their feelings openly and move ahead with the task they had been set.

EXERCISES

Here are some suggestions for ways of clarifying decisions so that the group can be more committed to outcomes.

Resources Needed: Flip chart paper and pens

The Task of the CLT (45 minutes)

Each CLT does one, two or all of these three tasks:

- a. **Managing** the circuit's resources – money, staff, buildings
- b. **Decision making:** acting as the Circuit Executive, with powers delegated from and by the Circuit Meeting – effectively a shared superintendency.
- c. **Visionary thinking:** creating strategy, identifying mission opportunities, establishing priorities, suggesting ways of being a discipleship movement shaped for mission.

If we are to be committed to the task and follow through on decisions, it is important that we all agree on the task of our CLT.

Split into two groups, one group to reflect on questions 1 and 3 and the other on 2 and 4 (or 4 groups with one question each if your CLT is very large) each group to discuss their questions for ten minutes and to write their opinions up on flip chart paper:

1. What tasks does our CLT do at present, and what tasks should our CLT be doing?
2. Is the CLT here to: a. **serve** the local churches or b. **tell** the local churches what to do or c. something else?
3. How can our CLT be visionary?
4. What is God doing in the CLT, and what does God want from this CLT?

Back in the full group, each group to report back on their discussions – no more than five minutes each. Now, as a full group, complete the following sentence (and make your own notes below):

The priority tasks of our CLT are:

a.....

b.....

c.....

One final question for each member to consider and then share with the group: **How is my role in the CLT part of my discipleship?** (Take two minutes to think about this question before sharing your answer; *leader goes first.*)

Note your answer here

.....

Managing Meetings (40 minutes)

It is much easier to be committed to decisions made at a meeting if the meeting is well chaired and facilitated. There are various models of CLTs around the Connexion.

Part 1 (10 minutes) Look at the brief examples in **Appendix 1**:

1. Which one is most similar to your own CLT?
2. Is there another style which you think would work better than your current CLT approach? Or are you happy with how things are managed?
3. Share your conclusions – will there be any changes to your meeting style?

Part 2 (20 minutes)

4. Now spend some time individually reading the notes about **Handling Meetings** in **Appendix 2**.
5. Tick or highlight any areas where you think your CLT meetings could benefit from taking note of the advice.
6. Share thoughts – time to practice being honest and trusting one another!
 - a. Where do your CLT meetings miss the mark?
 - b. How could they be improved?
 - c. What changes would you as a group like to agree to?
 - d. Who is responsible for those changes taking place?

Task or People Focused? (For information)

The term ‘Commitment to the Task’ can sound as if the only priority is to ensure things get done without any concern for the people who are involved in the process. There are theories that hold to the line that, unless we are concerned with both the task *and* the people, our work will not be effective. To some extent, the responsibility for that lies with the leader of the team. But if members of the team have different priorities, there’s always the danger of frustration and bad feeling.

Look at the grid on page 19 and mark on it where you think you stand in terms of your involvement in the CLT. Is your major concern for the people in the team and feeling good (left hand grid)? Or are you just focused on getting the job done (bottom grid)? Plot your position and think about how it affects the rest of the group.

The different positions could be described as follows:

Let’s Have Fun!

If this is your major position then it may be hard for the team to get any commitment from you. You may end up feeling resentful that you are asked to do things that feel like a chore.

Why Do We Bother?

This may be a place where a team member has been co-erced into joining the CLT. If this is you, your commitment to task or people is low. You just want the meeting to end so you can get on with life.

Middle of the Road

This is a good enough place to be, a commitment to people and task. But it might also lead to a loss of dynamism, a plodding agreement and no sparkle in the team.

Dissatisfaction and Bad Feeling

If you have no real interest in the rest of the team and your mutual development, then you are likely to feel a level of frustration with the rest of the team. Why won't they get on with the jobs they've committed to?

Commitment to the Task and Team

If the whole team has a sense of purpose and enthusiasm for the task and also a commitment to the other members of the team, there is likely to be a creative synergy and who knows where that will take you?

Consider

Think about your position on the grid. Do you need to reconsider your commitment to the team and the task?



4: BEING ACCOUNTABLE TO ONE ANOTHER

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labour:
If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.
Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

INTRODUCTION

Holding one another to account for performance or behaviours that hurt the team is one of the most difficult aspects of the Lencioni model. As he says: *'The essence of this dysfunction is the unwillingness of team members to tolerate the interpersonal discomfort that accompanies calling (ie challenging) a peer on his or her behaviour and the more general tendency to avoid difficult conversations.'* (p213, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*).



We might maintain that a church group is different from a business group (which is what Lencioni is talking about), we are friends as well as working colleagues. However he goes on to say: *'In fact, team members who are particularly close to one another sometimes hesitate to hold one another accountable precisely because they fear jeopardizing a valuable personal relationship. Ironically this only causes the relationship to deteriorate as team members begin to resent one another for not living up to expectations and for allowing the standards of the group to erode.'*

So it is important for the group to be clear about what they expect from one another and how they plan to fulfill the task of the CLT.

EXERCISE

The following exercise offers the group an opportunity to clarify together what is important to the CLT so that members have agreed together the areas that they might need to hold one another to account.

Resources Needed: Flip chart paper and pens

Core Values exercise

If we are going to feel confident and comfortable holding one another to account, we need to be clear what we think are the core values of the team to start with. What is this team here for? What expectations do we have of one another?

1. Using a flip chart, brain storm your thoughts of what is important for the team to function effectively. Below are a few ideas to get you thinking (you don't have to agree to the list below, you may think one or two are worth holding onto).
 - a. Commitment to God's Kingdom values
 - b. Confidentiality
 - c. Acceptance of the Lencioni model
 - d. Being prepared to be made redundant from the CLT (if it seems appropriate)
 - e. Attendance at meetings
 - f. Annual retreat
2. Using the methods you've learnt today and reflecting on your conversations of the day, create a list from your brainstormed ideas of **'The Core Values of the CLT'** that you all agree on (you don't have to fill in all 10 lines):
- 3.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

4. How can you ensure the whole team commits to these Core Values and holds one another accountable?

5: FOCUSING ON GOALS

INTRODUCTION

Lencioni's model calls this dysfunction 'Inattention to Results'. The point he is making here is that team members are more caught up in the fact that they are *in the team* than they are in ensuring that the team achieves its goals. Or they are pre-occupied with their own little area of concern rather than seeing the big picture.

Again, we might say that this doesn't happen in the Church, that no-one chooses to take on a Circuit or Church role for the status... But perhaps there is the danger that if someone took on the role with their arm twisted behind their back, they are not going to be so committed to the work of the CLT. Their desired outcome might be for meetings to be shorter or for their social life to be improved. Sometimes people take on the role with a conscious or unconscious agenda that may be different from the desired goals of the CLT.

This final section of the training is an opportunity to reflect on what has been covered so far; to clarify what we understand to be the goals of the CLT; and to offer that to God.



Resources Needed: tea lights (sufficient for every member of the team), matches or lighter. Members just need their booklet and a pencil – clear the table of other stuff.

AN ACT OF WORSHIP

Sit in a circle with a tray of tea lights in the middle of the group.

Spend a moment centering yourself and listening to your breathing and the sounds around you. Ask God for the gift of a receptive heart.

One by one, starting with the leader, light a tea light to signify your membership of the Circuit Leadership Team. Say your name as you light the candle.

In the silence reflect on the day, allow God to bring to mind events, conversations, revelations, challenges and inspirations.

Listen to the word of God, spoken through Paul:

We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
(1 Thessalonians 1:3)

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. (Philippians 2:1-2)

So we bring our learning of the day to God and ask for his blessing, let us pray.

Think back to the beginning of the day, when we discussed **Trust**:

- What did you learn about any member of your team that might affect your prayers?
- Which Belbin roles do you bring to the team?

In the silence, write your thoughts into the **Trust** section of the pyramid.

Lord receive our prayers

And strengthen our resolve to follow you

Now think about **Disagreement and Conflict**:

- How do you feel about conflict and disagreement?
- Will you change your behaviour?
- What can you do to ensure you and others in the team feel safe enough to express disagreement and engage in conflict from time to time?

In the silence, write your thoughts into the **Conflict** section of the pyramid.

Lord receive our prayers

And strengthen our resolve to follow you

We move on to **Commitment to the Task:**

- Bring the main tasks of the CLT to God
- Bring your discipleship to God
- Are you challenged by the way meetings are managed or by your position in the Task and People grid?

In the silence, write your thoughts into the **Commitment** section of the pyramid.

Lord receive our prayers

And strengthen our resolve to follow you

And we come to our **Accountability to One Another** and our Core Values:

- Spend some time reflecting on your 10 Commandments – which ones will challenge you the most?

In the silence, write your thoughts into the **Accountability** section of the pyramid.

Lord receive our prayers

And strengthen our resolve to follow you

We pray together:

**O God of infinite possibilities,
help and enable us to believe in your power
and to trust our lives and the life of our CLT,
churches and Circuit
to your love and grace.
Amen**

Together blow out the tea lights and watch the smoke rise. In the silence offer that 'fragrant offering' to God as a symbol of your resolution.

And now let's say the grace to one another:

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
The love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with us all, ever more
Amen**

Each person to take a tea light home with them

APPENDIX 1

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CIRCUIT LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Circuit Leadership Teams can function in many ways, depending on the style of Circuit they represent and the nature of the work they are engaged with. Circuit teams behave differently depending on the task in hand.

The work of a CLT can include executive, governance, consultation and prophetic leadership, and at times these can conflict or make it hard for right relationships to be maintained. This can be especially obvious in larger Circuits where the CLT is likely to have more members. The quantity of work that can be presented to the CLT in these situations can be overwhelming if the team tries to function in the more familiar patterns that have served smaller Circuits.

Below we look at (a) different methods of appointing or selecting the chair of the meeting and (b) different ways of taking responsibility for decision-making.

CHAIRING

CPD states that the Superintendent has the right to chair any meeting in the Circuit. This is especially important when a difficult issue or situation has arisen. But the CLT (like any meeting in the circuit) can be chaired by any member of the team. Experience suggests that Circuits tend to work better when the Superintendent does not chair all meetings. Any of the following models may be adopted:

1. Non-Participating Chair or Facilitator

One of the members of the team is chosen as a facilitator, or an outside facilitator is invited to come to help the team work on a particular task. The facilitator is responsible for enabling the team to complete a task. They do not engage in the actual discussion, but help all members of the team to contribute. This approach is preferable when the team is seeking a consensus decision (this could fit with the De Bono 6 Hats approach).

2. Rota Chair

The chairing of meetings is organised on a turn by turn basis, emphasising the team work necessary, and preventing anyone using the chair to dominate successive meetings.

3. Special Interest Chair

The chair of a meeting, or section of a meeting, is chosen to reflect the subject area under discussion. For example, the lead property steward could chair a part of the meeting concerning church refurbishment. They may be the best person to understand the issue and to ensure the full team is making an informed decision.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISION-MAKING

1. Extended CLT

Some Circuits successfully operate with a core membership of the CLT, with additional members attending only when a specialist area is on the agenda. This may be according to a Rota (eg finance is discussed only at alternate meetings) or need (eg small sub-teams have responsibility for particular areas and they are called to a meeting when their area is on the agenda). A small core group would attend all meetings.

2. Executive Team

A small core team meets more frequently to undertake minor tasks, with the full leadership team meeting less often when important matters are under consideration.

3. ‘Cabinet’ CLT

The CLT consists of a small group of carefully chosen officers (who may be ordained staff, lay staff or volunteers) each with a specific ‘brief’ to represent in CLT meetings. Each in turn has their own (leadership) team to work with, and a degree of autonomy within their specialist area.

4. Weighted Decision Making

The CLT discusses issues as a full team, but the final decision is largely (or exclusively) taken by those who are directly involved. The role of the team is to help the specialist group to make a good decision, rather than make the decision for them.

5. Exclusive Decision-making

Certain subject areas are discussed only by ordained members of the team (or by other special-interest groups).

6. Advisory Function Only

The CLT functions as a consultation group to assist the Superintendent in making up his/her mind.

APPENDIX 2

NOTES ON MANAGING MEETINGS

PREPARING FOR THE MEETING

General Questions to ask yourself:

1. Do I know what I am hoping for from this meeting – objectives?
2. Have any papers – including the minutes of the last meeting – which give information that members need beforehand been prepared and distributed?
3. Does anything need to be done (by me or others) to help people look forward to the meeting and come ready to engage with the task?
4. Are there any dangers I need to guard against in talking to people before the meeting?
5. Are there any individuals I need to help to be ready for the meeting? How shall I do this? (For newcomers, see below)
6. Are there any people who are regularly absent or late to whom I need to speak?
7. Am I clear about the timing of each item and the whole meeting?
8. Have any people whose specific in-put is required been invited and briefed about those who will be present, the purpose of the meeting, their presentation time, and their role at the meeting?
9. If I am responsible for introducing any item:
 - a. Have I got all the information I need?
 - b. Do I know how I am going to present it?
 - c. Am I aware of the areas, if any, which will need discussion?
 - d. Have I prepared to help people to express their views/opinions?
 - e. Have I prepared to help people arrive at a decision all can own?

PREPARING THE AGENDA

1. Who draws up the agenda?
2. Is it a standard agenda or does it need to be tailored to this meeting?
3. Shall I accept AOB items or try to ensure all matters members want to discuss are on the agenda before the meeting?
4. It is clear why each item is on the agenda – information, discussion, decision? Am I clear why each item is on the agenda and what choices are to be made about it? Have I got all the information I need?
5. Is there sufficient information, explanation, and reference to any relevant papers under each item?
6. Is the expected timing of each item clear?

TIMING

1. Will you start on time even if some are not present? How will you welcome late-comers?
2. What is the best time of day/best day of the week for the people who come to this meeting or who might come to this meeting to meet?
3. Are there any child-care issues for those who come or might come?
4. How long should the meeting be?
5. Try to ensure that each item has sufficient time but is not allowed to 'drag on'.

VENUE

Looking around at the room we are in:

1. Is the atmosphere, size, décor, furnishing suited to our meeting?
2. Does the seating arrangement help to make the meeting effective? Are the seats of the right kind?
3. Is the use of tables helpful?
4. Are we looking in the right direction? Is the background distracting?
5. Have we got everything we need?

Apply these points to your own setting for a Church Council or other meeting

NEW MEMBERS/NEW CHURCH COUNCIL

1. If possible, discuss with the existing group how they will welcome new members. How did they feel when new? How might newcomers feel?
2. What do new members need to know about the existing group, how it works, what the issues are, what its purpose is? How will they be informed?
3. Are there any documents it would be helpful for them to have?
4. Would it help them if you brought them together or contacted them informally before their first meeting so that they can ask any questions and be briefed?
5. When a new Church Council is formed (eg at the beginning of the connexional year or after elections), consider bringing all together to get to know each other, explain their roles, tell their stories, share their hopes for the coming year.

MEMBERS WHO DON'T PARTICIPATE

1. At the beginning of the meeting stress the value of each person's (unique) contribution.
2. Listen carefully to everything that's said and show you value each contribution (however slight it may seem); encourage others to do the same.
3. Ask questions which encourage people to respond – 'Anyone want to add anything?' 'Does anyone who's not yet spoken want to say something?' But don't put them on the spot - 'John, what do you think about this?'
4. Watch for body language indicating someone is thinking and might like to contribute.
5. Try to catch their eye, silently inviting them to contribute.
6. Make time for people to jot down their own ideas before inviting discussion
7. Use buzz-groups or sub-groups to encourage people to put their thoughts into words
8. If you know the people well enough to know what they would like to say, encourage them to do so without embarrassing them.

DOMINANT MEMBERS

1. Re-assure him/her s/he's been heard, indicating that the contributions of others are important.
2. Acknowledge their contributions – 'You've made several very important points'.
3. Encourage others to think for themselves and participate, inviting them to consider the dominant person's point.
4. Avoid getting annoyed!
5. Talk with the person outside the meeting, encouraging him/her to see that it's important to let others speak and hear their contribution.
6. Encourage quieter people to speak.

WORKING FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

1. Ask those who are taking a particular position to explain to the others who don't agree and then reverse.
2. Get people to put into words the point of view they don't agree with.
3. Encourage people to put into words the essential core of what they want ('I have a problem with sitting in a draft because of a stiff neck' rather than 'shut that window')
4. Put people into groups with those they agree with or those they disagree with and encourage them to work out a solution which might be acceptable to all.
5. Try to identify common ground so that people can see what they do agree on, and then work at remaining differences.
6. Encourage people to see the bigger picture

Material based on **MEETINGS THAT WORK: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO TEAMWORKING IN GROUPS** by Catherine Widdicombe - an invaluable book for anyone leading meetings. Published by The Lutterworth Press 2002, 2013.

RECOMMENDED READING

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: Patrick Lencioni, 2002, Jossey-Bass, USA (from which this material has been adapted – with thanks to the Table Group organisation – www.tablegroup.com)

Meetings That Work: Catherine Widdicombe, 2002,2013, The Lutterworth Press, UK

Meetings, Better Meetings: Joanna Cox, Stephen Lyon, Elizabeth Nash, 2012, Grove Booklets

Six Thinking Hats: Edward De Bono, 1985, Little Brown & Company, USA

Management Teams: Why they Succeed or Fail: R. Meredith Belbin, 2012, Elsevier Ltd, UK

All quotations from the **NIV bible**