

**GLOBAL TEAM MANAGEMENT: AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF FIRMS'  
INNOVATION STRATEGY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*In the world marketplace some firms compete successfully and others fail to gain global competitive advantage. Some researchers argue that innovation strategy is the answer to successfully meeting today's and tomorrow's global business challenges. An important aspect of the innovation strategy is managing global teams effectively. Thus, firms of tomorrow will be characterized by values such as teamwork, innovation, cultural diversity, and a global mindset. The rapid globalization of business, and increasing competition will continue to drive the need for effective teamwork and/in innovation management. The purpose of our research is to gain insight into global team management and its role as a major component of innovation strategy. We discuss the changing and developing functions of teamwork, examine the characteristics of global teams, and finally offer a process to achieve effective global team management.*

*Keywords : Globalization, Global Team, Change, Management, Innovation.*

**1. Introduction**

As citizens of the twentieth century, we have witnessed enormous changes in our daily existence and in our environment. The twenty-first century will be even more complex, fast-paced, turbulent and hypercompetitive (Cascio, 1998:12). It could well be described as the "global century." Increasingly, organizational participants are urged to "act global, think local" or become part of the "global village" (Parker, 1998: 6). This global environment of business affects all types and sizes of organizations. It is now a whole new arena for managers. With the entire world as a marketplace and national borders becoming irrelevant, the potential for organizations to grow and expand increases dramatically. For instance, a study of 1250 highly diverse U.S. manufacturing firms found that companies which operated in multiple countries had twice the sales growth and significantly higher profitability than strictly domestic firms (Koretz, 1996: 20). This points to the need for innovation and ultimately to firms' innovative capabilities as the core factor in the intensely competitive world.

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From this perspective, in order to formulate or implement strategic plans for the twenty-first century effectively and to be more innovative, firms must be able to focus on the unique needs of foreign customers, suppliers, labor pools, government policies, and technology, while at the same time on general trends in the world marketplace. It requires vast knowledge and processing abilities in order to categorize and interpret raw data effectively. It requires being able to understand and work effectively with people from different cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds, as well as the ability to manage global teams that are composed of such cross-cultural members (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall, and Stroh, 1999: 3). Thus, the purpose of this study is to gain insight into global team management and its role as a major component of innovation strategy in the globalizing world.

## **2. Managerial Competencies For A Globalizing World: Global Teams**

In order to compete effectively businesses must focus on the competencies necessary to gain competitive advantage. With technology advancing daily and hypercompetition, companies must be able to respond to the changing environment more rapidly than their competitors. By focusing on what a company does better than its competition i.e. its distinctive competency the business should be well prepared for battle. Implementing new strategies requires different skills and capabilities. Thus, these new skills and capabilities need to be assessed regularly to be sure a company is able to compete effectively.

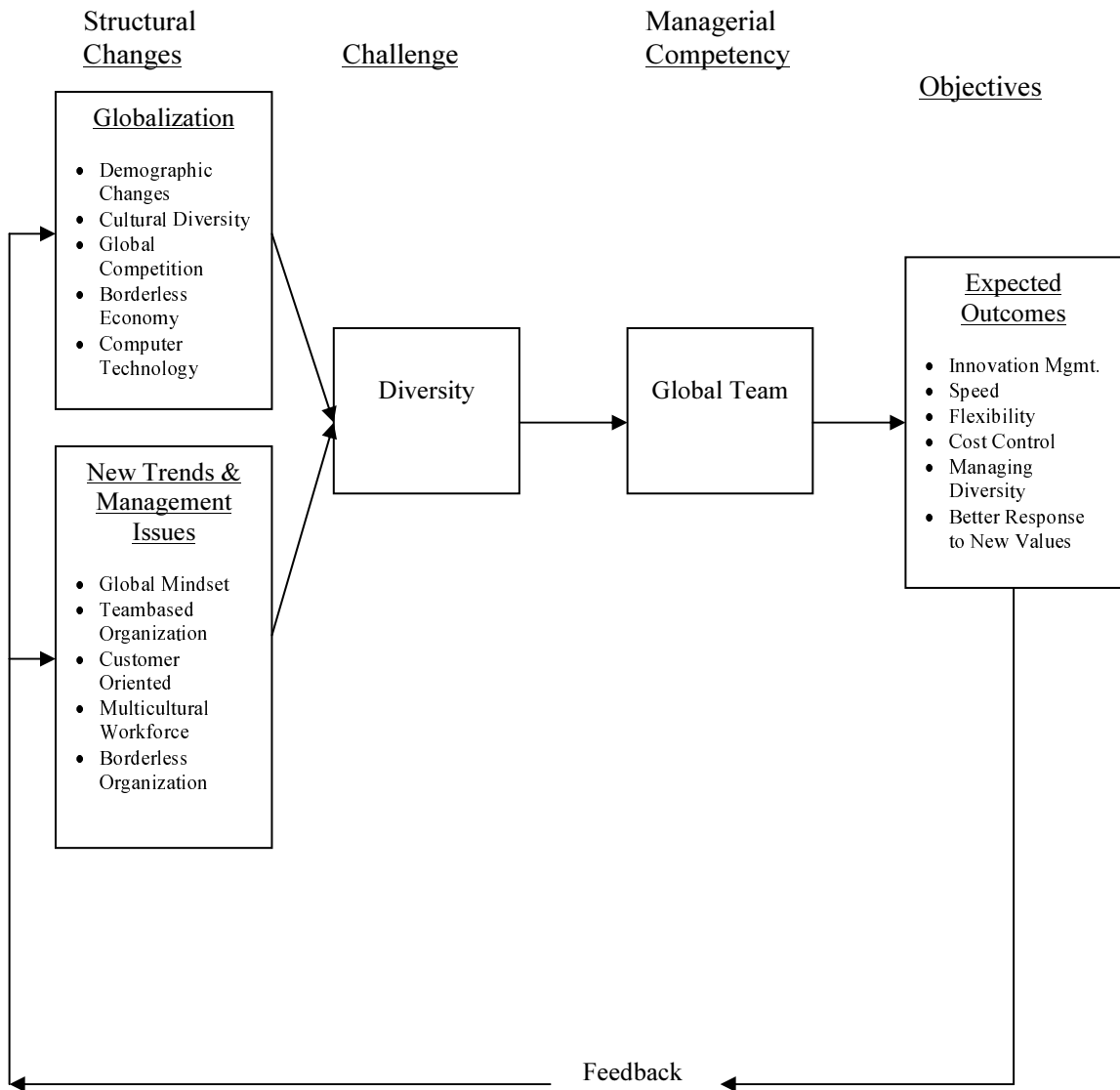
### **2.1. New Business Strategies Require More Teamwork**

To survive, to serve, and to succeed organizations need to accomplish goals that are defined more broadly than ever before. That means carrying out strategies that no single part of the organization can execute but rather strategies that must be implemented throughout the organization. For example, if a firm's business strategy emphasizes time to market, speed must be evaluated in each functional area. This evaluation and control process is often accomplished through the use of teams.

Firms have found that work teams can execute newly adopted strategies stressing better quality, innovation, cost control, or speed. Indeed, thousands of companies such as Levi, General Mills, Corning, Federal Express, Westinghouse, and Dana Corporation have found that teams promote greater flexibility, reduced operating costs, faster response to technological change, fewer job classifications, and better response to new worker values. Teams also facilitate innovation by bringing together experts with different knowledge bases and perspectives.

Alternatively, diversity is an inevitable by-product of teamwork, especially when teams are drawn from a diverse base of employees (Cascio, 1998:81-83; Mackin, 1996: 4-6). Figure 1 illustrates the function of teamwork in the new competitive business environment as.

Figure 1: The Function of Teamwork in the Competitive Business Environment



**(a) Key Characteristics of the Changing Environment**

When we examine Figure 1, a new landscape is emerging across the business world. The old boundaries, national economies, and markets are responding to globalization. It is a different universe with an entirely new ecology that defies all of the past assumptions. From this we can summarize some key characteristics of the global environment and their affect on management issues.

***Increasing cultural diversity:*** First, managing a diverse workforce is a key challenge facing tomorrow's executives. Creating a culture that supports and encourages diversity needs to be a major organizational effort. An organization that truly wants to promote diversity must shape its culture to allow diversity to flourish (Robbins and Coulter, 1996: 85).

***Global competition:*** Global competition is the single most powerful economic factor in life both today and the future. For example in 1998 a mere 70% of the U.S. economy was exposed to international competition and this percentage will continue to decrease and more companies compete globally (Cascio, 1998:12). This is also true for the remaining world's countries. Today, many firms follow a multilocal strategy that treats competition in each country or region on an individual basis (Parker, 1998:492). This shift in strategy better focuses on the individual customer's desires.

***People as a source of competitive advantage:*** Still, in the globalizing world, a firm's most important competitive asset becomes the skills and cumulative learning of its workforce. Every factor of production other than workforce skills can be duplicated (Cascio, 1998:15). Only people can be the key to success. After all, the strategy of a company is a function of its strategy makers (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhal and Stoh,1999:2). It is clear that company's future strategy will be no better than the quality of people in the organization who are formulating and implementing it.

***Innovation as a source of competitive advantage:*** Meanwhile, innovation is becoming important source of strategic advantage. As Peter Drucker (1974: 61) stated "business has only two basic functions: one of them is innovation." Truly, "innovate or die!" has increasingly become the rallying cry of today's firms. Innovation is the process of taking a creative idea and turning it into a useful product, service, or method of operation. The innovative organization is characterized by the ability to channel its creativity into useful outcomes (Hanan,1991:31-41;Robbins and Coulter, 1996: 444). Thus, the organization's success mostly depends on the capabilities of creating new products or services that may be in the mind of customers.

**(b) New Trends and Issues of Management Practices in the Globalizing World**

All of the above explanations illustrate that there are structural changes occurring in the economic, social, cultural, and technological environments of the world and these radical changes create new management trends and issues.

**A global mindset:** As national economies, political systems, cultures, technologies, resources, and industries increasingly converge, global business and management skills are likely to become more important to all organizations, even for those who never managed in the global environment. The global mindset will differ profoundly from mindsets based on domestic environments (Parker, 1988: 88-89). Table 1 presents a comparison of these two mindsets.

Table 1: A Comparison of Domestic and Global Mindsets

Domestic Mindset	Global Mindset
1. Expertise in a function, e.g., marketing, accounting, finance	1. Expertise needs to be general, based on a broad view
2. A need to prioritize in a step by step fashion	2. Need to balance contradictions and recognize paradoxes and challenges
3. Hierarchical structure is usual	3. Emphasis on processes
4. Individual responsibility is encouraged	4. Emphasis on teamwork
5. Eliminate surprises	5. View change as an opportunities

Source: Parker, 1996, 88-89

**Prototype of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’s organization:** What shape will the twenty-first century organization take? How will its culture and the way it competes differ from today’s model? A synopsis of some changes is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Current and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Prototypes of Organizations

Current		21 <sup>st</sup> Century Prototype
Hierarchy	ORGANIZATION	Network
Self-sufficiency	STRUCTURE	Interdependence
Homogeneous	WORKFORCE	CulturallyDiverse
By Individuals	WORK	By Teams
Domestic	MARKETS	Global
Profits	FOCUS	Customer
Capital	RESOURCES	Information
Autocratic	LEADERSHIP	Inspirational

Source: Cascio, 1998 , 11-12

When we overview Table 2, this new paradigm values teamwork over individualism, seeks global markets over domestic ones, and focuses on customers rather than on short-term profits. It recognizes the value of a multicultural workforce in an increasingly diverse labor pool and customer base.

***From multinationals to transnationals to borderless organizations:*** Today, many large, well-known companies are moving to more effectively globalize their management structure by breaking down internal arrangements that impose artificial geographic barriers. Their managers have become increasingly global in their perspectives and accept the reality that national borders no longer define corporations. As a case in point, Honda, a Japanese company, employs more than 10,000 Americans at four plants in central Ohio and is now exporting Accord automobiles back to Japan. Excavators sold by Komatsu, another Japanese firm, are mostly made in Illinois and similarly, most Sony televisions sold in the U.S. are made in California, while “American manufacturer Zenith makes its TVs in Mexico.” The message from these examples should be clear, a company’s national origin is no longer an accurate measure of where it does business or the national origin of its employees (Robbins and Coulter, 1996: 117-118).

***Managing diversity:*** Managing diversity means establishing a heterogeneous workforce that performs to its maximum potential in an equitable work environment (Torres and Bruxellers, 1992: 30-32). Organizations house not only diverse people, but diverse systems, diverse structures, diverse ways of thinking and acting and all these dimensions are important aspects of managing diversity. When we look at the environment, there is no going back; diversity breeds diversity. Managing it well is an essential part of the management strategy (Cascio, 1998: 80).

Thus, those organizations that can adapt fast enough to the new environment will thrive; those that try to do things the old way will be eliminated by the new ecology of the competitive world. So how do we build the bridge of survival to the future? How do overgrown, tradition bound, national companies learn to trim down, and soar beyond the old boundaries of nations and cultures? The answer is clear: the competitive superiority of the global marketplace requires high-level, cross-cultural, multilingual, and cross-functional global teams between and within organizations.

## **2.2. The Concept and Importance of Global Teams for Today's Firms**

Global teams come in various configurations. Generally, they fall into one of two categories: intercultural teams, in which people from different cultures meet face-to-face to work on a project, and virtual global teams, in which individuals remain in their separate locations around the world and conduct meetings via different forms of technology (Solomon, 1998:13-14). In addition, the global team is usually considered a team that is comprised of individuals that are located in many different countries or geographic areas. Most global teams also vary by team member functionality thus adding a second layer of complexity to the group dynamics (Wheatley and Wilemon, 1999:1).

A recent survey of Fortune 1000 companies reported that 68 percent were using self-managed or high-performance teams in some way or another to perform work activities. Many smaller organizations are also using teams to perform organizational tasks and solve problems (Robbins and Coulter, 1996: 506-507). What do companies gain from these units? What is the importance and necessity of teams for today's firms?

Of course there is no single explanation for the recent increase in popularity of teams. We propose that there are a number of reasons, several of which are listed below (Robbins and Coulter, 1996:509; Shonk, 1992:3-9; Solomon, 1998:13; Hamel and, Prahalad, 1994:102-105).

- Increased efficiency: teams help global companies, preventing them from needing to reinvent the game with each new project
- Increased productivity: they enable organizations to realize 24-hour productivity via the latest technology
- Facilitate cooperation: they facilitate cooperation and improve employee morale and create a climate that increases job satisfaction
- Speed decisions: decisions are often made more quickly when teams exist than when jobs are designed around individuals
- Facilitate workforce diversity: the use of diverse teams may result in more innovative ideas and better decisions than might arise if individuals alone made the decision
- Positive effectiveness: they allow cross-pollination between cultures as well as business units adding depth of knowledge and experience to the endeavor

- Increase performance: all the preceding factors combine to make team performance higher than might be achieved by the same individuals working alone

In spite of these benefits, global teams are not simple to create or maintain. Thus, challenges must be overcome.

### **2.3. Challenges of Global Teams**

Challenges are a continual fact of life for global teams. They occur from the moment a potential team gathers until the team comes to an end. Challenges faced by a global team can be placed into three categories.

The first category is cultural diversity. Culture refers to the total way of life of particular groups of people. It is learned not inherited (Devereaux and Johansen, 1994: 38; Neff, 1995: 5). By definition a global team brings cultural diversity together. But, even though it seems an obstacle, one must realize that there is no room for inflexibility and intolerance in a diverse workforce. These traits must be displaced by adaptability and acceptance (Cascio, 1998:87). Cultural diversity in the global market must be recognized not simply as an obstacle, but as a positive benefit.

The second category is "logistical challenges such as time differences, language differences, and locational issues. Simply scheduling a meeting can be very difficult because of time zone differences. Adding other geographic regions multiplies this inconvenience. Again, it is no longer uncommon for businesses to require employees to speak multiple languages. So, language differences also present an obvious problem" (Wheatley and Wilemon, 1999: 3).

The final challenge category is structural. Because of the many issues faced new structures and configurations for teams are being developed and created. One example is the virtual team. This structure can overcome many challenges, but also creates new problems. There is some overlap with this category and the logistical category. For example, with the virtual team the boundaries are fluid and often fuzzy. This creates difficulties for some individuals due to ambiguity, causing individuals to be more self directive and assertive when needing information from other team members (Wheatley and Wilemon, 1999: 3-4).

In spite of these challenges, global teams are worth the effort in order to create a distinctive competency. Organizations as new actor's of the changing world have to guide their teams across borders to be successful. This success depends on the capabilities of being innovative in the globalizing world.



### **3. Innovation Management Through Global Teams**

#### **3.1. The Importance of Innovation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

In the contemporary business environment no other task is considered more vital or more demanded than the sustained management of innovation (Tushman and Nadler, 1996:74-93). Thus, the capabilities of innovation will become the new way of competence in the global marketplace.

The standard of innovation to which many organizations thrive is that achieved by the 3M company. It has achieved near legendary status as a product innovator. It develops over 200 new products each year while doing about \$10 billion in sales and earning a rate of return that ranks in the top 10 of Fortune 100 companies. The experience of 3M informs us that innovation does not happen by chance (Robbins and Coulter, 1996:444).

Innovation is a particular type of organizational change. It refers to a change that is new to the adopting organization (Robey, 1991: 421). It is the process of taking a creative idea and turning it into a useful product, service, or method of operation. Thus, the innovative organization is characterized by the ability to channel its creativity into useful outcomes. As Theodore Levitt once said “creativity is thinking up new things. Innovation is doing new things. Ideas are useless unless used. The proof of their values is only in their implementation. Until then, they are in limbo.” (Humphrey, 1987: 91).

All types of innovation ( new product innovation, which means to produce new products or services; administrative innovation, which means to adopt new structures or processes; and technical innovation, which means to adopt new techniques for accomplishing work) should be managed in an effective way to be successful in the global marketplace (Robey, 1991: 426). What is the secret to 3M’s success? What can we do to make our organizations more innovative? All these questions can be answered by using progressive business strategies such as an innovation strategy.

#### **3.2. Innovation Strategy as a Contemporary Competitive Business Strategy**

By using the system model, in order to get desired output (i.e., creative product) the inputs and the transformation of those inputs need to be analyzed. The inputs include creative people and groups within the organization. However, just having creative people is not enough. It takes the right environment for the innovation process to take hold and prosper, just like a flower requires the proper soil, watering, and light levels to grow. What does this “right” environment look like? We can identify three sets of variables that have been found to stimulate innovation (Robbins and Coulter, 1996: 444-448).

The first category of variables is related to the organization's structure. Here, we can conclude three things about the effect of structural variables on innovation. First, organic structures positively influence innovation. Second, the easy availability of plentiful resources provides a key building block of innovation. Finally, frequent inter-unit communication helps to break down possible barriers.

The second category of variables is related to culture. In this frame, an innovative culture is likely to have the following characteristics: acceptance of ambiguity, tolerance of the impractical, tolerance of risk, tolerance of conflict, and focus on ends rather than means. Overall, a general acceptance of differences is important.

The final category of variables is related to human resources. Within the human resources category innovative organizations actively promote the training and development of their members to make them highly skilled. They offer their employees high job security to reduce the fear of getting fired for mistakes.

As a summary, under a competitive strategy of innovation, the implications for managing people may include selecting highly skilled individuals, giving employees more discretion, using minimal controls, making greater investments in human resources, providing more resources for experimentation, allowing and even rewarding occasional failure, and appraising performance for its long-run implications. Innovative firms such as 3M, Hewlett-Packard, Raytheon, and Pepsi Co illustrate this strategy (Cascio, 1998: 608).

### **3.3. The Importance of Global Team in Innovation Management**

The successful operation of any organization depends on how its members interact. Today, as we speak about the global product, global market, global consumer, global firm etc., the performance of organizations requires multiple skills, judgements, and experiences. Thus, in any situation requiring the real-time combination of skills, experiences, and judgements, a team inevitably gets better results than a collection of individuals. This creates more urgency for using teams to achieve greater performance. High levels of performance depend on being customer driven, delivering total quality, empowering the workforce, partnering with suppliers and customers, and continuously improving and innovating (Katzenbach and Smith, 1997:15-16). So, organizations are now so interested in teams and technology. Teams bring together different individuals who know and can do different things. When team and technology are integrated, their joint contribution to knowledge and organizational performance is greater than the sum of their parts (Mohrman, Galbraith, and Lawler, 1998:37).

A global company, General Electric based in Salisbury, North Carolina typically changes product models many times a day by using a team to produce lighting panel-boards. This plant has increased productivity by 250 percent, compared with other GE plants that produce the same product (Sherwood, 1988: 5-13). Additionally, in 1971 Motorola claimed turnover was down 25 percent, productivity was up 30 percent, and attendance had increased to 95 percent due to the implementation of a team philosophy. This management philosophy used the creativity of the individual and of the team collectively to effect solutions through consultative and involvement techniques (Shonk, 1991: 6). Motorola, recently acclaimed for surpassing its Japanese competition in producing the world's lightest, smallest, and highest quality cellular phones with only a few hundred parts versus over a thousand for the competition, relied heavily on teams to do it (Katzenbach and Smith, 1997: 15-16).

All of these examples and research over the last fifty years has shown that innovation can be encouraged through the use of more organized techniques such as teams (Lloyd, 1994: 198). To be more innovative, team building and the management process may be the most important theme for organizations in the increased-globalizing marketplace to consider.

#### **4. Managing The Global Team**

Understanding and managing teams that are similar in nature can be a difficult undertaking in and of itself. Add in diversity, and it can be even more challenging. But, even though it may be more of a challenge, it is very obvious that the benefits to be gained from the diverse perspectives, skills, and abilities more than offset the extra effort expended. From this perspective we try to answer the following questions. How do we overcome the challenge of coordinating diverse teams and manage diversity? What are the essential characteristics of the global team?

##### **4.1. Overcoming the Challenges of Coordinating Diverse Teams**

Meeting the challenge of coordinating a diverse work group and dealing with diversity is important and crucial. It is important in managing a diverse group to stress five crucial interpersonal behaviors: understanding, empathy, tolerance, promoting pluralistic values, and communication (Robbin and Coulter, 1996: 507; Smither, Houston, and McIntire, 1996: 312). People are not the same, yet they need to be treated fairly and equitably. Cultural differences can cause people to behave in different ways. Group leaders and each group member need to understand and accept these differences. Empathy is closely related to understanding. As the group leader, each member should try to understand other's perspectives. Tolerance is another important interpersonal behavior in coordinating diverse

groups. It is important in dealing with diverse ages, gender, cultural behaviors, or any of the other dimensions of diversity, to be tolerant--to allow group members the freedom to be themselves. Part of being tolerant is being open-minded about different values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Promoting pluralistic values is another factor. Value concerning democracy, freedom, liberty, equality, justice, the rights of individuals, and the responsibility of team and organizational membership help to form the teams and the organization's culture. To function effectively, team members must respect basic human rights, listen to dissenters rather than reject them, and openly discuss differences. Finally, open communication is important to coordinating a diverse team. As long as the communication exchanges are handled in a non-threatening, low-key, and friendly way, they generally will have a positive outcome. It helps to have a group atmosphere that supports and celebrates diversity.

#### **4.2. Essential Characteristics of Global Teams**

All teams must overcome three critical challenges to be effective: the successful completion of tasks and goals; the maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships among members; and the need to effectively adapt and change as conditions change. To meet these challenges, group members need skills that enable the group to solve both technical and human problems. Thus, successful team building requires that all group members have a clear understanding of what constitutes an effective team. In that frame, the characteristics of effective teams can be summarized as below (Robbins and Coulter, 1996: 510-512; Smither, Houston, and McIntire, 1996: 315).

***Clear goals:*** In effective teams, members are committed to the team's goals, know what they are expected to accomplish, and understand how they will work together to achieve these goals.

***Communication of ideas and feelings:*** Communication among members should involve sending and receiving information about both ideas and feelings.

***Appropriate leadership:*** Effective leaders can motivate a team to follow them through the most difficult situations. They help clarify goals and they increase the self-confidence of team members, helping members to realize their potential more fully.

***Supportive climate:*** The other condition necessary for an effective team is an internal and external support. Internally, the team should be provided with a sound infrastructure. Externally, management should provide the team with the resources needed to get the job done.

**Unified commitment:** Members of an effective team exhibit intense loyalty and dedication to the team. They are willing to do anything that has to be done to help their team succeed.

**Mutual trust:** Effective teams are characterized by high mutual trust among members. That is, members believe in the integrity, character, and ability of one another.

**Encouragement and constructive management of conflict:** When managed properly, conflict can lead to better decision making, more creative problem solving, and a higher level of group member participation.

Table 3 differentiates the characteristics of effective global teams from ineffective global teams.

Table 3: Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective Teams

Effective	Ineffective
Information Flows freely up, down, sideways	Information Flows mainly down, weak, horizontally
People Relationship Trusting, respectful, collaborative	People Relationship Suspicious and partisan
Cultural Sensitivity Cultural differences are acknowledged and respected.	Cultural Sensitivity Cultural differences are ignored
Atmosphere Open, non-threatening, noncompetitive, participative	Atmosphere Compartmentalized, intimidating, guarded
Decisions By consensus	Decisions By majority vote or forcing
Power Team members feel powerful	Power Many team members feel powerless
Motivation Commitment to goals set by team	Motivation Going along with imposed goals

Source: Adapted from Quick, 1992: 65; Gupta and Wilemon, 1999

### 4.3. Managerial Considerations to Achieve An Effective Global Team

(a) **Organizational supportive characteristics:** Organizational background plays an important role in developing an effective team. Figure 2 illustrates the organizational structure and processes that are necessary to support the effective operation of teams.

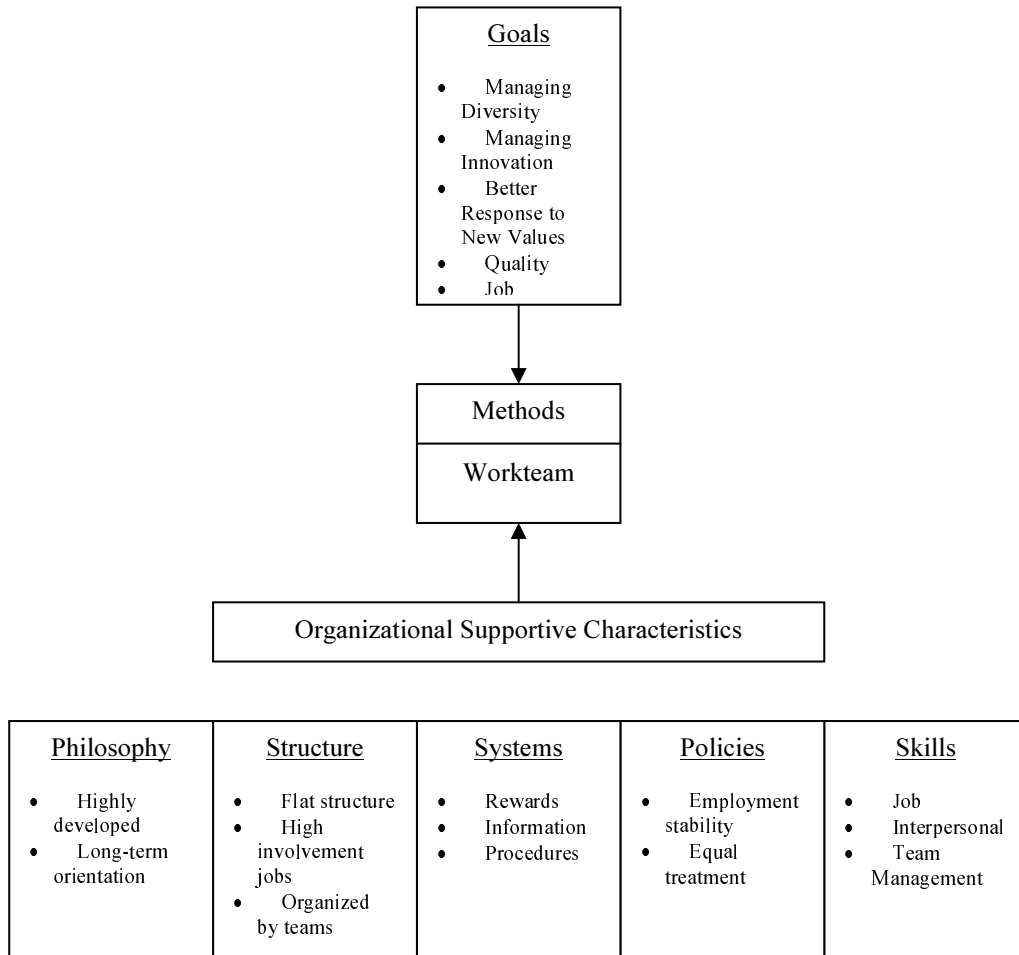


Figure 2: Essential Supportive Characteristics of the Organization for Teamwork

Source: Adapted from Shonk, 1992:93

When we look at Figure 2 the organization philosophy of management and core values must be supportive of work teams. A long-term orientation is common among team-based organizations. Also, a flat organization structure is compatible. The reward systems most commonly associated with high involvement organizations are gain-sharing, profit-sharing, skill-based pay and flexible benefits. Teams need sufficient information to make better decisions. The feeling of equality is essential to feeling part of the team. The four most commonly needed skills are job, interpersonal, team, and management. It is essential that organizations provide time and resources for members to develop these skills (Shonk, 1992: 35-49).

**(b) Strategies for a successful global team development:** It is crucial and important to understand teamwork from the closer perspective of how teams actually evolve and learn to function, the process can be long and difficult (Devereaux and Johansen, 1996: 157). Thus, there are some strategies that if practiced, can contribute significantly to successful teamwork. In this section we examine several factors that can be useful to assess a team and its capacity for successful performance.

***Norming standards;*** Standards for behavior and developed ways of working together should be formed. Team members tend to accept each other more and share a common sense of purpose when this occurs (Smither, Houston, and McIntire, 1996: 314).

***Developing culturally sensitive leadership;*** Leaders of global teams need to be fully aware of the cultural context of global team members (Gupta and Wilemon, 1999: 2-4).

***Redesign work processes for the global environment;*** The cultural dimensions of language, context, time, and information flow shape how work processes are designed and perceived. Global teamwork often means linking and sequencing subordinate tasks among different locations. The team leader must facilitate the process of exposing different perceptions and help the team find a “third way” to work (Devereaux and Johansen, 1996: 171).

***Effective use of communication technology;*** The development of new communication technologies has added an important tool for global teams. For example, e-mail, CAD, CAE, and video conferencing help teams communicate frequently and effectively.

***Training in cross-cultural teamwork;*** This includes understanding cultural differences, communicating across cultures, cross-cultural views of power,

authority, relationships between work and family life, and cross-cultural views of work and performance (Gupta and Wilemon, 1999: 4).

***Holding effective meetings;*** Since teams accomplish much of their work in meetings, it is important that the meetings run as effectively and efficiently as possible. Thus, it is important that team members and associated managers understand the following considerations (Quick, 1992,pp.79-88; Solomon, 1998: 13-14).

- Meetings must have clearly established objectives and predetermined agendas.
- Team members must make time to discuss the lines of communication. What methods will members use to communicate? Does everyone have equal access to the communication?
- Participants should recognize the role of language difficulties and manner of speaking in cross-border teams.
- Members must realize that people need to understand each other's differences before they can effectively come together as a group.
- Team members frequently check with others to make sure they have heard correctly and understand the point of view offered before responding.

Finally, there are some suggestions to managers about interpersonal skills used in managing teams (Manz,Neck,Mancuso,and Manz, 1997: 131-147;Robbins and Coulter, 1996: 314).

- Asking appropriate questions to bring out ideas and stimulate discussion.
- Managing group discussions to encourage shy team member's participation.
- Using the consensus method to reach decisions on key team issues.
- Involving team members in setting goals.
- Implementing meeting guidelines to minimize wasted time in group meetings.
- Identifying and dealing with dysfunctional behaviors immediately.
- Celebrating the achievement of milestones and other team accomplishments.



## **5.Conclusions**

As the competitive landscape continues to change rapidly, organizations must constantly invent and adopt new ways of coping with such ambiguity. One such way is to devote time and money to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of global teams. By capitalizing on global teams' advantages and minimizing weaknesses the global team can assist in gaining competitive advantage.

The changing environment is made up of increased cultural diversity, global competition, and a shift to considering people as a competitive advantage as well as innovation. These trends and characteristics are driving the need for the global mindset, new organizational structures, borderless organizations, and increased emphasis on managing diversity all of which point to and support the increased importance of global teams.

## **ÖZET**

### **Küresel Takım Yönetimi: İşletmelerin Yenilik Stratejisinin Temel Unsuru**

Dünya pazarında, küresel rekabet avantajı sağlama sürecinde bazı işletmeler başarılı olurken, bazıları ise başarısız olmaktadır. Kimi araştırmacılar yenilik stratejisinin, bugün ve geleceğin küresel ticaret çıkmazlarını başarılı bir şekilde gidereceğini ileri sürmektedir. Yenilik stratejisinin önemli bir yönünü küresel takımların etkin bir şekilde yönetilmesi oluşturmaktadır. Böylece geleceğin işletmeleri, yenilik, takım çalışması, kültürel farklılıklar gibi değerlerle nitelendirilmektedir. Dolayısıyla, ticaretin hızla küreselleştiği ve yükselen rekabet ortamında, işletmelerin yenilik yönetimi ve bu süreçte etkin takım çalışmaları daha da etkin hale gelmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı işletmelerin yenilik stratejisinin temel unsuru olarak, küresel takım yönetimi sürecine bir bakış açısı kazandırmaktır. Bu bağlamda, takım çalışmasının değişen ve gelişen işlevi tartışılarak, küresel takımların nitelikleri incelenmiştir. Ayrıca, etkin küresel takım yönetimi sürecinin geliştirilmesine yönelik önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

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