

TEAM REPORT – AN ACTUAL EXAMPLE

(1) PRE VOYAGE CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to setting sail the facilitator was aware of the teams' **Achievement Profile** and the spread of contribution preferences amongst the team members. These were as follows -

The **Driving** contribution was well represented so it would be likely to dominate proceedings on the *Bridge*. **Enabling** was also strongly present but not to the same extent. The two team members with this preference also had **Driving** as their secondary preference. Thus there existed a real danger that any well intended attempts to 'enable' progress could be drowned out completely. A small presence of the **Assessing** preference meant that the team might take the necessary time to monitor its progress and analyse its methods during the first 90-minute voyage across the English Channel. For this team its greatest concern as it boarded had to be the absence of any **Planning** or **Implementing** preferences.

Two of the six team members had indicated such a strong preference for **Driving** that they might well be in danger of appearing inflexible. Therefore it would prove interesting to observe the extent to which this desire to dominate would lead to autocratic, non participative and short-sighted decisions being made once on the *Bridge*.

No one in the team showed any sustainable preference for **testing for difficulties** and three team members preferred to avoid it altogether. As a critically important step in effective **Planning** it would be instructive to see if the team would drift off course or, much worse, cause unplanned havoc amongst the Cowes week yachts!

(2) THE VOYAGE ITSELF

- ❑ The problem of the cracked valve was well communicated and carefully **assessed**.
- ❑ Its impact on the ETA was discussed although no clear cut decision was made.
- ❑ The Dover Port Authority could have been advised of the situation sooner.
- ❑ The team overlooked the need to use RAM/NUC signals even though appropriate.
- ❑ An excellent job was done of **monitoring** the situation.
- ❑ The overheating of the bearings was well handled generally.
- ❑ However the Master should have been informed of the likely consequences earlier.
- ❑ This time the decision made around the impact on ETA was made and communicated.
- ❑ Confusion, even bordering on chaos, was apparent when the engine room was flooded.
- ❑ This could have been avoided had the team taken the time to establish the facts.
- ❑ The failure of the pump gave the team an excellent opportunity to participate.
- ❑ This time they took it, sharing information and reaching a well considered decision.
- ❑ The **enabling** component in this team helped them deal with the sick passengers.
- ❑ The sudden convergence of 38 yachts did not result in the team panicking.
- ❑ Good **assessing** contributions resulted in the correct navigation decisions being taken.
- ❑ The medical emergency occasioned some indifference amongst team members.
- ❑ This did them little credit as they placed other criteria ahead of passenger welfare.
- ❑ A more creative approach might have lead to a helicopter evacuation.
- ❑ Apart from this episode communication with Dover was mostly excellent.

- ❑ The debriefing session between voyages resulted in a successful voyage to Singapore.
- ❑ The shipping lane collision was handled well and all options were considered.
- ❑ When the net became tangled in the propeller the team briefly lost the plot.
- ❑ The oversupply of **Driving** preferences suddenly came to the fore.
- ❑ However the team was immediately able to understand what happening.
- ❑ The Captain brought order to the proceedings and good decisions were taken.
- ❑ The huge learning point was the triumph of collaboration over competition.
- ❑ Sound decision-making on the basis of hard facts continued to keep the team afloat.
- ❑ The engine ‘overheat’, the diving accident and the oil leak were quickly dispatched.
- ❑ The team was then saved from the Pirate attack thanks to the alertness of one member.
- ❑ In the debrief this provided a classic example of the need to **monitor** progress.
- ❑ It was also one of the best moments in that the team really ‘listened’.
- ❑ Thereby no team member ended the voyage by walking the plank!

(3) POST VOYAGE EVALUATION & LEARNING

Despite the ‘unbalanced’ preferences and potential for inflexibility it was clear that team members were willing to make shifts and adjustments when needed. This was a major factor in ensuring the best possible outcome, and can profitably be carried back to the workplace.

The huge benefits to be found in collaboration rather than competition were clearly illustrated on a number of occasions. Collaboration, particularly when forthcoming from a group of mainly **driving** preferences, inevitably results in meaningful participation with high levels of motivation present.

They also communicated and listened particularly well. This was really positive, again considering the excessively high number of **driving** preferences. At no stage was conflict the consequence of natural competitiveness.

It was nevertheless clear that most team members were not keen to get into too much detail, preferring the big picture contributions more often than not. As a whole the team seemed uncomfortable with detail, although timely and important temporary shifts were observed. It’s important that the team does not fall back into its familiar comfort zone in the real world. It needs to consciously resist and overcome the true nature of its profile.

It was also observed, (and this is very positive indeed), that individual team members were aware of their own high and low preferences and were making conscious efforts to level this out in a (mostly successful) attempt to spread themselves around the wheel.

A case in point, and this came across more as a team than an individual effort, was in the **Assessing** contribution. The team were aware that this was a contribution lacking in their overall profile and, consequently, it was quite clear that they were making valiant and successful attempts to manage this gap.

In the debriefing session it was pointed out that some of the ‘respectful’ behaviours were being seen on the *Bridge* for the first time. The point was made that this contrasted rather strongly from the reality to be found in the workplace. To the extent that this is true it is important to make this a serious learning point and to make a strong and conscious effort to show each other more ‘respect’ in the ‘real’ world.

Communication both up and down the ‘line’ could have been better. Some team members seemed to hold back on providing what might have been important information useful to the Captain. By the same token the Captain himself could (at times) have been more forthcoming in keeping his team in the loop and up to speed.

It was clear that the performance of this team had benefited from the pre-designation of specific *Bridge* roles. The decision to go this route from the outset stemmed from the teams project work in the real world, where roles and expectations are clearly defined.

With the many **drivers** present it was not unexpected to see some gentle argument as to who should be the ‘Captain’. Ultimately and wisely the team resolved to share the burden of leadership. They then tended to make progress on the basis of essentially being a ‘team of equals’ without ever putting at risk the need for ultimate accountability. Here again we have another good learning point for furthering in the workplace.

One of the real beauties of the simulator experience for this particular team was that in the real world it needs to be highly action orientated. The learning methodology provided by SAMTRA is precisely this. Consequently the team thrived in this environment. Most members wanted the voyage to last longer than the combined 3 hours of the two voyages.

All team members agreed that their own particular preferences had come to the fore. They were aware of them both when on the *Bridge* and later during the debriefing sessions. They used these insights to manage their behaviours constructively – at least more often than not. It was this awareness that had most to do with the relative success of both voyages.
