

Success Factors for Self-Directed Work Teams

- 1. Top-Level Commitment.** There is a champion at or near the top of the organization who is totally committed to self-directed teams and will protect, support and fight for the success of the effort.
- 2. Leadership-Employee Trust.** Leaders trust that, over time, employees will actively support the changes necessary to make this process successful. Employees trust that the organization's/team's leadership will allow them to take risks, express their opinions and make decisions about the work of their self-directed team.
- 3. Willingness to Take Risks.** Leadership is willing to risk a difficult and potentially costly change that will radically change their organization. Employees are willing to give up aspects of their traditional individual jobs for a more demanding role as a team member.
- 4. Willingness to Share Information.** Leadership is willing to share previously secret or closely held information about the organization including financial reports.
- 5. Enough Time and Resources.** Leadership is willing to take the time (often years) and provide the resources in the form of training, materials, equipment, technology, etc., to ensure the success of the transition to self-directed work teams.
- 6. Commitment to Training.** Leadership/Administration is willing to provide intensive, long term training in interpersonal, administrative and technical skills necessary for a team-based environment.
- 7. Operations Conducive to Work Teams.** The organization has operations/processes that include a wide range of employee tasks, with some complex enough that improved skills and commitment can lead to improved productivity.