

1.5.7: Why It Matters- Collaboration In And Between Teams

As Pedro scans through his morning email, he sees a message letting him know that the corporate office is offering a store remodel to the store with the best idea about how to increase customer purchases while decreasing operations costs. The email wants all proposals submitted within six weeks so the winning store will have the work completed by year's end.

That seems like a short amount of time. Pedro would need to gather both customer and store data. After collecting all that, he would need to come up with some good ideas and probably have sketches made for his proposal. It's too much to do, but what an opportunity!

Pedro's store manager must think highly of him to put him in charge of the project. Pedro starts to make a list of what he will need. He quickly realizes there are not enough hours in the day for him to do all this work. He probably needs more background in some areas. His initial brainstorming list includes contacting the following teams and individuals:

- Customer Service for customer ideas
- Store Operations for practical matters of shipping and receiving
- Individual departments for trends in their areas
- Purchasing for the budget
- Maybe an external consultant for design support

That list started to look overwhelming given the six-week time frame. Pedro realized he would need help and needed to form a team. He started to consider the following:

- How the team would communicate
- How it would make decisions
- How often it needed to meet

Finally, there would be the biggest job of all: writing the response that would persuade headquarters to select Pedro's concept. Pedro needed to think about how the writing of the response would get done with so many experts providing input.

Pedro's lists just begin to recognize the power of teams in the workplace. Teams can accomplish much more than an individual. It's not just that teams can do *more* work; with several minds and experiences on one problem, the *quality* of the work improves as well. The written response would be so much stronger with a team of experts involved.

Teams do require intentional structure to be successful. While team decision-making might take longer, it produces a better, hopefully winning, result.

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