

DREAM TEAMS

Working Together Without Falling Apart

SHANE SNOW

SHANE SNOW is a business journalist and self-confessed geek. He is a cofounder and chief creative officer of Contently Inc., a web-based platform which empowers freelance journalists to do what they love. He is also an adviser to Visual.ly and a published contributor to *Mashable*, *WIRED* Magazine, *Fast Company*, *The New Yorker*, *Time*, *The Washington Post* and *New Scientist*. He is the author of *Smartcuts* and *The Storytelling Edge* and was previously the founder of Brave Media LLC and assistant editor at Scroll Newspaper. Shane Snow is a graduate of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism and Brigham Young University - Idaho.

The author's website is at: www.shanesnow.com.

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MAIN IDEA

Why is it some groups of people become spectacularly successful when they work together but most do not?



Logically, humans should excel at collaboration but studies show unambiguously that talented individuals consistently outperform teams. There are, however, some exceptions to the rule – a small number of "Dream Teams" which defy the odds and achieve something spectacular.

So how do you put together and run a dream team? New discoveries in psychology and neuroscience have decoded what the real secret sauce is in running a dream team. There are eight principles involved. Use them and excel.

"Our greatest moments in history—not just in sports, but in business and art and science and society—happened when humans defied the odds by coming together and becoming more than the sum of their parts. When they linked arms, stood on the metaphorical shoulders of the giants who came before them, and saw further together. There's science behind this kind of magic. Dream Teams are not just random. They're the result of subtle interactions, and ones that are not obvious. Once we understand how it works, the science of Dream Teams is something that we can apply to everything. From our personal relationships, to our everyday work, to our businesses and causes, to our communities, and to a world itself that desperately needs us to stop breaking down because of each other, and start breaking through together."

– Shane Snow

Principle #1 – Recruit for diversity, not fit Page 2

The conventional wisdom is to look for people who are a good match to your team culture. Dream teams don't do that. They look for people who will add something new.

Principle #2 – Encourage infighting and tension Page 3

If you want business as usual, tension is bad. Dream teams, however, are always pushing the envelope. They encourage internal tension deliberately as a way to help achieve that.

Principle #3 – Make everyone play together Page 4

As trivial as it may sound, the best way to get diverse groups working together is to create opportunities for them to play together. Play can spark inclusion faster than anything else.

Principle #4 – Tolerate and celebrate dissent Pages 4 - 5

To make progress on anything especially when you're locked into one way of thinking, set up a provocation. Invite some dissenters and those with extreme uses to get involved.

Principle #5 – Consider lots of weird ideas Pages 5 - 6

Sometimes even bad ideas are useful in that they point us in the right direction. Be prepared to consider weird ideas and see whether they spark useful follow-on ideas.

Principle #6 – Make people contribute Page 6

The key to putting together a dream team is to have a compelling "superordinate goal" – a goal which is so enticing it will make people who are different work together.

Principle #7 – Develop open-mindedness Page 7

To keep a dream team running, people have to be open-minded about doing things a different way. You need to be open to new experiences and perspectives to survive.

Principle #8 – Use lots of storytelling Page 8

To make forward progress, every dream team needs to get good at telling engaging stories. The right stories can change everything for the better.

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