Clear and inspiring team goals—Members of a winning team know why the group exists, and believe the purpose is important and worthwhile.

A results-driven structure—Winning teams are organized in a way that allows them to get the job done in the most efficient manner. Members understand the expectations set by the group.

Competent team members—Members of winning teams have the skills necessary to accomplish their goals.

Unified commitment—People in successful groups share a commitment to the job and to one another. They put the group’s goals above their personal interests.

Collaborative climates—Members of successful groups trust and support one another.

Standards of excellence—in willing teams, doing outstanding work is a norm. Each member is expected to do his or her personal best.

External support and recognition—Successful groups need an appreciative audience that recognizes their effort and provides the resources necessary to get the job done.

Principled leadership—Winning teams usually have leaders who can create a vision of the group’s purpose. They are able to create the changes that are necessary to get the job done. They have the ability to unleash the talent of group members.

Analyzing Groups

Observation
• Who talks? For how long? How often?
• At whom do people look when they speak? Who talks after whom? Who interrupts whom?

Participation
• Who are the high participants? Who are the low participants?
• Do you see any shift in participation (e.g., highs become quiet; lows suddenly become talkative)

What are possible reasons for this in the group’s interaction?
• How are the silent people treated? How is their silence interpreted? Consent? Disagreement? Disinterest? Fear? Etc.?
• Who talks to whom? Do you see any reason for this in the group’s interactions?
• Who keeps the ball rolling? Why?

Decision Making
• Does the group drift from topic to topic? Who topic-jumps? Do you see any reason for this in the group’s interactions?
• Who supports other members’ suggestions or decisions? Does this support result in the two members deciding the topic or activity for the group?

Is there any evidence of a majority pushing a decision through over other objections? Do they call for a vote (majority support)? Is there any attempt to move toward consensus?

Organizational Roles
A variety of crucial roles need to be filled to ensure group goal accomplishment and success. Roles are distributed among three types:

Task
Primarily expressed through trying to accomplish group tasks. Examples: initiator-contributor, information seeker and giver, elaborator, orientate, energizer, recorder.

Maintenance
Oriented toward improving relationships among members. Examples: encourager, harmonizer, compromiser.

Self-Oriented
Focuses on personal needs regardless of group concerns. Examples: aggressor, recognition seeker, dominator, blocker.