

STUDYGUIDE

Takeaway 13.1

Why Is It Important to Understand Teams and Teamwork?

Terms to Define

Committee	Formal team	Self-managing team	Team
Cross-functional team	Informal group	Social loafing	Teamwork
Distributed team	Project team	Synergy	Virtual team
Employee involvement team	Quality circle	Task force	

Rapid Review

- A team consists of people with complementary skills working together for shared goals and holding one another accountable for performance.
- Teams benefit organizations by providing for synergy that allows the accomplishment of tasks that are beyond individual capabilities alone.
- Social loafing and other problems can limit the performance of teams.
- Organizations use a variety of formal teams in the form of committees, task forces, project teams, cross-functional teams, and virtual teams.
- Self-managing teams allow team members to perform many tasks previously done by supervisors.

Questions for Discussion

1. Do committees and task forces work better when they are given short deadlines?
2. Are there some things that should be done only by face-to-face teams, not virtual ones?
3. Why do people in teams often tolerate social loafers?

Be Sure You Can

- **define** “team” and “teamwork”
- **describe** the roles managers play in teams
- **explain** synergy and the benefits of teams
- **discuss** social loafing and other potential problems of teams
- **differentiate** formal and informal groups
- **explain** how committees, task forces, and cross-functional teams operate
- **describe** potential problems faced by virtual teams
- **list** the characteristics of self-managing teams

Career Situation: What Would You Do?

It's time for the initial meeting of the task force that you have been assigned to lead. This is a big opportunity for you because it's the first time your boss has given you this level of responsibility. There are seven members of the team, all of whom are your peers and co-workers—no direct reports. The task is to develop a proposal for increased use of flexible work schedules and telecommuting in the organization. What will your agenda be for the first meeting, and what opening statement will you make?