



## WHAT MAKES TEAMS FALL?

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Have you ever worked in a team where individual commitment seems to be difficult to come by? Where the leader's vision is not shared by all the other team members simply because the leader tends to be overbearing? Or where the team members consistently grumble about the work they have to do because everything is not evenly distributed?

The concept of teamwork in our younger years was much simpler than that of today. Back then, a leader was assigned in order to tell other members to bring this or that material, a member who was skilled to do so was assigned to do illustrations as needed, another was assigned to buy this or that. It was always the leader who ended up with the heaviest workload and the biggest blame come crunch time. But those were our earliest exposures to working within a team. One great thing that those experiences taught us was they made us see how effective teamwork went-or didn't go-into progress. Success was measured by the beauty of a project or the grade we had gotten. Then the leader ended up getting chosen over and over again to head other groups.

I, for one, have been and will always be a follower. I am prepared to work with the team, sharing whatever talents and skills I have to get closer to the goal or to make the objective more achievable. One astute reading characterizes my personality as bordering between the phlegmatic and the melancholic, the types that thrive more on observation, and yes, doing as we're told and required. I shine best when given directions but fail miserably at giving them. I guess you could say I shun responsibility because strategizing can be a genuinely big challenge for me. I work well within a team because I perform as expected and can even give inputs from time to time. But don't expect me to be astute about progress, because I easily find my comfort zone and easily embrace it. Sanguine personalities shine socially, choleric ones have the propensity to direct and lead. I fall neither into one or the other of those two latter personalities.

In a team, personalities need to mesh in order to have work done well. We can't all be leaders; some of us have to be crew members. Can you just imagine the kind of ruckus that a group with everyone aspiring to be the leader creates? Potentially no clear objective in sight, such groups are doomed to fail, or fall, whichever way you want to look at it!

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Can you give examples of famous teams that failed? Why do you think they failed?
2. Can you give examples of famous teams that were successful? Why do you think such teams succeeded?
3. Which is better, a team with a great leader but lousy members, or a team with a lousy leader but great members? Justify your answer.
4. What are qualities that each team member, including the leader, must possess in order to succeed in team efforts?
5. Do you think you can be a great leader? Why or why not?