Leadership and teamwork in the public services

The public services could not operate efficiently and effectively without leaders and without teams – they are essential if an organisation is to meet its goals. This unit provides you with an understanding of effective team leadership skills and an overview of how teams operate and how you can be a good team member.

This unit looks at the key principles in effective team leadership skills in a public services context. You will identify and investigate the different styles of leadership and how and when they may be used. You will gain a clear understanding of team aims and goals and explore the benefits of working in teams. You will look at effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, and understand its importance within a group setting, especially when giving instructions and feedback. Throughout the unit you will develop your interpersonal skills, helping you to interact and deal effectively with team members, through feedback, group encouragement and individual support. You should take every opportunity to reflect on your performance and identify the skills needed to develop and become a more effective leader.

You will also identify a range of barriers to effective teamwork and look at solutions and techniques in overcoming them. Finally, you will use your skills to carry out planning sessions and demonstrate your ability to conduct group and individual evaluations. This unit is designed to help you identify and understand a range of qualities which are required for successful leadership in a variety of public services, such as the armed forces and emergency services. You will have the opportunity to develop and practise your own leadership skills and review your progress. In addition, you will explore both the practical and theoretical aspects of leadership in order to understand that what makes an effective leader can vary from situation to situation.

Learning outcomes

After completing this unit you should:
1. understand the styles of leadership and the role of a team leader
2. be able to communicate effectively to brief and debrief teams
3. be able to use appropriate skills and qualities to lead a team
4. be able to participate in teamwork activities within the public services
5. understand team development.
Assessment and grading criteria

This table shows you what you must do in order to achieve a pass, merit or distinction grade, and where you can find activities in this book to help you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:</th>
<th>To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:</th>
<th>To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P1</strong> describe the different leadership styles used in the public services See Assessment activity 2.1 page 47</td>
<td><strong>M1</strong> compare the different leadership styles used in the public services See Assessment activity 2.1 page 47</td>
<td><strong>D1</strong> evaluate the effectiveness of different leadership styles used in the public services See Assessment activity 2.1 page 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P2</strong> identify the role of the team leader in the public services See Assessment activity 2.2 page 49</td>
<td><strong>M2</strong> brief and debrief a team for a given task using effective communication See Assessment activity 2.3 page 57</td>
<td><strong>D2</strong> evaluate own ability to lead a team effectively See Assessment activity 2.4 page 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P3</strong> brief and debrief a team for a given task See Assessment activity 2.3 page 57</td>
<td><strong>M3</strong> effectively lead a team using the appropriate skills and qualities See Assessment activity 2.4 page 61</td>
<td><strong>D3</strong> evaluate team members’ performance in team activities See Assessment activity 2.6 page 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P4</strong> carry out a team task using the appropriate skills and qualities See Assessment activity 2.4 page 61</td>
<td><strong>M4</strong> appraise own performance in team activities See Assessment activity 2.6 page 71</td>
<td><strong>D4</strong> evaluate team members’ performance in team activities See Assessment activity 2.6 page 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P5</strong> describe the different types of teams that operate within a selected public service See Assessment activity 2.5 page 65</td>
<td><strong>M5</strong> analyse the impact of good and poor team cohesion on a public service, with reference to relevant theorists See Assessment activity 2.7 page 72</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P6</strong> participate in team activities See Assessment activity 2.6 page 71</td>
<td><strong>M6</strong> evaluate team members’ performance in team activities See Assessment activity 2.6 page 71</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P7</strong> explain how teambuilding leads to team cohesion in the public services with reference to relevant theorists See Assessment activity 2.7 page 72</td>
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</table>
How you will be assessed

This unit will be assessed by an internal assignment that will be devised and marked by the staff at your centre. The assignment is designed to allow you to show your understanding of the learning outcomes for leadership and teamwork. These relate to what you should be able to do after completing this unit.

Assessments can be quite varied and can take the form of:

- reports
- leaflets
- presentations
- posters
- practical tasks
- case studies
- simulations
- team activities
- personal evaluations
- peer assessments
- tutor observations.

Claire experiences teamwork

I really enjoyed this unit and I learned a lot from it. I am quite outspoken so people often look to me for leadership when we are doing group tasks, but just because I can speak my mind doesn’t mean I’m a good leader – or even a good team member. In fact, I’ve been in groups where speaking my mind has actually made things worse for the team.

This unit helped me to understand the skills I already have in terms of leadership and teamwork and also the skills I need to develop. A leader is a bit like a chameleon, they have to adapt their style to differing circumstances and I’ve struggled with that a bit, but I have got better as I have had more experience.

Having the chance to be a leader has also helped me develop my teamwork skills. I tend to think before I speak now as I need to be careful not to undermine the leader or contradict what they have said. If I have something to say, I think about how I can make it constructive rather than critical. I’ve found this helps the team far more than me just saying what I think and not offering any suggestions for improvement.

This unit has also improved my confidence not just at college, but also in my personal life.

Over to you!

- What areas of leadership and teamwork might you find interesting?
- Have you ever been involved in leadership before?
- How well do you work in a team?
- What preparation could you do to get ready for your assessments?
1. The styles of leadership and the role of a team leader

Thinking about leadership and teamwork

- Make a list of your leadership strengths and weaknesses. What actions can you take to improve your weak areas?
- Think about a recent experience you have had being part of a team, did it go well, could you have been a better team member? What can you do to improve your teamwork skills?
- Feedback to the rest of your group and make an action plan for improvement with your tutor.

This unit is essential in providing you with an understanding of how leadership and teamwork influence those working in the services every day of their working lives. It is important that you have a clear grasp of your own leadership and teamwork skills and a clear idea how to develop your strengths and overcome your weaknesses.

Effective leadership is essential in the uniformed public services as employees often work in teams and rely on each other as they carry out their individual roles, and also rely on a leader to direct them. Leadership is particularly significant for the uniformed public services due to the rigidity of the hierarchical structures, the necessity for obedience and the following of lawful orders, and the dangerous nature of the roles they perform. Without an effective leader the chances of a team achieving its goal is greatly reduced.

1.1 Leadership styles

A leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction for a team, implementing plans and motivating people to complete a task. There are several different leadership styles, each with advantages and disadvantages. The public services are constantly changing in response to changes in public expectations, the law and the current political environment and so the styles of leadership they use change and evolve too.

![Figure 2.1: The main leadership styles. These are never completely clear cut, and can overlap. People often use different styles at different times.](image-url)
**Authoritarian**

**Key term**

**Authoritarian leadership** is a very direct leadership style where the leader tells the team members what they must do.

Sometimes this style is also described as autocratic. It is often considered a classic leadership style and is used when a leader wishes to retain as much power as possible and maintain control over the decision-making process. It involves the leader telling the team members what they must do without any form of consultation or negotiation. Team members are expected to obey orders without receiving any explanation. Appropriate conditions when you might use this leadership style are when:

- you have all the information to solve the problem
- you are working to a tight deadline
- the team is well motivated and used to working for an authoritarian leader.

Generally, this approach is not considered to be the most appropriate way to get the best response from a team in ordinary working life, but it has distinct advantages in situations where there is great urgency and pressure to achieve, such as the armed forces. Autocratic leaders may rely on threats or intimidation to ensure that followers conform to what the leader requires. In addition, this approach could devalue team members by ignoring their expertise and input and discouraging demonstrations of initiative.

**Activity: Responding to the authoritarian style**

After examining the autocratic style of leadership described above consider how well you would respond to this particular style. How would you feel if you were working under it?

**Democratic**

**Key term**

**Democratic leadership** is a style of leadership where the leader maintains control of the group, but team members’ opinions and views are encouraged and the leader informs the team about issues which may affect them.

In this approach the leader encourages the followers to become a part of the decision-making process. The leader still maintains control of the group and ownership of the final decision, but input from team members is encouraged and the leader informs team members about factors that may have an impact on them, the team and the project.

This encourages a sense of responsibility in team members who feel that they have a vested interest in the success of the project or operation. It allows a leader to draw upon the expertise and experience of a team in order to achieve the best results for all and it also helps to develop the skills of individuals in the team. The democratic approach is viewed positively as it gains employees’ respect and it can produce high-quality work over long periods of time from highly motivated and engaged team members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It maintains order and discipline.</td>
<td>Team members rely on the leader for instruction and do not develop initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It allows public services to be deployed quickly and efficiently.</td>
<td>Team members have less responsibility for their own actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It allows young and inexperienced recruits to know what to do and when to do it.</td>
<td>Team members may feel angry and resentful at being ordered to perform tasks without explanation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It allows large-scale coordination with other shifts or units.</td>
<td>It can lead to high staff turnover and absenteeism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It ensures that decisions are made by those best equipped to make them.</td>
<td>Staff may feel devalued and fearful of punishment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It enables decisions to be made very quickly.</td>
<td>Staff morale may decline leading to poor job performance.</td>
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</table>
motivated teams. Employees and team members also feel in control of their own destiny, such as gaining promotion and progressing up the ladder. However, its application in the field of public service work is slightly more problematic and the drawbacks are seen as follows:

- Democratic discussion takes time. A public service may have to respond very quickly, so gathering the views of all team members may not be a viable option.
- A participative approach may not be the most cost effective way of organising a service. The time of service officers is expensive and in terms of public perceptions and government funding it is best if the public services, especially the uniformed services, are doing the job and not talking about how to do it.
- A time-consuming approach is not appropriate if the safety of team members is paramount. Safety is not open for negotiation; a public service must endeavour to protect its members from harm wherever operationally possible. Equally, when members must risk their personal safety in the defence of others, it is not open to discussion.

The laissez-faire approach can also be called the ‘hands-off’, ‘free-reign’ or ‘delegative’ approach. This style differs from the others in that the leader exercises very little control over the group and leaves them to establish their own roles and responsibilities. Followers are given very little direction but a great deal of power and freedom. They must use this power to establish goals, make decisions and resolve difficulties should they arise. This style is difficult to master as many leaders have great difficulty delegating power and authority to others and allowing them the freedom to work free from interference. It is also a difficult approach to use with all teams as some people experience great difficulty working without a leader’s direction and projects or goals may fall behind schedule or be poorly organised.

In general, a laissez-faire approach is most effective when a group of followers are highly motivated, experienced and well trained. It is important that the leader can have trust in their followers to complete tasks without supervision and this is more likely to happen with a highly qualified team or individual. However, there are situations where a laissez-faire style may not be the most effective style. An example of this would be when a leader lacks the knowledge and the skills to do the job and employs this style so that the work of the followers or employees covers the leader’s weaknesses. This is not the same as a leader who brings in outside expertise, such as a scenes of crime officer, to complete a task they are not qualified to do. In addition, it would be inappropriate to use this style with new or inexperienced staff who may feel uncomfortable if the direction of a leader weren’t readily available. For instance, a commanding officer would not approach the training of new recruits in a laissez-faire manner, but as an individual progresses through a rank structure they will become more skilled, experienced and trustworthy and they may encounter this style more often.
Did you know?
The laissez-faire approach is a good one to use when dealing with expert staff who may know a great deal more about a subject than the leader themselves on a specific issue. In a public service context, a good example of this would be a murder enquiry where the supervising officer would employ a laissez-faire approach to a scene-of-crime officer or a forensic investigator. The experts know what they are there to do and can be safely left to get on with it, leaving the supervising officer free to attend to other tasks.

Transactional

Key term
Transactional leadership is a very direct style of leadership and uses rewards and punishments to motivate the team.

Transaction leaders use conventional rewards and punishments to gain the support of their team. They create clear structures whereby it is obvious what is required of the team and what incentives they will receive if they follow orders (salary, benefits, promotion or praise). Team members who perform adequately or accomplish goals will be rewarded in some way that benefits their own self-interest. Those who don’t perform or meet the standard required will be punished by the leader through the ‘management by exception principle’, whereby, rather than rewarding work, they will take corrective action against those who don’t work to the required standards.

Transformational

Key term
Transformational leadership style is a form of leadership style that focuses on team performance as a whole by encouraging team members to think of the group rather than themselves. It is about moving forward as a team rather than individuals who just happen to be on the same project.

Transformational leaders aim to make team members better people by encouraging their self-awareness and helping them to see the bigger picture of what they do. They want team members

This is similar to autocratic but not as extreme, even though transactional leaders, like autocratic leaders, are direct and dominating and spend a great deal of time telling others what is expected of them. Transactional leaders are very common in businesses where people receive rewards such as bonuses, training or time off if they demonstrate good performance.

Table 2.2: The advantages and disadvantages of transactional leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The leader actively monitors the work and each individual’s performance.</td>
<td>• Leaders tend to be action oriented and focus on short-term tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People are motivated by being rewarded for exceeding expectations.</td>
<td>• Team members may not get job satisfaction because of the reward and punishment ethos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a clear chain of command.</td>
<td>• It has serious limitations for knowledge-based or creative work but remains a common style in many organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formal systems of discipline are in place.</td>
<td>• Team members do exactly what the manager tells them to do and have no authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The team is fully accountable for its actions and will be sanctioned for failure.</td>
<td>• The team might not have the resources or capability to carry out a task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It ensures that routine work is done reliably.</td>
<td>• The style assumes that people are motivated by money and not by emotional and social factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The leader could manipulate others to engage in unethical or immoral practices and control others for their own personal gain.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It creates an environment of power versus perks.</td>
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BTEC’s own resources

Transformational leaders are often charismatic with a clear vision. They spend a lot of time communicating and gaining the support of the team through their enthusiasm. This vision may be developed by the leader or the team, or may emerge from discussions. Leaders will want to be role models that others will follow and will look to explore the various routes to achieve their vision. They look at long-term goals rather than short-term goals. They are always visible and will be accountable for their actions rather than hiding behind their team. They act as mentors and demonstrate how the team should behave and work together through their own good practice. They listen to the team and often delegate responsibility – they trust their team enough to leave them to grow and solve the problems through their own decisions.

Table 2.3: The advantages and disadvantages of transformational leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - People will follow transformational leaders because of their passion, energy, commitment and enthusiasm for the team and their vision.  
- They add value to the organisation through their vision and enthusiasm.  
- They care about their team and work hard to motivate them – this reduces stress levels and increases well-being.  
- They have belief in others and themselves.  
- They spend time teaching and coaching the team. | - The team may not share the same vision if they are not convinced by it.  
- If the team do not believe that they can succeed, then they will lack effort and ultimately give up.  
- Followers need to have a strong sense of purpose if they are to be motivated to act.  
- Leaders believe their vision is right, when sometimes it isn’t.  
- Large amounts of relentless enthusiasm can wear out the team.  
- Leaders see the big picture but not the details.  
- Leaders can become frustrated if transformation is not taking place. |

Activity: Transformational leadership

Consider how you could transform a team you are leading into a highly motivated, inspired team who think of others rather than themselves when the job they have to do is routine, low paid and uninspiring? What difficulties would you encounter? How could you overcome them?

Bureaucratic

Key term

Bureaucratic leadership is a style of leadership that focuses on rules and procedures to manage teams and projects.

A bureaucratic form of leadership is one in which authority is diffused among a number of departments or individuals and there is strict adherence to a set of operational rules. This is also considered to be a classic leadership style and is often used in organisations that do not encourage innovation and change, and by leaders who may be insecure and uncertain of their role. It involves following the rules of an organisation rigidly. People who favour using this style of leadership are often very familiar with the many policies, guidelines and working practices that an organisation may have.

If a particular situation arises that is not covered by known rules and guidelines then a bureaucratic leader may feel uncomfortable as they like to ‘do things by the book’. They may feel out of their depth and will have little hesitation in referring difficulties to a leader higher up in the chain of command.

This approach is commonly found in many uniformed and non-uniformed public services. Often the public services are very large and bureaucratic themselves and, although it may seem unlikely, there are several situations where the bureaucratic leadership style may be useful, for example, when:
• a job is routine and doesn’t change over a long period of time
• a job requires a definite set of safety rules or working guidelines in order to comply with the law.

However, if the bureaucratic style is used inappropriately it can have negative consequences, leading to a lack of flexibility, an uninspired working environment and workers who do what is required of them but no more.

People-orientated

Key term
People-orientated leadership style focuses on participation of all team members, clear communication and supporting and developing the individual in order to improve skills.

The people-orientated leader is focused on organising, supporting and developing the team. They are competent in their role and inspire others by unlocking their potential. They allocate roles based on a person’s strength and individual skills.

This style of leadership is participative and encourages good teamwork, loyalty and creative collaboration and helps to avoid work-based problems such as low morale, poor communication and distrust. The style has a human element and good relationships are crucial to its success. The key to this style is people power – the organisation is made successful by utilising the knowledge, skills, abilities, life experiences and talents of the individuals and groups. A people-orientated style also looks to develop a person’s skills and help them acquire new ones through continuous and regular training. A disadvantage of this style is that it can focus so much on the well-being of the team that the job they do is neglected.

Task-orientated

Key term
Task-orientated leadership style is about getting the job done. The completion of the task rather than the needs of the team is the key goal.

Task-orientated leaders focus mainly on getting the task done, whether it is structured or unstructured.

They will define the work and the roles required, put structures in place, plan, organise and monitor with little thought for the well-being or needs of their teams. This approach can have many flaws, such as difficulties in motivating and retaining the team.

This style of leadership is the opposite of people-orientated leadership. In practice, most leaders use both task-orientated and people-orientated styles of leadership. As an example, a police inspector organising crowd control at a football match may use a task-centred approach, but back at the station, when dealing with junior police officers, she might employ a people-centred approach.

Activity: Which leadership style?

List possible situations when the public services will use a task-orientated approach and situations in which they would use a people-orientated approach to lead teams.

Remember!

Choosing the right leadership style depends very much on the situation but to help you select the most appropriate style you need to consider the following:

• The authoritarian approach tells others what to do and how to do it.
• The bureaucratic approach has clearly outlined procedures that must be followed if you are to know what to do and how to do it.
• The democratic approach discusses with others what to do and how to do it.
• The laissez-faire approach lets followers decide for themselves what to do and how to do it.
• The transformational approach encourages individuals to share the goals of the organisation and work towards its success.
• The transactional approach rewards people for good performance and punishes those who don’t perform well.
• The people-orientated approach focuses on the needs, problems and skills of team members and identifies the support individuals will need.
• The task-orientated approach focuses on getting the task done and the leader considers what needs to be done to achieve this.
Case study: Winston Churchill 1874–1965

“It was the nation that had the lion’s heart. I had the luck to be called upon to give the roar.”

Winston Churchill (1954)

Winston Churchill was born into a well-recognised military and political family in 1874. After serving as a military officer in three campaigns and also as a war correspondent he developed skills that set him on the road to greatness. Many of the qualities that would help save Britain from Nazi invasion 40 years later were already emerging. These qualities included intense patriotism, an unshakeable belief in the greatness of Britain and her empire, inexhaustible energy, a strong physical constitution, a willingness to speak out on issues despite the fact that to do so would prove unpopular, meticulous organisational skills and the ability to inspire and motivate others.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Churchill was Lord of the Admiralty and had a crucial role to play in the events of 1914–18. His experiences during the First World War educated him about political office and large-scale battle tactics, and it helped him come to terms with his leadership failings.

Not all of Churchill’s military campaigns in the First World War were successful. In 1915 he was instrumental in sending a naval and army force to Gallipoli in the Mediterranean. Gallipoli was a disaster and cost thousands of allied soldiers and sailors their lives. Admitting responsibility, Churchill resigned from both political and military office; he would not regain his pre-war political status for over 25 years. Failures by leaders last much longer in the minds of the public than successes.

It seemed that his troubled political years helped to develop his leadership skills and mental faculties to such an extent that in the hour of Britain’s crisis at the beginning of the Second World War, his skills and abilities matched the requirements of the situation better than those of his political contemporaries. During the 1930s Churchill spoke out vigorously on the rise of totalitarian regimes such as the Nazi party. This ensured that when confrontation between Britain and Germany inevitably arose, Churchill stood out as a statesman who had fought against the threat of Nazism for many years while other politicians had tried to appease Adolf Hitler.

The nation felt they had found a politician who understood the situation and whom it could trust. Churchill was reappointed to head up the Admiralty office on the same day that war officially broke out: 3 September 1939.

Norway fell to the Germans in April 1940 and this was quickly followed by the fall of Belgium and the Netherlands in May. Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of the time, lost the confidence of Parliament and resigned. It was clear at that point that Churchill had the skills and spirit to unite and lead the nation. He was appointed Prime Minister to a coalition government headed by a war cabinet. After the fall of France, Britain stood without substantial allies and faced most of 1940 under German air bombardment and the constant threat of Nazi invasion. Churchill used his personal skills and patriotism to motivate and inspire the British public to endure the hardships they faced with good humour, strength and resourcefulness. Churchill also used his extensive diplomacy and communication skills to forge alliances between nations with differing political and social philosophies, such as the communist Soviet Union and the capitalist United States.

Churchill’s leadership qualities were present from the early days of his military and political career but it is fair to say that some of the decisions he made in his early career did not show him as an effective leader in all circumstances. His obituary written upon his death in January 1965 notes the following:

His career was divided by the year 1940. If he had died a little before that he would’ve been remembered as an eloquent, formidable, erratic statesman. An outstanding personage, but one who was not to be put in the class of such contemporaries as Lloyd George or even Arthur Balfour. Yet all the qualities with which he was to fascinate the world were already formed and matured. They awaited their hour for use.

Despite his many and varied leadership skills it is unlikely that he would have risen to greatness without the Second World War. It was the circumstances that Churchill found himself in that allowed his best abilities to dominate in a way they might not otherwise have done.

1. What were Winston Churchill’s key leadership strengths?
2. How did his leadership style suit the situation in 1940?
3. Do you think great leaders are born or made?
4. Does it take the right situation to bring out the best in someone’s leadership skills or can they be a good leader in all circumstances?
1.2 Appropriate style for the situation

The public services receive their strategic plans either directly from a government ministry or they must draw up their own plans under the prevailing political will of the time. This means that even very senior officers often have no input into the goal setting of the organisation but are given authoritarian dictates that they have to impose on their employees. Despite this, a public service leader must be ready to respond to the challenges and changes that may arise in society with a whole range of leadership techniques that can be deployed singly or all at once. Public service leaders must be highly adaptable and comfortable using all styles of leadership.

1.3 Team leader role

Team leaders can be appointed in many different ways, for example through:

- promotion
- nomination
- election
- delegation
- volunteering.

Some people make better leaders than others, however, as long as someone is interested and willing, with an idea of how to communicate well, understand the needs of others, offer support and be flexible, then they have the basics to develop their leadership skills.

Position and responsibilities

There are many functions of a team leader. These range from helping the team to decide how roles and responsibilities will be divided amongst its members to helping to coordinate the task and resolving interpersonal conflicts.

The team leader is the contact point for communication between the team members. He or she should:

- encourage and maintain open communication
- help the team to develop and keep to a good way of performing and focusing on the task
- be an active listener and show initiative when things become flat by building up rapport to help maximise performance
- look to delegate their authority when appropriate and follow up on any points after a task has been attempted or completed
- encourage the team members to reflect on the task
- coordinate multi-agency responses such as emergency service or military teams working together to achieve a common goal.

Activity: Examining great leaders

One of the ways you can find out more about leadership styles, skills and qualities is to examine great leaders who you admire. These can be leaders in any field from successful football managers, military leaders, political figures or someone you know and admire in your personal life. Consider what makes these people good leaders, how can they be a role model for you to develop your own skills and abilities?

Assessment activity 2.1

Understanding the different leadership styles the public services might use will be essential in your future career. In the form of a presentation slideshow address the following tasks:

1. Describe the different leadership styles used in the public services

2. Compare the different leadership styles used in the public services

3. Evaluate the effectiveness of different leadership styles used in the public services

Grading tips

Your slides should describe the leadership styles outlined in the information above, make sure you cover them all in order to pass. For your slides should also make comparisons about these leadership styles noting the differences and similarities and commenting on situations where one style might be more appropriate than another. For you should supply some supporting notes to your presentation that draw conclusions about how effective these styles are for leaders in the public services.
Did you know?

One example of a leadership position within a uniformed public service is that of a Commanding Officer (CO). The CO is the officer in command of a military unit, post, camp, base or station. He or she has authority over the unit and is given legal powers, within the bounds of military law, to discipline and punish certain behaviour.

A CO has a range of significant responsibilities with regard to the allocation of service personnel, finances and equipment. They are accountable to the higher ranks and have a legal duty of care to the team. COs are highly valued and progression within the service is awarded to the best officers who have worked their way up the ranks.

Table 2.4: Key qualities for leadership roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership qualities</th>
<th>Adaptability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decisiveness</strong></td>
<td>A leader within the uniformed services needs to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrate good judgement by making effective,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>timely and sound decisions in response to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>situations that arise. Decisions need to be</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>made quickly and include consideration of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>impact and implications of their decision.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many decisions need to be made proactively</td>
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<td></td>
<td>before a problem arises.</td>
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<td><strong>Adaptability</strong></td>
<td>A leader within the uniformed services needs to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>be able to adjust any long-term plans when new</td>
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<td></td>
<td>information is available and constantly apply</td>
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<td></td>
<td>critical thinking to address any new demands</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and reprioritise tasks in a changing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>environment to fit any new circumstances.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This is particularly important in public</td>
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<td></td>
<td>services where the political climate or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>operational conditions can change with very</td>
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<td></td>
<td>little or no warning.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Courage</strong></td>
<td>A leader within the uniformed services needs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>courage to accomplish tasks, especially when</td>
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<td></td>
<td>he or she is faced with tough decisions and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>has to take action in difficult situations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leaders need to use courage to manage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>dangerous situations whilst appearing calm to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the rest of the team at all times, even when</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>under stress.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compassion</strong></td>
<td>Compassion is an awareness and sympathy for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>what other people are experiencing. A good</td>
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<td></td>
<td>team leader needs to understand how the team</td>
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<td></td>
<td>might be feeling and be able to help,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>particularly considering some of the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>heartrending situations the public services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>have to deal with such as child abuse, murder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and combat which can take a significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>emotional toll on team members.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership skills</th>
<th>Organisation and multi-tasking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>A team leader will have many jobs to do at once,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>including, dealing with the actual task they</td>
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<td></td>
<td>are trying to achieve, monitoring their</td>
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<td></td>
<td>personnel, securing equipment, monitoring</td>
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<td></td>
<td>finance, reporting to the public or senior</td>
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<td>officers and dealing with the ground changes</td>
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<td>as they happen. In order to do this their</td>
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<td></td>
<td>organisational and multi-tasking skills must be</td>
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<td></td>
<td>well developed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organisation and multi-tasking</strong></td>
<td>Another key skill a leader must have is the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ability to motivate their team. Motivation is</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the drive to successfully reach a goal or aim,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a leader must help their team be motivated to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>complete the task they have been set. If a</td>
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<td></td>
<td>leader cannot motivate their team then it is</td>
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<td></td>
<td>less likely the team will be successful. For</td>
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<td></td>
<td>example in a mountain rescue scenario the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>physical conditions may be very difficult to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>deal with, severe cold and poor weather might</td>
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<td></td>
<td>sap the team’s energy and they may become</td>
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<td></td>
<td>demotivated. The job of the team leader is to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>find strategies to keep them motivated and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>committed until the missing person is located.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Communicating effectively to brief and debrief teams

It is important that a leader possesses good communication skills. Effective communication is crucial for the uniformed public services, particularly as a major part of their work involves briefing and debriefing teams.

Key terms

**Brief** is a verbal process of getting information to people quickly and efficiently, very similar to a meeting but with less open discussion.

**Debrief** is the process of gathering information about the success of a task or activity after it has been completed. This helps improve the planning process for next time. Briefings and debriefings can be done on a team or individual basis.

2.1 Communication

Communication is an integral part of all our lives and is a critical factor in most areas of employment. This is particularly so when the job involves substantial contact with the public and teamwork situations with colleagues, both of which occur almost all the time in public service work. Communication is the mechanism by which we give and receive messages and articulate ideas in order to interpret the situation and environment around us and act accordingly.

When we communicate studies suggest that the actual literal content and the words we say are far less important than how we say it, the tone of our voice, our
facial expression and body language. Our senses are involved in giving and receiving communication all the time and it is a major part of how we present ourselves to others. The manner in which we communicate determines the way in which people respond.

**Verbal communication**

Effective communication means that other people take you seriously and only occurs if the receiver understands the exact information or idea that the sender intended to transmit. To ensure this happens while speaking in groups, communication should be clear and concise and as simple as possible so that it is understood. Communication should be relevant to the task and clarification should be sought from the recipient, even if it is just a nod of the head. Straightforward questions should be asked to ensure the communication has been understood.

The content of the message can be affected by the tone, pitch, quality and speed of your voice. You should ensure your voice complements the message that you convey to avoid misinterpretations. The cornerstones to effective speaking are:

- clarity
- simplicity
- preparedness
- conciseness.

**Did you know?**

The best way to improve your communication and ensure that communication is active in your teams is to:

- Ensure you know the names of all members of the team as this will help the group to be responsive and supportive.
- Try to be confident in situations where you don’t always feel comfortable.
- Be open and responsive to problems when they occur and be prepared to talk about them as a group.
- Respect and seek the opinions, thoughts and feelings of all members of the group or communication will break down as people feel alienated.
- Exhibit emotions such as concern, empathy, sympathy and remorse when they are needed as these put people at ease.
- Ensure that you use the right tone of voice when speaking to avoid unnecessarily upsetting or offending anyone.

**Non-verbal communication**

Non-verbal communication refers to all the actions that accompany communication. Many of these have a recognised meaning and can give an indication to someone’s state of mind. For example, a nervous person is likely to fidget, pinch or tug their flesh and a defensive person might cross their arms or legs and avoid eye contact. These can be valuable signs for any public service employee to look out for when doing their job as it may alert them to signs of danger or help them understand how a situation is affecting others. In briefing and debriefing situations it can help the leader know that information is being received and understood.
Activity: Body signals

How would you convey the following through body signals? Demonstrate and see if a friend can guess what they are:

- upset
- angry
- happy
- bored
- shocked
- amazed.

Table 2.5 shows some examples of non-verbal communication you may come across and shows what each one might mean. Looking for these non-verbal forms of communication in briefing and debriefing situations can help you understand how other people feel, what they are likely to do next and whether they have understood your message.

Activity: Interpreting signs

- Imagine someone has told you a lie in the past. How would you know it was a lie? Was it because of the things they said or was it the way they acted?
- How do you let someone know that you like them if you are too shy to speak to him or her?
- How do you know that a team leader is showing you approval and recognition for your achievements without using words?

Listening skills

Studies have found that listening accounts for between 42–53 per cent of the time that an average individual spends communicating. Listening is not simply hearing and understanding the spoken word, it involves listening to the tone of the communication and the sentiment behind it. Understanding the tone of communication is crucial in most societies, but especially so in the UK where **sarcasm** and **irony** are natural forms of humour.

Key terms

**Sarcasm** is the use of irony to mock someone or something.

**Irony** is a statement that, when taken in context, may actually mean the opposite of what is written or said.

You must hear what is being said, pay attention to the speaker, understand the content of the message and be able to remember it. This process is very important on several levels. Firstly, if you don’t listen, you are placing yourself at risk and increasing your vulnerability. For example, if you are told not to touch a piece of electrical equipment which carries live electricity, and you do not listen, the consequences could be fatal. Secondly, in a public service situation it is of vital importance that you listen to the commands of your senior officers. If you do not, you may compromise the safety of yourself, your colleagues and the general public. Thirdly, listening and paying attention are also a crucial factor in the achievement of team goals.

Table 2.5: Some common forms of body language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-verbal communication</th>
<th>What it might indicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making direct eye contact</td>
<td>Friendly, sincere, self-confident, assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaking head</td>
<td>Disagreeing, shocked, disbelieving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiling</td>
<td>Contented, understanding, encouraging, happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biting the lip</td>
<td>Nervous, fearful, anxious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folding arms</td>
<td>Angry, disapproving, disagreeing, defensive, aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaning forward</td>
<td>Attentive, interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting in seat</td>
<td>Restless, bored, nervous, apprehensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having erect posture</td>
<td>Self-confident, assertive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Listening can be divided into two main categories:

- **active**
- **passive.**

**Active listening.** This can be summarised as listening with a purpose. It involves paying attention to what is being said and questioning the speaker to ensure real understanding has been achieved. Active listening requires as much energy as speaking and it is a skill that requires practice and development if it is to be perfected.

**Passive listening.** This type of listening simply involves hearing what has been said without needing to respond or check understanding. This type of listening occurs when you are watching TV or listening to music.

**Activity:** **Active listening**

You are a public service employee and a complaint has been made against you by a member of the public. You are anxious to defend yourself and go to see your line manager at the earliest opportunity. Your line manager hears what you say but her eyes continually wander and she stifles a couple of yawns. Explain how this makes you feel and why it is important that she actively listens.

**Activity:** **Your listening skills**

Are you generally an active or passive listener? How might being an active listener help you develop your team of staff? How could being a passive listener detract from the potential your team has to succeed?

**Activity:** **Repeating and understanding**

Try this exercise with a friend. Start talking about any topic related to the public services for about 30 seconds. When you stop talking, ask your friend to repeat back to you the main points that you said. Then, reverse the roles and repeat the exercise. You could also increase the time or talk about a topic your friend knows little about to really test their listening skills.

Communication in teams is very important in building confidence and morale; positive feedback given at the right moment can lift a team’s performance. Equally, negative feedback can demoralise a team and harm their performance. Even if you need to be firm with a team about their behaviour or performance, it is still possible to do this with tact, sincerity and with concern for the feelings of the team members.

Effective communication is also used in the services for:

- **Articulation of ideas.** The communication of an idea about how to tackle a problem or issue which can then be examined for merit.
- **Self presentation.** Effective communication can say a lot about the kind of leader and team member you are. If you present yourself well you have more chance of being listened and responded to.
• **Questioning.** Communication is also essential for questioning. If you have not understood an aspect of a team brief you must get clarification on it; effective questioning is the way to do this.

• **Defusing and resolving conflict.** Good communication skills can prevent conflict and help diffuse it if it develops.

### 2.2 Briefing teams

Team briefings are similar to meetings and are a verbal process of getting information to people quickly and efficiently. A briefing should be an open but structured two-way communication process and not just about informing the team about what they are required to do. Often there will be no written records of team briefings as they are applied to one-off situations, which are often practical in nature.

Successful team briefings will avoid misunderstandings and conflict. Teams who are involved in the briefing process are more likely to perform, progress and achieve the desired results as they will have clear direction and awareness of the main issues and won’t need to rely on constant guidance from the team leader.

There is no single recognised model for briefing teams but a successful team briefing should follow a reasonably consistent format so that everyone knows what to expect. However, it could include some of the features outlined below.

**Remember!**

Tips for a successful briefing include being:

- **clear** – avoid unfamiliar technicalities and acronyms and keep communications adult to adult – never patronise or talk down
- **brief** – be precise and only repeat yourself to make sure the main points have been understood
- **in control** – be prepared and lead, keep in control by ensuring you can focus on all members of the team so that you can read their body language
- **positive** – be confident and don’t appear nervous. Monitor your body language (avoid negative signs such as crossing arms or no eye contact). If things start to go wrong, or not to plan, don’t panic and persevere with the task.

### Ground orientation

- Commonly used in the military.
- Involves the use of objects and models to help explain the location and surrounding area.
- Can be adapted to suit more conventional team briefings by ensuring the team is aware of the environment it is working in (including issues such as facilities and resources at their disposal).

### Safety points

- A risk assessment of any location/task needs to be carried out in order to highlight safety points and identify hazards and risks.
- Identify the precautions that should be taken to minimise the risk and decrease the likelihood of harm (for example, avoiding certain behaviour, wearing special equipment). Uniformed services often rely on dynamic risk assessment when working in teams. This is a process of identifying hazards and risks on a situation by situation basis and taking appropriate steps to eliminate or reduce them. This means as new risks occur, or as the circumstances change, the uniformed services will adapt the risk assessment and inform the team of any changes to the safety points.
- An example of this would be firefighters dealing with a factory fire and discovering that the factory has some highly explosive and very toxic chemicals stored in the basement. On learning this, they will adapt the risk assessment and take new measures and precautions to protect their colleagues and the public.

### Summary of situation

- When briefing a team, a clear summary of the situation should be offered – this could take the form of a brief and concise statement that presents the main points.
- It should include the things a team must and should know about the situation.
- From this, the **primary aim** or aims should be established (these are the most important and immediate concerns).

### Key term

**Primary aim** is the key objective of the team, the task or goal that must be achieved.
• An example of this is at a road traffic incident where the primary aim of the public services will be to coordinate and work together to ensure the preservation of life and safety of the people involved or affected directly by the incident. This may mean closing the road and diverting traffic to preserve the scene for later investigation and removing the vehicles involved.

**Method to achieve aim**

• Briefings should not just be a one-way communication from the leader but should involve the team being able to suggest possible ways of achieving the primary aims and goals.

• After all the possible solutions have been presented, discussion should take place on the pros and cons of each suggestion along with the likelihood of their success.

• It may ultimately be down to the team leader to select the method used to achieve the aim, based on the solutions offered by the group.

**Designated roles**

• The team leader is not expected to achieve the goals and aims unaided. A team briefing will allow the team leader to delegate and designate roles based on people’s strengths and abilities.

• One way this could be done is by using team roles defined by Meredith Belbin in 1981 after an extensive study on the interaction between team members. A summary of the nine major roles she identified is shown in Table 2.6.

• Although organisations won’t have these designated roles named, in any team there will be people who match up to one of more of these roles. It is important that public service workers know what their role in any situation is and what is expected of them if the team is to succeed.

**Timings**

• It is likely that briefing will have to take place quickly and often under situations of extreme pressure and stress. (Think about how the combined uniformed services would have to respond to a terrorist attack within an urban area.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team role</th>
<th>Summary of role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>Clarifies group objectives, sets the agenda, establishes priorities, selects problems, sums up and is decisive, but does not dominate discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaper</td>
<td>Gives shape to the team effort, looks for patterns in discussions and practical considerations regarding the feasibility of the project. Can steamroller the team but gets results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant</td>
<td>The source of original ideas, suggestions and proposals that are usually original and radical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor-evaluator</td>
<td>Contributes a measured and dispassionate analysis and, through objectivity, stops the team committing itself to a misguided task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementer</td>
<td>Turns decisions and strategies into defined and manageable tasks, sorting out objectives and pursuing them logically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource investigator</td>
<td>Goes outside the team to bring in ideas, information and developments – they are the team’s salesperson, diplomat, liaison officer and explorer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team worker</td>
<td>Operates against division and disruption in the team, like cement, particularly in times of stress and pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finisher</td>
<td>Maintains a permanent sense of urgency with relentless follow-through.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• This means that resources, equipment and safety issues will need to be identified immediately and the team will need to quickly establish the situation and primary aims, along with how they will tackle the problem.

• In the example of a terrorist attack, the uniformed services will coordinate and designate roles based on their service’s strengths. For example, the fire service will focus on search and rescue, the paramedics will deal with casualties at the scene and the police will manage the scene to bring the situation under control and ensure general safety.

**Equipment**

• When offering solutions to problems, the team can be aided or restricted by the equipment they have available.
This means that you should consider the equipment you have and ensure the team are informed of, or can see it.

Possible solutions to problems made by team members will be no good if the equipment isn’t there to support them.

**Team motivation**

A successful team is a team that is well motivated and eager to work together to implement the identified aims. There are many ways that a team can be motivated to perform.

- **Clear focus** – if the team has a clear aim and understands how to achieve that aim it is more likely to work towards its completion in a positive manner.

- **Challenge** – a team will be motivated if the task is a sufficient challenge to them but is less likely to be motivated if the task is too simple or too difficult.

- **Camaraderie** – a sense of comradeship and loyalty will help a team to work together as the members will have a genuine respect for each other and will work hard to develop and maintain this relationship.

- **Rewards** – this could be money or benefits that the team will receive upon completion of the task.

- **Responsibility and authority** – having a sense of ownership of the task and a clear role is likely to help motivate the team.

- **Growth** – if the team feels they are moving forward, learning new skills and stretching their minds then they are likely to have a high level of motivation as personal growth enhances an individual’s self-esteem and self-worth.

- **Treating people fairly** – it is important that all members of the team are treated equally and are all involved in the task; this will ensure that each member is motivated and that they work as a team.

**Check understanding**

- During the briefing you should check understanding.

- This could be done by generally observing a person’s body language and facial expressions or by asking questions for clarification.

- The team should also be encouraged to ask questions and make comments to gauge their understanding of the task.

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**2.3 Debriefing teams**

Debriefings are used extensively by the Armed Forces (and other services) and involve troops or personnel giving feedback about their mission/task. The information generated is then assessed and troops or personnel are instructed on what they can talk about and what information is strictly confidential. The information given is also used to assess the troops or personnel’s mental condition and to determine when they can return to duty.

Debriefings with teams can be seen as reviewing what has been learned from a task. It is a process that helps a leader and a team to reflect on the completed task in order to aid personal and professional development.
Successful reviewing will help the leader and the team to improve their interpersonal skills and work more effectively. Reviewing a task involves more than just reflecting on the task, it involves open communication between the team that leads to analysing and evaluating the task to ensure learning takes place.

Reasons why you should debrief after completing a task include:

- It keeps you in touch with the team and helps maintain motivation and enthusiasm for future tasks.
- It adds value to the experience and shows that you care for and are interested in the team.
- The team benefits from discussing, reviewing and evaluating the task which will in turn increase confidence and allow the team to become more independent and more capable of self-development.
- It increases the amount of strategies and ideas that may be used in future tasks as people will be imaginative and express themselves.
- It develops your skills (such as communication, perception and observation).
- Everyone learns from the task as they will share understanding and knowledge and gain an appreciation of their own strengths and weaknesses.

Case study: Debriefing after the Hatfield rail disaster

On 17 October 2000, a GNER train travelling from London to Leeds was derailed one mile outside Hatfield train station in Hertfordshire. The incident killed four people and injured many others. All of the subsequent debriefings conducted by the services were synthesised and pulled together by Hertfordshire Emergency Services Major Incidents Committee (HESMIC) into one debriefing report. This could then by widely circulated and have its recommendations acted upon. Some of the issues and concerns raised in the debrief are described below:

- There was confusion in communication between the emergency services and Railtrack over the safety of power lines which was not resolved for over an hour into the incident.
- There were many people milling around in the inner and outer cordons who had no role to perform. They were not challenged on their reason for being present.
- A helicopter was used but the noise of its rotors meant that safety instructions could not be easily heard by emergency services on the ground.
- The identification of silver/tactical commanders was difficult as many individuals were wearing similar high visibility tabards.
- Some survivors of the derailment had to complete their onward journey by train.
- Although the clergy were put on standby to help survivors in the reception centres, they were not deployed.
- The Queen Elizabeth II Hospital was put on standby but it was never given the signal to activate its major incident response. The hospital made the decision to activate the plan itself when the casualties began to arrive.

These are just some of the issues raised by the debriefs on the Hatfield incident. It is clear that there is no such thing as a perfect incident response – there are always lessons to be learned in an ongoing cycle of development.

1. Why was it inappropriate for a major incident survivor to continue their onward journey on the same form of transport that was involved in the incident?
2. How would this debrief help improve a response for next time?
3. What is the benefit of detailed debriefs for all the uniformed services?
4. What might be the consequences if the uniformed services did not monitor and evaluate their performance in relation to significant incidents?
• It helps to reinforce the objectives of the task and can be used to clarify and measure the amount of achievement that has taken place.

• The team is likely to work better and be successful in future tasks as they feel engaged and integrated into the process and can see the bigger picture.

• It helps people to acknowledge and enjoy success.

Feedback

One of the key aspects of any team debriefing is giving feedback. There are three common types of feedback including:

• **Negative feedback** – this should be avoided when debriefing teams as it is likely to cause conflict and a decrease in future participation by the whole group or certain members of the group.

• **Positive feedback** – this is obviously a great way of maintaining good group cohesion and output. However, it could be detrimental when there are obvious flaws in the team that go unmentioned as this could cause long-term problems.

• **Constructive feedback** – the best approach when giving feedback is to do so in a constructive way. Reassuring the team that supportive comments will be given, even if they fail, will encourage people to take risks. Also both failure and successful experiences will be analysed so that the team can develop further and move forward.

The key aspects of a debrief are to acknowledge the successes of the team, identify the strengths and weaknesses of their performance and put into place an action plan for future development. If the situation arises again the team will then be better prepared for it and therefore more effective.

### Assessment activity 2.3

**It is important that you are able to practise your briefing and debriefing skills if you are going to become an effective communicator in the public services. Choose a team-based activity that you are going to lead and then address the following tasks:**

1. Brief and debrief the team for a given task
2. Brief and debrief the team for a given task using effective communication

**Grading tips**

Consider all the things you have learned about brief and debrief and incorporate it into a plan to communicate with your team about the activity you have chosen. To gain make sure you are clear and concise and that you check people have understood what you want them to do.

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3. **Skills and qualities to lead a team**

This is a practical outcome and you will need to demonstrate most of the content in leadership and teamwork situations that your tutor should help you develop. When considering the content below you should have in your mind how the knowledge could be practically applied to show that you can use the appropriate skills and qualities to lead a team.

#### 3.1 Skills and qualities

There are many skills associated with leadership and the skills demonstrated may vary from situation to situation. For example, the skills needed by a commanding officer in a conflict situation may vary from the skills needed by a station officer in charge of the day-to-day running of a fire station. However there is a general set of skills which are useful for any leader to have, such as:

• time management
• commitment
• motivation
• delegation.
**Time management**

A successful team is one that manages its time, as time is the most valuable (and undervalued) resource you have. It can be managed effectively by determining which task or element of a task is most important. This will help you use your time in the most effective way you can. A well-managed team will also look to control the distractions that waste time and break the flow of work.

**Did you know?**

The 80:20 Rule (or Pareto's Principle) states that typically 80 per cent of unfocused effort generates only 20 per cent of results. The remaining 80 per cent of results are achieved with only 20 per cent of the effort.

Is your time management a strength or a weakness? What can you do to develop your skills in this area?

**Commitment**

A leader within the uniformed services needs commitment. This is demonstrated by the time and energy they put into the job and leading from the front. They put effort into the task until a level of success has been achieved.

**Motivational skills**

To create a motivated team you need ground rules. However, these should not be too complex or rigid in order to avoid confusion. Any counter-productive behaviour should be addressed and communication should be clear and consistent. Also team members should be given team roles that suit their personalities and complement their strengths.

**Morale** has a profound effect on a team. When it is high, a team will be enthusiastic about its work and function better by being more productive as its members will be committed and confident of success. Good morale makes communication easier, clearer and more energetic. When a team is happy, all the members will feel a sense of pride in being a member of that team. Good morale gives your team a good mindset and good team spirit. This often means team members become friends. Morale can be observed directly through people’s behaviour and the productivity of the group.

**Key term**

**Morale** is also known in the services as ‘esprit de corps’ and it refers to the spirit and enthusiasm of a team and their belief and confidence in their purpose and success.

**Delegation skills**

Delegation is not about the leader handing over authority. It’s about giving the team clear roles and responsibilities and leaving it to the team member to manage and control their task.

The key to delegation is to delegate as much as possible so that team members feel empowered and to delegate equally amongst the team so that everyone has a role or responsibility. Apart from giving a person responsibility for the completion of the task, you should also give them ownership of how they complete it.

---

**Figure 2.3** Factors to consider in order to carry out a task.
3.2 Implementing a plan

Planning is the process by which you and the team will determine the most effective way to attempt and complete a task. The time you spend planning will often make the difference between success and failure.

By planning effectively you can:

- **Avoid wasting effort** – it is far too easy to spend large amounts of time trying to complete a task with ideas and methods that are completely irrelevant.
- **Take into account and consider all possible solutions** – this ensures that you are aware of all the methods available to complete the task and that you are prepared for a variety of different eventualities. This will help your team work effectively with minimum effort.
- **Be aware of all possible changes and alternative solutions** – if you have a number of possible solutions to the task, then you can assess in advance the likelihood of being able to change the way you tackle the problem throughout the duration of the task.
- **Identify the resources needed** – by planning the task you will be able to evaluate the worth of the resources you have available and how they are to be used to complete the task and, in some cases, be able to work out if additional resources are needed.

Key factors in implementing a plan and choosing a course of action include:

- identifying primary aim(s)
- considering factors which may crop up unexpectedly
- the available resources you have
- team member capabilities.

3.3 Leading the team

The key information you need in order to be able to develop the skills and knowledge to lead a team effectively is summarised in Figure 2.4.

**Activity: Delegation in leadership**

Delegation is not an easy skill to master. Look back at the styles of leadership and the skills and qualities of effective leaders you have covered (page 40). Consider which styles use delegation and the reasons they value delegation so much.

**Figure 2.4** Factors to consider when leading the team.
3.4 Personal organisation

There are many aspects to personal organisation that are likely to make you a better team member. These are shown in Figure 2.5.

Personal organisation is very important to leadership and teamwork in the uniformed services. If you are not personally prepared to do your part, you are letting the team down as their leader and harming the overall team performance.

Figure 2.5: Personal organisation improves other skills.

Activity: Personal organisation

This questionnaire should give you an indication of how personally prepared you are in terms of teamwork. The highest score is 80 and the lowest score is 16. The higher your score, the more personally prepared you are to be part of a team.

Grade each answer 1 to 5 with 1 being a skill you are not good at and 5 being a skill you are very good at.

If you have scored less than 50 points on this self-assessment, you could consider drawing up an action plan that will help you to improve your personal organisation. This in turn will make you a more effective team leader and member.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I always bring the right equipment with me to college or work</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I always punctual and reliable at college or work</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I keep an assignment diary so I know what work is due in and when</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I always attend events I have agreed to go to because I put them on my calendar</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I always take notes in class or during work briefing</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I can summarise information easily</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can pick out the key point of what someone else is saying</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am able to organise others when I work in a team</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am accountable and can accept responsibility for my own actions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I do not blame others for teamwork problems</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I feel accountable for how well my team performs</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I can adapt quickly to changes that need to be made</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I always consider my options before I act</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I can concentrate for long periods of time without getting distracted</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I can accept criticism</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I can give constructive criticism to others</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Participate in teamwork activities within the public services

In this unit so far we have focused on team leaders and the qualities and skills needed to implement a plan and brief and debrief teams. We are now going to look at some of the different types of teams that can be formed within the public services and that you might encounter in your working life.

4.1 Types of team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of team</th>
<th>Description and example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Formal       | • Formal teams have a clear membership and a defined structure. They have clear goals and objectives and there are monitoring systems in place to ensure that goals are reached in a timely fashion.  
• Formal teams have the backing of senior management and may have been created by management to solve a particular problem.  
• An example of this would be a multi-agency safer city partnership team who work together across a variety of organisations to combat antisocial behaviour on behalf of the government. |
| Informal     | • An informal team may have more elastic membership allowing individuals to move in and out of the team with some flexibility as their particular skills are needed.  
• The goals and structure may be less well defined but the informal nature of the team allows for innovative and new ideas to be considered.  
• An example of this could be a best practice working group. |
### Table 2.7 (cont): Different types of team that you may come across in the public services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of team</th>
<th>Description and example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Temporary    | • Temporary teams come together for a short space of time to solve a particular problem and then disband once the objective has been achieved.  
• It can be difficult for temporary teams to work well as they do not know each other’s strengths and weaknesses in the same way as permanent teams do. However, they can be efficient at troubleshooting as they sometimes see things differently from established teams.  
• An example of a temporary team in the public services might be operational, tactical and strategic command teams at the site of a major incident. These groups come together for the duration of the incident only and then disband once the situation is resolved. |
| Project      | • Project teams are very like temporary teams – they come together to achieve a specific task based project and they may disband as soon as the project is finished or they may then move on to another task.  
• Project teams are usually made up of specialists and a project manager who runs the schedule and ensures objectives are met.  
• A project in the Fire Service might be to ensure all primary schools in a region have a visit from a fire safety team to warn about the dangers of fires and hoax calls. |
| Permanent    | • Permanent teams are very common in the public services; many shifts, watches and regiments can have predominantly the same members for years at a time.  
• They are considered strong teams who know each other’s strengths and weaknesses and can use that knowledge to best effect in achieving aims and goals. On the downside they can become set in their ways and it can be difficult to change how a permanent team works. |

### 4.2 Benefits of teams

Working as part of a team is common in the public services and many other organisations. There are many benefits at both an operational and an individual level. It is also important to note that some organisational objectives simply cannot be met by one individual alone – a team is required to achieve them.

**Contribution or productivity and effectiveness**

Teams are a vital part of making an organisation flexible and responsive to new challenges and customer needs. The public services have around 60 million customers in the UK alone and each man, woman and child has the right to expect the services to be ready to respond to their needs.

**Reduction of alienation**

Psychologists would argue that humans are social animals by nature – we like to be part of a social group, to belong to a team. This includes all manner of things such as sports clubs, churches, pressure groups and hobby groups. Teams allow individuals to feel as if they belong and are more than a payroll number. Effective teams can allow individuals to express their ideas, educate themselves about the organisation they work in and become part of it on a wider scale by having a say in policy-making procedures.

**Fostering innovation**

Innovation is about new ideas and new approaches to both old and new problems. Teams can be very good places to foster innovation as they allow for idea sharing activities between individuals in a critical yet supportive environment. All team members can throw ideas into the pot and have them examined and evaluated by others to see if they would work in practice. This can lead to new approaches to issues that have traditionally been hard to solve.

**Sharing expertise**

All team members, whether young or old, experienced or inexperienced, will have a unique area of expertise.
that they can share with others in the team. An effective team will allow each person to share their expertise and specialist knowledge. This has two benefits: firstly, it educates other team members in areas where their knowledge might not be as up-to-date or extensive as others and, secondly, it allows experts to have their say on how certain goals and objectives can be achieved.

**Implementing change**

The role of the uniformed public services, and indeed any large organisation that serves the public, is dynamic and ever changing. The services are subject to the changes made by successive governments, funding plans, target setting, social changes and global needs. They move on and the roles they fulfil change. A fundamental role of teams is to move change forward and this is driven by leaders with the vision and knowledge to understand why the changes must take place. They will also have the communication and interpersonal skills to help others understand why the change needs to take place.

**Identification and development of talent**

Team performance is based on the skills and talents of its members. It is therefore very important to identify team members who have talent in a particular area and ensure that they attend the right training events to develop it. For example, a senior officer might spot that a new police recruit manages difficult situations very well and may ensure he or she receives training and opportunities in their career that helps to develop those skills still further.

**Case study: The Apollo Syndrome**

The researcher Meredith Belbin noticed an occurrence in teams that was subsequently termed the Apollo Syndrome. The Apollo Syndrome is a trend whereby teams of extremely talented and clever individuals under-perform against teams of ‘ordinary’ individuals. When this phenomenon was looked at in more detail, it was discovered that Apollo team members often undermined each other’s strategies while trying to achieve their own solutions to a group problem. They were essentially working as individuals in competition rather than as a united team pulling together. Experiments such as this made it clear that the intelligence, talent and understanding of the team were not the only factors in its success.

1. Why do you think that groups of talented individuals perform less well against those who are less talented?
2. Why did individual Apollo team members believe their own goal was the right one to pursue?
3. Why did Apollo team members undermine each other?
4. What would you do to improve teamwork if you were in charge of an Apollo type team?

**Link**

Meredith Belbin’s pioneering work is introduced in Unit 2 on page 54.

**4.4 Types of teamwork activities**

There are many types of teamwork activities that the public services use to train teams. These are generally divided into three categories: the practical or activity-based ones, the ones using pen and paper and the ones carried out at work (see Table 2.8).
Table 2.8: Training activities used in building teams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper-based</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disaster</td>
<td>There are two main kinds of paper-based disaster teamwork scenario.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Seminar:</strong> This is a discussion-based exercise that is designed to outline to all the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>agencies involved exactly what their roles and responsibilities are and what the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>procedures would be in dealing with a particular major incident. This can be done as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>part of a large team or services attending can break down into smaller groups to discuss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>one particular aspect of the emergency response or focus on the responsibilities of one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>particular service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Table top:</strong> This is similar in nature to a seminar exercise but it generally involves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>smaller teams. The public services and any other agencies talk through their responses to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a specified major incident in the order in which they would occur if the incident were real.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They generally conduct these exercises around a conference table, hence the name of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exercise. Table top exercises are effective for testing major incident plans as they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>highlight any weaknesses in a safe environment where lives are not at risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics</td>
<td>This is the process of managing and tracking the raw materials and components needed for a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>project. For the Armed Forces this might be the movement of troops and equipment to a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>battle zone along with all the support services such as medical, housing, catering and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chaplaincy support. This can involve the movement of thousands of troops and millions of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pounds worth of equipment in a situation which is time critical and in which mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>may compromise the safety and security of service personnel. The best way to ensure the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>move goes as planned is to have a team of logistics experts plan it out prior to the actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>move. Although it is called a paper-based activity it is much more likely to be done via</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>computer software these days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity-based</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical training</td>
<td>Physical training is an excellent way of promoting effective teamwork. Competitive sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>such as football, basketball and rugby encourage team members to work together to achieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the goal of winning a match. Team sports can also foster a sense of camaraderie and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>encourage less physically able members of the team to strive to improve and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>encourage more physically able members of the team to assist them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teambuilding</td>
<td>Teambuilding exercises can be any activity that is used to bring a team together and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>make it work more efficiently. This could include activities such as outward-bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>training courses or bringing in consultants who will help the team find better ways of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>working together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military / emergency</td>
<td>Live exercises can test a small part of a major incident or military response plan (such</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exercises</td>
<td>as an evacuation) or they can test a full scale response. The exercise is carried out as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>realistically as possible including fake casualties and a simulated media response. This</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>provides all the service teams involved with an opportunity to get to grips with the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>problems arising from a major disaster or military incident and attempt to solve them in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>real time, just as they would need to do in a real incident.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work-related</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achieving objectives</td>
<td>A major goal of teams in the workplace is to achieve the objectives set by the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organisation. These objectives could range from reducing patient waiting times, to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reducing the instances of self-harm in prison, to securing a building against terrorist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and achieving a</td>
<td>Projects and initiatives that require planning and implementation are common in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>project</td>
<td>workplace. Teams are largely responsible for developing a strategy to achieve a project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and for monitoring its success. They are also accountable if the project is unsuccessful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4.5 Types of team in the public services

Each public service has its own way of structuring and deploying teams in order to help it achieve the organisational objectives set for it by the government. The types of team in the service you wish to join will be very different from the types of team in another service. Some of the most common teams are shown in Figure 2.6.

Activity: Types of public service teams

Using an internet search engine gather web-based definitions of each of these types of team and use the results to draw up a table that explains each term and describes which service you would be most likely to find it in. This research can be used directly for your assessment activity described below.

Assessment activity 2.5

If you have completed the activity above you will know the definitions of public services team names and which services they belong to. Using this information produce a fact sheet which answers the following task:

1. Describe the different types of teams that operate within a selected public service.

Grading tip

Choose the service you are most interested in and know most about and describe the teams that operate within it.
5. Understanding team development

5.1 Roles in teams

Different kinds of teams require different kinds of members. For example, a committee might need a chairperson, a football team might need a captain and a government needs a Prime Minister or President. Each person in a team usually has a specific role to play, such as leader, expert, researcher or team player, and each role is equally important. There have been several well-known and detailed research studies on team roles, such as those carried out by Bruce Tuckman, Peter Honey and Meredith Belbin.

Recruitment

Recruitment of the right individuals is a key aspect of building and maintaining a successful team. The right person is not always the best qualified or the most confident but the one who has the right mix of abilities and social skills to be able to join and improve an existing team. Recruiting a new team member can be fraught with difficulties. There are usually two options available: firstly, you can appoint a brand new member of staff from outside the organisation or, secondly, you can search within an organisation to find an existing member of staff with the right skills and qualities. Unless you are in a position to try these new members out on a trial basis, there can often be no way of knowing if they will be the right choice until after they are already in post.

Induction

Induction is the process by which new employees become familiar with their new workplace. It is a vital part of ensuring a new employee knows the full range of tasks they are required to do and how to do them. This includes finding out about canteen arrangements, learning about company policy and procedures, and where to go for help if with your job role. Induction is important in the public services and they often have probationary periods or terms of basic training for new staff to learn how things are done.

Motivation

The motivation of a team is essential. Motivation has been covered on several occasions throughout this unit already.

Training/Coaching

Training and coaching are a key aspect of any role in the public services. Many of the tasks employees are expected to do are highly specialised and require extensive training and knowledge in order to do perform them well. This might involve the use of
complex and technical equipment, legal knowledge or tactical knowledge. In the public services, training is an aspect of the job that never stops – an employee is never fully trained. New laws, new equipment and new theatres of battle all mean that training and coaching may be ongoing for an entire public service career.

**Mentoring**

Some organisations offer mentoring whereby an experienced colleague is on hand for an employee to turn to for advice. A good mentor will never be a person’s line manager as there may be a conflict of interests. The mentor offers advice on how to deal with difficult work-based interpersonal situations or how to achieve an objective to best effect. Some organisations do not have mentors at all.

**Team knowledge**

Team knowledge is about understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your team and using this knowledge to get the best performance out of them. Only by knowing what members of your team do well can you allocate tasks and responsibilities efficiently. The team development process is an interesting one – teams do not develop overnight. Simply assembling a group of individuals and assigning them to a task will not make them an effective team; they must go through a team development process that establishes relationships and provides them with the team knowledge they need to work effectively. One of the better known models of team development is the model developed by Bruce Tuckman described below.

---

**Did you know?**

**Tuckman’s theory of Team Development**

Bruce Tuckman first published this model of team development in 1965. It is effectively a theory of how teams develop from the very start of a project to the end. It describes four main stages, although he added a fifth stage (adjourning) later in his career. The stages are described below:

**Stage 1 – Forming.** In this stage the team may be meeting for the first time. They will have a high level of dependency on the leader and roles and responsibilities will not be particularly clear. The processes that the team should follow will not be known and the majority of information and guidance comes from the leader as they explain why the team exists and what it is intended to do.

**Stage 2 – Storming.** As the name suggests this can be a very turbulent stage in a team’s development. During this stage, individuals might be struggling for position and power with other team members and there may be some challenges to the authority of the leader. Personal relationships are starting to form, both good and bad, and the team needs to be very goal focused otherwise it may become distracted by these internal difficulties.

**Stage 3 – Norming.** This is a much calmer stage. There is usually clear consensus and agreement and the leader is not challenged so much. Aims and objectives are clear and team roles and responsibilities are established. Commitment to the team is strong and there is a sense of bonding and unity between team members.

**Stage 4 – Performing.** This is a crucial stage of team development as it is where the team really begins to work like a well-oiled machine. The team is able to work positively towards its goals and resolve conflict in a positive and constructive way. Team members support each other and look for new and innovative ways to develop.

The fifth stage that Tuckman added is often not seen as part of the main theory but organisational change happens quickly in the public services and teams can be broken up routinely once they have achieved their objectives. Hence, it is important to examine it.

**Stage 5 – Adjourning.** This is the stage when the team breaks up to move on to new projects. The original team goal has hopefully been achieved and the team is no longer needed. This can cause tremendous insecurity in team members, particularly if they like the team they work in and have formed strong bonds with their colleagues. It is a stage which needs to be dealt with sensitively to ensure that all team members can move on to pastures new with no ill feelings. It allows for team members to be promoted as recognition of their achievement, with some going on to potentially lead teams of their own.
Weaknesses

There are many possible barriers to a team’s successful performance of a given task. Some of these problems are relatively easy to rectify while some can cause long-term resistance and continual poor performance.

Common barriers include:

- Team members simply don’t understand their role or all have similar roles, which leads to disorganisation, conflict and a disjointed team structure.
- Teams can also be affected by being unclear about the exact aims of the task or by a lack of support from the team leader. This could lead to the team lacking focus and wasting valuable time.
- If the team or individual members don’t have the appropriate skills or abilities to complete the task, they may refuse to cooperate with the rest of the team. This lack of skills or abilities could be simply down to the fact that they lack prior knowledge or are poorly prepared.
- Poor relationships between certain team members or with the team leader can create barriers to performance and lead to a breakdown in communication along with a non-conducive working environment, especially if the team leader tries to control the group through a dictatorship style approach.
- Little or no recognition can make a team member lose enthusiasm and commitment for future tasks as they may not feel valued. This can lower their self-esteem, especially if others do receive recognition or reward for their participation.
- Barriers can also be created when the team question the credibility of the team leader as this will lead to them having little confidence in the team leader and competition may arise for the team’s leadership.
- Further barriers can also be created if certain team members have hidden agendas or individual interests that go against the group ethos.
- Teams that have low standards and little expectation of success, along with no accountability for the team’s performance, will create a blame culture. This can lead to conflict or ultimately the group will completely break down.
- Teams that receive and give little or no encouragement to their members, especially when things are tough, can lead to a drop in motivation. Team members will become fragmented and discouraged from performing the task.
- Inconsistent teams can also be problematic as in one task they will work well together and in the next task they will not perform. This could be due to the nature of the task – the team may perform well in a task that involves a mental challenge but, due to a lack of overall fitness, they may perform poorly or choose not to take part in a physical challenge.

Finally there are some factors that can affect the team’s performance that are purely out of their control. These include:

- A lack of adequate resources to complete the task (which may be down to financial constraints) leading to having no resources at all, poorly qualified staff or substandard equipment.
- The environment and facilities can also affect team performance, especially when attempting outdoor tasks, as bad weather or poor conditions can make the task more challenging and test the group’s resolve.

When building a team it is important to take into account the sensitivities of the people involved, perhaps consider what might offend them or upset them and be aware that if you are building a team your role as leader is to support all team members.

Activity: Teambuilding in your service

Conduct some independent research on the service you would like to join. What kinds of teambuilding activities do they use?

5.4 Team performance

Team performance hinges around measuring how well a team meets its aims and objectives. This can be measured in different ways.
Performance indicators

These are a set of figures designed to measure the extent to which performance objectives and agreed targets are being met on an ongoing basis.

Performance indicators in the public services can be things such as:

- customer satisfaction ratings
- emergency response times
- crime statistics
- measurement against the performance of other similar services.

Performance indicators for teams are usually set around a specific theme. For example, for a police team it might be the reduction of incidents of antisocial behaviour by 10 per cent in a six-month period or for a healthcare team it might be to reduce incidences of infection in patients by 35 per cent in a three month period. Although the performance indicators will vary from service to service, what they have in common is that the indicators will follow a SMART target setting process. SMART targets are:

**Specific** – clear and direct, they say exactly what a team is going to achieve

**Measurable** – so that the team knows when they have been achieved

**Achievable** – they can be reached in a realistic timescale

**Realistic** – they are genuinely in the team’s control and they can actually take action on them

**Time-related** – there are clear deadlines for completion.

Target setting

The process of target setting is very important if teams are going to achieve their goals. If you don’t know what a target is, how can you plan your time and resources to make sure you achieve it? Sometimes public service targets are set independently of the service, for example at central government level and sometimes services can set their own targets. Performance is then measured against the achievement of these set targets.

Monitoring

Team performance in the public services is monitored in exactly the same way as described above with the use of performance indicators and target setting. Services will also use benchmarks, which are national performance indicators that inform the public and other services how well a similar service is performing. For example, there are 43 police constabularies in England and Wales, each of which will be able to compare itself against the performance of the other 42 to indicate how well or poorly it is performing compared to the national average. In reality, these statistics do not take into account the particular circumstances of a constabulary, for example, the Metropolitan Police Service may deal with far more violent crime than a predominantly rural police service such as Devon and Cornwall. This doesn’t mean that the rural police service is better because they have less crime, it just means that they are policing in very different circumstances.

Review

Reviewing your team’s performance is an important part of team development and is particularly valuable if you are going to work again as a team. A review is a considered analysis of the team’s performance against the set targets and an assessment of the reasons for success or failure from which lessons can be learned for next time.

Activity: Achieving targets

Do you use SMART targets yourself? Do you think they might help you plan your college work and time? Set yourself some SMART targets to achieve your qualification goals.

5.5 Evaluation of team performance in the services and the support and development of team members

Often when a task is being attempted, everyone will make observations about what is going well and how things could be better, but most of the time they will not reflect and discuss these issues together as a team.
It is important to **evaluate** as it helps the team to remember the goals initially set and determine whether they have been achieved. It also helps the team to praise each other and celebrate success, along with identifying any problems or weaknesses that could be rectified in future tasks.

**Key term**

**Evaluation** A process used to gather information to determine whether or not the team has been successful and achievement of its aims has occurred.

**Case study: Evaluating individual performance**

The use of appraisal is widespread among the public services. It is an organisational version of a personal action plan that is usually conducted by your immediate line manager. In general it follows the following structure:

1. **Identify strengths and weaknesses**
2. **Ensure that the role you fulfil makes use of your identified strengths**
3. **Identify how your weaknesses could be overcome by training**

Kerry is a new recruit to the Fire Service. In the 12 months she has served so far she doesn’t feel she has made a major impact on the role and feels that male recruits who started at the same time as her have adapted better to their role. She is concerned that her team leader thinks very little of her and this is causing Kerry to lose confidence in her abilities and make mistakes while on duty. The ongoing training and physical demands of the job are causing Kerry a great deal of distress and she believes she is falling further and further behind the other new recruits. Kerry is due to have an appraisal shortly and she wants to make the most of it to improve her performance and rebuild her confidence.

1. **How should Kerry prepare for her appraisal?**
2. **What questions should she ask during her appraisal?**
3. **What support should she ask for?**
4. **What type of feedback is she likely to encounter with regard to aspects of her job performance?**
5. **What could she do to help improve her performance after the appraisal?**

**Group evaluation in the public services**

Group evaluations can be more complex as they involve multiple individuals and different teams from different agencies. They usually try to evaluate a project or an incident to see what can be learnt for next time from the experience the team has just had. For example, in the aftermath of a major incident, many questions are likely to be asked about what the causes were and how such events could be avoided in the future.

The public services go through a similar procedure, questioning and evaluating their own performance and the effectiveness of their major incident plan. This procedure is called a debrief, which has already been discussed in detail on page 49, and it provides all of the organisations and agencies involved with an opportunity to discuss and comment on various aspects of the combined response and the overall operation. Debriefings do not just happen as a result of major incidents – the services use them routinely to evaluate group performance at any level.
5.6 Team cohesion

Team cohesion is the process of team bonding. It is what makes a team stick together and achieve their goals even when everyone is tired, under pressure or experiencing difficulties and challenges. There are many aspects to promoting a strong team bond and some of these are outlined in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9: The features that encourage team cohesion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear vision and team understanding</td>
<td>The team needs a clear idea of why it exists, what it is there for and how it is intended to work together. Without this knowledge the team is aimless and will find it harder to bond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear goals</td>
<td>The team must have SMART targets which it can strive to achieve in unity but each team member should have individual targets too. This ensures all team members pull their weight and contribute equally to team performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role satisfaction</td>
<td>In order to promote team cohesion, team members must have satisfaction in their role and feel valued and needed within the team. Roles should be clear or this can harm team bonding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive work environment</td>
<td>The work environment should be positive and happy. Working in teams can require a keen sense of humour and there should be opportunities for socialising and laughter. Some teams also respond well to having a unique identity within a larger organisation. Again this can help the team to bond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive and cooperative relationships</td>
<td>Team members need to trust and rely on each other. Personal respect and trust can promote team cohesion more than anything else. If the members of a team genuinely like each other, they will perform better as there is likely to be less conflict.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading tips

Participating in and being confident in your team activities is likely to gain you P6 and M4. In order to achieve D3 be ready to discuss with your tutor the strengths and weaknesses in your own performance and draw up and consider an action plan to address the weaknesses.
Definition of team goals

As has already been discussed a team must have clear goals if it is to succeed. The Apollo Syndrome case study on page 63 indicates what can happen if a team do not work with each other in a cohesive way.

Group conflict (actual/potential)

Conflict is unavoidable in any team. This might be conflict about choosing goals, achieving aims or other work related issues. Some conflicts are interpersonal and are based on a clash of personalities. The important thing to remember is that conflict is not necessarily a bad thing. Conflict can be a tremendous help to a group as it can challenge old ideas and bring forward new and innovative ones. Conflict is not necessarily a challenge to a leader’s authority or group cohesion - resolving conflict well can often lead to a stronger more unified team. And it is always better to resolve conflict where you can rather than leaving it to simmer under the surface and harm team and individual performance. Resolving conflict positively can have several benefits for teams including:

- **An increased understanding of other team members** – resolving the conflict through constructive discussion can help to improve an individual’s awareness of the points of view and needs of other team members. It can help an individual to know how to achieve their own goal without undermining the goals of others or harming overall team performance.
- **Improved team cohesion** – if conflict is resolved constructively and successfully it can strengthen the team. Individuals can develop more respect for other team members and have more faith in the team’s ability to work together as a whole.

- **Increased self-awareness** – conflict can be very challenging and, at times, upsetting. However, it can also make people explore their own motivation and help them to understand why they behave in certain ways that might create a poor impression.

Group turnover

People can and do move in and out of teams and groups. Low group turnover can be good for team cohesion as members have time to get to know each others capabilities and ways of operating, however new members can bring in fresh ideas and perspectives that established team members may not have considered.

Opportunities for career progression and recognising contributions

Team cohesion can also be helped if there are opportunities for career progression involved. People often work well together when there is a potential or actual reward such as a promotion on offer in the future. However team cohesion can also be aided by something as simple as the team leader recognising and appreciating the individual contributions of the team members. No one likes to think their hard work goes unnoticed and by using praise and appreciation a team leader can often motivate and improve a team’s performance.

Assessment activity 2.7

Understanding how team building works and how team cohesion can be maintained will make you a better leader when you join the service of your choice. In a written report address the following tasks:

1. Explain how team building leads to team cohesion in the public services with reference to relevant theorists.
2. Analyse the impact of good and poor team cohesion on a public service, with reference to relevant theorists.

**Grading tips**

Using the theories of Honey, Belbin and Tuckman consider how team building promotes an effective and cohesive team and then assess the impact that good and bad team cohesion might have on the performance of a service or team within a service.
I always wanted to be a police officer. I think it was the idea of giving something back to the community and helping to make people lives better by helping to get rid of crime.

It sounds idealistic now, but the truth is that's still why I do the job of a police officer after 10 years in the service.

**A typical day**

My current role as Police Sergeant means that each day is so different and I don’t ever have a typical day. Generally I will be involved in supervising a safer neighbourhood team who respond to the concerns of citizens in the area where I am posted. This could be anything from antisocial behaviour to serial burglaries to nuisance neighbours.

I often have to meet with local councillors and other public service agencies to try and come up with solutions to the problems the area has. I also go out on patrol with the team to see first hand what the issues are.

**The best thing about the job**

The best thing about the job for me is seeing the difference my team makes on the lives of people in the community by reducing crime and the fear of crime. As a Sergeant you also get a different perspective from the average Police Constable as you get to see a wider picture and have some say in how issues can be tackled.

What topics have you covered in this unit that might give you the background to work in a team or as a leader?

What knowledge and skills do you think you need to develop further if you want to be involved in teamwork and leadership in the future?
Just checking

1. Identify four different leadership styles.
2. When might a bureaucratic leadership style be used in the public services?
3. Why is non-verbal communication important?
4. Define the terms brief and debrief.
5. Why is time management important to a team leader?
6. Why is personal organisation important in the public services?
7. List the types of teams you might encounter in the uniformed public services.
8. What are the benefits of teams?
9. Briefly describe Belbin’s team roles.
10. Briefly describe Tuckman’s five stages of team development.

Assignment tips

• This unit had a large practical element and involves lots of teamwork and leadership activities. Don’t be worried about this, even if your teamwork and leadership is not very strong the whole point of doing the unit is to improve your abilities. One of the best things you can do is make sure you take part in some regular teamwork or leadership activities such as a team sport or join the cadets of a particular service. This will enable you to constantly practise your teamwork and leadership skills.

• This may sound very basic, but make sure you have read your assignment thoroughly and you understand exactly what you are being asked to do. Once you are clear about this then you can move on to your research. Doing your research well and using good sources of evidence is essential. Lots of students rely too much on the internet and not enough on other sources of information such as books, newspapers and journals. Always double check the information you find, don’t just accept it at face value. Good research and preparation is the key to getting those higher grades.