teamwork

the combined action of a group of people, especially when effective and efficient

What's the biggest thing The Avengers, The Lord of the Rings, and Ocean's Eleven have in common? If you've read the title of this post, you've probably already guessed the answer (hint: its teamwork).

You may not be facing dark lords, world-ending calamities, or the Kingpin of the Las Vegas casino scene, but every job has challenges to overcome. And it's been proven time and again: teamwork works. Survey results reveal when employees feel connected to their teams, there is a 55% increase in engagement and an 83% increase in the incidence of great work.

Few forces rival the power of the high-performing team. It's one of the indisputable truths of the greatest sports wins, the most groundbreaking scientific discoveries and the biggest military successes. We talk about the importance of teamwork in business, too, but it turns out it's a lot easier to talk about than it is to execute: Nearly 4 in 10 employees believe their organization doesn't collaborate enough, and nearly half of employees say they find it difficult to contribute in a meaningful way with larger teams.

We hear all the time about "teamwork" and that it makes "the dream work". But HOW do we actually utilize this effective tool in our everyday lives? Here are 5 practical skills you can add to your lifeskills 'toolbelt' to get the most out of teamwork.

Communication Effective communication is the most important part of teamwork and involves consistently updating each person and never assuming that everyone has the same information. *Being a good communicator also means being a good listener.* By listening to your colleagues you show them respect, which is an essential trust-building method. Offering encouragement also goes a long way to getting the best out of team members. Collaborating and being open to new ideas are also essential ingredients for a harmonious team environment.

Delegation Teams that work well together understand the strengths and weaknesses of each team member. One of the benefits of strong teamwork is that team leaders and members are adept at identifying all aspects of a project and allocating tasks to the most appropriate team members.

Efficiency A strong and cohesive team develops systems that allow them to collaborate efficiently to complete tasks in a timely manner. Through working together, colleagues will be aware of their own capabilities and the capabilities of the group in general, and can organize the workload accordingly.

Ideas When a team works well together, colleagues feel more comfortable offering suggestions and ideas. A respectful and trusting team environment will not only enable colleagues to think more creatively, but will lead to more productive and collaborative brainstorming sessions. Discussing differing opinions in a judgement free environment actually provides the opportunity for creativity in problem solving.

Support All workplaces provide challenges, but having a strong team environment in place can act as a support mechanism for staff members. They can help each other improve their own performance as well as working together toward improving their professional development. Building bonds on trust and reliance on each other can be extremely important when facing a particularly difficult challenge or if the group is forced to deal with the loss of a team member while continuing to maintain productivity.

Good teamwork means a synergistic way of working with each person committed and working towards a shared goal. Teamwork maximizes the individual strengths of team members to bring out their best.