

BUILDING A TEAM OF 'SUPERHEROES'

Leveraging and honing individual strengths of the right people will enable them to perform extraordinary work.

// There was an idea. The idea was to bring together a group of remarkable people, see if they could become something more," so says Colonel Nicholas Joseph Fury, a fictional character appearing in American comic books published by Marvel Comics.

And that's simply how The Avengers came together. There's really no magic formula to creating an ideal team.

In just a very short time, each hero was identified for their unique and exceptional abilities, and the dynamic team was brought together to protect the universe from evil.

However, what *The Avengers* movie got right is that a team is not just a gathering of individuals. They come together in order to become something more.

As such, we need to know how to leverage individual strengths of people and even hone them to become better over time in order to do extraordinary work.

That's the process that The Avengers went through to learn to be a team, and that's how a dream team comes to life in real life in every organisation.

Essence of Teamwork

Most companies tend to hire talents with a specific level of experience



or knowledge related to their field. However, times have changed and we must learn to ride the change.

For example, the advent of digital media is disrupting the communications industry and traditional media to the point that several industry giants are being shaken to their core. As organisations strive to be more holistic in their communications solutions, we need people with diverse talents to effectively address the current situation.

You also need a team that is able to fully understand the story an organisation is to tell and come up with a holistic strategy. The secret ingredients lie in the diverse talents

behind this storytelling team.

Today, the convergence of different generations within the office – whether the Baby Boomers, Gen X or Gen Y and the upcoming Gen Z – has brought about multiple challenges. People with different cultures and viewpoints certainly bring along different experiences, but this has also brought about many opportunities.

But how do you build your dream team of superheroes from a multi-generational group with diverse perspectives? By staying focused on the bigger picture.

Multi-Generational Workforce

Traditional company cultures usually require employees to conform to a certain pattern of thinking. This has given rise to many comments about the generation gap

at work today and difficulties working with the "new" generation of employees.

Well, maybe it's best to forget about these so-called weaknesses by embracing diversity.

In today's context, it is crucial to see these "differences" as opportunities. It doesn't mean that every opinion has to be wholly accepted, but in team spirit, they can be embraced, seriously considered and perhaps eventually adapted to become something bigger and better.

As the American writer Audre Lorde said, "It is not our differences that divide us, it is our inability to recognise, accept and celebrate those differences."

Besides, the reality is that Gen Z will soon enter the workforce. It is inevitable that they will shift the paradigm of employer/employee relationships. They are digital natives, raised in an instant-reaction and instant-gratification world.

The reality is that they will be seeking a workplace that is the best cultural fit for themselves. For continuity to happen, the previous generations in the workforce have to adapt to the generation living in this technological pace.

The key to building an effective multi-generational team is to focus on the purpose of a task. When we look at the bigger picture, we can begin to discover that there are many paths that lead to the goal.

As such, every person's unique perspectives become a valuable component contributing to the

larger objective. If every individual and leader of an organisation aligns themselves to that purpose or goal, they would be able to work together seamlessly.

Of course, a more knowledgeable workforce adds value for companies and clients. So don't just seek to add experience to your workforce, but also seek new, younger talents.

And those from a different field! Look for people who can bring new ideas, skillsets and a positive attitude to the table. They would be able to contribute to the strength of your workforce by creating more value for both your team and for your clients.

Similarly, our skillsets are not limited to just our academic qualifications. We also have to take into account a person's ability to adapt and assume various roles and responsibilities.

This is what clients seek in a PR consultant – clients are on the lookout for the right firm that can bring a wider breadth of experiences and

perspectives. As George S. Patton, one of the most successful US field commanders of any war, said, "If everyone is thinking alike, then no one is actually thinking."

New World, New Perspectives

As good communication strategies become increasingly important in a well-connected world, it is no longer about

playing it safe or sticking to what one is already familiar with.

Thus, to be truly successful, we should constantly expose ourselves to different ideas and absorb new knowledge, no matter how outlandish or far-fetched they may seem at first.

At Perspective Strategies, we always seek dynamic, self-starting, enthusiastic candidates from various backgrounds, as we believe they would add value in their own ways for our portfolio of clients.

Being a PR consultant no longer means you need to come with a mass communication, journalism or communications degree. Some of our consultants have degrees in law, psychology, economic or business!

As the media and communication landscape continue to evolve, we too need to embrace change to build an effective, multi-generation, multi-discipline team.

The ability to provide different perspectives in communicating brand or corporate messages will help our clients achieve their communication goals more effectively.

Thus, to be able to build a team of superheroes, the hiring of a diverse workforce should no longer be a "by-the-way" process, but a process that companies should consciously pursue.

The next challenge is to develop a company culture that embraces and celebrates diversity! 



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