

# TEAMWORK IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

*{written by ke5nzy}*

Teamwork is the concept of people working together cooperatively as a team in order to accomplish the same goals. The dictionary defines teamwork as a "Cooperative effort on the part of a group of persons working together in the interests of a common cause. It means working in unison for a higher purpose or reward, than what they themselves will receive, in other words people working together for an unselfish purpose.

Applied to Organizations like ARES/RACES, teamwork is a method that aligns the volunteer's mindset in a cooperative and selfless manner, towards helping others during times of disaster. Today there is no organization that is worth much of anything that does not talk about and realize the need and value of teamwork in the organization. While the concept of teamwork and its benefits are well known and talked about, it is far too rare to see it being practiced. And you may have often noticed what appears outwardly as teamwork is not really teamwork internally.

I know we have very many really skilled Ham operators in Arkansas, yet some things cannot be accomplished by people working individually, no matter how good their individual skills may be. Larger, more ambitious goals usually require that people work together and combine their skills with other people. In this environment there must be give and take, as well as compromise by all parties. ARES-RACES volunteers must keep in mind a larger goal than their own self interest. ARES-RACES Projects require that people work together in order to accomplish a common goal.

If you have signed up for ARES/RACES then you are a volunteer, and therefore we all need to volunteer to work together, learn together, train together and share our experience with each other. Shared skills are necessary, to work well in a team environment. By shared skills, I mean more than one person works together and only by their combined skills can the job be done. There have been miraculous surgical procedures performed in the last few years using this principal that could have never been accomplished just a few years back. Some of those procedures require large teams of surgeons, each doing what he is best at. No one surgeon could complete such a complex task. Have you ever watched two men work one of those huge two man saws, have you ever tried it. I have only tried it for the fun of the experience, but I can tell you this, until you can work together with the other man, you will work yourself plum to death and still never get a very big tree down, that's for sure.

ARES-RACES leaders should try to enhance their volunteers shared skills by fostering good communication skills, positive attitude training, team projects that require a team effort, training together as a group for disaster communications, as well as coordinated Practice Drills in order to help people learn to effectively work together as a group during emergencies, as well as developing plans for those emergencies.

Human beings by nature are very independent and we will always have our own opinions and independent methods of doing something. This is the way our minds are hardwired to work. Except for a very small percentage, sharing and collaboration with others is not exactly programmed inside, which means we have to work at it a little, all of us do. This is because, like it or not, each person is mainly concerned about his or her own rewards, appreciation, need for power, and so on, and I am not faulting anyone, when I say this is just our nature.

Teamwork is a different ballgame that aligns mindsets in a cooperative and unselfish manner towards a specific purpose. And it involves sacrifices, sharing of rewards, sharing the blame and punishments, which is not very enjoyable to many. For many folks it is always, "What is in it for me" rather than "What is in it for us."

In order for teamwork to succeed one must be a team player. A Team player is one who makes his personal goals secondary and works in a coordinated effort, with the other members of a group, or team, in striving for a common goal.

#### Teamwork skills

Aside from any required technical proficiency, a wide variety of social skills are desirable for successful teamwork, including:

**Listening** - it is important to listen to other people's ideas. When people are allowed to freely express their ideas, these initial ideas will produce other ideas.

**Discussing** - it is important to discuss your ideas with your teammates until you can come to an agreement, and it always involves some compromise.

**Questioning** - it is important to ask questions, interact, and discuss the objectives of the team.

**Persuading** - individuals are encouraged to exchange, defend, and then to ultimately rethink their own ideas.

**Respecting** - it is important to treat others with respect and to support their right to have their ideas, even if they differ from your own.

**Sharing** - it is important to share with the team to create an environment of teamwork.

**Participating** - all members of the team are encouraged to participate in the team.

**Communication** - For a team to work effectively it is essential team members acquire communication skills and use effective communication channels between one another e.g. using email, Open forum discussion, group meetings and so on. This will enable volunteers of the group to work together and achieve the team's purpose and goals.