



Colleen Kettenhofen

International Speaker, Trainer, Author

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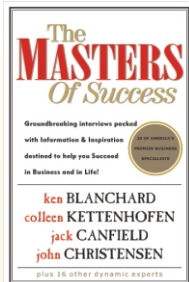
When Teams Don't Work: 10 Reasons

written by Colleen Kettenhofen

There are a number of reasons why teams fail. Here are 10 of the most common:

1. **Backstabbing.** If you are the team leader and backstabbing is an issue, suggest that the team come up with a rule. Example: if there is any backstabbing among team members and they can't resolve it on their own, it goes before the team leader.
2. **Interrupting.** This is a common challenge in meetings. Have the team come up with a rule such as, "No one is allowed to speak until the other person finishes and you raise your hand."
3. **"Tangents."** Someone going off on tangents in meetings. If you are the team leader, tactfully ask the rest of the group if they want to hear any more about the issue being discussed." If not, let that person know they can talk with you privately after the meeting. Remember tact and diplomacy.
4. **Whining.** Have an unwritten rule that team members must come up with a solution whenever they complain. One team actually held up cue cards with a sad face whenever someone whined excessively. It added humor to the meetings but got the point across.
5. **Not sharing job knowledge.** This is so important it should be in every employee's job description. Sharing of job skills, knowledge and ideas is central to a team's success.
6. **Tardiness.** Is there an employee who is consistently late? What is its impact on the morale of the team? Have a personal standard in writing for what is considered "late."
7. **Too many breaks (or too long).** Put the number of breaks allowed, along with time frame in job descriptions. An alternative is to have the team come up with how many breaks a team member can have in one day. Include the number of minutes.
8. **Disorganization of shared workspace.** Two common problems: 1) Shared workspace is so small it affects productivity. 2) If "Oscar" and "Felix" are sharing workspace, have them define the rules on what's considered neat and organized. Have them ask themselves, "Is this problem affecting productivity?" I love it when I go into a company's break room and above the sink it reads, "Please clean up after yourself. Your mother doesn't work here!"

(continued on next page)



Colleen Kettenhofen

International speaker, author and motivator is to be featured in a new book called

The Masters of Success.

It features **Kettenhofen** along with best selling authors **Ken Blanchard** (*One Minute Manager*) and **Jack Canfield** (*Chicken Soup for the Soul*). Each of these well-known speakers and authors share their strategies for success in frank and intimate interviews.

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9. Excessive personal use of the Internet or telephone. In my programs around the world, I frequently hear complaints from people receiving too many joke emails. Another common challenge is someone in the office talking loudly while on a personal call. Have the team define the rules. While everyone likes to socialize, what is considered to be adversely affecting the performance of the team?

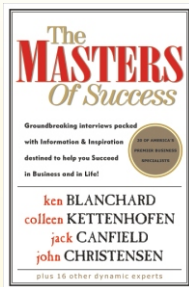
10. Leaking confidential information. What is considered confidential? Be specific and put it in writing.

Communication is key to the success of any team. Gather your team together for a meeting. Have everyone discuss any potentially unacceptable team behaviors. Are there any activities adversely affecting the team? What issues could have an impact on the team's morale? Write everything down. Print it out and give everyone a copy. There will be more "buy in" because they were involved in the solutions.

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Please let me know if you would like me to customize an article for your organization. You are **FREE** to reprint or repost this article provided my name and contact information (websites, email and phone) are at the end of the article. Colleen Kettenhofen is a Portland, Oregon-based international speaker and author specializing in communication, presentation skills, conflict management, motivation and success, leadership, teams, diversity and management development, wellness and life balance. Colleen is available for keynotes, breakout sessions and seminars. Colleen can be reached toll free at 1-800-323-0683 or via email at colleen@colleenspeaks.com. Please let us know how you plan to use this article or send an electronic tear sheet.

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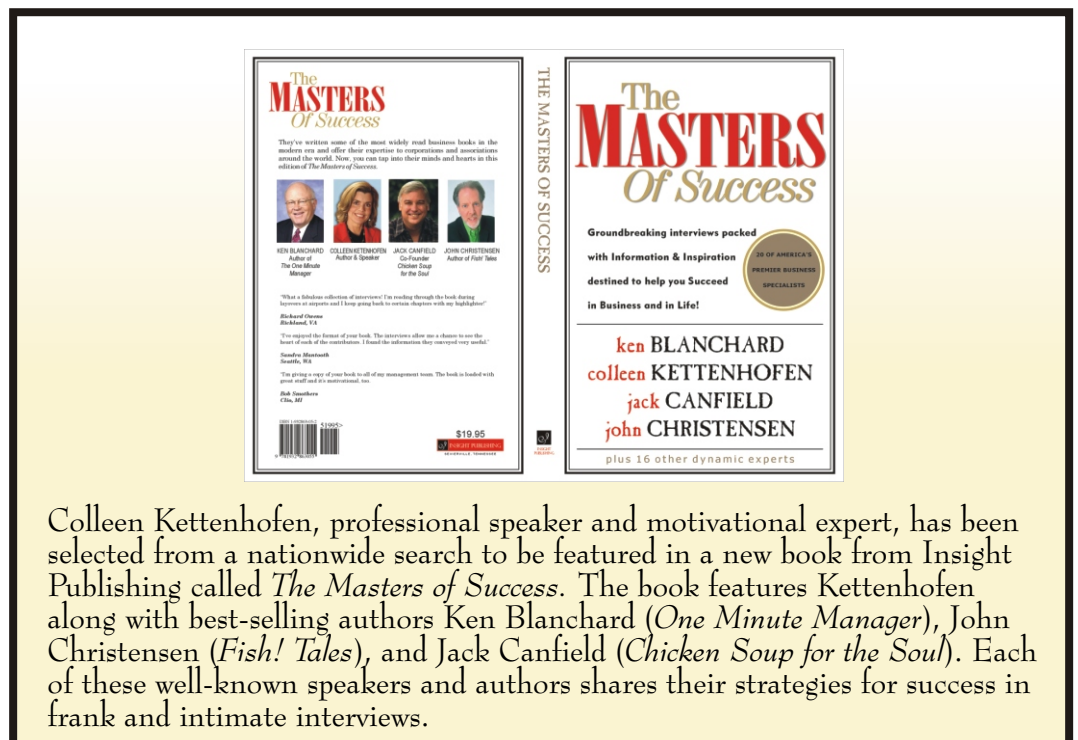
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