

of the work. Recognizing the importance of the roles of each party is the primary enabler for a real team opportunity. Hugh Ferriss, inspired as a child to become an architect by a photograph of the Parthenon, recognized that the Parthenon was built in a “fortunate” period when engineers and artists worked together and the public valued and rewarded their cooperation.⁶

Committed to a Common Purpose and Performance Goals

Purpose and performance goals go hand in hand; teams do not exist without both. Most teams shape their purposes in response to a demand or opportunity put in their path. The best-performing teams invest a tremendous amount of time and effort exploring, shaping, and agreeing on a purpose that belongs to them both collectively and individually. Groups that fail to become teams rarely develop a common purpose that they own and can translate into specific actionable goals. The power of a purpose lies in the fact that it is a joint creation that exists only as a result of the team’s collaborative efforts and therefore inspires pride and responsibility. The purpose gives the team an identity and keeps conflict constructive by providing a meaningful standard by which to resolve clashes between individual interests and team interests.

To establish a common purpose in a design project, it is important to choose and mobilize the entire project team at project inception. During the first phase of design work, involving all identified parties in setting strategic objectives enables a project to be built on a common purpose to which the entire group has contributed. However, bringing together experts including the client, architect, engineer, designer, other specialists, and in some situations even financiers or lawmakers is often a challenge. Often constraints such as financial goals set by senior project management or clients less informed of the process of design prevent such early involvement of these parties. Architect Renzo Piano understands the importance of early involvement by the entire project team; he is known for working collaboratively with designers of varying specialties. Piano has alleviated the problem of early mobilization of a project team by creating roles for engineers and other critical contributors within his studio, therefore ensuring involvement from project inception. Piano’s spirit of collaboration is noted in talking about the process of design, when he speaks of “we,” even chastising one writer for attributing buildings specifically to him rather than to the firm.⁷

The surest first step for a team trying to shape a common purpose meaningful to its members is to transform broad directives into specific and measurable performance goals, e.g., coming in under the design budget, responding to all customers within 24 hours. The successful design team defines clear goals that will focus team discussions. When goals are ambiguous, discussions on pursuing them are much more difficult to have. Clear goals aid the formation of *team work-products* that will tend to differ from both organization-wide missions and the sum of individual objectives. The work-product definition will require roughly equivalent contributions from most team members, must be acceptable to all parties, and add real value.

An important enabler of real team development and project success is working with the client to understand and set performance goals for the design project team. While often in a design project a single mission or desired end-state might be clear to different members of a project team, most likely the members will have individual project performance goals. The client-side project manager may be most concerned with keeping on budget and with end-user satisfaction, while the lighting expert is most concerned with achieving the optimal balance of natural and artificial light. The lighting balance goal must be compatible with the constraints of the realistic budget goal. Both parties' performance goals are important to the success of the project, but in order to be truly committed to a common purpose, these goals must be open and understood by all.

Committed to a Common Approach

Teams also need to develop a common approach to working together. The approach must include an economic and administrative aspect as well as a social aspect. To meet the economic and administrative aspect, every member of a team must do an appropriate amount of "real work" together. This "real work" reaches beyond reviewing, commenting, and deciding and involves subsets of the team "rolling up their sleeves" and interacting closely with each other to produce collective work-products. Team members must agree on who will do particular jobs, how schedules will be set and adhered to, what skills need to be developed, how continuing membership is to be earned, and how the group will make and modify decisions. Agreeing on the specifics of work and how it fits to integrate individual skills and advance team performance lies at the heart of shaping a common approach. Effective teams always have members who assume important social roles such as chal-