1-day-Training „Effective interpersonal Skills for Project-Managers"
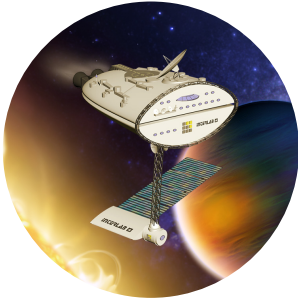Instigate, Yerevan / May 07, 2015

RESULTS

4 weeks after the training the following feedbacks (anonymized) were sent to the trainer:

GENERAL FINDINGS

- „As we witnessed during the training process **listening to each other** is one of the keys for successful project. We shared the knowledge with each other and shared roles. This has been done through communication, the process where we listened to each other and confirmed the received information by summarizing. This behavior can be applied during the discussion in the team and with the customers. The important part of listening is the feedback. Having the confirmation of the listener is required to have the clear statements."
- „I realized that **role assignment** not only helps because you know exactly what to do. It's also because the defined role makes you feel confident and calm, which let's you do less mistakes, which gives you more capacity. This is the part of planning, which should be done."
- „Defining the roles is the first step, the second is to **trust the team** member who already has his role. Absence of trust will only bring loss of calmness and confidence. What could be done, is whenever you feel absence of trust, you have to solve the reason. E.g. if you are in a new environment, you don't know how proficient are your colleagues, you could spend effort on sharing knowledge with them and getting the same from them."
- „**Clear wording**: So simple to follow and saves time during the communication. Once you've lost the though of the speaker you could make sure you are using the same terms before going ahead and struggling with misunderstanding."
- „The training itself was a great exercise, so that one can experience how the **planning and playing by the rules** are vital in critical situations and how not obeying them may lead to serious consequences."

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

- „**More analysis in daily work**, analysis of mistakes."
- „**More attention to details** and events happening in the team."
- „Examples: I used the simple rule of clear wording, especially when talking via phone with the team in the region; **it saves time** and I notice it. **I listen more carefully** and notice when the speaker doesn't hear me, try to resolve by driving attention to the point of interest. **I request confirmation** of the information shared by me."
- „First thing that comes to my mind is the feedback from a team member, that I needed not to 'blame' for mistakes, because that demotivates. Well, I always thought that I'm doing a good job there, but apparently sometimes it's not enough, so now I'm paying even **more attention to my manner** and wording when having such discussions."
- „As for the other 'obvious' things like planning, attention to details, coordinating and collaborating, though they were not new and well known before the training, the **training helped to refresh** them in memory and see their importance more clearly."

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FEEDBACK AFTER 6 MONTHS

I can definitely divide my insight into professional interpersonal communication into two periods: one before the InterLAB training and one after.
Alexander Stork's training, more specifically the weaknesses and gaps that both he and the InterLAB mission helped to reveal, have and still are shaping a new perspective for me in regards to how more capacity and effectiveness can be generated by simply paying attention to otherwise invisible foibles and gaps in communication.

When you work and create in a complex environment full of intricate situations where a wide variety of personalities is involved, you start to become overwhelmed by the stress that the communication gaps and situational unawareness can impose on you.
Most of the time decisions in conflict resolution, technical management and team mentoring become negatively affected by the presence of that same stress factor. One example to illustrate the effect of the stress factor would be the locked circle of team capacity lack, generated by the imbalance of the team needs in favor of customer needs and vice versa.
This disproportion is, what I have come to discover, caused by weakening of the situational awareness, lack of emphasis on the details of communication setups, incomplete planning etc.
Before my InterLAB mission I would generally try to resolve this lack of capacity by trying to increase the pace of the team and that of my own. This caused even more stress and thus more capacity drainage.

The InterLAB space mission ideally simulates the real life conditions in terms of communication, planning and action needs, by mapping those to ones needed to maintain the speed and energy supply of a spaceship, the crew of which I and my 3 colleagues were.
The gamified process of the "crew's" communication planning, setups and real time actions easily revealed the exact flaws which drained our capacity.
In real life one is often able to realize the consequences of his actions only after a prolonged time period, while that time loss disables the person to identify and resolve issues affecting his own or his team's capacity.
On the contrary, during the InterLAB mission, I was able to quickly and clearly see the foibles I made during one round and be able to correct them during the next one. During each consecutive round I got a more solid feeling that I am discovering crucial factors which can increase my and my "crew's" capacity.
Things like situational awareness, trust and belief in your peers, invisible panic, verbal repetition of newly introduced concepts and many more...
I never realized how important and mighty can otherwise underestimated things be and how they can help achieve your and your team's goals leaving all of you in a mood of utter satisfaction, friendship and honesty towards each other.

After the InterLAB mission, I changed the way I look into things like conflict resolution in high-stress environments, root of effectiveness problems, planning and communication gaps and many more. In my professional career, the InterLAB space mission truly was - a journey to remember.

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