

Academia Answers to Critical Questions (page 5) regarding Leadership and Management (Slovenia's COER)

- **How would you tackle the problem of managing multi-professional teams, in which different experts and professionals see their discipline or line of work as more/less important than others?**

Firstly, by providing a protocol of some sort that would state which field of study comes first and that would be based on the degree of emergency (e.g. medical treatment for physical health concerns comes first, followed by psychological treatment, social care, etc.). Secondly, all professions have a say in the matter, but these reports, ideas, etc. must be provided in a similar format (e.g. all team members have a chance to provide a report that is as harmonised as possible in terms of its length and form).

- **In your opinion, which skills are important to manage and lead community projects?**
Undoubtedly, communication and mediation skills are of key importance, but organisational skills are also significant. Team members should also possess crucial personal traits, such as integrity, empathy, self-perpetual motivation and self-criticism.
- **How would you prevent the motivation of your team from diminishing?**
Firstly, the team leader must be observant to the signs of diminishing motivation and respond to them accordingly. Such responses may range from simple praise or reward to the redistribution of workload and teambuilding activities. Most importantly, team members should be entrusted with new challenges, but this must be done through an honest and true cooperation with a team member (a person can say yes to a new task if it comes from the boss, yet, in reality, they do not want a new challenge). This implies that it is crucial to build a proper relationship between the leader and individual team members.
- **While managing and leading such teams might be demanding, which benefits and challenges would this create for you as a practitioner?**
Benefits are new, innovative and effective approaches to tackling a variety of issues and performing tasks. Challenges depend on the aforementioned equilibrium of disciplines and harmonised approaches.
- **Which activities would you encourage or suggest for your teams' teambuilding?**
First and foremost, teambuilding must be done properly. It must include activities that all team members are willing to carry out. In this respect, "theoretical experts" and "counsellors" are often getting things wrongs, since they apply certain universal suggestions to team building activities regardless of the team structure and workload (in some cases, a day out of the office means more backlogs). Therefore, teambuilding activities are highly dependent on the team structure and a one-fits-all model must be strongly avoided. If a team is working in offices, then outdoor activities should be encouraged. They may be continuous, such as weekend hiking trips (trails must be suited to the members' fitness levels). If they work outside and they like to spend time outdoors even in their spare time, then relaxation activities, such as rafting, canoeing or city walks can prove suitable. If they work outside, but do not want to spend more time outdoors, then escape rooms, museums, art exhibitions, wine tastings and similar events may be suggested. In any case, the organiser must consider the amount of time that one wishes to devote to it. People may wish to spend more time with their family and not devote their weekends to anything else. They must not be forced to do so or have the option to bring their family along. Short activities, such as dinner after hours, going to a stand-up comedy show,

bowling or playing pool, or simply having a pizza day, can also have an important impact. If possible, the activities should be funded by the organisation or jointly from an unofficial fund.