

## **Nobody's perfect... But a team can be!**

We, the European Taskforce, have just come home from our second meeting this year, which was held in Oslo at Multiconsult's very nice new headquarters. It was the second time the eleven of us met, and the focus this meeting was team building and "team skills", based on the results of Belbin's research, a famous professor from the UK. The motto of Belbin is that "nobody's perfect but a team can be" and we learned a little bit on how we use the sources within the team the best way, and which different roles are needed in a team.

It felt like, for Taskforce, it is a very natural thing to work on team building since we so outspokenly are going to be a team for the coming year, and we have to deliver our tasks in the name of the team. But on Friday evening, with the Belbin theories fresh in mind, some of us started to talk about the teams we work together with everyday, meaning our departments back home. How is the team spirit among our colleagues?

It turned out that many of us have experienced that for example when you arrive at the office in the morning it's hard to get people only to say "hello". We didn't come to a conclusion why that happens, if it depends on lack of interest or busy working, but it really doesn't matter because how could we ever get good teams at a department if you don't even say hello to each other in the morning? Maybe, or most likely, problems like this exist in other departments as well.

In Sweden we have an expression, "det är i backarna man rycker", that freely translates as "it's on the uphill you put on a burst of speed". It's used in cross country skiing from the beginning and means that if you want to pass your competitors and take the leading position, it's on the uphill you should take the opportunity. It's been used here and there within the WSP walls the last couple of months, referring to the financial crisis of course. Well, if that's going to be a reality the first thing we have to make sure is that our team works, because we will definitely need a good team spirit to be the best consultants on the market.

So, may we suggest that we all make efforts to change our "bad" behaviour? You could for instance take a moment with your colleagues to decide at least one thing you will try to change in your group to get a little bit closer on your way to the perfect team. To start with it doesn't have to be anything complicated. It could be to say hello when you arrive in the morning, or to always be on time to meetings, or to not answer your mobile phone if it rings during a meeting with your colleagues. This sounds very basic, but we truly believe that it can have large effects on the team spirit.

And remember, nobody's perfect but a team can be. And that would mean that to be Outstanding we will need to work as a team!

*//European Taskforce*

*through Anna Malmborg, Chair, and Christian Franz, Co-chair. March 2009*