NORM SETTING PROCESS

OBJECTIVES:

1. To establish team behavioral norms.

2. To reach consensus around team values.

3. To create a more effective environment for communication in a work team.

PROCESS:

1. Ask the participants to think of a team / organization in which they felt valued / respected and able to perform effectively.

2. Ask participants to identify the characteristics of that team in which they felt valued / respected and able to perform effectively.

   Note that the above two steps should be conducted individually, outside of the group setting. This allows each person to work at his / her own pace, thereby demonstrating a value for both style and time differences.

3. Have all participants share the three characteristics they have identified and list them on a flipchart. This should be done by circling the room asking that each person contribute one item and then continuing this process three times around the room. Doing this allows each person to participate and to stay engaged. If you asked each person to share all three items at one time, persons who had already shared their three could disengage while persons who came last could find that all of their items had already been listed.

4. Divide the participants into small groups (3-5) and have each group identify three behavioral norms or rules they believe would help the group demonstrate respect for each other and perform effectively using the characteristics of effective teams as guidelines. Caution that the suggested norms must be behavioral, not theoretical. For example "do not interrupt" is behavioral; "respect others" is not.

5. Chart the proposed norms of all groups using the process from #3 above. That is, ask each group to share one proposal first and then get a second from each group, etc. As you chart these suggestion, number each one consecutively from "1" to whatever number you end up with. Leave spaces between items so dots can be placed under each one.

6. Combine any items that naturally go together. Take care in combining norms to keep them specific and behavioral.

7. Give each participant three colored dots. Ask that they select the three norms that they believe would be most effective in establishing a respectful work team. Now ask that they write the numbers of the three items they have selected on their three dots. (Note that forcing   people to writing numbers on their dots before they place them on the easel paper avoids undue pressure or influence from the more informal leaders of a group). After everyone has done this, ask that people now place their dots under the items they have selected. The leader or manager of a group should go last – again to avoid undue influence.

8. After tallying the dots, list the top 5-7 norms as the Team Norms for the group and have each member agree to use them. Give team members a copy and if appropriate, post them in a common area.

9. Schedule a date for review and revision in 3-6 months.