

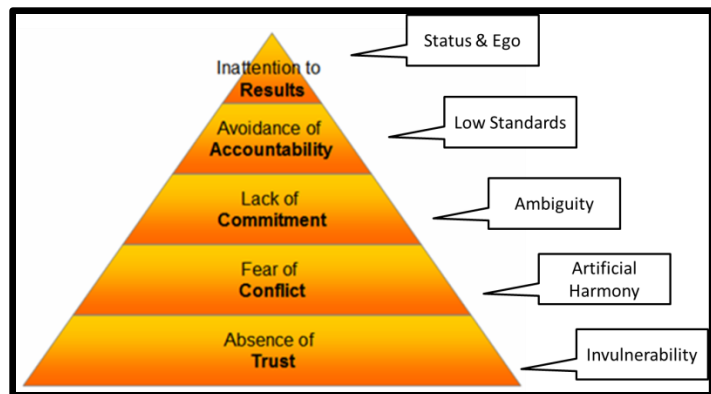
Dear Arts & Sciences Students, Faculty, and Staff:

Hello, I am Jason Stone, the Division Head of Arts & Sciences at OSU-OKC. Let's continue our conversation about your future. I am delighted that you chose to invest in yourself and attend to the next letter in our series about the Habits of the Mind. The Habit that we are stressing in this letter is working and Thinking Interdependently. This Habit stresses the importance of learning to become a good team member.

One of my favorite books is Patrick Lencioni's *The Five Dysfunctions of Team: A leadership fable*. The first half of the book is nonfiction. The second half of the book is a novella that applies the lessons that Lencioni is teaching. Many of Lencioni's books are organized in this way, so he does a great job mixing fact with fiction to make his points.

Team work is important. You as an individual are going to be asked to be a member of a team the rest of your life. One of the most hated educational assignments is being asked to work in a group or on a team without the ability to choose your teammates. One of the reasons those types of assignments are so hated is because most teams don't function effectively. I'd like to share some of Lencioni's thoughts on the subject with you. Lencioni has a pyramid of five team dysfunctions and associated organizational behaviors.

The first is the "absence of trust." If you don't trust your teammates, then you can't delegate work to them, so you go ahead and you do the task anyway. The second is "fear of conflict." Oftentimes in organizations there is so much emphasis on getting along that members of the organization are afraid to hold others in the organization accountable. Lencioni argues that once the absence of trust and fear of conflict have been established, then people are just putting in their time within the organization; a "lack of commitment" soon manifests itself. Employees will work from 8-5, but that is all the time and effort the organization can expect from them. The fourth dysfunction is "avoidance of accountability." Once a demonstrated lack of commitment to the organization is the norm, it does not take much for us to all avoid accountability. In other words, you say nothing when I don't do my job. I say nothing when you don't do your job. The organization functions smoothly and without conflict because we as employees have agreed to not challenge each other. The last dysfunction is "inattention to results."





DIVISION OF
Arts and Sciences

Arts and Sciences Division
900 N. Portland Avenue, LRC 331
Oklahoma City, OK 73107
P: 405.945.6718
www.osuokc.edu

Now that we have named the five dysfunctions, let's also expose organizational indicators that prove that these dysfunctions are present. As trust erodes, some individuals in the organization will assert themselves as invulnerable. These employees feel that no matter what happens, no matter how bad a job they do, they are invulnerable within the organization. They are chosen and they are untouchable within the organization. So, are there "special people" in the organization? Are there people with nepotistic relationships with the owner or the leader of the organization who are above question? If so, those situations erode trust.

Second, because members of the organization fear conflict, they now have artificial harmony, so they all just smile and get along. No one feels able to put real dysfunctions on the table. No one is able to say, "Guess what: this, in this area, is not working like it should." Instead we have artificial harmony.

Third, if things are ambiguous at your organization and your goals are unclear, then you are in an ambiguous working situation. Ambiguity and not telling employees what they are expected to do results in confusion. Confusion reinforces a lack of commitment.

Fourth, when the organization has cultivated a culture that avoids accountability, that dysfunction is associated with behavior of having low standards. Whatever is produced is acceptable. Because there is not a high standard for what is produced. The lack of standards is associated with a lack of accountability.

Fifth, when we get to a point where nobody is attending to the results, then the organizational behavioral norm associated with that is a greater emphasis on status and ego. When people feel like they have high levels of status and power in the organization, then you get more of the rest of the dysfunctions. Patrick Lencioni provides a short and actionable digestible guide about how to transform dysfunctional teams into groups that we can all contribute to and feel good about. I encourage everyone to read it.

Please join me and attend to the other videos in this series. Invest in yourself and your future. Attend to your thinking habits. Your mental habits will determine how far you go. Thank you for your time and attention. Have a great day and "Go Pokes!"

Jason Stone
Division Head, Arts & Sciences
LRC 332
Phone: 405.945.3296
Email: esto@osuokc.edu