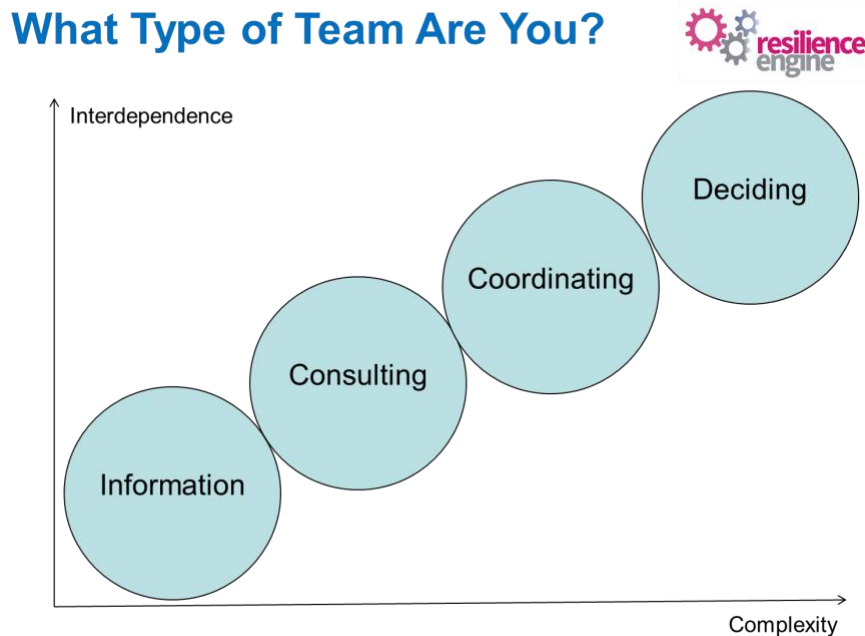


What Type of Team Are You?

Let's look at what type of teams and the implications for resilience. The diagram below shows the four main types of teams. (The model is derived from Ruth Wageman's work.) In reality, any team will spend time in several of the areas. The need for resilience increases from left to right:



Informational teams exchange important information about various areas of work and the organisation, and gather in one place external data that may be useful to other parts of the organisation. They also meet to hear about the direction, strategy and initiatives that are happening in the organisation. Informational teams can create the shared point of view that is necessary for alignment - the purpose is to make sure that individual leaders and managers are better informed and therefore better aligned.

Consultative teams might periodically bring people together to discuss and advise on key decisions to be made. These teams don't make decisions, but instead gather views and ideas of how to solve key issues. These teams are there really to support the boss's decisions.

Coordinating teams coordinate and execute strategy. Task focussed teams fall into this category. Team members perform a set of interlocking tasks in order to accomplish an end result - product, service or activity. The function of a coordinating team is to manage the operational interdependencies involved in their area. Members are highly interdependent, have shared responsibilities, and must work together frequently and flexibly to accomplish their shared purpose.

Decision-making teams make a small number of critical decisions that have high impact in the organisation. The decisions made in these teams have the biggest impact across the organisation, and because of that, power dynamics amongst members is often at play.

Consider the 4 categories of team: Informational, Consulting, Coordination and Decision Making.

- How much time and investment does your team put into each category now?
- How much time and investment should your team put into each category?
- Does this change the type of team you think you are?
- How much more resiliency is needed to make the changes necessary?

The four types of teams are not mutually exclusive. Most commonly, there will be a core decision-making team which handles strategic decisions, along with a coordination team that is effectively the extended leadership/management team. Both of these teams then link to lower-level operations teams. To help alignment, sometimes teams are formed cross-functionally, or cross-divisionally, to help coordinate. And very frequently, project teams are born to share issues and ideas, and offer recommendations to the senior management who consult with them.