



CAREER COMPASS

Steer Your Career. Accelerate Our Mission.

Developing Team Initiative

Participant Workbook

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Introduction

Objectives

- Understand what initiative and team initiative mean
- Learn how to develop team initiative
- Discover 7 ways to encourage team initiative

Agenda

- Introduction
- Define initiative and team initiative
- Discuss ways to develop team initiative
- Review 7 ways to encourage team initiative
- Closing/ Q&A



Chat Question

What comes to mind when you hear the term “initiative”?

Initiative

The ability to assess and initiate things independently - *Oxford Dictionary*

An introductory step; energy or aptitude displayed in initiation of action - *Webster’s Dictionary*

Actively seeking and identifying opportunities to contribute to and achieve goals - *National Institute of Health*



Team Initiative

Team initiative is different because though it relies on individuals willing to take the initiative, it doesn't work if team members act on their own, individually. It refers to collective initiative.

It begins with the encouragement of a proactive leader who encourages their team to make the right choice between doing nothing and doing something.

– Entrepreneur.com

You might be thinking that's way harder, and yes, it takes a leader to fuel, direct and inspire initiative by creating the right environment and offering support and encouragement.



Workbook Exercise

Have you had a manager or supervisor who excelled at encouraging team initiative?

- ***If so, describe how they did it.***
- ***If not, in what ways did some of your managers fail to maximize team initiative?***

Activate Team Initiative

This may sound negative and counter-intuitive. But Martin Seligman is a famous clinical psychologist, former president of the American Psychological Association, and the father of positive psychology. His original hypothesis below dates back decades:



*“Being helpless and passive are peoples’ default reactions to troubles. People will naturally give up in the face of difficulties **unless** ignited by mastery, agency, and hope.”*

7 Ways to Encourage Team Initiative



These seven actions are by no means comprehensive but they provide a good framework. In other words, there are many things you can do as a leader to develop team initiative, but if you master these seven, you'll probably get the results you seek.

1. Lead by Example

- Engage in the behavior that you want to see
- Coach others to follow your example
- Cast NAVFAC's values:
 - Respecting everyone
 - Extending trust
 - Taking initiative
- Be aware of your body language
- Portray a good attitude



Scenario

Brad leads of team of eight project managers. Most days, he remains in his office working through spreadsheets and project reports and speaking on the phone with clients and stakeholders.

When problems occur on projects and clients or other stakeholders complain, Brad typically calls the Project Manager (PM) into his office, shares the bad news, and gives the PM advice on how to get back on track.

In team meetings, Brad describes new directives from senior leaders, or new projects, emphasizes their importance, and describes how he would like to see them implemented.

Chat Question

What examples is Brad setting related to initiative? What, if anything, might he do better to encourage team initiative?

2. Assign Difficult Tasks (Delegate)

- Build capabilities and push creativity
- Assign difficult projects to employees to get them out of their comfort zone
- Check in with them when you do this
- Provide the team with the opportunity to try something new



3. Show Impact

- Demonstrate the impact that individuals and their teams are having on:
 - NAVFAC
 - Navy
 - Nation
- Connect your team’s work to the NAVFAC/Navy mission
- Connecting work to purpose helps to drive engagement



The Three Bricklayers

What are you doing?

- *“I’m a bricklayer. I’m working hard laying bricks to feed my family.”*
- *“I’m a builder. I’m building a wall.”*
- *“I’m a cathedral builder. I’m building a great cathedral that will serve the people of this city for centuries to come.”*

Chat Question

Which bricklayer do you think will show the most initiative? Why?

4. Tell It Like It Is

- Share the hard problems and get others' perspectives on how to solve them
- The more people know, the more likely they are to engage and add value
- Demonstrate strong ethics and values - tell the truth



5. Focus on Lessons Learned

- Eliminate fear of mistakes
- Learn from mistakes
- Ensure that the same mistake does not happen twice
- Be confident in what you learned



Scenario

Selma supervises a team of ten logistics engineers. Three are involved in a high-visibility port refurbishing project. Their job is to keep needed supplies flowing from various parts of the world so that the project stays on track. The team is tight and highly-engaged. The project has already suffered pandemic-related delays and is in danger of stalling due to a shortage of steel from China.

The team doesn't give up. They finally source a comparable product from Canada. The costs are higher but acceptable because transport is cheaper and there are no tariffs due to free trade. Trade re-negotiations are underway though and anything could happen. After much consideration, they accept the risk and place the order.

As a result of the negotiations, steel is hit with a 30% tariff making the Canadian product untenable. They place the order with China but have lost weeks in the process and are now at the back of the line.

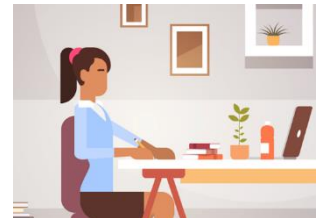
Chat Question

Selma gets an angry call from the client, and her boss wants to meet urgently.

- ***What should she say, if anything?***
- ***What should she do, if anything, with her team?***

6. Take Time to Learn

- Make professional development a priority on your team
- Give your employees time to engage in learning
- Utilize the resources available on the CCRC, including leveraging the ECA and IDP
- Add discussion of a competency to a monthly team meeting



7. Appreciate Those Who Show Initiative

- Reward the behavior you want to see; this can be through public recognition or other non-monetary, but meaningful ways
- Every team has its own culture, so create something in yours that will reinforce this behavior



Bringing It All Together

- People don't resist change, they resist being changed
- People crave novelty and adventure
- As a leader, you can either suppress initiative or encourage it
- Encourage initiative by rewarding thoughtful risk-taking and by showing appreciation

Final Reflection

- What are a few things from today's session that you want to utilize when developing team initiative?
- What actions can you take now to improve your ability to develop team initiative?

Use the space provided to capture your response.

Key Takeaways

What are some of the key takeaways from today's course?

Course Credit

You will receive credit for participating in this course. Email the address below. Make sure to include all the following information:

Component	Include in Email
Address	W_NAVFAC_PRTN_NITC_NFI_ADMINS_US@navy.mil
Email Subject Line	Self-Certification- Developing Team Initiative
Course Name	Developing Team Initiative
Course Completion Code	9KcoCH



Contact Information

BD17 Contact Information: Write to us! We are always seeking to improve our learning and development products and encourage your feedback. Please email us with your suggestions and we will incorporate them into future work. Additionally, we are available to answer any questions about the content you may have and provide additional resources to support your learning endeavors.

- NAVFACHQTotalForceDevelopment@us.navy.mil

Development Resources

Career Compass Resource Center: An online source of information that provides NAVFAC civilian employees access to professional growth and development opportunities.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/>
- To access more content specific to the **Initiative** competency:
- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Initiative>

Career Compass Catalog: an online tool which provides you with information to help you take ownership of your professional development. It identifies options to assist in planning and creating a successful career path within NAVFAC.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Catalog/>