Grid® Success Stories

Grid International, Inc. ▪ 2100 Kramer Lane, #950 ▪ Austin, TX 78758 ▪ 800-288-4743; Fax: (512) 794-1177 ▪ www.gridinternational.com

Grid® and the Future of CCL
Classic Couverture Ltd.

By Ian Povey*

Searching for Answers

Following 3 years of mind-numbing business restructuring and millions of pounds of expenditure on the operational side of the business, we now have a factory that is something to be proud of.

As Classic Couverture Ltd. has dramatically turned the corner, the market conditions have simultaneously deteriorated driven by our competitors' Kamikaze mission to fill their factories at all costs.

The question that faced CCL as we approached the 2005-06 financial years was simply: **"What are the areas that need to be tackled that would provide the maximum impact to our financial performance?"**

It was at this stage that it became clear that this was a tough question, particularly as we had successfully

- re-built the factory achieving optimum performance, quality, and efficiency. The enhancements would not arrive from further capital investment; and

- recruited and bedded in an absolutely first-class management team.

What else could we do?

This type of success can create a smokescreen of reveling in our wins and hiding the less tangible results areas.

Further examination revealed that there was little evidence of effective teamwork, but rather a development of departmental silos, but also great opportunities to improve communication, cooperation, and coordination across the organisation.

Following many months of research into a suitable solution, the "Grid: The Power to Change®" was selected to improve our individual and collective teamwork performance.

Drs. Blake and Mouton founded Grid in 1961. True visionaries, Blake and Mouton have been an instrumental force in transitioning the revolutionary powers of academic psychology and behavioural science to the heightened day-to-day performance of corporate activity.

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They developed a product and a process that measures the intangible relationship of behaviours and results in a 3-dimensional concept that measures:

- Concern for people
- Concern for results
- Positive and negative motivations

A common concept in any business practice is that "What gets measured gets done." We routinely measure all kinds of things for effectiveness—policies, processes, production, finance, equipment performance, customer service, to name a few. But one of the most powerful ingredients in the successful workplace environment is most often overlooked—the "people" factor of sound working relationships, i.e., the *human side of enterprise*.

The highest degrees of education, the most expensive equipment, and even unlimited amounts of capital will never reach their full potential if the "people" behind them cannot work together soundly and effectively.

Sound relationships drive successful business performance, but relationships are rarely explored in overt and

objective terms. The belief is that no objective forum exists for discussing relationships, leaving people to determine for themselves what behaviours are acceptable or unacceptable.

How often have you been member of a team that began projects with focused discussions about the best way to critique behaviour, resolve conflict, or make consensus decisions? Not likely many. On the other hand, how many work situations have you observed where not addressing these issues caused catastrophic results?

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The Dynamics of Teamwork: R1 Resources, R2 Relationships, R3 Results

Goal
R3

R2 Pathway

Start
R1
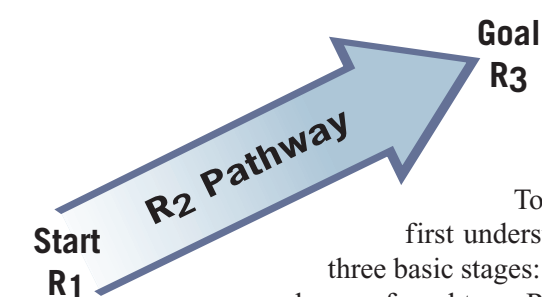
The fact is that an objective forum does exist for addressing relationships between people in the workplace. Grid® methodology provides a way to quantify the "people" aspect of workplace interaction to achieve lasting and more effective individual and team results. Hence, our attraction at CCL to this product.
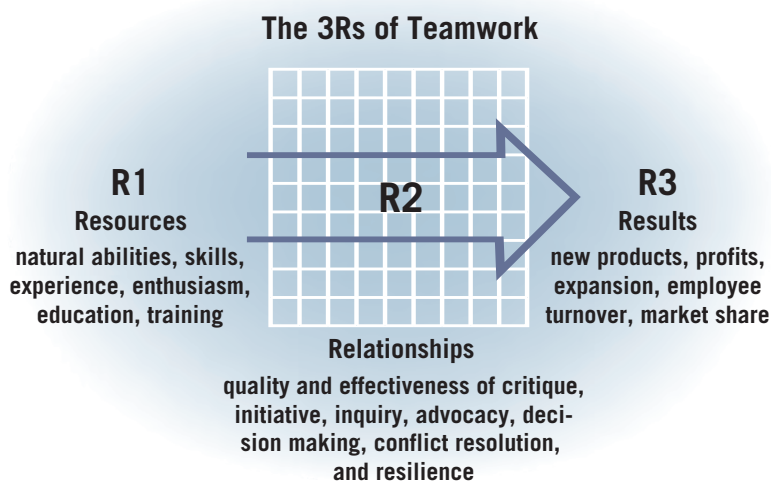
To understand *how* individual behaviour affects team achievement, we must first understand the dynamics of teamwork itself. Every teamwork interaction involves three basic stages: a starting point, a pathway, and a result (or goal). These three stages of teamwork are referred to as R1 Resources (the start), R2 Relationships (the pathway), and R3 Results (the goal). Grid theory explores the pathway stage of teamwork that deals with the power of personal relationships and how they can dramatically affect the quality of the results, regardless of the soundness of the original resources.

R1 Resources (Start): This includes the "human resources" that individual members bring to the team, such as education, training, experience, skills, enthusiasm, and confidence. This also includes "hard" resources like budget, time, capital, facilities, and equipment.

R2 Relationships (Pathway): R2 involves how effectively people work together as a team to harness the resources available in R1. Does their teamwork make the most of resources and the chances for high-quality results, or are resources being lost in the process of working together?

R3 Results (Goal): R3 is the results of an activity that can be seen, felt, or measured. It also includes many other things such as profits, employee turnover, growth, acquisitions, or expanded capital—anything that results from an activity or project, regardless of whether it is a small or large undertaking.

The most critical factor of the entire teamwork process is the R2 Relationships stage (the pathway). This stage is where team members merge the resources available into tangible results.

The 3Rs of Teamwork

R1
Resources
natural abilities, skills, experience, enthusiasm, education, training

R2

R3
Results
new products, profits, expansion, employee turnover, market share

Relationships
quality and effectiveness of critique, initiative, inquiry, advocacy, decision making, conflict resolution, and resilience

Measuring the Relationships that Drive Results

Resources (R1) and results (R3) include tangible, realistic conditions that can be measured and analyzed rather easily. Relationships (R2), however, are subjective and include emotions, feelings, and notions of fairness and trust—qualities that are more difficult to address or measure. Just as the principles of mathematics help to measure R1 resources and R3 results,

the Grid provides a framework for understanding and measuring the relationships and behaviours in the R2 stage of teamwork.

The "missing link" between R1 resources and R3 results for most teams is that members don't share a common definition of sound behaviours and actions. The absence of this link begs the question "are teams and organisations achieving results (good or bad) *because* of what they do or in *spite* of it?" A common ideal in Grid theory moves the focus of teamwork away from *who* is right to a more objective focus on *what* is right. Setting criteria for acceptable behaviour prevents challenges from becoming "personal" accusations. For example, team members might set behavioural criteria that says unilateral decision making is unacceptable in most instances. Then if it occurs, this behaviour can be objectively challenged (critiqued) on the basis of criteria agreed to by the team, not because "someone doesn't like it."

With R2 relationships strengthened by shared criteria for acceptable behaviour (*how* people work together), maximum energy can be redirected on *what* people do—their job responsibilities—with quality and renewed commitment.

> *Just as the principles of mathematics help to measure R1 resources and R3 results, the Grid provides a framework for understanding and measuring the relationships and behaviours in the R2 stage of teamwork.*

The Leadership Grid®
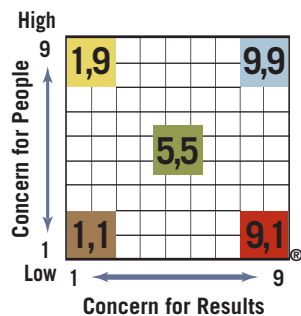
9,1 Grid Style: CONTROLLING
(Direct & Dominate)

I expect results and take control by clearly stating a course of action. I enforce rules that sustain high results and do not permit deviation.

1,9 Grid Style: ACCOMMODATING
(Yield & Comply)

I support results that establish and reinforce harmony. I generate enthusiasm by focusing on positive and pleasing aspects of work.

5,5 Grid Style: STATUS QUO
(Balance & Compromise)

I endorse results that are popular but caution against taking unnecessary risk. I test my opinions with others involved to assure ongoing acceptability.

**1,1 Grid Style: INDIFFERENT**
(Evade & Elude)

I distance myself from taking active responsibility for results to avoid getting entangled in problems. If forced, I take a pass ive or supportive position.

**9,9 Grid Style: SOUND**
(Contribute & Commit)

I initiate team action in a way that invites involvement and commitment. I explore all facts and alternative views to reach a shared understanding of the best solution.

PATERNALISTIC Grid Style
(Prescribe & Guide)

I provide leadership by defining initiatives for myself and others. I offer praise and appreciation for support, and discourage challenges to my thinking.
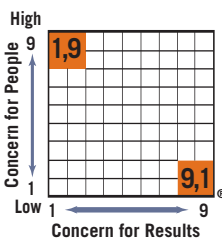
OPPORTUNISTIC Grid Style
(Exploit & Manipulate)

I persuade others to support results that offer me private benefit. If they also benefit, that's even better in gaining support. I rely on whatever approach is needed to secure an advantage.
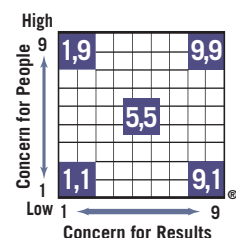
A Pathway to Sound Relationships

The first step to measuring the intangible and "fuzzy" area of behaviours is to examine seven basic behavioural styles presented by the Leadership Grid® that characterize workplace interactions and performance. The seven styles are based on how two fundamental concerns (concern for people and concern for results) are manifested at varying levels whenever people interact. This model provides the first step in understanding behaviour by providing points of comparison for exploring sound and unsound behaviours.

Each Grid style is explored through specific behavioural elements, known as relationship skills that are common to all workplace interactions. These are the Grid Relationship Skills:

- **Critique:** Learning from experience by anticipating and examining how behaviour and actions affect results

- **Initiative:** Taking action to exercise shared effort, drive, and support for specific activities

- **Inquiry:** Questioning, seeking information, and testing for understanding

- **Advocacy:** Expressing attitudes, opinions, ideas, and convictions

- **Decision Making:** Evaluating resources, criteria, and commitment to reach sound decisions

- **Conflict Resolution:** Confronting and working through disagreements with others toward effective resolution

- **Resilience:** Reacting to problems, setbacks, and failure, and understanding how these factors influence the ability to move forward

The Grid behavioural model is unique because it takes a typically intangible process (relating to others) and defines specific actions that reveal a person's, a team's, or an organization's style of relating. Using the model, people can explore the Grid styles to:

- develop a shared understanding of what behaviours are sound/unsound, and their impact on results;

- reach agreement on an ideal model;

- compare the agreed-to ideal with what's occurring now; and

- define strategies for closing the "gap."

The seven styles on the Leadership Grid exemplify different ways of demonstrating the relationship skills. For example, skill in using critique can range from assigning blame and "correcting" others to never using critique and letting errors and mistakes slide by. Making decisions can be characterised by everything from arbitrarily "announcing" decisions without concern for implications to leaving things to just "happen" as they will. Conflict resolution can range from seeking to pacify conflict at any cost to suppressing conflict by dominating others. Grid theory explores these variances in great detail and enables individuals and teams to define their shared "pathway" to successful results.

Why Do You Need a Model?

To provide a benchmark. The significance of the model is the same as with any process. The model establishes a benchmark for comparing what people want to accomplish with what they are accomplishing now. People need a clear framework for exploring a range of behaviours through which to clarify their own effectiveness.

Successful relationships are like any other process. We learn, practice, make mistakes, make corrections, learn, practice, etc., in a continuous cycle. The more awareness we generate about sound and unsound behaviours, the better chance we have of anticipating and resolving problems that may arise.

Changing Behaviours with Self-Convincing Methodology

Overcoming Self-Deception

The first step for changing behaviour is having a clear understanding of how our own behaviours impact others. People are usually not very objective when it comes to self-evaluation. Instead, they tend to evaluate themselves based on their own intentions while others see only their behaviours or actions. People naturally protect and emphasize their own strengths while ignoring or playing down weaknesses, even if this view bends reality a little. The difference between what an individual intends to achieve, and what others experience through that person's actions is the area of self-deception. Self deception occurs when a person refuses to recognise or address the difference between intentions and actions.

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Looking Beyond Self-Deception to Change

Changing behaviours is much more complex than learning a new procedure or skill. Behaviours are deeply ingrained and reflect a myriad of personal relationships, beliefs, values, and assumptions that have developed over a lifetime. They don't change overnight, or without a great deal of effort and support; simply preaching "right" and "wrong" behaviours is not effective. People have to be convinced of the need for behaviour change and motivated to accomplish the change. They have to recognize the "gap" for themselves, which can be a complex task.

The Grid methodology is called self-convincing because it enlarges the viewpoint and gives people the motivation and the "power" to change their behaviours. Grid seminars transform the traditional academic, "expert-teacher" learning environment to one where teams and individuals take responsibility for their own learning. In Grid seminars, teams investigate problems and create their own solutions, demonstrating the value of teamwork in a "real time" setting. Behaviours are examined against criteria the team defines as sound. Individuals receive specific suggestions and support for ways to improve their interactions with others.

Removing the "Expert"

The Grid approach creates self-reliance and teamwork using a unique and empirically tested methodology. In Grid Seminars, individuals are empowered to look to their own ingenuity and that of their team to:

- Define a course of action that identifies and optimizes available resources.

- Set goals, manage time, and practice critique as needed to complete activities.

- Score and evaluate their own performance.

- Compare their results with written rationales.

- Compare their team results with other teams completing the same activities.

- Define and test a course of change for improvement in succeeding seminar activities.

- Use critique to achieve real synergistic results.

Removing reliance on external resources i.e., the "expert," ensures that teams and individuals develop the all-important confidence to immediately transfer learned skills from the seminar to their work environment.

The Motivation Gap

0   100

11%

73%
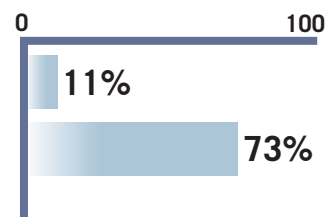
The motivation to change increased from 11% (before the seminar) to 73% (after the seminar) based on what seminar participants learned about themselves during the seminar.

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Looking at CCL through the Grid

We have completed the Director and Management phases as follows.

- Individual Grid Leadership learning

- In-tact team development workshops

The general consensus from the Grid experience has been extremely positive and powerful.

- Despite our self-delusion, the Director Team was shocked to learn that we did not have a clear and cohesive team purpose and were not functioning as a team.

- This same situation was evident at all levels in the business—shocking but true.

- I was personally intrigued (and temporarily mortified) to identify my Grid management style as a Paternalist. Although this is not all bad, I had little idea of some of the negative impact on my team mates. On the one hand, I criticised my people for not making the right decisions, only then, via Grid, to realise that I was the only one allowed to make the decisions! Bizarre but true.

- The process uncovered significant issues relating to unresolved conflict. This varied in content from mild disagreement to gross misunderstandings to World War 3, planned murders.

- Every participant, without exception, now has a clear understanding of how their behavioural style affects their own effectiveness and impacts their team colleagues. They each have a visible, corrective action plan to which they have committed to acting on. This has caused sleepless nights and tears have literally been shed. The truth does hurt. (sometimes)

- Communication, cooperation, and coordination throughout the business have improved dramatically overnight.

- Directors and managers are now comfortable with the concept of positive feedback and pulling each other up on how their behaviour is impacting. This has to be more productive than whining about a colleague behind their back.

- The plan is to roll out this application right throughout the Company over the next 12 months.

Future plans

Grid has provided CCL with a structured framework to address individual and team effectiveness and added an exceptional extra dimension to our understanding of the people factor.

More importantly, the framework provides ongoing measurement and has made the intangible totally tangible.

The level of return from this venture is directly proportional to the belief and commitment invested into the post workshop period.

Without a doubt, this project must be supported from the very top or it simply will not succeed.

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