

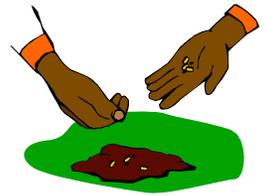


## A WINNING TEAM IS LIKE A BEAUTIFUL LAWN

I happen to be one of those people who likes analogies. They always seem, at least for me, to bring the point home better. Comparing a winning, terrific team to the beautiful, manicured lawn can help to create the vision of what can happen to your efforts and pride.

The perfect, plush, green, weed-free lawn (the envy of the entire neighborhood) got that way because of

- 1) *a great deal of work and devotion*
- 2) *lots of constant maintenance (fertilizer, water, mowing, weeding)*



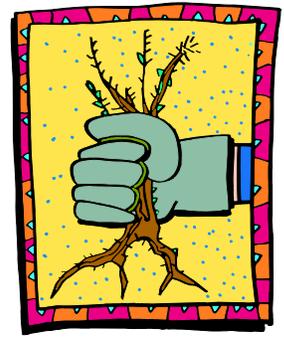
To develop a perfect, plush, weed free TEAM (the envy of the orthodontic neighborhood), requires the very same two steps as the lawn; 1) *work and devotion*, and 2) *constant maintenance*.

Seeds of "anti teamwork" are always in the wind waiting to germinate and sprout up. When these seeds do germinate, they should be addressed immediately, before the beautiful "Teamwork Lawn" is threatened. We tend to overlook or ignore the deterioration of the team until things are strained and the weeds have taken over.

### THERE ARE 4 LEVELS OF WEED GROWTH ON A TEAM

- 1) Germinating the weed seed- Little problems left unsolved  
Useless staff meetings  
Sarcastic looks
- 2) Small weeds appear - "That's not my job"  
"It's not my fault"  
More sarcastic looks
- 3) Medium weeds appear - Complaints about others  
Criticism of teammates  
Blaming others  
Threatening retaliation
- 4) The big weeds appear - Open conflict, harassment  
Internal sabotage  
"I'll get you, my pretty!"  
Revenge, outright dislike





By the time level four has arrived, the lawn is looking pretty bad, the team has fallen apart, it may be time to dig it up and totally re-seed.

To prevent needing to re-seed your team lawn and to promote team playing, we can concentrate on 6 DAILY FERTILIZERS :

- A) acceptance - of who we all are as people and as professionals being tolerant of each other and our differences
- B) time - invest quality time to be together, to play, to talk, have meetings, to go on retreats
- C) communication-be honest, be open, be forward, be sensitive, be kind, be tactful. Use eye contact and body contact
- D) effort - to build relationships, to deal with others, to forgive
- E) forgiveness - accept mistakes, forgive grievances, be sincere
- F) conflict resolution- deal with "little weeds" before they grow into medium or even big weeds, don't sweep things under the carpet hoping they will disappear (they usually don't)

Just as a perfect lawn requires PATIENCE, PERSISTANCE and PERSPIRATION to create, so too does a winning team require PATIENCE PERSISTANCE and PERSPIRATION to create and maintain...

But it's worth it!

