

interproduct involvement by research personnel. Fourth, *product adaptability analysis should be conducted for services too.*

**3M's Sophisticated Formula for Teamwork**, Michael K. Allio, *Planning Forum* (November-December 1993), pp. 19-21

At a recent Planning Forum Conference, a presentation on the use of empowered teams was made by two managers from 3M: Robert Hershock, a group vice president and David L. Braun, corporate scientist. They reported on what happened in the establishment of a high-speed new product team to develop a new gas/vapor/particle personal filtering mask and develop the appropriate process for their team and other teams to follow. Their story contained much that is widely known about the creation and management of new product teams, but several of their ideas may be surprising to some readers.

1. They used the phrase "bosses were to become leaders." It was not explained, but it suggests that leadership has a subtle meaning that extends beyond or within bossing.
2. They stressed that the team needs a charter. Mission is the term more commonly used, but charter has a demanding directional dimension. Among other things, the charter gives goals and objectives and lays out parameters within which the team has the freedom to operate. For example, they suspend some normal checks and balances, such as when they allowed this team to order a press from Austria, on their own, and with air shipment.
3. They said that the team should be interdisciplinary, but not necessarily cross-functional. Advisors are called in when necessary; not every area needs to be on the team.
4. A phrase "hierarchies are *suspended*" suggests an interesting way of telling functional managers how they will relate to the new team. This is especially critical at 3M because their teams are part-time assignments, not dedicated.
5. Facilitation was stressed as perhaps the central function of the team leader.
6. A sponsor was "established" and "assigned" to the team. Often thought to be a function of the team leader to find such a higher-level supporter, 3M thinks it is so important they see that one is provided.
7. A three-day team-participation training session was held.

8. The team was allowed to spell out when senior management would intervene.
9. They think that teams go through a three-phase life cycle. The first phase is the transitional phase, when teams "suffer from divisions of loyalty." When dedication occurs, they enter the operating phase where most of the work is done. The team may enter a final critical phase, if conditions get so tough that the team players create auto-networks, small groups who must handle tough issues on a zero-time basis. During a critical phase team members may be put full-time on the task, via "grace periods" for their regular assignments.
10. Team members are asked to set their own rewards, even straight money, and decide who participates. One team asked that all of the important players be permitted to attend the official product launch in Germany.
11. Groups are disbanded "after they have met their objectives." But, this is unclear because the subject team was told the item was to be a \$10 million business in five years. Yet the inference was given that they were disbanded well before that time. (The new product exceeded this goal.)
12. The 3M managers "recommend that objective, outside consultants review the team's performance to understand its effectiveness and to gather lessons about the process."

**Is National Design Dead?**, Marilyn Stern, *Across the Board* (September 1993), pp. 32-37

The industrial designer is a key player on the product development team. Given that new product focus today is rapidly becoming transnational, or global, the question naturally arises: will design also become global? The answer varies—some say it already has, some say it is rapidly becoming so, some say no it just appears so, some say it may but should not, and some say it never will. Take your pick.

A group of top designers recently looked at twelve new products, and their average score was 16% correct national identification. This has especially happened in the industrial and business world, less so in fashion, textiles, and tableware.

Building blocks of style (where national "looks" appear) are being used in multicultural stews, or bouillabaisse. The Swatch watch, for example. Corporations are becoming globalized—production is being scattered all over the world, media are becoming more