

# Case Study: Building Teams at Procter & Gamble

The Human Element has been extremely effective in maximizing team compatibility in work groups. But what about in adversarial conditions where there has existed a history of the I-win/You-lose mentality? Following is a report of a labor union president:

Prior to the approximately 60% of the Baltimore employees attending The Human Element, our plant had about as distinct a separation of management from non-management as you would ever see. There was no doubt in anyone's mind upon entering our plant for the first time just who was management or non-management. The separation was mainly built upon the high degree of mistrust that had grown over the years.

I was President of our local union when Don White made the first of many offers to the union leadership to attend a session of The Human Element. After a period of time, we agreed to participate, as long as it would be on a voluntary basis. Unfortunately, the date selected resulted in a conflict with my daughter's wedding, so I was unable to attend at that time. When the group of union officers and management returned it was as if a whole new world suddenly entered our plant. People were actually discussing and recognizing issues for what they actually were and attempting to resolve versus argue.

I then had the opportunity to attend the next session. My first words to Will Schutz were that

I was attending to see if he 'brainwashed' the previous attendees, was a charlatan, or really did have a program that helped people get along as a group.

My learning experience from The Human Element was that I am now able to look within myself to find the truth to better understand my relationship with other people. This allowed me to start trusting myself, and in turn, permitted me to start trusting other people.

The Human Element was the catalyst that enabled our plant to negotiate and ratify a complete new high performance work system at Baltimore. This was accomplished in spite of the fact that we were in the middle year of our then current contract. This unprecedented amendment broke down many barriers of the work system. Both the union and plant leadership attribute the success of the negotiations and passing of the agreement to The Human Element workshop. It made it possible to put aside the games and hyperbole that used to be so commonplace. 