

Welcome to the eleventh edition of Jennifer Selby Long's *Traveling Light*. Are you blessed with the talent and opportunity to lead? *Traveling Light* will skyrocket your impact and lighten the load inherent in your life. It's based on the work of executive coach and management consultant Jennifer Selby Long. Copyright 2008 Jennifer Selby Long. All rights reserved.

The Five Hidden Secrets of High Performing Teams

Have you ever noticed how some teams have the magic touch? You see their work, and the way they work together and all you can think is, "Oh, I wish I were on that team instead of this one." It's hard to put your finger on what exactly makes them tick, isn't it?

Well, satisfy your curiosity right here and right now. I have the answer.

The reason you can't see the magic is that it's invisible. It's not written down in their mission statement and it's not repeated in the footers of their documents. From outside the team, you can't see it at all.

Here are the five hidden secrets that separate the great teams from all the rest:

1. *Trust*. The team has developed a high level of trust. This means not only personal trust ("I trust that you are fundamentally a good person who won't stab me in the back") but also competency trust ("I trust that you have the knowledge and abilities to come through for me"). This level of trust takes time and while it may appear to be there from the start, it's not.
2. *Conflict*. Team members are willing to deal with conflict in a direct, honest, and thoughtful way: not holding things in, not lashing out, and never using conflict for personal gain.
3. *Feedback*. Team members are willing to call each other on unhelpful, unproductive, or destructive behaviors. They don't chicken out when it comes to giving and receiving feedback at the peer level.
4. *Commitment*. Most team members are committed to success, even when going through difficult times. They will walk the talk, as the saying goes, no matter how challenging the situation.
5. *Values*. The team has a clear sense of their shared values. They do not necessarily share all of the same values, but they do share several core values, which guide their decision-making and behavior.

How does your team stack up? If you're not close to a 10 on a scale of 1 – 10, in all five areas, fix it. If it's beyond repair and the leader is unwilling to face this, think about finding yourself another team. Life is too short to be miserable at work. Low performing teams are miserable teams. High performing teams are happy teams. How would you rather feel all day?

Jennifer's Update

Gung Hay Fat Choy! (A little late)

We celebrated the Chinese New Year at the home of Vinnie and Liz Zinck, who hosted us and many others in fine style, complete with Chinese liquor I won't soon forget. The cutie pie in the photo is one of their guests. I'm pretty sure it's Zachary, but his twin brother Alexander was in a few shots, too, so it might be Alexander. They're back in Shanghai now, so it will have to remain a mystery.

Chinese New Year is a big, big deal here in San Francisco. People think of Californians as being tall, blond surfers, but actually we're quite a diverse group. In San Francisco, ethnic Chinese are the largest population, which is great for those of us who otherwise wouldn't have an opportunity to usher in the Year of the Rat.

Being a rat is a good thing in the Chinese horoscope, so there's no need to hide it! Rats are people who were born in 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, and of course, 2008.

Bill, of course, celebrated the Chinese New Year in much the same way he celebrates all other holidays:

Jennifer's Calendar

March 8 – 9

Out of the office attending practice development training

March 15 and 22

Teach *Coaching for Performance* class in the UC-Berkeley Extension Business Management. Not much theory, tons of practice. To enroll, go to <http://www.unex.berkeley.edu/cat/course76.html>.

March 31

Last day to enroll in Private Coaching Program:
http://www.selbygroup.com/coaching_individual.html.

May 9 – 27

On vacation in Spain. Slight change of dates. I'll be available for client consultations May 8 until 3:00, at which time I head to the airport and say, "*Adios! Hasta la vista!*" All coaching client engagements are automatically extended three weeks, so you won't miss a thing!

Contact us for further information at: lighten@selbygroup.com.

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