

THE VISION OF Teams



In 1993 four women stood ready to embark on a fantastic adventure.

For the next 67 days they survived incredible hardships to travel across Antarctica and reach the South Pole. This program takes you on their epic journey to teach you how to come together, learn together and take action as a team.

THE VISION OF TEAMS PREVIEW GUIDE

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Getting the Most Out of Your Preview

Thank you for previewing *The Vision of Teams with Ann Bancroft*.

We know you're busy and don't always have the time to read through every leader's guide and participant workbook sent your way. Therefore, we have summarized the key information in this preview guide. This will allow you to make the best purchasing decision for your organization.

In this preview guide, you will find a quick overview of the key concepts from the film, along with sample sections from the leader's guide and workbook.

If after viewing the program, you would like to see a copy of the complete support materials, please call Star Thrower at 1-800-242-3220. We will happily send preview books for your review. In the meantime, you're invited to keep this preview guide even after you return the preview film.

Welcome to **The Vision of Teams**

Thank you for your interest in *The Vision of Teams*. My goal is to offer our story as a new way of looking at the challenges that come with creating an effective and unified team from a diverse group of people.

The video presents the journey of the American Women’s Expedition, the first women’s team to ski across Antarctica to the South Pole. In *The Vision of Teams*, I talk about our journeys—both our trek to the Pole and our quest to become a smoothly running team made up of individuals who like and respect each other. Although the tasks before our team were unique, the challenges we faced are universal.

First, we had a bottom line: Getting to the Pole. That meant we had to “produce” or ski so many miles each day to reach our goal.

Second, we had teammates who didn’t begin as friends and didn’t always get along. As team leader, I picked the members; they weren’t able to choose with whom they worked. In pulling together the most effective team that I could, I assembled a group of talented and strong-willed individuals. The challenge then became creating an environment that would allow everyone’s ideas to come forward in a constructive way.

Third, we faced rigid time constraints. If we didn’t start our trip on time, the weather in Antarctica could have prevented us from traveling at all that year. Similarly, if we didn’t proceed at our scheduled fast pace, we faced a real danger of running out of food.

Fourth, we operated on a tight budget that left little room for error.

Fifth, communication between team members was important but also difficult. The reasons were both practical—we spent our days skiing single file with facemasks on—and emotional—we shied away from talking about failures or disagreements.

Sixth, like most coworkers, we had longer-term careers that would be affected by our success—or lack of it—in Antarctica.

Seventh, we wanted to feel good about ourselves and each other and enjoy the challenge before us, even as we worked incredibly hard to reach it.

And finally, just as most teams do, we made mistakes along the way. However, we tried to learn from our errors, overcome our weaknesses, and capitalize on our strengths to achieve our shared goal.

The lessons we learned on our journey to the South Pole apply to almost any team trying to reach a goal. Whether your mission is to develop a better software application, turn around a faltering division, or increase test scores in your school, I hope and believe that our story will inspire, motivate, and entertain you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Bancroft". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Bancroft

About Ann Bancroft

Ann Bancroft is the first woman to travel across the ice to the North and South Poles and is one of only a handful of people who have journeyed to both Poles. Her career first captured the public's attention in 1986, when she skied to the North Pole as the only female member of the Steger International Polar Expedition. In November 1992, Ann led the American Women's Expedition to the South Pole. This group of four women skied more than 660 miles, each pulling 200-pound sleds, to reach the Pole in January 1993. In February of 2001, Bancroft and Norwegian polar explorer Liv Arnesen become the first women in history to sail and ski across Antarctica's landmass – completing a 94-day, 1,717-mile (2,747 km) trek.

Between trips, Ann is an active citizen, diplomat, and community volunteer. She continues her work with the American Women's Expedition Educational Foundation, an organization whose goal is to highlight the strengths and achievements of women, as well as to educate young people on environmental challenges in Antarctica. She is an instructor

with Wilderness Inquiry, a group that helps individuals with disabilities, as well as able-bodied people, to enjoy the wilderness.

Ann has worked with the American/Soviet exchange program, Ski for Peace, whose goal is to foster communication and understanding between citizens of different nations. She also has served on the boards of the Melpomene Institute for Women's Health Research and Friends of the Boundary Waters. Currently, she is a board member of the National Women's Hall of Fame. Ann has been a volunteer for numerous civic and charitable organizations, including Equity in Education and the Special Olympics, among others.

Today, in addition to her work, Ann is preparing for her next expedition. This all-women's journey to the South Pole and across Antarctica is scheduled to begin in November 2000.

Ann earned her bachelor of science degree in physical education from the University of Oregon and previously taught physical education.

Materials Included With The Vision of Teams

Star Thrower Distribution designs programs as a complete training system. A successful training course is one that inspires the participant to remember content and apply the lessons learned. We have carefully crafted this program to accomplish each of these tasks.

The Vision of Teams, VHS

We believe that a training film should both entertain and inform. First the program must inspire the viewer to see the topic's importance. Then the program must provide information that causes the viewer to take action. The video is closed-captioned and is also available in the PAL format.

The Vision of Teams, LEADER'S GUIDE

Our goal is to develop a guide that makes the materials easy to use and flexible enough for all training levels. This guide respects the uniqueness of each facilitator, as you can customize the questions and activities for your organization. It is designed to provide you with the information needed to determine what the participants remember about the program. The leader's guide also helps you check for participants' understanding of the concepts. And finally, the questions and activities encourage participants to start thinking about how these ideas relate to their own work and lives.

The Vision of Teams, WORKBOOK

The participant workbook was created to assist in individual learning. It works in correlation to the leader's guide but does not assume a facilitator is involved. It was designed to give individuals the opportunity to study at their own pace. These workbooks are excellent for organizations that utilize large group training and do not have a lot of time for discussion or activities. The workbooks allow participants to study the materials independently.

The Vision of Teams, POCKET REMINDER CARDS

These small cards help group members remember the program's key concepts. Remembering the important learning points is vital to gain positive results. Commonly, trainers pass these cards out at the end of a presentation.

The Vision of Teams, CD-ROM

PowerPoint™ Presentation

The PowerPoint™ Presentation on CD-ROM highlights all of the important concepts and lessons from The Vision of Teams. The CD-ROM can also be used to prepare overhead transparencies. These save the trainer valuable time as they get ready to present the program.

General Information

Length:	24 Minutes
Sale Price:	\$625.00
Rental Price:	\$200.00
Preview Price:	FREE

Materials included w/sale: Leader's guide, participant workbook, 25 pocket reminder cards, and CD-ROM with PowerPoint™ presentation.

Additional Material Pricing

QUANTITY	1 – 100	101 – 250	250+
Leader's Guide	\$15.00	\$12.50	\$10.00
Workbook	\$7.50	\$6.25	\$5.20
Pocket reminder card	\$.50	\$.40	\$.30
CD-ROM	\$ 10.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 6.00

Discounts & Special Offers

Industry Discounts: Consultant
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Quantity Discounts: Quantity discount for additional copies of The Vision of Teams is 50% off the regular (\$625.00) price.
No other discounts apply.

Bundling Discounts: When you purchase more than one Star Thrower training program, you are eligible for a 20% bundling discount. Call for a specific price quote.

KEY CONCEPTS

Listed below are the team concepts identified in the video. This leader's guide includes more comprehensive information on each concept, as well as exercises that will help your team members apply the concepts to their own experiences.

1. First:

- It all begins with passion.
- But passion is not enough.
- Each team member brings a unique set of strengths and weaknesses.

2. Sharing a vision requires:

- truly communicating with each other and listening, rather than blaming;
- committing to a common goal; and
- meshing personal goals with the vision for the team.

3. Learning as a team means:

- learning from mistakes;
- learning from each other; and
- planning for communication, rather than leaving it to chance.

4. Taking action means:

- recommitting to the shared vision;
- working with and through other people to accomplish goals;
- putting in a solid effort, rather than just putting in the hours; and
- challenging yourself.

5. In conclusion:

We are transformed by working together and challenging ourselves to meet a common goal.

It All Begins With Passion

From the Video

“It’s the passion that really pushes you through the times when you’re being told you couldn’t, or you shouldn’t, and you yourself are questioning, ‘Why am I here?’” says Ann Bancroft. “It is those moments of reconnecting with that passion that allow you to put one foot in front of the other.”

Program Insight

Passion—the strong feelings that we hold about an issue or cause—sparks our dreams and compels us to take action.

Whether we’re trying to launch a new product, run a political campaign, or raise funding for a cause in which we believe, we need to hold tightly to our beliefs, because achieving our dreams often isn’t easy. In fact, it usually requires hard work and a commitment of time or money, or both. Other people may try to discourage us. While we need to be open to intelligent, constructive input, we also have to be able to keep going even when others disagree with our goals.

Facilitator Question

List two things outside work about which you are passionate.

Possible Responses

An avocation.

A political or social cause.

A personal goal, such as completing a 100-mile bike ride.

Follow-up Question

List two things about your job or this organization about which you are passionate. Even if you are not particularly enthused about your current position, find a couple of things about the company or the work environment about which you care.

Possible Responses

Being continually challenged to do the best work I can.

Our company’s reputation for cutting-edge research.

The people I work with.

Team Activity

First, ask each team member to stand, introduce himself or herself, and briefly discuss his or her role in the company. Then ask each to identify one or two things about a company project that they find exciting or an aspect of the project in which they really want the team to excel. For example, if a team is working to develop a new product, the engineers are apt to care most about the product design, while the finance folks may be more interested in ensuring that the project stays on budget.

It All Begins With Passion (continued)

Team Activity (continued)

Record the responses. When you are finished, check to see whether all of the major facets of the project have a “champion.” If not, discuss who in the group would be a logical choice to assume these roles.

Expedition Insight

Passion fluctuates when you are working toward a big goal that demands a large commitment of time and effort. The trick is to find or develop ways to keep your passion going.

One way that Ann Bancroft kept up her enthusiasm during the five years she planned and prepared for her trip to Antarctica was to tie the expedition to another of her passions, education. Working through the American Women's Expedition Educational Foundation, she and other teachers developed a curriculum based on the trip for several hundred thousand school children. For example, the children following the Expedition learned about art and music taking place in Inuit, or Eskimo, communities.

Although some adults told team members that the venture was bound to fail, the school children never questioned their ability to succeed. The kids' enthusiasm, which was always on display when Ann and the group did presentations on Antarctica, helped team members stay connected with their passion.

But Passion Is Not Enough

From the Video

"I've learned that passion is not enough," says Ann Bancroft. "Not enough for you to succeed in your environment, and not enough for me to succeed as leader of the first women's expedition to cross Antarctica on skis. Passion is not enough, because we cannot do it alone. Achieving our vision requires teamwork."

Program Insight

While passion may spark a dream and compel one individual to act, achieving a dream almost always requires working with others. Even a goal that appears to be the work of one person, such as an individual's commitment to lose weight or stop smoking, is easier to reach with the support of others.

Because of this, it's essential that we all develop the skills that will allow us to be contributing members of a functioning, effective team.

Facilitator Question

Can you think of a goal you have achieved that required the support and efforts of others in your life?

Possible Responses

Taking a job that required a move or a change in hours.
Going back to school, which meant less time with family members.
Quitting smoking or drinking.

Follow-up Question

Identify the qualities that an individual needs to fully contribute to a team.

Possible Responses

An ability to listen.
An ability to work with a diverse group of people.
An ability to take responsibility.

Team Activity

This exercise takes the previous one a bit further, getting more specific about individual project responsibilities. Ask participants to talk to the person(s) sitting next to them about his or her role(s) on the team. How will each team member's work affect the others' work? What information does each need from the other? If one area runs into problems, how will that affect the other areas? What actions can each take to help the other person(s) and move the team more quickly to its goal?

But Passion Is Not Enough (continued)

Expedition Insight

One obvious benefit of working with a team is that it allows you to share the work. On the Expedition, each team member became an expert at a particular task. Of course, everyone on the team knew how to do all of the tasks, in case of an emergency.

Ann Bancroft communicated with the outside world via the group's radio. Sunniva Sorby made sure that the team completed the research they were supposed to do as they traveled. Anne Dal Vera worked with a dietitian to devise a nutritious mix of foods that could be packed on sleds and survive the Antarctic climate. And Sue Giller worked with a Global Positioning System to determine how far the group had skied each day and whether they were still on course.

One drawback of Sue's job: to get the batteries that powered the system to operate in the Antarctic, Sue first had to put them in her long johns for an hour or two to warm them up. The effect, she says, was like dropping a bag of ice down her pants.

Each Team Member Brings A Unique Set of Strengths and Weaknesses.

From the Video

In preparing for her trip, Ann Bancroft says, “My first step was to choose the members of my team. I looked for passion, experience, and a complementary set of skills.”

Program Insight

Most successful teams offer a mix of skills. A diverse set of talents and experiences helps to ensure that all angles of a project are covered. In addition, creating a strong, deep team means that more members are able to take on leadership roles. This is important, because it is unrealistic to expect the “official” leader of the group to have all of the answers.

Facilitator Question

What strengths do you bring to the group? On what aspects of the project are you an expert?

Possible Responses

Technical expertise.

Knowledge of the bureaucracy or politics surrounding the project.

Project-management skills.

People or communication skills.

Follow-up Question

In what areas would you like to improve?

Possible Responses

Could be any of the above.

Team Activity

Like the trip to the South Pole, most projects include some ancillary jobs that can't be neatly assigned to one person or department. Examples might include heading a special event or studying a particular issue.

Now that participants understand the expertise and skills of the other members, ask the team to identify which members are the most logical ones to take charge of such functions. Pair each ancillary activity with the appropriate team member(s), who will take responsibility for becoming an “expert” at that job.

Each Team Member Brings A Unique Set of Strengths and Weaknesses. (continued)

Expedition Insight

Sometimes a team member's contribution veers from that described in his or her official job description. When Sunniva Sorby became injured, her contribution to the group's progress in logging miles while pulling a sled packed with 200 pounds of gear obviously lapsed. In fact, the others had to take much of the weight off her sled.

However, her concern for the others and cheerful willingness to give them emotional support remained intact. This was not an insignificant achievement, given the emotional, as well as physical, rigors of the trip. "In that sort of environment, almost everyone goes into survival mode," says Ann. "You do only what absolutely needs to be done. It's easy to decide not to make an effort to be friendly or supportive. However, Sunniva would give emotionally so unabashedly and freely, and sometimes at great expense to herself."

For example, if Sunniva was first in the tent at night, while her tent-mate was finishing her own chores, she made sure she had a cup of tea or soup waiting for her. She was able to cheer up Anne Dal Vera when she was down, and also help Sue Giller, who has an intense personality, relax a bit.

SHARING A VISION REQUIRES:

Truly communicating with each other – listening rather than blaming.

In the video, Ann Bancroft describes the end of the team’s Great Slave Lake training expedition when team members had to wait two days before a plane could fly them out. The group had made many mistakes on the trip and everyone was ready to point a finger. “There was a lot of anger,” Ann says, “so, we sat down and thrashed it out. Criticism is never comfortable. We had to set aside the natural tendency to be defensive and really listen. Listening, not blaming got us back on track.” When a team is working toward a goal, it’s critical that members listen openly when something goes wrong, rather than simply blame others.

In the long run, blaming is usually counterproductive. People become defensive and may avoid doing more than just the task in front of them. In addition, blaming makes it easy to overlook all of the reasons something went wrong. Usually, mistakes occur because of problems throughout the system.

Describe your experience:

At one point or another, almost everyone fails to really listen. Can you describe a time when you didn’t listen, but instead assumed someone else has made a mistake? Or, can you recall a time that you were the one who was assumed to have made a mistake?

(Examples: When forced to work overtime on a much-delayed project, I blamed another department for bungling their responsibilities, only to find out later that they hadn’t been given the correct deadline. Or, when a bike was stolen out of your garage, I blamed a family member for leaving the garage door open, until I remembered that I had taken the trash out before going to bed.)

Based on what you’ve experienced and observed, how do people react when they are not listened to, or are singled out when something goes wrong? How does this affect the team? (Example: People are less likely to go out of their way to contribute, which hinders the progress of the team.)

SHARING A VISION REQUIRES:

Truly communicating with each other – listening rather than blaming.
(continued)

Describe your experience: (continued)

Individual Reaction

1. _____

2. _____

Impact on Team

1. _____

2. _____

Expedition Insight

One morning of the expedition, Anne Dal Vera made what could have been a serious mistake. She forgot to secure her daypack on top of her sled. The pack contained everything she might need that day, including extra jacket and gloves, goggles, and her lunch. All of these items were necessary, and the team had no spares. Soon after the four set off, the daypack fell off Anne's sled and was left behind.

While the mistake was serious, the group resisted the impulse to point a finger at Anne. Instead, the team came up with a plan: Anne Dal Vera would go back for the pack, while Ann Bancroft would take over her sled, in addition to her own. This means that Anne, skiing without a sled, would travel quickly. The rest of the group would keep pace with Ann and, obviously, ski more slowly.

The plan kept the time lost to a minimum. More importantly, team members remained supportive of Anne, meeting her with hugs and hot chocolate on her return. That didn't mean they ignored what had happened. In fact, the experience reinforced in everyone's mind the need to create safeguards so that it didn't happen again. After that, every morning a round of "Are the packs secured?" would go out before the group left.

LEARNING AS A TEAM MEANS:

Learning from each other.

When one team member became sick on the Greenland expedition, all of the team members pitched in. “The extra pressure sparked new energy in one of our less-confident teammates,” Ann says. “She rose to the challenge, and we all learned that she had a lot more to contribute than we’d imagined.”

No one has all of the answers or all of the abilities. Bigger goals can best be reached by combining strengths so that the result is more than simply the sum of the parts. For this to occur, everyone on the team must respect input from all other team members.

It can be easy to assume that someone is less knowledgeable, just because he or she is from a different department or works at a lower-level position. Many times, quieter team members are overlooked. However, ignoring someone can result in a more limited pool of information and ideas. In the end, that can hurt your team’s chances of reaching its goal.

Can you recall a time when someone surprised you or the rest of your team with his or her knowledge or insights? (Examples: I assumed that someone from outside of our group wouldn’t understand our situation – then I found out she had been in a similar situation elsewhere. Or, we dismissed input from someone as a complaint, only to find out that his concerns were important and valid.)

Once it became clear that the person could contribute, how did his or her input change the group or the actions you took? (Examples: We sought her advice when we ran into problems in her area of expertise. Or, we changed the outside partners, such as vendors, with whom we were working.)

Whom on your team do you know the least? Can you get together for lunch, or ask to “tag along” with him/her at work for several hours?

Expedition Insight

Even though all four team members were skilled, experienced explorers, each was willing and able to learn more about different ways of doing things. “Part of it was curiosity, and their general willingness to explore,” Ann says. “However, everyone also knew that being open to new ideas and ways of doing things would enhance the chance of success.”

TAKING ACTION MEANS:

Working with and through other people to accomplish goals.

“Getting the team to the Pole was the most important thing to think of,” Ann says. “Not to reach the Pole, but to work as a team, travel as a team. Our motto because ‘Four to the Pole.’”

Being a team can take on many forms. Although the four members of the American Women’s Expedition spent much of their time skiing single file in a line, Ann says, “I never worked on anything that demanded so much that we act like a team.” A team is defined by its members working toward a common goal, where everyone’s efforts are needed to reach it.

On the ice, the hard and soft skills of the four women had to come together so that the team could function efficiently and effectively in the unforgiving Antarctic environment. For example, instead of each member insisting on her own way of putting up a tent or building a snow wall, the group used ideas from everyone to arrive at the fastest and easiest method.

To effectively work with other people, team members have to feel confident about expressing their thoughts and making contributions. The challenge is creating an atmosphere that allows this. Rank how well your team does:

- Not well at all; our meetings become pretty hostile.
- Just a few people seem comfortable voicing their opinions.
- We’ve done OK, but there’s room for improvement.
- We’re doing great.

If improvement is needed, identify several ways that your team can enhance the atmosphere: How can we enhance the atmosphere of the group, so that everyone is comfortable taking risks and expressing ideas? (Examples: Agree to seek out ideas from all team members; stipulate that no ideas will be dismissed without fair consideration.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Brainstorming sessions, in which everyone contributes and all ideas are recorded, can be an effective way to tackle an issues, as well as to get members comfortable voicing their thoughts. What issue facing your group would be appropriate for a brainstorming session?

TAKING ACTION MEANS:

Working with and through other people to accomplish goals. (continued)

Expedition Insight

While the video shows just the four women who made it to the South Pole, the American Women's Expedition really comprised many more members. Approximately 150 volunteers helped raise money and get the group packed and ready for the trip. For example, school children backed all of the Expedition Food – everything from bread and butter to cookies.

Hundreds and thousands of people made financial donations. The contributions ranged from a single dollar to several thousand, although the majority of donations were under one hundred dollars.

And finally, it's important to acknowledge again the importance of the schoolchildren's enthusiasm and confidence in the team. "Sometimes, when it was tough skiing, I would look at the sled and see those 300,000 kids," Ann says. "It was enough to help me kick it in gear for several more miles."



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