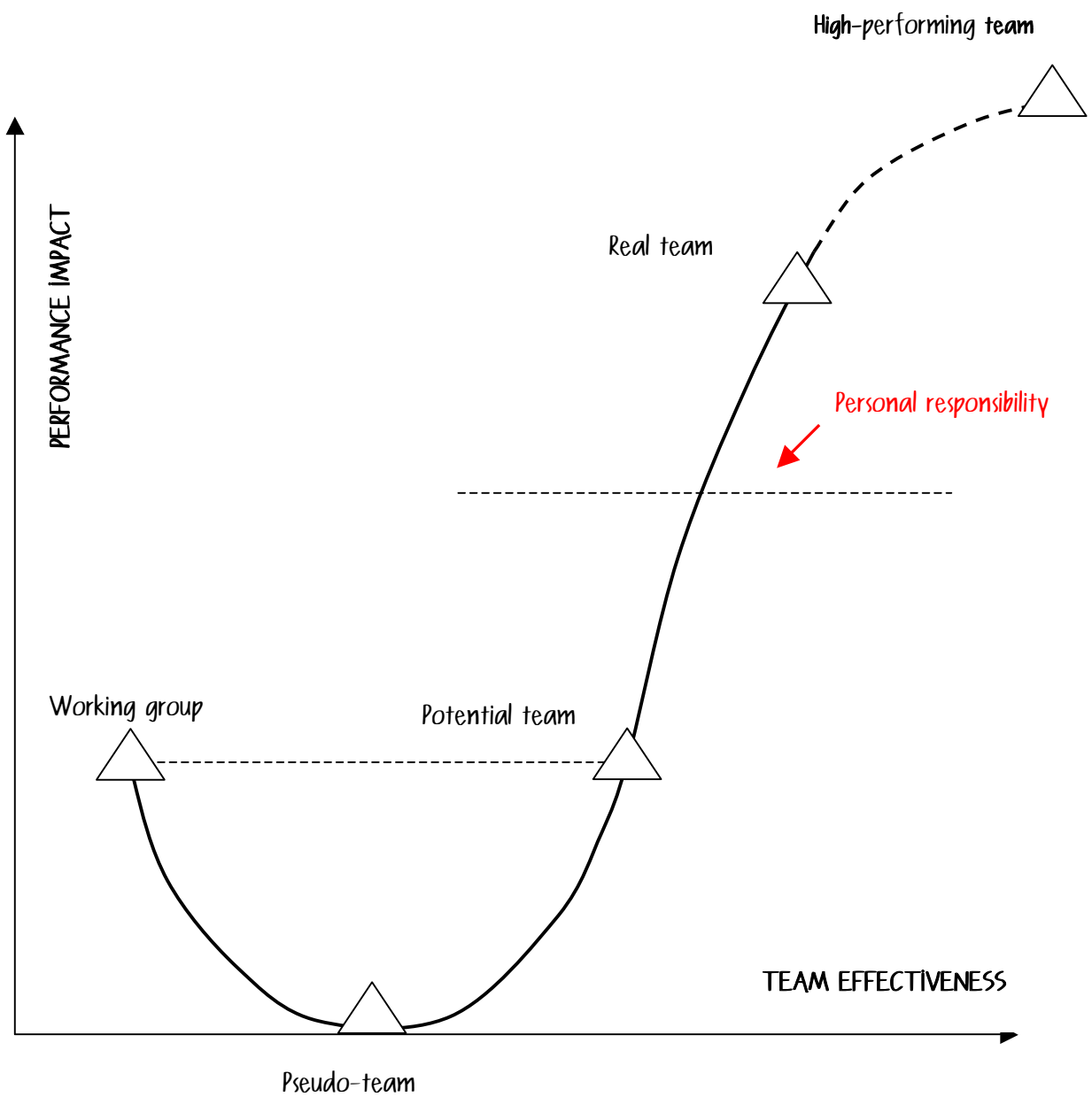


# The Team Performance Curve



The Team Performance Curve is a model that describes 5 types of teams in terms of performance impact and team effectiveness.

***“ A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable”***

### Working group

This is a group where there is no significant incremental performance need or opportunity that would require a team approach. The members of the group interact primarily to share or obtain information, share "best practice", or perspectives and to make decisions to help each individual perform within his area of responsibility. Beyond that there is no realistic or truly desired common purpose or goal that call for a team approach or mutual responsibility. They often perform well and the good performance is because no energy / time is spent on conflicts, the time to build trust and confidence. ( $1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 4$ ).

### Pseudo-team

This is a group for which there could be a significant incremental performance need or opportunity, but it has not focused on collective performance and is not really trying to achieve it. It has no interest in shaping a common purpose or set common performance goals, even though it may call itself a team. Pseudo teams are the weakest of all groups in terms of performance impact. They almost always contribute less than working groups because their interactions detract from each member's individual performance without delivering any joint benefits. In pseudo-teams, the sum of the whole is less than the potential of the individual performances. ( $1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 3$ ).

### Potential team

Potential teams are very common in organizations.

In this group there is a significant performance need and the group is really trying to improve its performance. In order to progress, they need to work on clarifying their purpose, goals, and common approach, i.e. get more structure around how to cooperate (a common working approach). The potential team members have not yet developed total trust in each other. They have not yet established common, collective responsibility (mutual accountability).

A great possibility for a potential team is when the team starts to gain understanding of what their mission and their reason for being is. As the Performance Curve illustrates, when a team approach makes sense, the performance impact can be high - the steepest performance gain comes between a potential team and a real team.

### Real team

A real team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are equally committed to a common purpose, goals, and working approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

The performance level and results of a real team are much higher than those of potential teams and workgroups. (  $1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 5$  )

### High-performing team

This group meets all the conditions of real teams, and has members who are also deeply committed to one another's personal growth and success. That commitment usually transcends the team. The high-performance team significantly outperforms all other teams, and exceeds all reasonable expectations given its membership. It is a powerful possibility and an excellent model for all real and potential teams.

The authors conclude that all too often the choice between work group or team is not made deliberately and with reflection. It is important to ask whether it really is potential for a team or whether it is better to create / maintain an effective work group, which probably performs better than a non-functioning team.

(Source : Douglas K Smith & Jon R Katzenbach/Wisdom of teams-92)