

Reducing the effects of need for closure on team performance

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Abstract

We explored the influence of need for closure (NFC) a propensity to adopt a deliberative versus a locomotor mindset on team performance under pressure. When teams solve problems under pressure, performance is often compromised by low quality and uninformed decisions. Research on NFC shows that high pressure situations increase NFC in individuals and teams when making decisions. This change in motivation increases the tendency to act quickly, often relying on suboptimal strategies to make decisions. Previous studies on medical teams have found that checklists can increase teamwork and decrease errors. We hypothesized that using a checklist reduces the effects of NFC by increasing communication and teamwork. In our study, teams play a video game that requires teamwork and communication to solve puzzles under pressure, with or without a checklist. The results of our research have implications for a variety of situations in which teams perform under pressure.