



## FUSION values

### Trust

A significant weakness of any industry is a contractual and confrontational culture. In general terms, this manifests itself in a lack of trust between the various parties involved in a project, each viewing the others as adversaries intent on doing them down and minimising or removing their profit.

One of the most fundamental differences in the FUSION approach – and one of the values to which people experience great difficulty in adjusting – is the requirement to trust other team members and recognise that they are trying to achieve the very best results of which they are capable.

It is easy to leap to the conclusion that, because someone is doing something that it is difficult to understand or value, they must be engaged in a clever 'game' of some kind. While that may occasionally be true, the first principle of the FUSION approach is that people are doing what they believe is best for the project and for the whole of the team. If this is supported by the other values, it will almost certainly result in success.

### Collective ownership

It is entirely possible for one individual to perform well while the rest of the team performs badly, but it is not possible for that individual to achieve success if the project fails. That is the principle of collective ownership: all succeed or all fail together – but there is more.

Anyone who has worked in a team environment of any kind knows that the potential for success is significantly greater for the team as a whole than for any one individual. They also know that every member of the team has an important role to play. Looking at motor racing drivers or athletes as examples, while one person is the focus, the greatest achievements are only available to those people who are part of a team with clearly defined goals and objectives. When that team performs to its maximum potential, the resulting success can be astounding, often far exceeding the team's expectations and giving every member the chance to enjoy success not previously thought attainable.

This is why collective ownership is one of the cornerstones of the FUSION approach.



### Personal responsibility

Individuals working on FUSION projects have to be prepared to exercise free choice and freewill in order to take personal responsibility for their contributions. Often, there are organisational and structural pressures that suggest certain rules of behaviour, which people use to deny or deflect responsibility. Once the spirit of these rules is closely examined, they should be entirely compatible, as long as FUSION values are applied as the guiding principles.

Individuals can exercise free choice and freewill by refusing to act in ways they believe to be wrong and by admitting their mistakes – to take just two examples. In essence, they must be open and honest with themselves, before this can be so with others.

The path to greater self-respect and higher responsibility begins with taking personal responsibility for the principle of commitment. Saying that a task will be undertaken must mean exactly that, without allowing room for procrastination or prevarication. If individuals do not believe in a course of action, or are asked to do something that is beyond their capabilities, they must say so.

This is what the FUSION values seek from every individual.

### Developing respect

From self-respect should follow the development of respect for others, in fact for everyone with whom the individual comes into contact. In the past, traditional contractual and confrontational methods tended to encourage the opposite viewpoint, with contractors forced to offer the very cheapest prices and clients trying to get more for their money by increasing the specification. Unsurprisingly, it would often end in conflict.

By discarding these barriers, those involved in a project can try to recognise that everyone with whom they come into contact is doing the best they possibly can and therefore deserves respect. From this point, trust, honesty and openness will follow.



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### **Communicating and listening**

The FUSION values insist on constant communication, which must be active and two-way. By accepting that there is nothing individuals can do which cannot be done better by a team, the principle of collaboration automatically becomes the highest of the FUSION values. That level can only be reached by truly listening to other people, on the basis that they have a positive contribution to make.

There is, after all, nothing to be lost by listening, for what is said need only be taken into account if it helps in achieving the solution. The insular approach of the individual, who is only prepared to take what he or she alone believes is the best course, is flawed and inadequate by comparison.

### **Collaboration**

Perhaps not just the highest FUSION value, but that of humanity itself, collaboration must take place at every level and at every opportunity. Its context will always be the search for the very best solutions, innovating and creating new opportunities that are only available by exchanging information and exploring others ideas; producing outcomes that are of benefit to everybody, without there being any need for compromise.

### **Valuing the team**

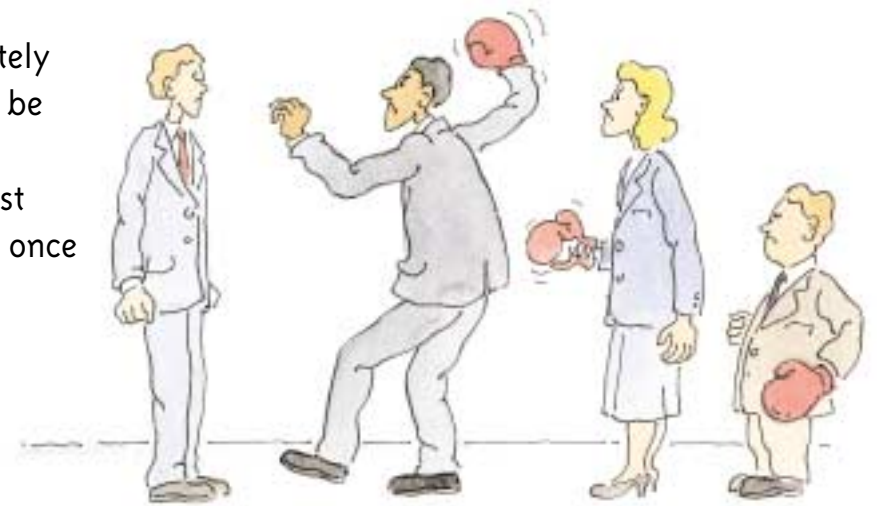
Simply by virtue of the fact that they are part of a FUSION team, everyone must have something to contribute. Each skill or capability that others possess will help to achieve a successful outcome, so ways must be found to involve all members of the team. Everyone has something to offer – it may sometimes be hard to find, but it is there.



### Challenges

Once a person acknowledges that others can offer skills and capabilities that he or she cannot, they must accept and indeed encourage what amounts to a challenge from those colleagues.

Again, there is everything to be gained and absolutely nothing to be lost by doing so. A point of view can be evaluated to see if it improves the solution under consideration and can be dropped if it doesn't. Most people will accept such a position without rancour, once they know their idea has been discussed and they understand why it has not been adopted.



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### Secrets

There is no place in the FUSION process for secrets, as they run counter to the principle of collaboration and imply that the holder knows better than the rest of the team.

Secrets are information of value to other people that is deliberately withheld, or told just to a few people, in order to increase the power of an individual. This is not the same as keeping some matters private, for everyone has a right to an inner level of information that is relevant to them, but not necessarily to every other member of the team.

### Grudges

It is not appropriate to harbour a grudge if you assume that everyone always does the best they can. While someone might not understand the implications of an action that has a negative effect on others, they obviously won't have set out to cause trouble.



Working together to resolve such issues will guard against the possibility of a grudge building into a major personality clash. Having got to the bottom of the problem, it might even be necessary to disagree, but that isn't the same as harbouring a grudge.

### **Inclusive values**

Everyone who accepts the FUSION values 'buys' a package. Openness, honesty, using initiative, team work, fairness are all part of it and must be applied inclusively, without any suggestion of selecting and rejecting, according to personal wishes. Only then will participants be entitled to the protection of the 'no blame' culture that is a central pillar of the FUSION process.

### **Transportability**

FUSION is a collaborative approach to partnerships of all kinds. It becomes especially strong when applied to construction activity, but its many other successes demonstrate that it is a truly transportable concept. For more information see 'projects' on the FUSION web site <http://www.fusion-approach.com>

### **Shared learning**

FUSION embodies many higher level values, one of which is continuous learning. This approach is about challenge, creativity and innovation throughout the life of the project and a desire to discard old methods that add no value. This remains so at the end of the project, and a feature of FUSION collaborations is the sharing of experiences within the team and with other partners and practitioners, who may be embarking on a new FUSION enterprise.

FUSION is a fluid concept. It needs to change and develop, just as the needs it seeks to deliver change and develop. Its practitioners believe that its benefit will not be fully realised until it is available for all to use at will. Therefore, if others decide they wish to adopt FUSION for their own projects, they are at liberty to do so, providing they do nothing to restrict the free use of the concept by any other party. We ask only that they be sure all participants are ready for the challenges this will bring and that they feed back their experiences so that we may all share in the learning.