

BLACK WIDOWS AND HAWKEYES IN OUR MIDST



WHY DO WE NEED THEM WHEN THEY ARE JUST MERE MORTALS?

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THE *Avengers: Age of Ultron* – Much has been said about it; much more will be said about it. This will not be another article dissecting the lessons learnt from the movie.

Instead, it will be one that looks at two particular members of the Avengers who have appeared in the string of recent Marvel movies.

Of the entire team, there are only two members who are not “superheroes” in the actual sense of the word, and they are Natasha Romanoff aka Black Widow and Clint Barton aka Hawkeye.

When compared with their counterparts (the enhanced super-soldier, the man with an iron suit, the God of Thunder and the green rage monster), one would question if Black Widow and Hawkeye have what it takes to be in the team.

Indeed, they don't have superpowers of their own but they do possess other qualities that allow them to make up for their human shortcomings and be worthy of being called an Avenger.

ORGANISATIONAL DILEMMA

Organisations are no stranger to this dilemma. It is a frequent question that pops up during the hiring process.

Should they hire the crème de la crème or the ones with talent that seem insignificant when placed alongside the “elite”?

Of course, there are those amongst us who would say the obvious choice would be the “elite” group. However, this article intends to persuade you to reconsider the “underdogs”.

So organisations, listen up! This is a message on why you could use more Black Widows and Hawkeyes in your team.

1 KEEPING EMOTIONS FROM THE EQUATION

In *The Avengers* (2012), Black Widow never loses focus of her primary objective which was to put an end to Loki's plans despite Hawkeye, whom she shares an emotional bond with, being under Loki's control.

Instead of giving in to her emotions and seeing herself as a pawn to the situation at hand, she utilises her emotions to outwit Loki into divulging his intentions.

It is not uncommon for life to throw us a curveball when we least expect it. This is especially evident in today's business world where we are all linked to each other in one way or another.

Indeed, within an organisation, your team may feel the ripple effects of an unforeseen event that has occurred halfway across the world.

Those of us who are so familiar with normalcy would most

likely be overwhelmed and fumble around in a feeble attempt to get our bearings.

However, a Black Widow in our team would put emotions aside and immediately take the necessary actions to remedy the situation.

In short, it is the ability to keep a cool head and strategise in times of peril that makes a Black Widow an invaluable asset to an organisation.

2 PLAYING TO ONE'S STRENGTHS

Hawkeye is noted for his impressive marksmanship skills, particularly with his bow and unique set of customised arrows.

In *Thor* (2011) and *The Avengers*, he is seen to be perched on higher ground. This is because he is aware that it is only on higher ground that he is able to utilise his marksmanship and acute observation skills to the fullest, thus providing his team with better support.

It is always good to have a self-aware individual in an organisation. Self-awareness can turn good into great.

By being aware of his strengths and weaknesses, the Hawkeye in your team can leverage on his strengths by choosing his moves more wisely and deliberately.

This would allow him to hold his own even if he is amongst people

who, at a first glance, seem to out-class him in all aspects.

So, always ensure that your team comprises people from various backgrounds to allow for better solutions to any given issue.

3 KNOWING WHEN TO PULL THE PLUG

In *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014), it was revealed that S.H.I.E.L.D. had been compromised, in which its ranks were infiltrated by Hydra personnel.

Black Widow, being a loyal agent of S.H.I.E.L.D. for many years, had to make the difficult decision to help Captain America bring down the organisation that was intent on doing harm to the people of Earth.

At times, the organisation which we serve may deviate from its original purpose. Even worse, it may tread on the slippery slope of moral compromise to achieve its objective, even if it means that others would be negatively affected.

The case of Enron comes to mind where the company, in the pursuit of its objectives, was willing to engage in fraudulent activities to the detriment of others.

If not for the efforts of Sherron Watkins who stood up as a whistleblower, the wrongdoings could have gone undetected.

With a Black Widow in your organisation, you can be assured that your team will not engage in any activities that go against good values and integrity, for she will be willing to expose the team even if it comes at a personal cost.

4 FOCUSING ON THE END GOAL

Hawkeye, in the latest instalment of the Avengers, utters a memorable line, “... if you step out that door, you are an Avenger.”

Later, he is shown to be willing to sacrifice himself in an attempt to protect a child though it meant that he would be unable to return to his own family. This shows that he truly believes in what the Avengers stand for.

In an organisational context, there are moments in which we are tempted to take the easy path instead of the right path as the latter would surely be a long and arduous journey.

A Hawkeye in your team would not see his actions as being that of an individual.

Instead, he would see the bigger picture of his actions to be one that represents the ideals of the team and the organisation.

Regardless of the work at hand, he will only give it his best and nothing less.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Although it is unlikely that any of us would ever have the capabilities of the Avengers, it is possible for us to relate to Black Widow and Hawkeye, who are the only two mere mortals in the team.

Perhaps this is why they were included in the team in the first place, to remind us that even ordinary individuals have the potential to shape the world for the better.



■ Dinesh believes that everyone is a potential game-changer, if only we have the courage to keep to our path and persevere through adversity. To engage with Dinesh, email us at editor@leaderonomics.com. Visit www.leaderonomics.com for more leadership content.