Product Development Team Structure

Below are five different examples of how firms can structure their new product development project teams. Can you identify which team structure approach would be the most effective?

Different New Product Project Team Structures

1. "I go to a weekly product development team meeting - and from time to time I'm allocated some tasks to do, on top of my normal work."

2. "Steve has just nominated five of us to work on the product's launch. While we each have our list of tasks to complete, there's no regular meetings planned, and we still have to do our normal jobs."

3. "I've just been told to clear out my desk! I'll be on a new product team for the next two years. They're replacing me. Who knows what job I'll end up with in two years' time?"

4. "Well, I still have my office in the department, and I still go to monthly meetings and I'm still here to help answer questions - but other than that, I'm on the project full-time."

5. "I roughly spend around 3 days a week on the project and 2 days doing my normal job. I got to off-load some of my normal duties to the new guy."

Student Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe (label) each of the new product team structures?

2. Which of the team structure/s would probably be the most effective? Why?

3. Which of the team structure/s would probably be the least effective? Why?

4. Which of the team structure/s do you think would probably be used the most in real businesses? Why?

5. In what circumstances would the second listed team structure above be appropriate?

6. In what circumstances would the third listed team structure above be appropriate?

7. In what circumstances would the third team structure above NOT be appropriate?