



A Tour de France Team

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The team does not win without functional leaders to support the team leader and other team riders

This is an example of the importance of the interaction of both Designated & Functional Leaders. This is covered in the Human Factors: Threat & Error Management course and provides an excellent example.

Designated Leaders:

- Team Captain (Designated Leader for the Team) – Sometimes, but not always the team leader. The team captain is in charge of what happens out on the road, subject to the advice or instructions of the team manager. He focuses the efforts of the team on the goal – winning the race. If the team captain is not the team leader, then a very experienced rider will take the role.
- Team Leader (Designated Leader for the Riders) – Expertise: The team's best overall rider. The rest of the team is there to support the team leader. Expected to be the top finisher in the race.

Functional Leaders:

- General Classification (GC) Riders – Expertise: Good enough overall skills in all areas to be a top finisher in the race and compete for overall ranking. Enough experience and physical skill to withstand a 3-week race.
- Rouleur – Expertise: Excellent endurance in steady, consistent riding. Rouleurs often provide a wheel to block the wind for the Team Leader to follow for hours at a time. Expected to support the Team Leader.
- Lead-Out Man – Expertise: A rider who specializes in providing a wheel for a sprinter to follow in the final stages of a race. Nestled in the lead-out man's slipstream, the sprinter waits for the final possible moment, and then accelerates for the line as the lead-out man pulls to one side. Expected to support the team leader or another CG rider so they can win a stage of the race.



- Sprinter – Expertise: Nerve, fast reflexes, fast twitch muscle power, and big quadriceps make him capable of accelerating very quickly at the end of a race. Expected to win a stage race for the team and compile overall points.
- Climbers – Expertise: Aerobic capacity and strength to weight ration to tackle the big hills.
- Time Trial – Expertise: High VO2 max and muscle strength. Expected to win the time trial event and add points to the team victory.
- Domestique – Expertise: The worker bees of a team, responsible for looking after the team leader and the other stars. Domestiques ferry food and water to their team leaders, provide a wheel for the leader to follow and in extreme cases even surrender their bikes if the leader has a mechanical problem. Expected to support anyone who needs assistance.