



COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



Build Relationships

The building blocks of effective collaboration and teamwork are the relationships between team members. It is easy to see why this is a highly correlated enabling behavior.

- Initiate interactions outside your team. Make connections with people in other parts of the organization by creating opportunities to interact. Consider informal settings such as lunch or break time.
- Demonstrate interest. Expand conversations with others to learn more about them and their outside hobbies and interests. Be mindful of birthdays, family events, and special occasions. Where appropriate, be aware of personal problems or stressors.
- Do not compete. Make every interaction with others based on cooperation, not competition. Rivalries can destroy relationships.



Communicate Powerfully

Having the ability to communicate clearly and influence others is one of the key ingredients in working collaboratively. Collaboration cannot be built without clear and consistent communication. Misunderstandings or lack of information frequently frustrate individuals and produce negative results.

- Make important discussions memorable. Use stories, examples, illustrations, or parables to illustrate important points. The stories will be remembered when the abstractions are long forgotten.
- Put yourself in the other person's shoes. When you are communicating an important message, begin by asking yourself, "What would I want to know?" and "What would be my biggest concerns?" Then, be sure to speak to those issues.
- Organize for clarity. Create a simple structure for important communications that logically positions your message. Explain the problem, issue, or complication. Discuss alternative courses of action, and then conclude with your recommendation and the reasons for it.
- When emailing information, ask yourself, "Who else needs to know this information?"
- Great communicators are broken records. They repeat information so that everyone knows the when, where, and how.



Inspire and Motivate

Leaders who achieve high levels of teamwork and collaboration know how to inspire and motivate others. To get team members and groups to work well together takes more than just asking people to cooperate. Leaders who can inspire and motivate are able to help others to move beyond their typical approaches and collaborate with each other.

- Support team and collaborative goals. Team and collaborative goals can only be accomplished when people work together.
- Keep focused on the goal. Remind yourself and others of the goals and the payoff that each group will receive. Enlist help from others in keeping priorities top of mind. Your focus will be inspiring to others.
- Convey your passion. Frequently convey your personal passion and commitment for the work you are doing. Your emotions are extremely contagious.
- Set a goal as a unified team. Involve everyone in identifying and adopting a difficult goal. Nothing inspires organizations more than pursuing and accomplishing a challenging goal.
- Take the time to create positive emotional connections with people in other groups across the organization.



Engender Trust

Trust is the foundation for effective collaboration and is generated by reliability, consistency, and not overpromising.

- Be transparent. Pass on accurate and complete information to your colleagues. Transparency builds trust.
- Consistently deliver on commitments. Record and carefully track the commitments you make to others and make sure you deliver. Often, with no harmful intentions, people forget the commitments they make.
- Own your mistakes. Accept personal responsibility when you make a mistake. People trust those who own their mistakes.
- Pass on credit. Never accept credit for the good work of a direct report. Pass on praise and add your own appreciation and praise for the good work.

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