Team Management

Foster Trust

Trust is the foundation of any highly effective team. To manage your team well, you have to strengthen your team members' trust in you and in each other.

Gain team members' trust

Everything about managing your team well depends on earning others' trust in you. If your team is confident that you'll do the right thing as their leader, they will accept your authority and guidance.
Trust matters more than ever today. Businesses operate in a fast-changing, global environment with dispersed teams handling more and more work. And every culture considers trust important.

When teams trust their leaders, they:

- Work better through the disagreements that inevitably arise in teams
- Work harder
- Stay with an organization longer
- Contribute better ideas
- Take smarter risks

What is trust

Trust is the belief that a person intends to do the right thing (character) and knows what to do and how to get it done (competence).

Character + Competence = Trust

When your team members trust you, they believe that you:

•Intend to do what is best for them and the organization
•Have the skills needed to achieve mutually important goals
•Deliver on your commitments
•Genuinely care about others' well-being

Character

Character is about your *intention* to do the right thing. Your team members will trust you if they respect your character.

Others will view your character positively if they believe that you:

- **Value your team's and organization's work.** You appreciate the inherent worth of the work you do, not just its personal usefulness to you, such as your own professional advancement. To demonstrate this, link your team's work to the organization's strategy, be a model of commitment to your team, and put the team first.
- **Value individual team members.** You genuinely care about them and take their needs and interests into account. You treat team members with respect. You're forthright and honest and do your best to keep your word. To demonstrate that you care, help team members succeed and accomplish goals, treat everyone fairly, and show appreciation for each team member.
- **Are emotionally intelligent.** You deal effectively with your own and others' feelings at work. To demonstrate emotional intelligence, acknowledge your own emotions, invite constructive criticism and feedback on your own work, and handle team members' mistakes constructively.
- **Are resilient.** You recover from setbacks, frustrations, and failure. Having a healthy sense of self-confidence will help you avoid discouragement and stay focused on your team's work and ultimate purpose. To demonstrate resiliency, express confidence, take control of team setbacks, and swiftly identify actions that will improve a challenging situation

Competence

Competence is your knowledge of what to do and how to get it done. To view you as a competent leader, your team must see you as having three types of competence:

•**Technical.** Technical competence means you know enough about the work your group does to guide others and make intelligent decisions. Technical competence can be viewed as "theoretical" knowledge— what you learn in a classroom or a textbook. It's how things are supposed to work. * Harvard Business Publishing. "Technical." *Breakthrough Leadership. 2012.*

•**Operational.** Operational competence is practical, "how to do it," real-world knowledge. When you have operational competence, you know how the theory behind your team's work actually gets applied. You acquire this kind of competence through on-the-job experience. * Harvard Business Publishing."Operational." *Breakthrough Leadership. 2012.*

•**Political.** Political competence means understanding how to get something done in your organization. It requires knowing company practices and processes, recognizing who has real influence, and being clear about other units' goals. * Harvard Business Publishing. "Political." *Breakthrough Leadership. 2012.*

Build trust between members

There are many ways to build personal bonds:

•**Host an off-site team meeting.** Convene your entire team, including remote members. Time spent together outside the office creates opportunities for team members to get to know one another on a personal level. These events help team members debunk stereotypes— for example, "the technology folks are hard to work with"—and find common ground for collaborative work. * "Team Management Challenges: Where Leaders Matter." Creating *Teams with an Edge: The Complete Skill Set to Build Powerful and Influential Team*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2006.

•**Hold team lunches.** Encourage casual conversation for a half-hour. Prompt team members to reveal a little bit about themselves—their upbringing, families, hobbies, travels. Whenever possible, have your virtual members attend by phone. * Field, Anne. "Diagnosing and Fixing Dysfunctional Teams."*Harvard Management Update* Mar. 2009.

•**Add a personal touch to meetings.** At the beginning of a meeting, ask each member—those in the room and those joining virtually—to give a brief personal or professional update. Building relationships before the meeting begins improves communication going forward.

•**Encourage periodic face-to-face meetings.** As time, geography, and budget allow, bring virtual team members physically together at important junctures, such as when key decisions must be made or when new members join the team. Use videoconferencing if physical meetings are not possible. This will reinforce the group bonding necessary for trust. * "The Virtual Team: A Collaborative Challenge."*Creating Teams with an Edge: The Complete Skill Set to Build Powerful and Influential Team*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2006.

•**Build team cohesiveness.** Have team members take a personality test, such as Myers-Briggs, and share the results with the group. Being aware of each other's personality styles helps people feel more comfortable airing conflicts and collaborating. * Field, Anne. "Diagnosing and Fixing Dysfunctional Teams." *Harvard Management Update* Mar. 2009.

2 Strengthen Team Identity

Successful teams have strong, shared identities. Your challenge is to strengthen your team's identity while maintaining the team's essential diversity

How team identity boosts performance

Team identity—team members' sense that they share a bond and a purpose—is critical for high performance. This ability to bring people together around a common mission is particularly important in today's organizations, where cross-functional teams frequently form to complete a project and then disband when the assignment is done.
Teams with a strong identity benefit from:

• Greater willingness to collaborate
• Freely shared information
• Increased effort and commitment
• Joint decision making
• Prioritizing team goals ahead of personal goals

Team identity is also important because it encourages mutual accountability for results. When team members see themselves as mutually accountable for achieving goals, they help teammates who are struggling or falling behind. Poor performers feel motivated to do better, and team members drop the "I did my share" attitude that weakens overall performance.

The causes of weak team identity

Weak team identity can be caused by many factors, including:

•**Newness of the team.** It's natural for new teams to suffer from some lack of identity. A feeling of team identity builds as people have opportunities to interact, discuss a common goal, or join forces in attacking a problem.

•**New members.** When new members join the team after the work has begun, team identity can suffer if the newcomers are disruptive or made to feel like outsiders.

•**Diversity of members.** The very differences that give a team its potential for high performance can sometimes make it difficult for members to develop a sense of team identity. Differing assumptions, cultural backgrounds, and ways of working and thinking can lead to misunderstandings or tensions among members. For example, people from a culture that values formality might be offended by counterparts who address them in an overly casual and familiar way.

•**Lack of a shared sense of purpose.** Without a clear and compelling reason for working together, the individuals who make up a team are likely to put their own interests above those of the group.

Strengthen team identity

BE TRANSPARENT ABOUT PROCESS

RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

INTEGRATE NEW MEMBERS

TEAM IDENTITY

ENCOURAGE COLLABORATIVE WORK

INSTILL URGENCY

REITERATE COMMON GOALS

- **Recognize individuals' skills**
- **Encourage collaborative work**
- **Reiterate the team's common goals**
- **Instill a sense of urgency**
- **Be transparent about your process**
- **Integrate new members**

Make Decisions Effectively

Assess decision-making methods

Teams often make better decisions than individuals. When people from diverse perspectives come together to choose a course of action, they bring a breadth of knowledge that can improve outcomes. But to make the most of a team's collective wisdom, you need to follow a disciplined decision-making process.

Determine if your team's current decision-making methods are working. Are sound decisions being made? Assess whether your team is following their agreed-upon processes and rules for making decisions. If not, remind members of the decision-making methods they agreed to follow and help them get back on track. Decision-making processes that include these five characteristics have improved odds of being successful: * Garvin, David A. and Michael A. Roberto. "What You Don't Know About Making Decisions." *Harvard Business Review* Sept. 2001.

•**Multiple alternatives.** Generally, successful decisions result from a review of many alternative solutions. Be sure your team considers several alternatives before making a decision. This "point-counterpoint" approach helps to ensure that at least two alternatives are considered. Remember, a "go/no go" choice involves only one alternative.

•**Open debate.** To generate creative alternatives, you need to facilitate open, constructive debate. Debate should be task-related, not emotional or personal. Silence or suppressed arguments are signs that the debate is not sufficiently robust.

•**Assumption testing.** It's unlikely that your team will have complete information at the time a decision needs to be made. The team will have to make assumptions as it proceeds. Make sure members recognize when they are relying on facts and when they are making assumptions. They may still choose to use untested assumptions in the decision-making process, but should reevaluate the plausibility of these assumptions throughout the process.

•**Well-defined objectives.** The team should continually review the objectives during the decision-making process to ensure that the discussion stays on target. If conditions change, the team should refine the objectives or even the definition of the problem to meet the new conditions.

•**Perceived fairness.** Engagement throughout the process is critical to the success of a decision. Team members should feel that their ideas are being considered in order to feel ownership of the final decision. If team members stop participating in conversations or are doing so reluctantly, they may be dissatisfied with the process.

Examine whether or not the team is using the best method for the decision at hand. Determine if the decision-making method your team selects is appropriate for the types of decisions your team needs to make.

Know the consequences of unproductive decision-making processes. These include lost time, poor choices, and decisions that team members won't support. Additional costs are erosion of morale, wasted energy, and the diversion of the team's attention from its goals.
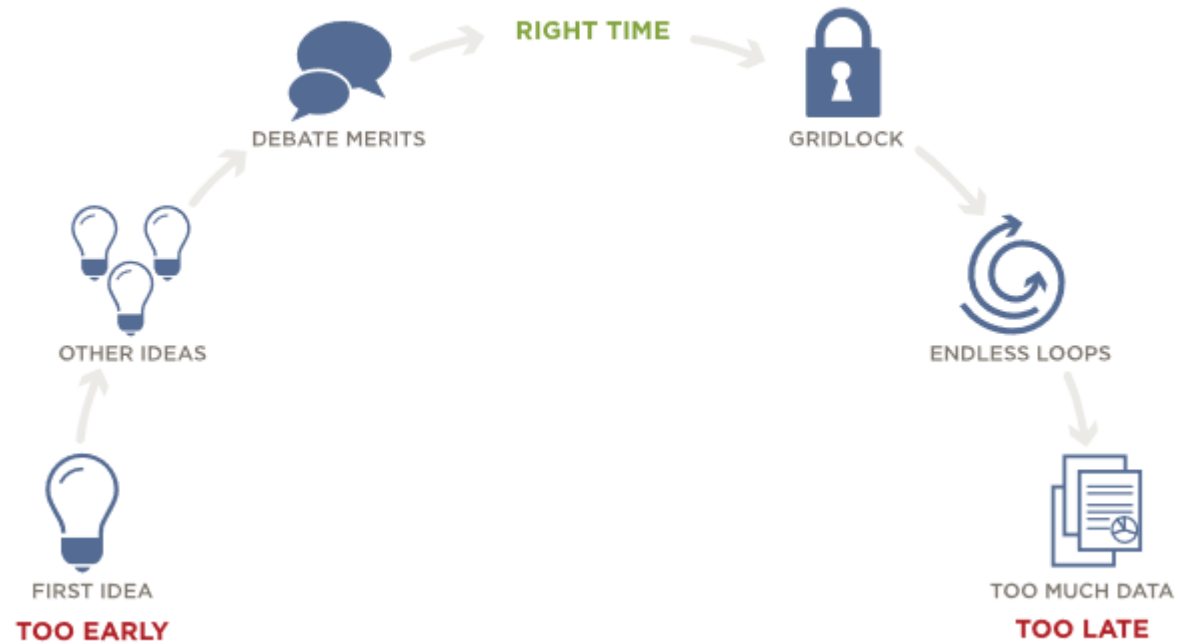
Facilitate the process

If your team gets stuck, your job is to facilitate an effective process. Try the following techniques to help your team make a decision:

• **Break big decisions into smaller ones.** If your team gets bogged down trying to reach agreement on a big decision, break the decision into smaller pieces that may be easier to agree on. Suppose the team is trying to select one of three product designs. Focus members' attention on smaller aspects of the decision. For example, ask: "What are the most important features that the new product needs to have?" If members can agree on the answer to that question, they may find it easier to agree on the selection of the product design.

• **Shift people out of their comfort zones.** * Garvin, David A. and Michael A. Roberto. "What You Don't Know About Making Decisions." *Harvard Business Review Sept. 2001.* Ask team members to research and argue for a point of view they don't necessarily support. Or ask people to play functional or managerial roles different from their own; for example, have a frontline employee assume a CEO's perspective.

• **Ask what needs to happen to reach agreement.** If your team is stuck, it may be that their needs—conscious or unconscious—aren't being met. Have each member identify what it would take for them to agree on a path forward. Once these needs are visible, you'll find them easier to address as a group. You may even discover that people are closer to coming to agreement than they thought.

Bring the process to closure

Making a decision too early

Bring the Process to Closure

RIGHT TIME

DEBATE MERITS

GRIDLOCK

OTHER IDEAS

ENDLESS LOOPS

FIRST IDEA
TOO EARLY

TOO MUCH DATA
TOO LATE

Making a decision too early. * Garvin, David A. and Michael A. Roberto. "What You Don't Know About Making Decisions." *Harvard Business Review* Sept. 2001. Occasionally, people's desire to be seen as team players outweighs their willingness to engage in thoughtful debate. Consequently, the group accepts the first idea offered without generating alternatives and debating their relative merit.

To defend against premature decisions:

•**Pay attention to body language.** Be aware of body language that suggests discontent (i.e., furrowed brows, crossed arms, audible sighs, pushing away from the table). To get team members actively engaged, consider taking a break. Talk individually to the team members who seem most upset and encourage them to speak up—remind them that their input is valuable in reaching the best decision. Reconvene the group and try again.

•**Designate a "devil's advocate."** Appoint a respected team member to play the role of "devil's advocate." Charge this person with challenging the assumptions and conclusions of the majority. He or she should represent dissenting ideas and contrary information

Making a decision too late. * Garvin, David A. and Michael A. Roberto. "What You Don't Know About Making Decisions." *Harvard Business Review* Sept. 2001. Sometimes teams hit gridlock—people with conflicting opinions refuse to yield and conversations loop endlessly. Other times, team members strive for fairness by listening to every view and resolving every question before reaching a conclusion. Teams replay the same alternatives, objections, and requests for further information.

To defend against lack of closure:

•**Help your team become comfortable with ambiguity.** Encourage members to make timely decisions in the absence of comprehensive data or answers to every question. If your team is unable to make a decision, you may need to end the debate, thank everyone for their valuable input, and make the call.

•**Create a culture based on trust.** Sometimes teams are unable to come to decisions because members aren't comfortable saying what they really think. When you engage in conversations with openness and honesty, you set the tone for your team to do so as well.

4 Resolve Conflict

Encourage constructive conflict

Conflict within teams is inevitable—and that's okay. Conflict is essential to the creativity, collaboration, and learning that make a team high performing. * Kling, Jim. "Tension in Teams." *Harvard Management Update* Jan. 2009.
In managing your team, you shouldn't avoid conflict or try to simply reduce disagreements. Skilled leaders purposefully encourage debate, disagreement, and discussion to get the best from their team. * Keller Johnson, Lauren. "How to Encourage Healthy Conflict." *Harvard Management Update* Aug. 2008.
The trick is to encourage healthy conflict—by decreasing the negative elements and increasing the good ones

NO

CONTENTIOUS BEHAVIOR

DEBATE, DISCUSSION

To encourage healthy, constructive conflict

LEARN AND GROW

Establish a shared method for resolving conflict:
Establishing a structured method for dealing with team issues and resolving disagreements will help your team engage
 in healthier conflict. If team members know what to do when friction arises, they won't shy away from necessary
 disagreements-and they'll be able to solve their own problems

Set conflict ground rules : Examples of conflict ground rules could include:
    Wait for another person to finish speaking before jumping into the conversation.
    Acknowledge the value of another person's idea, even if you don't agree with it.
    If you disagree with someone, explain the reasons behind your position

Provide criteria for contentious trade-offs. :
When contentious, or even zero-sum, decisions arise for a team, having specific criteria for making trade-offs can be helpful.
 To define these criteria, make sure all team members are clear on the organization's strategy. Be specific about the team's
goals and highest priorities. When all team members are clear about the team's and organization's goals, they are better
able to make trade-offs.

Steps to resolve destructive conflict

Left unresolved, some conflicts can destroy a team's ability to achieve its goals. If you find your team embroiled in destructive conflict and unable to move forward, help them resolve the problem by following three steps.

1. FIND THE ROOT CAUSE   2. FACILITATE A RESOLUTION   3. REMIND PEOPLE TO FORGIVE

Step 1: Define the root cause : When conflict arises in your team, ask yourself the following questions to uncover the conflict's root cause:

"Why are team members arguing with each other?"

"Is there a deeper personality conflict here?"

"Does this conflict have organizational causes/roots?"

"Is this a recurring pattern?"

"Why does one member always insist on getting their way?"

"Is the cause of this conflict a behavior? A clash of opinions? A situation?"

When appropriate, involve team members in this inquiry process.

Step 2: Facilitate a resolution : Once you understand the root cause of a conflict, avoid dictating a resolution. Many managers are tempted to use their authority to enforce a solution, but you should employ this tactic with care. Imposed solutions tend not to be as thorough or as lasting as solutions that the team arrives at itself. Your job is to help *facilitate* a resolution. Give the team a chance to work out its own problems. Your "listening-to-telling ratio" should be 90:10. * Kling, Jim. "Tension in Teams." *Harvard Management Update* Jan. 2009. When you do speak, restate team members' perspectives and encourage those in disagreement to do the same. The goal is to empower your team to resolve their own conflicts.

To help facilitate a resolution, you should:

Stick to the facts.

Focus on behavior, not character

Acknowledge all opinions

Encourage active listening

Step 3: Remind team members to forgive:

Once a conflict has been resolved, remind people to forgive one another for any hurt feelings or damaged egos.
•**Point out that forgiveness is not a sign of weakness.** Rather, it enables people to let go of anger—and prevents anger from poisoning future encounters between team members.
•**Be a forgiveness role model.** Don't harbor a grudge or ill will after a conflict has been resolved. And remember to apologize when you've done something wrong. * *Managing Teams*. Pocket Mentor Digital. Harvard Business Press, 2010.
•**Look at the situation as a learning experience.** Your example will influence members of the team to behave the same way. Encourage an exploration of what caused the failure and what could be changed next time. * Kling, Jim. "Tension in Teams." *Harvard Management Update* Jan. 2009.

Tips for dealing difficult team members

Difficult team members can prevent your team from doing its best work. Here are tips for dealing with team members whose behavior stands in the way of successful collaboration:

- **The show-off**. Offer a compliment, then switch focus to another team member. "Jeffrey, that really worked well for you; what have you found to be successful, Daniel?"
- **The overly helpful person**. Make sure to praise them for their contributions, then ask someone else to take a turn. "Sophia, thank you for your great work on that spreadsheet. Janet, can you share your findings?"
- **The negative commenter**. Deter this behavior by challenging them to come up with a positive alternative. "Prabal, you've made it very clear that you don't agree with the decision. Can you offer an alternative?"
- **The person who won't let go**. To avoid going down a road that has little value, be assertive. Take the blame and redirect the conversation in order to move on. "I'm sorry, Rob. I must have defined that issue poorly. What we're really talking about here is..."

5. Encourage Collaboration

Tactics for encouraging collaboration :
Open Communication
Participation
Creative Thinking

Encourage open communication:

Solicit members' views

Keep members informed

Follow communication best practices :

To foster effective team communication, follow certain communication best practices:

•Use inclusive pronouns such as "we," "us," and "our" when referring to your team.

•Use questions to open space for dialogue and feedback. For example, ask, "Can you tell me what makes this issue important to you?" "What are your reservations or concerns?" "Let's stop for a minute and revisit our objectives (or examine our process)."

•Seek clarification as needed. Ask, "I don't understand. Could you explain what you're saying in another way?"

•Don't interrupt team members who have less authority than others in the organization.

•Draw everyone's attention to the team's goals. Talking about goals helps to focus team communication and direct people's attention away from interpersonal conflicts or other distractions.

Increase team participation

Teams are most successful when all members participate wholeheartedly in the team's work, meetings, and social events. With greater participation comes greater collaboration

As team leader:

Stay attuned to participation levels

Reiterate the team norms

Make it easy to meet expectations

Ask for explanations

Assess the fit between team members and tasks

Remember virtual team members

Foster creative thinking

1Promote diversity
**2Balance contradictory characteristics**

•**Expertise and fresh perspectives.** Your team needs a balance of experience and new ideas. To strike this balance, bring in outsiders to augment the more seasoned members.
•**Professionalism and play.** Creativity thrives on playfulness, but business must be conducted professionally. To maintain this balance, provide time and space for play, but clarify the appropriate times and places.
•**Planning and flexibility.** A team must plan projects carefully while also improvising when things inevitably don't go as planned. To balance planning with improvisation, encourage team members to look for ways to turn unexpected events into opportunities. And keep plans flexible enough to incorporate new ideas.

3 Engage in divergent and convergent thinking
team's creativity stems from two types of thinking:
•**Divergent thinking**—seeing and doing things in a range of nontraditional ways and viewing familiar things from new angles
•**Convergent thinking**—channeling the results of divergent thinking into concrete proposals for action
To generate the most creativity, a team needs to engage *first* in divergent thinking, and *then* in convergent thinking.

DIVERGE   CONVERGE
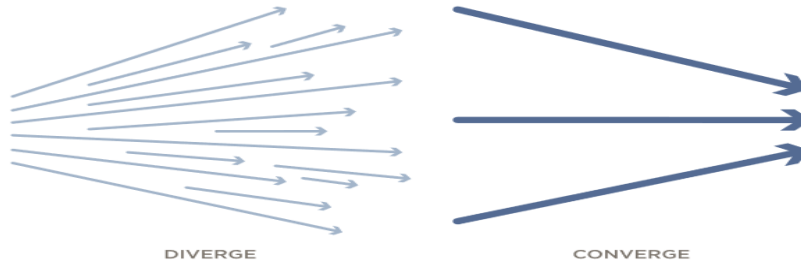
6 Evaluate Performance

Measure results and process

Some performance measures focus on *results*—the measurable outcome of the team's work. These measures are determined by the team's objectives. Results-based performance measures can include:

•Improved customer satisfaction

•Lower production costs

•Enhanced product quality

•Faster delivery time

Other performance measures focus on *process*—the way the team is achieving its results. Process-based performance measures can focus on behaviors such as:

Collaboration and information sharing

Conflict resolution

Positive interpersonal relationships

Willingness to make changes and take risks

Effective problem solving and decision making

Adherence to agreed-upon processes and procedures

Review individual performance

In addition to your team's overall performance, assess individual members' performance. Each of your team's members serves in a number of roles—individual contributor, member of your team, and member of the larger organization. So it's helpful to evaluate each person's performance in each of them.
Consider these evaluation methods:
•**Team leader review:** You evaluate each member's performance.
•**Management review:** Your supervisor evaluates individual and team performance.
•**Self-appraisal:** Each member rates his or her own performance.
•**Peer rating:** Team members assess each other's contributions.
•**Customer satisfaction rating:** Internal and external customers rate the team's and individual members' performance.

Review your own performance

Reward effectively

End of Presentation
Please attempt Quiz