Team Basics: On the Same Page

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https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2017/01/17/15/26/network-1987214_1280.png

INTRODUCTION

Over the years we have heard that "good" teams are the result of "luck". 🍀 Hmmmm…although every team is different and needs to negotiate how to work together to accomplish shared goals, we think *all* teams have the potential to be "good" teams.[1] This involves making the time to (1) set up thoughtfully, (2) use structures and processes to keep all team members on the same page as work progresses, and (3) regularly check in to discuss how things are going and make adjustments.

To help get on the same page, this handout takes about 15 minutes to "get the gist", an hour to work your way through the resources, and another hour to work through the suggested processes with your team. This upstream work will most likely save you time (and anguish) overall. 😌

GENERAL HELPFUL APPROACHES AND ATTITUDES FOR ACHIEVING Shared Goals

- Decide on how you are going to communicate AND the frequency (cadence) of your communication.
- Be flexible and open to new data, perspectives, and ideas (Yes, you can change your mind without losing your face)
- Be patient with your team members–and yourself
- Reflect on HOW your team is functioning regularly
- When requested, provide feedback
- Use all team activities as opportunities to practice your durable skills like negotiating, professionalism, time management, etc
- Turn up when you agreed to and have the work done that you said you would do when you said would do it
- Don't EVER end a meeting without action items and clearly established responsibilities (who is doing what by when–action log)

[1] We are defining "good" teams as teams that (1) get good work done together (i.e. accomplish their goals) and (2) might even want to work together on other projects!

Strategies	Why	How	Resources
Develop a **Team Functioning Plan/ Team Charter**	This sets the project up for success by ensuring everyone understands how you will work, who will do what, team roles, etc.	Use a shared document	What Is a Team Charter, and Why Is It Important? (~8 minutes to read) Conflict Management and Learning through Reflection (~ 8 minutes plus reflection time) (includes **link to team charter templates**)
1. Project goal(s)	Making sure everyone is clear on the goal from the outset is perhaps the single most important factor for teamwork.	Write the goals down and sign off on them	Defining Clear Goals for your Team (~ 5 minutes to read)
2. Project timeline	Target dates can move projects along. No date? Not done…	Use backward planning to set end dates and milestone dates. A shared spreadsheet works great for this purpose.	Follow the approach used in Backwards Planning (2:47 video) with your team
3. Team roles	Things can fall through the cracks when team members aren't clear on who is doing what by when.	● Work through who is doing what. ● Create–and use–a shared team activity log. Keep the log up to date. ● Include meeting summaries in your **Activity Log.**	Clearly Defined Roles Are More Important To Teamwork Than Clearly Defined Work (Aspect 9 of 10) (~8 minutes to read) How Understanding Your Team's Roles Can Help You Build A Better Team (~ 2 minute read)
4. Team processes	Consistent processes that are clear to everyone are like the rules of a game. Clarify processes to streamline "play."	Decide on how to: ● communicate AND the frequency (cadence) of your communication. ● share information. ● meet. (frequency, times, platforms)	The Importance of Negotiating (~ 6 minute read)
5. How to address problems/ differences	Invariably problems come up.	It is important to discuss how you will *address* problems in advance of them arising.	Keeping Collaborative (Writing) Projects Afloat (~6 minute read) Navigating "Together" Work (~ 6 minutes read)

Note: The following are Bonus resources and are not included in the estimated 1 hour to complete.
Bonus resource: 6 Tips for Effective Teamwork (10:26 video)
Bonus resource: How can Teamwork Fail (8:54 video)
Bonus resource: 6 Steps to Define Roles & Responsibilities in a Team (10:46 video)