

What Successful Teams Do Differently

People are complicated, and when you bundle a lot of them together, say, in teams, many issues might arise. Unfortunately, team building in organizations often fails to reach its true potential because a data-driven approach that accounts for interpersonal factors is not developed.



You have balance sheets detailing your organization's financial health. Still, you might fail to apply the same quantitative approach to understanding how to maximize the potential of your most precious asset: **PEOPLE.**

In reality, most teams fail due to a perfect storm of factors: ineffective

communication, unclear roles and goals, a lack of mutual trust, poor team cognition, and poor leadership. However, successful teams, overcome these barriers by operating differently.

What Successful Teams Do Differently

1) Cohesion & Trust

They form strong bonds rooted in trust and shared purpose.

2) Open Communication

They ensure information flows across all layers of the organization, not just within their clusters.

3) External Awareness

They reach beyond their team. Members act as ambassadors and scouts, building bridges with management, stakeholders, and other teams.

Additionally, according to Eduardo Salas and Scott Tannenbaum, world experts in team performance, great teams consistently master what they call the **"7 Cs" of teamwork:**

1. Capability – The right mix of skills and talent
2. Cooperation – A mindset of mutual respect and collaboration
3. Coordination – Clear roles and accountability
4. Cognition – Shared understanding of goals and tasks
5. Communication – Transparent and timely information flow

6. Coaching – Leadership that develops and supports the team, aiding self-development

7. Conditions – Organizational culture that reinforces teamwork

Teams that engage in pre-briefs, debriefs, and reflective “stop–start–continue” sessions vastly outperform those that don’t, because they constantly recalibrate, learn, and grow.

When organizations invest in understanding how people work together (not just what they can do), cool stuff happens:

1) Collaboration becomes effortless

2) Collective intelligence emerges

3) Performance exceeds the sum of its parts

Guess what?

Team performance isn't something you wish for; it's actionable and repeatable. It's measurable, understandable, and trainable.

What is team culture?

Team culture is the personality of a team — the values, beliefs, and behaviors that shape how people work together. A strong team culture promotes trust, psychological safety, and a sense of belonging, which fuels effective team collaboration.

It also influences everything from daily decisions to long-term strategies, shaping how team members connect in any type of team environment. Strong team cultures reflect shared values, clear team principles, and a commitment to a positive team dynamic.

Why team culture matters

A strong team culture often overlaps with a collaborative culture, where employees work together openly, share knowledge, and trust each other to contribute toward shared goals.

It supports professional development and helps improve team outcomes by encouraging growth, ownership, and open communication. Whether you're managing high-performing teams or building a team from scratch, team culture is the foundation of a thriving work environment, and a positive team culture experience.

How can team culture impact your business?

Company culture is the core set of values that dictate how a company will operate day-to-day as it works to achieve its long-term goals, guiding employees as they interact with leadership, customers, and stakeholders.

When your collaborative teams are aligned with your company culture and believe in carrying it out, it shows. They're happier and more engaged with their work, which means better quality and quantity of work. That, in turn, means more revenue for your business.

McKinsey and Co. reports that organizations in the top quartile for organizational health are nearly three times more likely to deliver superior long-term performance compared to their peers.

Positive team culture can also help you attract and retain top talent, saving on costly employee churn expenses. In a 2019 BuiltIn survey, 46 percent of job seekers said company culture was an important factor in the application process. Meanwhile, 47 percent cited poor company culture as their driving reason for seeking a new job. Investing in culture is one of the best ways to recruit and keep top talent.

A great culture gives employees purpose and effectively aligns every team member to work toward achieving business goals. Here are six ways to build excellent team culture in your organization.

A great team Culture

A great team culture looks like a safe, open environment where people trust each other, share clear goals, and feel supported to do their best work.

Key Signs of Great Team Culture

- ✓ Psychological Safety: Team members share new ideas and admit mistakes without fear of judgment or punishment.
- ✓ Open Communication: People talk honestly, listen actively, and share information without hidden agendas.
- ✓ Shared Purpose: Everyone understands the team's main goal and knows how their individual work helps reach it.
- ✓ High Trust and Respect: Colleagues rely on each other's skills and respect diverse backgrounds and viewpoints.
- ✓ Meaningful Recognition: Hard work and success are noticed and praised often, making team members feel valued.
- ✓ Support for Growth: Leaders provide tools, feedback, and learning opportunities so everyone can improve their skills

How to build great team culture

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Feedback

- **Do:** Give specific and timely feedback regularly.
- **Don't:** Avoid giving feedback or wait until it's too late.

Appreciation

- **Do:** Regularly acknowledge and appreciate good work.
- **Don't:** Forget to say thank you or recognize efforts.

Communication

- **Do:** Communicate openly and frequently with everyone.
- **Don't:** Keep important information to yourself or create confusion.

Respect

- **Do:** Treat everyone with dignity and kindness.
- **Don't:** Tolerate any form of disrespect or discrimination.

Empowerment

- **Do:** Give employees the autonomy to make decisions.
- **Don't:** Micromanage or control every action they take.

Recognition

- **Do:** Recognize achievements both publicly and privately.
- **Don't:** Ignore accomplishments or make recognition rare.

Trust

- **Do:** Be honest, transparent, and dependable.
- **Don't:** Be inconsistent or secretive when making decisions.

Growth

- **Do:** Provide opportunities for learning and career advancement.
- **Don't:** Neglect personal development or block career paths.

Wellness

- **Do:** Promote a healthy work-life balance and wellness.
- **Don't:** Encourage overwork or disregard employees' well-being.

Collaboration

- **Do:** Foster a collaborative environment where teamwork thrives.
- **Don't:** Let your team work in silos or make people work in isolation.

Inclusivity

- **Do:** Encourage everyone to share ideas and participate.
- **Don't:** Let anyone feel excluded or marginalized.

Support

- **Do:** Be available to help employees succeed inside & outside the office.
- **Don't:** Be distant or unapproachable when employees need guidance.