



LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS: A TECHNIQUE YOU MIGHT NOT THINK OF TO BOOST PERFORMANCE

Why do organizations agree with their team coaches that it is a good idea to create Team Agreements? Two reasons: to drive performance and to eliminate the dysfunctions of teams.

Creating Team Agreements (or recommitting to them) is an efficient and fun way to drive and enhance performance and bring the team together. A team coach can provide the framework and facilitation to produce a meaningful set of guidelines for a leadership team.

One leadership team we worked with created their Team Agreements as part of a cultural shift that included 360 degree assessments and coaching for the top three tiers of management. The CEO said that the Agreements transformed the way his team dealt with issues in the company and that the result was the best year they have had to date at that time.

Here are four reasons why you might want to consider generating your own Team Agreements (aka Team Guidelines, Guideposts, Code of Behavior...):

1. You observe that trust is declining.
2. There is an elephant (or two or three) in the room and people are not saying what needs to be said or discussing what needs to be discussed.
3. Accountability isn't where it needs to be—the leader or the team or both are not holding each other, and themselves, accountable for behavior and/or results.
4. Results are lower than expected.

In addition to those diagnostic reasons, here are five junctures where it might be wise to do an exercise to create/renew Team Agreements.

1. If significant time has passed since Team Agreements were created (six months or more). Maintenance (periodic check-ups for relevance and effectiveness) and accountability are important. Keep the Agreements on the team agenda; have a plan on how everyone on the team will be held equally to account.
2. If you are reorganizing your team.
3. If there are a significant number of new members on the team.
4. If it is a newly formed team.
5. If there has been an event in the larger organization such as an ethics breach, layoffs, or something else similarly traumatic.

Have there been instances when your team might have benefited from having Team Agreements to guide behavior? If your team operates using a set of Agreements, how have they helped the team? What do you need to do to renew/refresh those Agreements?