How Effective Teams Work: Q&A

**1. How can this content be applied to multigenerational teams? What are the implications for Gen Z?**

Research shows that age differences are much more impactful than generational differences. Across generations we see a lot of similarities in what people want out of work: interesting and meaningful jobs that provide challenges and growth opportunities, opportunities to form good relationships, and be respected by others.

I have found that how people prefer to communicate can be impacted by their age/generational grouping – younger generations have grown up with digital communication tools and tend to default to their use in communication, while older generations tend to default to the communication tools that they are most comfortable with. However, effective communication will use different methods based on what needs to be communicated – this is where team norms need to be established and reinforced so that all members adjust their communication methods to the needs of the situation.

For more information, search “Adam Grant + Generations.” He has some interesting findings and discussions about this topic.

**2. Do you have any tips on creating psychological safety so team members feel comfortable sharing feedback to their teams?**

I wrote an article about psychological safety in 2021 – which you can find here: <https://www.cphrab.ca/no-trust-no-team-%E2%80%93-importance-psychological-safety>

But a couple of quick tips:

* Be positive – assume that people are trying to come up with the best ideas/solutions
* Be curious and take the time to fully understand what team members are thinking
* Talk about a shared future
* If you are a team leader – you need to go first! Share your vulnerabilities, challenges and areas where you need help; share mistakes you have made and the lessons you have learned as a result.
* Team Debriefs are also an effective way to develop psychological safety – this method teaches all team members to take a learning approach and diagnose areas in need of development.

**3. What happens when you have such different personalities on a team and conflict occurs? Conflict resolution is always the toughest to deal with. Best tips?**

Addressing conflict can be stressful and intimidating – but failure to resolve conflict is one of the primary leadership deficits that we see.

Quick tips:

* Redefine conflict simply as a situation where people have different perspectives; too often people automatically assume the worst and think of conflict only in negative terms.
* Assess the situation
* Choose behaviours accordingly; if it’s an emergency and you need to move fast, you can be more assertive; if you need to develop complex solutions, you can be more collaborative

For more on conflict I would recommend exploring the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument here:

<https://www.psychometrics.com/assessments/thomas-kilmann-conflict-mode/>

Or you can read more of our blog posts on this topic here:

<https://www.psychometrics.com/?s=Conflict&search-type=on>

**4. How can team members evaluate how it is going as a team?**

Teams need to set aside the time to discuss how things are working for them. Great methods for this are called Team debriefs, Post-mortems, After Action Reports. Sometimes teams will need a facilitator to get them started, but once they have the hang of it, they should be able to self-regulate! A example of a basic format is included in the slide deck (#25).

A second method that I use when working with teams to is show aggregate results of the team’s Work Personality Index results. An example of this is in the slide deck (#26) which shows the distribution of a team’s scores on the Analytical Thinking and Democratic scales – I then ask them how this distribution impacts how the team solved problems; what worked well; where they found it didn’t work well. This approach also works well if you are using the MBTI assessment.

**5. We have leaders who are terrified of giving feedback because they are afraid that people leave and we already have retention issues, how should that be addressed?**

It is very helpful to provide leaders with training on how to provide constructive feedback. In this approach the feedback is given for the purpose of helping the recipient develop and increase their skills. Leaders need to avoid feedback that comes across as only evaluative – e.g. you did well (or poorly).

Our work with employees has shown a consistent desire for opportunities to learn and grow – they actually want feedback. BUT, it needs to be delivered in a manner that aligns with helping them learn and develop their capabilities.

Leaders also benefit from increased self-awareness and how their natural approach to engaging others will come with the natural strengths and potential blind spots. Assessment tools such as the WPI Leadership Report can help individual leaders develop this increased self-understanding.

**6. What about leaders who act like parents for their team instead of leaders in the name of hyper empathy?**

Helicopter leaders can have the same negative influence on their team’s ability to grow and tackle challenges that helicopter parents have on their children. Leaders as parents is a incredibly patronizing and hierarchical approach that team members quickly pick-up on and do not appreciate. So while the leader thinks they are being considerate, they are getting in the way of team members learning and development.

**7. How do you maximize engagement for a hybrid team?**

Shared leadership is a great way to start! You can read more here:

Hoch, Julia & Dulebohn, James. (2017). Team personality composition, emergent leadership and shared leadership in virtual teams: A theoretical framework. Human Resource Management Review. 27. 10.1016/j.hrmr.2016.12.012.

**8. Any tips for building/rebuilding trust? Any noted/studied trends of changes in trust post the pandemic working environment changes impacting team work?**

Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman have been doing a lot of interesting work around building trust and have identified 3 key elements that leaders need to focus on to increase trust:

* Positive relationships – leaders need to establish cooperative relationships, resolve conflict and give helpful feedback
* Good judgment – leaders need to anticipate and respond to problems
* Consistency – leaders need to be role models; they need to walk their talk

**9. How do we obtain a copy of the Deloitte capital Trends Report?**

You can find the 2023 version here: <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/focus/human-capital-trends.html>

Past versions can be found by searching “Deloitte Human Capital Trends”