

# Top tips for Teams

Energising Existing Teams to Perform



Top tips for Teams: Energising Existing Teams to Perform

Top tips for Teams: Motivating a Team

Top tips for Teams: Relationships and Roles

## Energising Existing Teams to Perform

**The pace of change within an organisation or team needs to keep up with the pace of change outside it.**

Jack Welch, CEO General Electric

Some teams within the NHS may remain stable in terms of membership. However, the world around them is moving at a rapid pace, and it is important that those teams are in tune with those changes so they:

- Know what's happening outside the team
- Understand the impacts on the team
- Can continually improve to deliver what is expected of them.

### High Performing Teams

High performing teams don't just happen by chance. Mike Woodcock observed teams that performed well and those that didn't. He analysed that the high performing teams possessed the following building blocks: By establishing and maintaining processes and opportunities for the building blocks, a team will perform well.



### Team Healthcheck

We all know teams who have many of these building blocks in place, and equally, teams where some of them are missing which impacts on their performance.



*And what about your team?*

Review your own team, using the questions below to honestly assess the health of your own team.

<p><b>Good Communication</b></p> <p>Do we have good, open communication between all team members, and at all levels within the team?</p>	<p><b>High Pride in the Job</b></p> <p>Do we take pride in our work? Are we a team that celebrates success when we perform well?</p>	<p><b>Balanced Roles</b></p> <p>Do we make the most of the talents and skills within the team? Is work distributed appropriately and fairly?</p>
<p><b>Clear Vision, Objectives and Agreed Goals</b></p> <p>Could everyone in the team articulate what our team's current objectives are? Is everyone in the team committed to the team's vision?</p>	<p><b>High Creativity</b></p> <p>Do we actively search for new ways in which to innovate and improve things? When team members suggest ideas, are they listened to and acted on?</p>	<p><b>Good Leadership</b></p> <p>Does the team leader get the best out of each team member? Does the team leader enable team members to work together effectively? Does the team leader give equal focus to performance, quality, people and service?</p>
<p><b>Regular Team Review</b></p> <p>Do we take time out to review how well you have completed a task? Do we review how well the team is working together and discuss how it needs to function effectively in the future?</p>	<p><b>Good Processes and Procedures</b></p> <p>Do we have clear processes for all tasks that everyone in the team understands? Do our procedures and ways of working reflect the direction of the team and organisation?</p>	<p><b>Task Completion</b></p> <p>Do we deliver as a team? Do we have a reputation for getting things done?</p>
<p><b>Helpful Inter-Group Relations</b></p> <p>Do we have good relationships with other teams? Do we work together with other teams and departments to overcome problems and find solutions?</p>	<p><b>Harmonious Relationships</b></p> <p>Do people in the team get on well with each other? Do conversations and meetings flow easily? Do all team members feel able to contribute?</p>	<p><b>Satisfied Team Members</b></p> <p>Is everyone in the team engaged with the work of the team? Is there a sense that all team members want to be part of the team?</p>

Where you have answered YES to all questions in a box, this building block is a strength of your team.

Where you have answered NO to one or all questions in a box, this area could do with some attention to improve the performance of your team. You may want to prioritise by reflecting on which of the building blocks are most important to the purpose and outputs of your team.

Here are some simple actions you can take to improve each building block:

Building Block	Solutions
<b>Good Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold regular team meetings.</li> <li>• Ensure everyone in the team has an opportunity to share opinions and ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>Clear Vision, Objectives and Agreed Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display the team's objectives in a prominent place in the office.</li> <li>• Link the team's activities to the objectives and the vision.</li> </ul>
<b>Regular Team Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate successes and learn from mistakes.</li> <li>• Set time aside each quarter to discuss how the team is doing.</li> </ul>
<b>Helpful Inter-Group Relations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Service Standards with other teams, especially around inter-dependent areas of work.</li> <li>• Invite other teams into your office or team meetings.</li> <li>• Buddy up team members with staff from other teams.</li> </ul>
<b>High Pride in the Job</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be clear about "what good looks like" and ensure everyone knows this.</li> <li>• Be sure to praise and celebrate when the standard is achieved.</li> </ul>
<b>High Creativity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look externally to find out what other teams and organisations do well, and build on it.</li> <li>• Set aside time each quarter for the team to share ideas about continually improving ways of working.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Processes and Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge team members to describe or write down the processes they use, being open to challenge to make it effective and efficient.</li> <li>• Walk through the process/procedure from a different perspective, e.g. the customer, another team.</li> </ul>

Building Block	Solutions
<b>Harmonious Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddy up new members of the team with an existing team member.</li> <li>• Where there are areas of disagreement within the team, use the question "what are we trying to achieve?" to move the situation forward.</li> </ul>
<b>Balanced Roles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link the activities of each team member directly to the objectives, to ensure all tasks add value.</li> <li>• Where workloads are unbalanced, consider what training needs to take place to redistribute activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider what needs to be done by the team leader, and what could be delegated to others in the team.</li> <li>• Ask the team members where the team leader adds most value, and ensure their weekly plan devotes considerable time to those activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Task Completion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be clear about the priorities of the team.</li> <li>• Display key deadlines for all the team to see.</li> <li>• Ensure there is cover within the team for critical tasks.</li> </ul>
<b>Satisfied Team Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periodically ask the team:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What's working well.</li> <li>- What could we do differently.</li> <li>- What's one thing that they/you could change to improve the team.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be seen to take action when staff provide feedback.</li> </ul>

### Five Minute Energisers



1. Start the day with a Focus for Five, gathering the team together and asking everyone to share their top focus for the day. It's a great way to share priorities and encourage support between colleagues.
2. Pick a common staff grumble and spend five minutes brainstorming ways of fixing it. The words no, but and can't are not allowed!
3. Have a competition to see who can eat a Fruit Pastille for the longest without chewing it.

# Motivating a Team

“Wearing the same shirts doesn't make you a team”

Buchholz and Roth

In the NHS at the moment, the make up of teams is changing, priorities seem to be continually shifting and fluctuating workloads are putting untold pressures onto teams. All this can leave team members feeling bewildered and distracted. As a manager it's your job to maintain focus and keep the spirits of your team high so that you can continue to deliver.

## Creating the right environment

Think about your experiences as a customer in a shop or a restaurant. It's almost impossible to get good service from a staff member who isn't motivated. We spend a lot of our time at work so it's critical that you can create a culture in your team where people are engaged in what they do and want to do a good job.

Imagine working at a fish mongers stall. It's cold, it's wet, it smells fishy, it involves early starts. You could be excused for thinking it's not the most motivating work environment.

Yet research done on motivation found the Pike Place Fishmongers Stall in Seattle, USA, to be the most motivating work environment in the world (as referenced in FISH, by Stephen C Lundin PhD, Harry Paul and John Christensen)! They were able to energise creativity and problem solving abilities among the staff, and motivate them to go the extra mile, happily!

So what are their secrets? Pike Place put their motivating environment down to four simple principles:

Motivational Principles	Action
<p><b>Choose Your Attitude</b></p> <p>People often allow their circumstances and external events to affect their attitude, yet in reality, only 'YOU' are able to choose your attitude, and how you're going to respond to an event. There is always a choice about the way you do your work, even if there's no choice about the work that you're doing!</p>	<p>Develop a Team Charter or Team Values that articulate how the team will behave towards each other.</p> <p>Be sure to talk about the positives, e.g. progress made, what's good about the team, what's gone well.</p> <p>Challenge those who have a negative attitude, pointing out their impact on others.</p>
<p><b>Be there for Your Team</b></p> <p>'Being there' is about being present for your team. If someone is talking to us on the phone, how many of us continue to tap into our pc? Sometimes it can be heard! Being there is about being present! It makes a difference!</p> <p>Being present will help you:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen</li> <li>• Create rapport with your team</li> <li>• Get a reputation of being a people person</li> </ul>	<p>Have regular one-to-ones with everyone in your team – away from the desk.</p> <p>Physically move away from your PC if someone in your team starts a conversation with you.</p> <p>If you don't have time to deal with a team issue there and then, explain this to the team member and create a time when you can talk.</p> <p>If you have been in meetings or away from the team for the day, aim to check in with the team at the end of the day.</p>
<p><b>Value and Appreciate Others</b></p> <p>Working in a team is an emotional experience. We all spend a lot of time in the workplace and it's nice to know we are valued and appreciated for the part we play in a team.</p>	<p>Make an effort to remember your team member birthdays and/or special anniversaries. Making a diary note can help.</p> <p>Say "thank you" for the effort people put into a task as well as the output they produce for you.</p> <p>Creatively reward your team and individuals within it for excellent work. For example ice creams on a hot day or bringing in a packet of biscuits for the team meeting can go down well.</p>
<p><b>Create a Workplace Buzz</b></p> <p>Research shows that play and having fun at work will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energise the creativity and problem solving abilities in you and others!</li> <li>• Motivate people to go the extra mile, happily!</li> <li>• Makes time pass more quickly when involved in routine work.</li> </ul>	<p>Start team meetings with a quiz or a puzzle.</p> <p>Introduce friendly competitions.</p> <p>Link team activities to national events (e.g. Grand National Sweepstake).</p> <p>If your work environment allows this, choose a day of the week or month to dress in casual clothes.</p> <p>Select a local charity and share ideas for fundraising or volunteering time to support it.</p>

You and your team may not have choice in the work that you do, but you do have choice in the way that you do it!

## Motivating Team Members

As a manager in a changing NHS, your team will look to you to provide them with motivation, and help them to make sense of what's going on around them.

### TASK

Here's a question for you: *What does your boss do that helps to motivate you?* Think about it for a moment and maybe note down those things.

Whilst motivation is personal, there are common things that help to motivate all of us:

- Appreciation – Feeling appreciated for what I do and that my contribution to the team is valued.
- Involvement – Feeling that I'm involved in decisions and able to contribute ideas to the team.
- Treated Like an Individual – Knowing that my manager understands me, respects me and challenges me to perform well.

Here are some practical hints and tips that you can use to bring these motivators to life:

Motivator	Why it is Important	Action You Can Take
<b>Appreciation</b>	Expressing appreciation is the first step in creating an atmosphere that will motivate people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give a team member verbal praise on immediate completion of a successful project and share this achievement with the team.</li> <li>• Meet regularly with individuals to review what they've achieved.</li> <li>• Meet regularly as a team to discuss what has been achieved.</li> <li>• Celebrate team or organisational success: when a project is completed don't rush on to the next one without first stopping to acknowledge both individual and team accomplishments.</li> </ul>
<b>Involvement</b>	People want to feel involved in their work. It would be completely impractical to involve everyone in every decision, discussion or project that ever takes place, but allowing for greater team member contribution, especially around initiatives that will directly affect them, gives people a sense of inclusion and importance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve team members in the decision-making process as much as is practical. This could be as simple as asking people to email you their thoughts and ideas on the topic up for discussion, or having an ideas sheet on the departmental notice-boards.</li> <li>• Encourage team members to work on projects together.</li> <li>• Have an occasional work night out or an office get-together to allow people to meet in a social context.</li> </ul>
<b>Treated Like an Individual</b>	Another important factor that can boost morale when people feel that management is genuinely concerned about them as an individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always consider and treat team members as individuals. Find out what interests them, both at work and in their personal lives, what their expectations are for the job and how they gain satisfaction from the work they do.</li> <li>• Ensure each individual is stretched and challenged in a way that promotes their growth and development. Set targets for your team members.</li> <li>• Offer on-the-job coaching and training whenever possible.</li> <li>• Actively demonstrate concern for health and safety.</li> </ul>

Interestingly, the above motivators don't cost the NHS a penny, other than investing a few minutes a day of your time. We all know that a motivated team performs well, and the benefits you will gain will far outweigh that investment.

# Relationships and Roles

**Do you want a collection of brilliant minds or a brilliant collection of minds?**

R. Meredith Belbin

Teams are made up of people and are therefore by their very nature complex. Relationships are capable of changing even when there is no change in the people within the team. As people change and evolve, so will the team and its performance, so it's important to keep a close eye on team relationships to ensure a positive and productive working atmosphere.

## Teamwork Relationships

By personality we are different, and as such we will have things in common with some members of the team and also some differences in the way we do things and the way we think. With so much structural change in the NHS, we find ourselves in teams where people's preferences and styles are different to what we have been used to. It is important to recognise that people aren't being difficult, they are simply being themselves.

Trying to manage such differences in personality within a team can be a challenge, and a good starting point is to understand some of the differences, recognise them and appreciate how they can add value to the team. For example, an outspoken member of the team may distract or annoy quieter members of the team, but they would deal confidently with a demanding stakeholder or customer!

The table below shows some typical personality traits, along with the strengths they bring to the team, and the impact of overplaying these strengths.

Someone who focuses on:	Their Strengths	Action Used Inappropriately	Solutions
<b>People and relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Care about the way people in the team feel.</li> <li>Look for ways to help the team.</li> <li>Trying to avoid being a burden to the team.</li> <li>Stick up for the team members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be seen as smothering by other team members.</li> <li>Can take on too much.</li> <li>Fight other people's battles unnecessarily.</li> <li>At the extreme can show emotions inappropriately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show appreciation for what they do well.</li> <li>Ensure 1-1 discussions focus on task as well as relationships.</li> <li>Provide feedback on the impact of their behavior on others (both positive and negative)</li> </ul>
<b>Task and output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competitive on behalf of the team.</li> <li>Persuasive.</li> <li>Alert to opportunities for the team.</li> <li>See the need to take risks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be competitive within the team.</li> <li>May want to be in the limelight all the time.</li> <li>May not appreciate other's contributions.</li> <li>At the extreme can become aggressive when outputs aren't achieved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage them to share their direction with others.</li> <li>Ensure they listen to others ideas and approaches.</li> <li>Set clear parameters of responsibility and tangible outputs.</li> <li>Provide situations for partnership working.</li> </ul>
<b>Data and Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective and logical in their approach.</li> <li>In control of emotions.</li> <li>Think things through before acting.</li> <li>Take a cautious and thorough approach.</li> <li>Organised and concerned with procedure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be slow in their decision-making and in completing tasks.</li> <li>Can be seen as nit-picking or rule-bound.</li> <li>Tend to look in the past rather than the future.</li> <li>Good ideas can remain inside their heads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set clear timescales and expectations of outputs.</li> <li>Paint a picture of the future to help them to understand it.</li> <li>Encourage them to share their ideas.</li> <li>Provide feedback on the quality of their work.</li> </ul>

### TASK

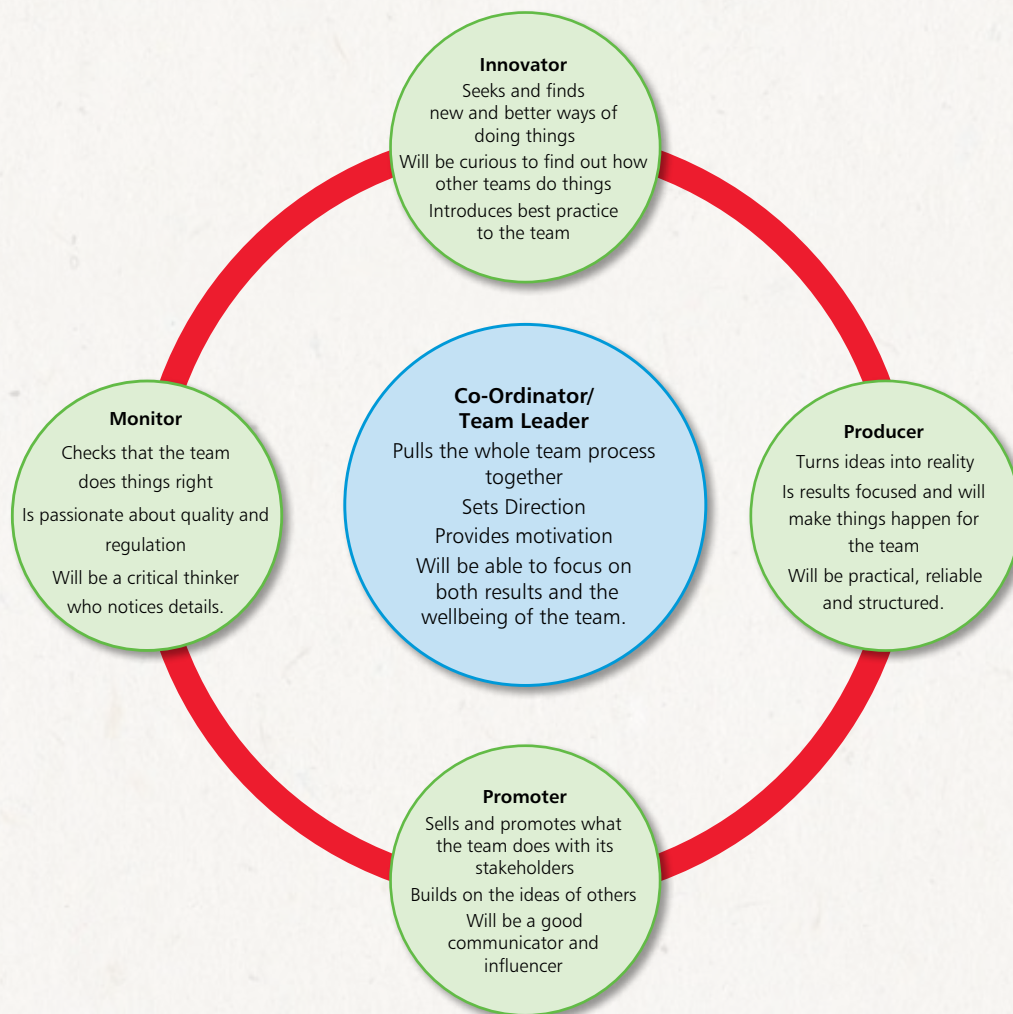
Use the table to reflect on your team members – where are their characteristics adding value to the team and where are they creating barriers to team performance? Try out some of the solutions to ensure you get the best out of each team member and develop harmonious relationships within the team.

## Team Roles

Within a team, there are different types of work that need to be done if the team is to perform and deliver in an “all round”, successful way. Dependent on our personalities, there are different elements of this work that we will enjoy doing more than others. For example, some people love spending their time going from meeting to meeting with

different stakeholders, whilst others couldn't think of a worse way of spending their day! These types of work shape the roles that need to be played within a successful team.

The different roles are summarised below.



### TASK

Thinking about the roles above, consider your team:

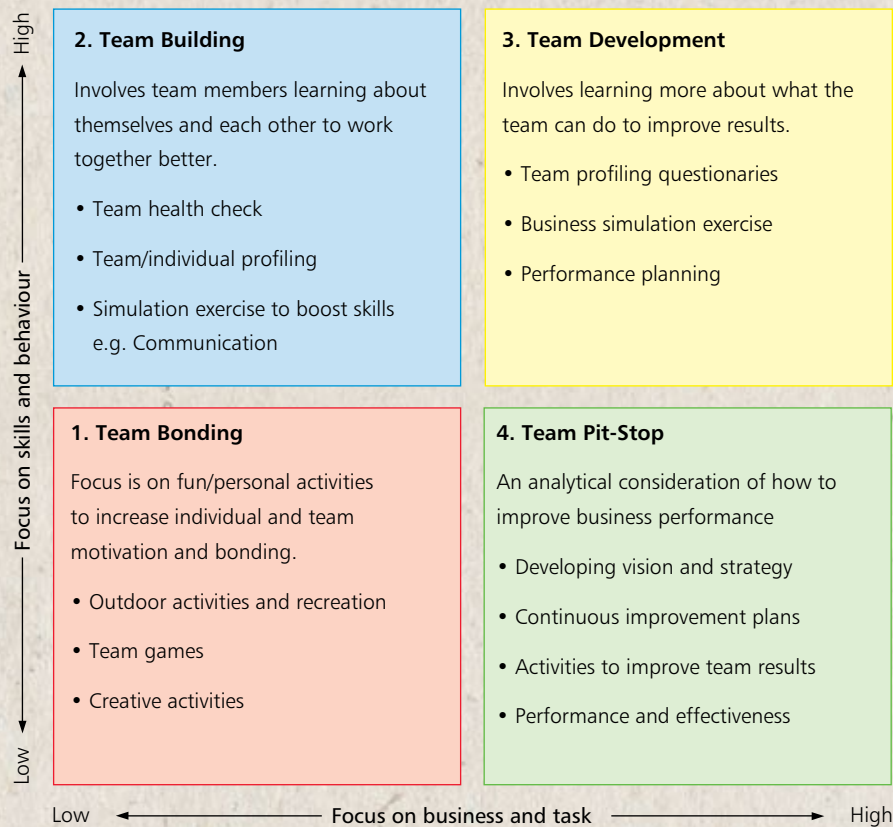
- In which roles does your team spend most of its time? For the work you do, how appropriate is this?
- How balanced is your team's focus across these roles? What can you do to increase the balance?
- Which team member's skills and strengths lend themselves to each of the different roles? How much of their time are they spending in these roles?
- Where do you have gaps, i.e. where nobody plays a role naturally, how could team members share their expertise to ensure all roles are covered?

Doctor Meredith Belbin, Charles Margerison and Dick McCann have done a lot of work in this area. See the FSD website for more detailed information.

## Developing your Team Further

The Team Intervention Model below looks at a team's needs across two factors; considering how much the team needs to focus on developing the skills, behaviours or relationships of the team, and how much it needs to focus on dealing with the business issues facing the team.

The model then summarises the different types of team intervention that would be appropriate for the team depending upon its needs.



The Team Intervention Model has been designed by Aspire Development UK Ltd. Aspire has significant experience of working with teams in the NHS to support their development and performance.

If you want to discuss a team event in more detail, or would like to receive more information about the type of team events available, please call Aspire Development UK Ltd on 01422 241964, or visit the Aspire website at:  
[www.aspiredevelopment.co.uk](http://www.aspiredevelopment.co.uk)



Other factors that help motivation in a team are building up individual's resilience and dealing with change effectively. Effective delegation and coaching also contribute to increasing performance in teams.

For further information go to [www.fsdnetwork.com](http://www.fsdnetwork.com) to download:

- Top Tips Dealing with Change.
- Top Tips Increasing Productivity
- Guide to Coaching within NHS Finance.