Clutterbuck Coaching and Mentoring International (CCMI) in partnership with Turner International Enterprises (TIE) are pleased to offer this virtual program. The aim of this program is to embody the presence of a team coach. You will be supported throughout the program by some of the most experienced team coaches in the world.

Team Coaching Practitioner

SESSION 8 WORKBOOK: TEAM DYNAMIC, MEASURING SUCCESS AND YOUR ON-GOING DEVELOPMENT

Contents

What can go wrong in each of the 5 supports of team performance?

Purpose and motivation

- Purpose too vague/ People interpret it in different ways
- Little or no connection with people's strongly held values (so low energy for achieving it)
- Conflicts with other strongly-held values
- Purpose not endorsed from above / inadequate direction from above
- Personal agendas predominate over the collective agenda
- Low resilience

Relationships

- Conflict is not addressed/ is denied
- Lack of psychological safety
- People feel undervalued / unsupported
- Cliques and sub-groups
- Lack of willingness to share responsibility for collective performance (blame)
- Communication problems (relational)

Internal processes, systems and structures

- Recurring quality problems
- Lack of clarity about tasks and roles
- Inadequate systems of review
- Lack of clarity about what constitutes good (high) performance in this context
- Unclear decision-making processes
- Communication problems (systemic)

External processes, systems and structures

- Reputational issues
- Lack of key resources
- Operating within a political environment
- Failure to establish clear expectations with stakeholders
- Environmental / market change
- Cultural influences

Learning processes

- "Too busy syndrome" (no time for reflection)
- Individual and collective learning insufficiently valued
- Lack of sources of external perspective and/or ideas
- Low learning maturity/ differences in personal maturity
- Resistance to change
- Mistakes are repeated (not learned from)

Stages of team dynamics: detailed questions for team coaching

The following questions provide a starting point for coaches to help newly formed teams and teams in formation to develop the mutual understanding and interdependencies that will assist their performance.

Foundation

- Who are the sponsors of this project or business need?
- What is the business rationale?
- What is the (political) context?
- How important is it that this team delivers?
- Who decides who should be on the team and how? (On what basis were members selected?)
- Is there appropriate diversity?
- What resources will be needed to do the job? How sure are we of the predictions for this?
- Will additional resources be available, if needed?
- What previous experience do team members have of working together?
- (If relevant), what experience do they have of working in project teams?

Formation

Shared purpose

- What makes achieving this purpose important to our stakeholders?
- What makes it important to us?
- How do we each interpret the given team purpose in terms of:
    - Explicit and implicit values
    - What achieving the purpose would look like to us
    - What it would look like to our stakeholders
- What is the main contribution you would like to make?
- How will we make sure we don't lose sight of the purpose?
- What identity do we want for this team?
- What hopes, aspirations and fears do we have for this team?

Building relationships

- How do we affirm that everyone belongs here and is a valued and equal member of the team?
- How do we ensure mutual trust and psychological safety?
- Understanding each other's story
- How will we care for each other?
- How will we build and maintain good relationships with each of our stakeholders?

Shared processes

- What tasks need to be done, in what order?
- Who has primary, secondary and general responsibility for each task?
- What tasks are reliant on people outside the team? How will we make sure these are delivered? (How will we manage the process boundaries?)
- How will we monitor and review?
- How will we benchmark?

- What needs collective decisions and how will we manage that process?
- How will we prevent "groupthink"?

Shared knowledge

- What expertise do we each bring?
- Where are the overlaps and gaps?
- What new knowledge and expertise do we need to acquire? Who will have responsibility for each of these areas?
- How will we question our assumptions?
- How will we maintain a healthy level of naivety?

Distribution of leadership

- What leadership functions does this team need?
- Who will be responsible for each?
- In what circumstances shall we pass functions to other team members?

Collective learning and adaption

- How are we managing and learning from setbacks? Are we capturing that learning effectively?
- Do we genuinely believe our forecasts?
- Are we stretching and challenging ourselves enough?
- What support do we need from each other?
- Are we making full use of the resources available to us? (Are There resources we could use but aren't using?)
- How well are we managing the politics outside the team, insofar as they affect us?
- Which areas of the PERILL model most need our attention currently?
- Is what we are doing still the best way to achieve the team purpose?
- Could a different team deliver the purpose better than we can?

Developing Ubuntu Team Lenses

Ubuntu is a word that means *'humaneness'*.

It literally translates to "I am because we are". This means that I cannot fully realise my full potential if fellow humans (everywhere, globally) cannot fully be who they can be. The term Ubuntu is commonly used among Nguni ethnic groups across southern Africa, and variations of it can be found across different parts of the African continent and around the world. Yes, Ubuntu is a global phenomenon, and not just an African concept. It just happens to have far greater expression and genuine grounding among many indigenous communities everywhere who have retained and nurtured everyday customs, traditions, cultural traits and ways of relating to fellow humans that value the collective or greater good over individual interest.

One great quote on Ubuntu is given by Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, Desmond Tutu here:
"Africans have a thing called Ubuntu. It is about the essence of being human. It is part of the gift that Africa is going to give to the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being willing to go the extra mile for the sake of another. We believe that a person is a person through other persons; that my humanity is caught up and bound up in yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself. The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms, and therefore, you seek to work for the common good because your humanity comes into its own in community, in belonging" (By Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, Desmond Tutu, from Reuel Khoza's book entitled 'Let Africa Lead', 2005).

Ubuntu is about accepting and acknowledging our inherent interconnectedness in our daily lives. This includes, the ability to *see systems* all around us as Barry Oshry recommends in his book '*Seeing Systems'* (1995). The awareness and embracing of *Ubuntu* ways helps us recognise, acknowledge and appreciate our common humanity across socially constructed illusions of difference imposed over time by business practices, by skewed historical narratives, differentiating religions, and other teachings and interpretations of separation. *Ubuntu* enables individuals, teams, groups and whole systems to listen without judgement, without any presumptions, and with utmost empathy.

Self-Reflection Questions:

1. How does Ubuntu align with PERIL?
2. Which PERIL pillars lend themselves more to the Ubuntu way of being?
3. How and where would you use Ubuntu and PERIL together?

References:
Reuel Khoza, 2011. Attuned Leadership… Barry Oshry, 1995. Seeing Systems…

By Dr Dumi Magadlela, GTCI Assistant Faculty (2020)

Team effectiveness diagnostic

A. Task
- What are our three critical priorities? (The things we have to deliver?)
- How will we know if we've succeeded or failed?
- Do we know who our customers are? (internal and external)
- Do we know what they want and need from us? (And do they know?)
- What's the quality of what we deliver? (Is it what they want/ need?)
- What reputation/ brand do we have with them?
- What do we do now that reinforces or undermines our reputation/ the quality of our work?
- Do we know *specifically* what needs to improve and how?
- Do we know what we are going to do to deliver those improvements?
  - Resources
  - Skills + competencies
  - Processes
  - Communication
  - Behaviours
- Do we understand the difference between efficiency and effectiveness? (What are we doing efficiently that is hindering our performance?)
- Are we clear about which influences on our performance are within our control / influence; and which are not? How can we move the latter, so we can influence them?
- What have we not considered that might affect our performance next year?

B. Behaviour
- Do we communicate openly and effectively within the team?
- Do we communicate openly and effectively to people outside the team?
- Do we have a high level of trust?
- Do we support each other?
- Do we give recognition and praise when appropriate?
- Are we flexible in our routines and processes?
- Do we "go the extra mile" when needed?
- Do we give each other sufficient honest feedback?
- Do we have high expectations of our own and each other's behaviour?

C. Learning
- Do we take time to review our activities and reflect upon practice?
- Do team members report back on learning from courses?
- Are individual development plans linked into a team development plan?
- Do we take these development plans seriously?
- Do team members receive coaching or mentoring when they need it?
- Do we learn from our mistakes?
- Do we actively seek ideas from elsewhere?
- Do we innovate in both what we do and how we do it?

How effective are your team meetings?

Score each statement from 5 (this describes our meetings accurately) to 1 (they are not like this at all).

Statement	Score
Everyone is clear and aligned about the purpose of the meeting	
All the items on the agenda are relevant and of interest to everyone in the room	
There are "no surprises" on the agenda	
Anything "for information" is dealt with outside and before the meeting	
Everyone is clear about whether items are for discussion or decision	
Any papers essential for the meeting are circulated well in advance, so everyone has sufficient time to consider them	
Everyone is well prepared for the meeting	
We have very clear, effective and well-understood processes for decision making	
The most important issues are always discussed first and in most detail	
We have an appropriate balance between issues that focus on the past (what happened), the present (what do we need to do now) and the future (what we need to do differently)	
Everyone feels safe in voicing an honest opinion	
We consider issues from multiple perspectives	
Everyone feels respected and listened to – especially the less confident and most introspective team members	
Everyone feels they have said what they need to	
People feel able to ask questions about issues, with which they are not familiar	
We are effective at parking issues that might side-track us	
Apart from planned regular agenda items, issues rarely continue unresolved for several meetings	
We are robust in our challenges but once a decision is made, we support each other fully	
There is very little politics or power-play in our meetings	
There is genuine consensus on decisions, not acquiescence	
Decisions never get overturned by lobbying after the meeting	
We maintain a good balance between sticking to the agenda timings and ensuring that issues are properly explored	
We are courteous to outsiders presenting to our meeting	
We build in time during the meeting to reflect on difficult decisions	
Individuals or subgroups are not allowed to dominate the discussion	
Everyone is engaged throughout the meeting (rather than checking their emails)	
We review the quality of our meetings from time to time	
The person chairing the meeting ensures that the discussion is summarised at appropriate points	
Everyone is clear at the end of the meeting what has been decided	
Are meetings enjoyable or bruising? (Do team members look forward to them?)	
TOTAL	

Scores:

120 plus – your meetings are effective and enjoyable
80 to 120 – quite a lot of time and energy are wasted
40 to 80 – you can think of better places to be and better things to do
>40 – avoiding these meetings will be good for your health!

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Additional reading

Validating the PERILL model and diagnostic

The PERILL model aims to provide a complex, adaptive systems perspective on team performance and dysfunction. The six elements (Purpose & Motivation, Externally-facing systems and processes, Relationships, Internally-facing systems and processes, Learning and the intermediary factor, Leadership) interact with each other in ways that may not be predictable. Where one element is positive and the other negative, the outcome for performance is expected to be negative (because 1 times -1 = -1).

The aim of this study is threefold:

- To gather examples of the practical use of the PERILL model in helping teams recognise the factors that influence their ability to perform (and hence develop the methodology)
- To identify significant thematic clusters in the PERILL diagnostic and improve the diagnostic as appropriate
- To establish a range of norms relating to the PERILL diagnostic

How we will validate

The key to validation is to build a sufficient database of team data. This will require the participation of a minimum of 120 teams, with at least 20 teams in each of the following categories:

- Senior leadership teams
- Middle management teams
- Project teams
- Operational teams

If possible, we hope also to achieve sufficient diversity in sector, although this is likely to be a later development requiring a larger sample size.

The data required will be any (or preferably all) of the following:

- PERILL diagnostic responses before or at the beginning of a team coaching intervention
- PERILL diagnostic responses after three or more team coaching sessions
- Initial and post-coaching PERILL matrices (showing themes in each box of the PERILL matrix)
- Themes the team chose to work on through coaching

The data will be anonymised to ensure confidentiality – identifiers will consist only of:

- Team type
- Sector
- Number of team members, including leader
- Number of team coaching sessions

How you can help

Data gathering:

1. Inform us of each team you will be using the PERILL model with. We do not need identifiers other than those above. We will assign a code to be used in all correspondence and data transfer relating to this team.
2. Confirm that you have the consent of the team to share their data anonymously.
3. Upload the data into an online template we will provide.

Data analysis:

We would like to share aggregate data from time to time to ask for your comments and observations.

Encouraging other team coaches to participate:

The more coaches involved, the faster the analysis and the richer the data!

Outcomes

As with any other coaching assignment, there will be an expectation that the impact of coaching can be measured. The pressure to measure the effectiveness of any form of coaching intervention can be intense. Coaches and sponsors both feel driven to demonstrate a high return on investment (RoI). Unfortunately, most of the attempts to measure RoI are not methodologically robust and hence don't carry much credibility. In particular, they rely on self-report by clients and/or sponsors, who have vested interests in positive outcomes; and they lack evidence of cause and effect. The problem isn't helped by the fact that effective coaching typically changes the goals people are working on, so any initial SMART measures agreed can become rapidly obsolete. Sometimes achievement of initial goals may not be a positive outcome at all!

Then there's the issue of timescale. The simple, relatively shallow objectives tend to be achievable within the lifetime of the coaching intervention. But the deeper, more beneficial outcomes may not occur until much later. The most important outcome of coaching is often propensity – the creation of a capability for change that may only be exercised with future circumstances and opportunities.

When it comes to team coaching, the problem of ROI becomes even more complex. Now we have to deal with both collective and individual outcomes, which may or may not be compatible. (For example, it's possible for everyone in the team to make individual improvements in performance, but without any significant positive impact on collective performance.)

Yet measurement in some form is an important part of the coaching package. Clients, whether individuals or teams, need some sense of whether they are making progress. The act of measurement stimulates reflection on process and often re-energises change. It indicates when new approaches or new thinking are needed. And, of course, it helps to reassure paymasters that all is well.

In our work with various kinds of team, a pragmatic approach to measurement has emerged that makes it possible to assess both short-term actual outcomes and propensity for change. It does not necessarily lend itself to tick-box measures, nor to numbers-based analysis. Rather, it relies on the quality of narrative in relation to five key questions:

1. *Does the team have greater understanding of its internal and external context/dynamics, in so far as it affects performance?*
2. *Does it have greater clarity of what it wants/needs to do as a result?*
3. *What actions have they taken? What are they doing differently?*
4. *What impacts can they define and attribute to those changes?*
5. *Can these impacts be assessed from multiple perspectives?*

A simple yes or no answer isn't acceptable here. What's required is detailed evidence through example (a coherent narrative of change) and input from as many sources as possible – the team itself, its key stakeholders, the coach and interested observers.

Appropriately, these questions are highly compatible with the team coaching process itself, so they can be built into the team coach's interventions and become a significant part of the team's learning about itself and its environment.

Consider: What methods of measurement would be appropriate for the teams and the organisational environments you expect to work in?

Your thoughts

Negotiating the balance of power between the team leader and the team

One of the biggest impediments to team performance occurs when there is a mismatch between the leadership style and behaviours the team needs and those that the leader and the team default to. The word default is appropriate because there is usually an unconscious process of adaptation, which may be driven by:

- The organizational climate and the expectations of the organizational culture with regard to the respective roles and behaviours of leaders and followers
- The leader's personality, competence and sense of security -- for example, the balance between having the curiosity to experiment and unwillingness to take risks
- The willingness and ability of the team members to share responsibility and accountability for leadership functions.

Having a language to address these issues – as in the framework below -- is a good starting point for a dialogue that explores the kind of leadership and followership that will best deliver the team's purpose.

A spectrum of leadership styles

- Dictate – the ultimate in command and control. A dictatorial style draws all power and decision making to the top
- Control – demands fixed processes and severely limits the ability of team members to take initiative
- Superficially delegate – gives team members accountability/ responsibility, but not authority
- Influence – permits autonomy only when team members do what the leader would have done in the same position
- Delegate– accountability/ responsibility with authority
- Empower – authority to redefine the task, as long as it fits within the team purpose
- Abdicate – ceding authority and responsibility entirely to the team; not even monitoring in a meaningful sense

The leader and the team may have different perceptions about the predominant style – exploring these can provide a lively dialogue! Even if there is a consensus on the style of leadership needed, this may be so far away from what exists that an immediate shift appears impossible, so the team and the leader may need to agree intermediate, small steps. If there is no consensus, then the small step approach may still be the best option for achieving progress.

What does the leader actually do?

Another option is to clarify what the leadership tasks are for this team and explore how some of these may be redistributed. The process begins with the question "What does the leader actually do?" To take away some of the threat from this question, it can be put in the context of "What do we need to know about your role in order to understand your priorities and support you in making things happen?"

Some examples of responses include:

- Co-ordinate the work between individuals
- Ensure everyone understands goals, roles and priorities
- Represent the team to the outside world
- Manage the team's reputation
- Motivate and energise
- Make the tough decisions
- Decide on new hires
- Evaluate and manage individual performance
- Support the development and learning of team members
- Find solutions to problems that have both an internal and external dimension
- Align the goals of the team with the goals of the organization
- Find resources
- Manage conflict
- Be a role model

Having identified these tasks, the team and the leader can explore together:

- How much of each does the leader really need to do?
- How much could be shared or delegated with the team now?
- How much could be shared or delegated, with time and some training?
- What would be the benefit to the leader of freeing up time from doing some of these tasks?
- What would be the benefit in building a reputation as a team, where people have lots of opportunities to grow and be stretched?
- What experiments could we safely attempt?

The role of the team coach

A team coach can support this tricky conversation by making it as safe as possible for both the leader and the team. Part of this may be to bring into the open hidden fears, so that the team and the leader can re-assure each other. For example, the leader may secretly fear that "giving away" parts of his or her job will make it appear that they have too little to do, putting their role under threat. Focusing instead on hitherto neglected projects and tasks, to which they can now apply their attention, relieves that anxiety and allows them to become excited about the new tasks.

What's more, simply going through this dialogue sets up the team for further team coaching sessions. After all, few other conversations are likely to address such emotion-laden issues with so much at stake for everyone. And conversely, not addressing this issue early on in a team coaching assignment may mean that the power issues between the leader and the team remain silent disruptors of the honest conversations needed to make significant, lasting improvements in team performance.

Team functions and dysfunctions

Team coaches frequently get called in when teams are not functioning well. Here are two models to explore the nature of team dysfunction.

Lencioni's five dysfunctions

Patrick Lencioni, in his book *The five dysfunctions of teams*, identifies five primary reasons why teams don't deliver:

Dysfunction	Symptom
• Inattention to results	People preoccupied with status and ego
• Avoidance of accountability	Low standards
• Lack of commitment	Ambiguity
• Fear of conflict	Artificial harmony
• Absence of trust	Invulnerability (focus on self-protection)

In teams that don't pay enough attention to results, some of the common symptoms include:

- Stagnation
- Unable to compete effectively
- Achievement-oriented members go elsewhere
- People focus on their own careers and agendas, rather than the collective purpose
- People are easily distracted

Teams that avoid accountability are characterized by:

- Resentment about different levels of performance or contribution
- Mediocrity
- Miss deadlines
- Rely on the leader for discipline and structure

Teams that avoid commitment:

- Have ambiguity about direction and priorities
- Miss opportunities by delaying agreement
- Fear failure (so avoid risk)
- Tend to revisit the same topics time and again without resolving them
- Second guess each other frequently

In teams that fear conflict:

- Meetings are boring
- Have politics and back-stabbing
- Avoid "difficult" conversations and topics
- People don't seek each other's opinions or views
- Waste time posturing

In teams with an absence of trust, people tend to:

- Conceal their weaknesses
- Hesitate to ask or offer help
- Jump to conclusions about other people's motivations
- Waste time and energy protecting their image
- Avoid spending time together

Team dysfunction and function from a PERILL perspective

PERILL looks at the team as a mixture of ever-changing functionality and dysfunctionality. The table below offers some of the most common signs of function and dysfunction.

	Dysfunction	**High function**
Purpose and motivation	• Purpose too vague/ People interpret it in different ways • Purpose not endorsed from above / inadequate direction from above • Little or no connection with people's strongly held values (so low energy for achieving it) / Conflicts with other strongly held values • Conflict about priorities between goals • Personal agendas predominate over the collective agenda • Low individual and collective resilience	• Everyone understands and is motivated by the team purpose • The team purpose has close personal meaning for team members • People put aside their own priorities to help others achieve the team purpose • There is high energy both for the work itself and how the team carries it out • Setbacks are seen as minor roadblocks rather than calamities
Relationships	• Conflict is not addressed/ is denied • Lack of psychological safety • People feel undervalued / unsupported • Cliques and sub-groups have hidden conflict • Lack of willingness to share responsibility for collective performance (blame) • Communication problems (relational)	• People are able to admit mistakes and speak up • People feel listened to • People take time for each other • Everyone takes responsibility for their own and each other's performance, learning and well-being
Internal processes, systems and structures	• Recurring quality problems • Lack of clarity about tasks and roles • Inadequate systems of review	• There is a robust process for making decisions and checking whether they were good decisions • There are clear accountabilities

	• Lack of clarity about what constitutes good (high) performance in this context • Unclear decision-making processes • Communication problems (systemic)	• There are strong processes to ensure everyone is aligned in what they are doing and why • Communications is more horizontal than vertical
External processes, systems and structures	• Reputational issues • Lack of key resources • Operating within a political environment • Failure to establish clear expectations with stakeholders • Environmental / market change leads to nasty surprises	• The team listens to its stakeholders • Stakeholders are supportive of the team and its purpose • The team is adequately resourced for its task • The team has powerful antennae on what is happening in its external environment
Learning processes	• "Too busy syndrome" (no time for reflection) • Individual and collective learning insufficiently valued • Lack of sources of external perspective and/or ideas • Low learning maturity • Resistance to change • Mistakes are repeated (not learned from)	• Learning is on the regular team agenda • People support each other's learning • People share learning • People are open to supportive feedback • Change is welcomed • Experimentation thrives and mistakes are seen as key to the learning process
Leadership processes	• Leader's style is command and control • People are reluctant to take on responsibilities • Responsibility and authority disconnected • Delegation is non-consensual • Micro-management	• Leader's style is empowering and inclusive • People are encouraged to take charge of tasks without asking for permission • The leader enables people to manage themselves rather than mange them • The team regular discusses how to distribute responsibility and authority

Six practical exercises to build trust between team members

1. Becoming vulnerable

Instructions to participants
Becoming vulnerable is a critical component of building enduring trust. Take a few minutes to reflect on your past history and in particular, on experiences that had a major effect in shaping the person you have become. Think also of times when you have experienced the greatest joy and the greatest sense of loss.

Choose one formative experience and one time of joy or loss to share with team colleagues. Note: you only have to share what you want – it's OK to be just a little vulnerable at this stage in the team's development.

Instructions to the team coach
Personal disclosure of this kind may be something some or all members of the team aren't used to. They may feel very uncomfortable about opening up in this way, so letting them decide what they want to reveal is vital.

This is one occasion where your own examples aren't helpful. Disclosing your personal vulnerabilities to the team can be seen as intrusive and distracting – the intimacy required needs to be focused inwards, within the team. They may also need you to appear strong and invulnerable at this moment, to give a sense of close-by security.

Thank people for the honesty and openness of their stories and encourage them to thank each other. Insist that everyone allows the presenting member space and time to talk in their own way. Don't allow questions; but do permit comments of support. When everyone has had a turn, ask them to reflect for a couple of minutes. Then ask:

- What did you learn about yourself?
- What did you learn about your colleagues?
- What did you learn about this team?

Encourage everyone to join in the discussion. Finally, ask one person to sum up on behalf of the team.

2. Building intra-team trust (1)

Instructions to participants
Put in an envelope one thing you will do to make life easier for a colleague. Do the same for all members of the team and hand out the envelopes – not to be opened until you meet again a few weeks later.

When you do meet, have the conversation: *What do you think I wrote in your envelope?* Then open the envelopes.

Instructions to the team coach
The covert objective of this exercise is to raise team members' awareness/ mindfulness of how helpful colleagues are, and to pay less attention to minor irritations or failures.

When the envelopes are opened a common reaction is "Oh yes, and you did that as well!"

3. Building intra-team trust (2)*

Instructions to participants
Write down for each colleague two or three expectations about working with them. Have a mix of positive and negative, if possible, but with the emphasis on the positive. For example:

- I can always rely on X for...
- I can usually rely on X for
- I can't rely on X for

Share these in pairs to build a picture of your trust networks – who trusts you and who you trust, for what. Try not to be defensive – this is a great opportunity to use feedback to boost your influence within the team. Collate the information into a team-wide trust matrix. Discuss how you will use this information to build greater trust within the team.

Instructions to the team coach
This exercise can be a bit chicken-and-egg. It can be very powerful in building psychological safety; yet it demands psychological safety for people to open up sufficiently. It is essential to have permission from the team to step into this emotion-laden territory, and for the team to understand what will be involved.

A useful metaphor is: *How much trust are you prepared to invest now, in order to gain a much higher level of trust later?*

Be clear about the ground rules. For example:

- Everything is done with goodwill (settling old scores is not permitted)
- If you feel defensive, shocked or angry, ask for some space (time out) to come to terms with the feedback and regain your equilibrium
- Make a point of saying thank you – and meaning it
- In giving someone bad news, you must take shared responsibility for helping them deal with it and working out ways, in which they can inspire greater trust
- Nobody can be trusted to deliver on *everything*

4. The trust matrix

Instructions to team members
Consider the following questions:
- *What do you trust each of your individual team members for most?* Identify the top three things for each colleague.
- *What do you most want / need to trust them for?* Again, identify the top three things – these may or may not be the same as for the first list!

Share and discuss in pairs, then collectively.

Instructions to the team coach
This exercise aims to identify the critical trust gaps within individuals on a team. You may need to remind team members that trust is between individuals, not collectively. Explain that most people will have some pleasant and some less pleasant surprises from their colleagues. Emphasise the need for honesty, even if it is painful.
Give everyone a few minutes to reflect, before they begin. Allow 10 minutes to write down their

thoughts. Then give each pair at least 5 minutes each to share and discuss.

Finally, bring everyone back together. First, check how everyone is feeling. What emotions would they like to share? What have they learned about themselves and their team members? Finally, help the team explore and come to conclusions about what they will do differently to improve the level of trust between members.

5. Best mistake to increase vulnerability and reflective practice

Instructions to team members
Each team member shares one mistake with the team that they have made in the previous month and what they have learned from reflecting on it.

Instructions to the team coach
This exercise is effective in building confidence to admit mistakes and to ensure that the whole team learns from them. Some teams use this as a regular monthly check in. Many teams have some sort of prize for the person, who has reflected most on a mistake and used it as a source of personal and/or team learning.

Principles of group dynamics

It's helpful for a team coach to understand that some of the most useful research and development of technique has come from the world of family therapy. According to psychologist Wilfred Bion three unconscious defensive processes influence the behaviour of groups:

- Fight/ flight – the group behaves as if they have a common enemy, which might be external (e.g. a competitor) or even internal (team members versus the team leader)
- Dependency – the group expects the leader to solve all of their problems
- Pairing – the group looks to two members (or a small sub-team) to provide solutions

All three defensive mechanisms distort the group's understanding of its internal and external context and push it towards inaction (what Bion calls freezing).

Consider the questions:

- *When have you encountered any of Bion's three group dysfunctions?*
- *How could the team or group have recognised and avoided these?*

Your thoughts

Christine Thornton identifies eight factors a team coach should be aware of in terms of group dynamics:

- Connectedness and belonging. While this can be positive most of the time, often groups maintain their cohesion by demonising the rest of the organisation – which doesn't help performance or team reputation.
- Interpersonal learning – to what extent are people used to learning from colleagues and able to do so?
- Competition, envy and admiration – the team coach has to be able to recognise competition between team members and raise awareness within the team both that it is happening and what the impact is
- Idealization – unrealistic attribution of team successes to one or more individuals leads to others trying to be more like them, when it would be better to be more like themselves
- Practising freedom and courage to act – the team coach can encourage this by helping members focus on small initiatives first and gradually becoming bolder

- Witnessing and being witnessed – the ability to say things out loud to another person, rather than keep thoughts to oneself. The team coach can help people become more comfortable with this, or less confrontive in how they do so.
- Encouragement – the team coach helps create a balance between being under-supportive and over-supportive. Thornton points out that "The group's capacity for holding contradictory ideas alongside each other – negative and positive ideas about the same thing – is a strength of team coaching."
- Group performance coaching -- how comfortable and capable members feel about bringing issues to the rest of the team, to be coached on how to tackle them. Thornton identifies two particular problems for the team coach to be aware of:
    - When one person brings far more issues to the group than others. This may be because this person is inexperienced, but it may also be because the team is avoiding a major issue, which only this member is prepared to address.
    - When one member keeps pushing a particular approach as the answer to a wide variety of problems

Consider the questions:

- *When have you encountered any of Thornton's eight factors?*
- *How did the team or group behave?*
- *What alternative behaviours could it have adopted?*

Your thoughts

Team identity

Having a positive team identity is particularly helpful in managing team reputation and therefore in team performance.

Key components of personal identity include:

- The values you espouse
- The values you live
- The things you do particularly well and less well
- The company you keep and who you see as your peers
- What you are interested in
- What other people immediately think of when your team is mentioned (first association)
- The contribution you make outside your assigned role

All of these are also applicable at the team level.

Consider the following questions, in relation to a team you are familiar with:

- *Does the team have a collective identity?*
- *Does it want one?*
- *If yes, what is it?*
- *What do the team want it to be?*
- *How could you help them bring that about?*

Your thoughts

Establishing and working with team purpose

The tools and techniques in this section are all about helping the team clarify what it is there for. Without this clarity, people tend to work to different priorities and agendas, even if on paper they have the same mission.

Very often, when people talk about a need, they are thinking about a process, method, technique, or solution. But that's about means, not ends. When we talk about ends, we mean a gap between a current or expected outcome and a desired outcome. (For more on this, see the work of Prof Roger Kaufmann, of the Center for Needs Assessment and Planning, Florida State University.) Purpose is about the ultimate need, as in the following hierarchy:

- Ultimate need (e.g. to reduce the rate of recidivism amongst young offenders)
- Secondary need (e.g. to reduce recidivism by implementing a mentoring programme)
- Tertiary need (e.g. to improve the quality of a mentoring programme by initiating mentor training)
- And as many other layers of need as required

In determining the team's purpose, only the Ultimate Need matters.

Thinking of a team you are familiar with, what ultimate need is that team there to address? Gather a mixture of wide and narrow definitions and categorise them against the hierarchy above.

Consider the questions:

- *What is it about your role in that team that gives meaning to your work? (For meaning, think purpose, personal identity, a sense of contributing to something larger and worthwhile.)*
- *How much of this meaning is related to the tasks you tackle alone and those you share with colleagues?*
- *How would you apply your insights from this to the way you work as a team coach?*

Your thoughts

Clarifying and building alignment with team goals

In general, behavioural interventions are more likely to improve performance when aimed at specific team processes or objectives, than when they are non-specific. This is one of the reasons that team coaching is so much more effective than team building.

Where the group already exhibits most or all of the characteristics of a team, the coaching goals tend to relate to specific areas of performance. One way of categorizing these is as:

- **Interpersonal** dynamics – issues such as recognizing and managing conflict, increasing collective emotional intelligence and building and sustaining an appropriate coaching climate
- **Temporal** issues – for example how the team balances its emphasis on past, present and future; and time management
- **Managing** key processes – goal setting and management, functional analysis, innovation, decision making and communication.

In establishing goals, it's important to recognise that while SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) can sometimes be helpful, they can also be a dangerous distraction. Research show that only 25% of people are genuinely motivated by SMART goals (with some people being put off by them!). Within a team, people will have very different reactions to SMART goals and this needs to be taken into account in terms of its impact on behaviour. Focusing too closely on specific goals can encourage people to:

- Focus too narrowly on those goals, to the neglect of others, which may be equally or more important
- Engage in risky behaviour
- Focus on extrinsic motivation and lose their intrinsic motivation
- Engage in more unethical behaviour than they would otherwise

For a deeper, more nuanced perspective on goals in coaching, read the book *Beyond Goals*, by Susan David, David Clutterbuck and David Megginson.

It also helpful to distinguish between:

- Goal setting
- Goal pursuit
- Goal evaluation

What challenges do you foresee in helping a team set appropriate goals? How would you help them manage those challenges?

Your thoughts

A simple team goal setting process

The critical starting point is "What is the team's purpose?". Once that is defined, you can facilitate them in discussing "What are the five (or 7 or whatever) key things that have to happen to achieve that purpose?"

Once these are agreed, you can start to define collective goals -- long term, medium term and short term. "What would have happened for us to be sure we are making progress towards achieving those things?" And "What measures would be appropriate?"

Next we ask people to co-coach each other on what they expect of themselves and of each other in terms of making these goals happen -- again long, medium and short-term. From this, everyone agrees two or three (maximum) goals for themselves.

Finally, and very important, everyone agrees to support each other in achieving their goals and discusses how they will do so.

At subsequent meetings, the agenda is:

What progress are we making towards our goals?
Which if any of our goals need to be revisited?
What have we done to advance the achievement of our own goals, each other's goals and the collective goals?

Ensuring goal alignment with team members

Goal alignment

	High alignment on what we want	Low alignment on what we want
High alignment on how to achieve goals	High collective performance, positive conflict	Focus on individual performance
Low alignment on how to achieve goals	Sub teams dominate	Disruptive conflict reduces performance

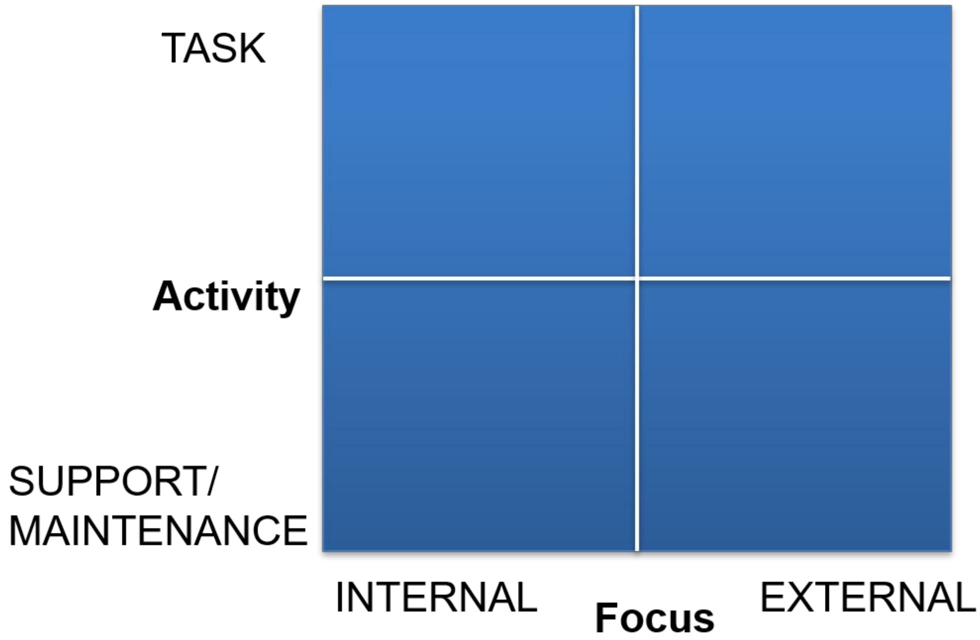
Using the matrix in the table above, take the highest priority goals of a team you are familiar with and explore where they lie on the matrix. What can you do about those, which don't appear in the High-High quadrant?

Your thoughts

What does the team actually do?
For the team to achieve both clarity of goal and clarity of process, the team coach may need to stimulate dialogue at a number of levels. One of the simplest levels is represented in the diagram below. The team needs to distinguish between the tasks it has to carry out to achieve the goals and what it needs to do to make those tasks practical and effective. The latter includes activities such as team building and planning. At the same time, there is a distinction in the minds of team members between tasks and processes related to the internal and the external environments.

Considering these issues separately enables the team to analyse what effort it needs to put into each quadrant, what priorities it wishes to adopt and what strategies it should apply in managing these complementary activities.

Activity diagnosis at the simplest level



Analysing the team functioning
One of the simplest ways to help the team understand its own workings is to conduct a detailed discussion and review based around the three team foci: task, learning and behaviour. Under each heading, the coach helps the team define what needs to happen and what does happen against three sub-foci: roles, processes and capabilities. In this context, **roles** are what people have to do to achieve the intended shared outcome.

Processes relate to how the team achieves the task, learning or behavioural goal. Drawing up a process map, identifying how each sub-activity links with others to produce the intended final outcome and where the potential failure points lie, is a standard approach for addressing quality issues.

Capabilities relate to the resources the team holds (or needs) to achieve the goal: knowledge, funds, equipment and so on.

Useful questions for exploring roles include:

- What won't get done if no one takes responsibility for it?
- What questions do we need to ask ourselves frequently, and how?
- What do we individually and collectively tend to avoid doing/ procrastinate over?
- From what different perspectives should we examine issues relating to this team focus?
- Is there enough difference of perspectives to stimulate healthy dialogue around how we do things?
- How consistent are we in managing the processes of strategic thinking, decision making, reviewing and reflecting?
- How effective are we in these? Where we are ineffective, what roles could some or all of us play in addressing the issue?
- What are the critical ways in which we and our colleagues contribute to each team focus, both in terms of what we do and how we do it? In what ways does each of us sometimes detract from each of the team foci?
- What roles are suggested by our level of task interdependence?

Useful questions for exploring processes include:

- How do we know this is the best way to do this?
- What would happen if we did some or all of the key elements in exactly the opposite way?
- Where are the points where things are most likely to go wrong?
- Which are most damaging if they do go wrong?
- Where are the points that we earn most "brownie points"?
- What bits of the process do we like most/least? (This can also provide clues about roles.)
- Do we review processes sufficiently frequently/in sufficient depth?
- What other businesses/activities can we benchmark our processes against?
- Are our processes appropriate for the balance we need between interdependence and autonomy?
- Which bits of the process do we least/best understand?

Useful questions for exploring capability include:

- What do resource restraints prevent us doing? To what extent does that matter?
- Do we have the right skills and experience mix for our current task and learning foci?
- What external resources can we call on? How effective are we at identifying and accessing these resources?
- How well do we use the capability we have? (For example, are people over-qualified for their jobs and, if so, what are the implications of that?)
- Is our capability growing?

Similarly, at the level of the three foci, useful questions about task focus include:

- What are we trying to achieve as a team?
- How clear are we about that goal?
- How will that help achieve the broader organisational or societal goals?
- How committed are we?
- How will we know when we are on target?

Useful questions about the learning focus include:

- What knowledge and skills are important for fulfilling the team task (now and in the medium term)?
- What is our plan for achieving that learning?
- How will we know when we have got there?
- What are our individual and collective responsibilities for learning?

Useful questions for exploring behaviour include:

- What does each of us do that supports our colleagues in their roles and activities?
- What does each of us do that makes it more difficult for our colleagues to carry out their roles and activities?
- What issues/behaviours do we feel most uncomfortable about owning up to in relation to ourselves and to our colleagues?
- What behaviours would make us more effective as a team?
- What do we fear most? Desire most?
- What makes us feel really good/less good working with our colleagues?
- What should we do more of/less of both individually and collectively?
- How can we stimulate the positive expression of each behavioural preference and personality and minimize the negative?
- What behaviours would best support our various roles in the team?

Using a team you are familiar with, consider how you would help them explore these issues and use insights to improve performance.

Your thoughts

Helping the team achieve focus and play to its strengths

Like individuals, teams tend to perform best when they play to their strengths. But they frequently don't know what those strengths are. Here's a practical way to help them focus more on tasks that play to their strengths.

Draw a matrix with two axes: High to low energy & Current & Future priorities. Map onto it as many as possible of the key tasks the team is responsible for. Then ask them to consider the questions:

- Which of these does this team collectively get energised about?
- What does it lack energy for?
- In what circumstances does it have high and low energy for these tasks?

In facilitating the discussion, you may wish to explore

- Where energy comes from (for example, intrinsic motivation from things we find inherently interesting; external motivation from connecting the task with valued rewards)
- What saps team energy

Suggest that the team use the concept of collective energy as part of its decision-making and priority-setting. Useful questions include:

- Have we honestly got the energy for this?
- What is it about this task that does or doesn't energise us?
- How can we distribute tasks more effectively to those people, who are energised by them (who may be outside the team)?

Discuss with the team the implications and help them plan specific changes in focus and roles.

Team communication

Team coaches often look for how the team speak to each other. However, there are many aspects of communication that you may want to consider with regard to communication more broadly which will add value to the team, the organisation and their wider stakeholder group.

Organisational communication processes
Teams typically have three main communication processes:

- Strategic (planning ahead)
- Coordinating (managing interdependencies) – including with internal and external stakeholders
- Autonomous (sharing useful information from tasks people do on their own)

How are these organised in a team, with which you are familiar? How effective is each process?

Your thoughts

Inter-organisational communication structures

Consider these four communication structures:

- The manager is outside the team, communicating to people individually or collectively
- The manager is within the team, communicating to people individually or collectively, but there is little communication between team members
- The manager (within the team) and team all communicate constantly with each other; the manager takes main responsibility for communicating with the outside world
- The manager and team both communicate constantly to each other and the outside world

What are the implications of each of these arrangements for team performance?

Your thoughts

Team reputation

Reputation management is often something that teams either don't have time to do; or something they spend a lot of time on, driven by insecurity. A high performing team recognises that a positive reputation makes it easier to obtain resources, persuade other people to support innovations and to gain the ear of key influencers.

Reputation management doesn't have to be a cynical exercise in manipulation. Rather, it is about:

- Doing what you do well
- Being authentic and principled
- Listening and being helpful to colleagues in other teams
- Building a network of champions, who value what you do and talk positively about your team (the power of referral)
- Being aware of what is happening in the wider organisational environment, and hence connected with new thinking
- Not being defensive about mistakes or setbacks
- Communicating in ways other people will see as helpful, rather than boasting

The team reputation plan aims to capture practical actions and assign responsibilities for implementing them. It needs to be reviewed regularly.

Consider the following questions, in relation to a team you are familiar with:

- *How well do we know what our team's reputation is with key stakeholders?*
- *How does the reputation we have align with the reputation we need to perform well?*
- *What should go into a team reputation management plan?*
- *When and how will we monitor progress against the team reputation plan?*
- *How can we be sure the reputational feedback we get from stakeholders is an accurate reflection of people's feelings?*

Your thoughts

Helping the team induct new members

The dynamics of a team change, whenever the membership changes. A new leader can bring about dramatic change, but new team members can also bring in new expertise or new connections that subtly shift the way people interact with each other.

What has been your experience of effective and ineffective induction of new members? What can you do as a team coach to help the team develop more effective induction and integration processes?

Your thoughts

Helping the team cope with setbacks

Research by Jeffrey Sonnenfeld, head of the Yale Leadership Institute, found that leaders and leadership teams, who survived setbacks well:

Regrouped immediately by

- Accepting their own responsibility for what had happened
- Rebuilding bridges immediately, when relationships had been damaged
- Used their support networks to provide encouragement and practical help, where appropriate

Redefined their mission by

- Reminding themselves of the skills and strengths they have, which have got them so far
- Reviewed what was still possible to achieve
- Starting to plan what to do make that happen

For a team you are familiar with, identify one or two major setbacks the team has encountered. Discuss what happened:

- How the team felt immediately after
- How long it took to come out of the trough
- The learning the team took from the experience
- Any long-term impacts

Consider the following questions:

- *What is this team's process for coping with setbacks?*
- *What is its process for learning from setbacks?*
- *How can you as a team coach help teams recover from setbacks?*

Your thoughts

Raising the quality of team decision-making

Most teams make decisions largely on intuition, or a mixture of intuition, consensus-making and selective evidence gathering. As a team coach, you can:

- Raise their awareness of what effective team coaching looks like
- Help them develop ways of evaluating the quality of past decision-making
- Help them establish and follow effective decision-making processes

In the Appendix, you will find a summary of an article from Harvard Business Review, *How to make dumb groups smarter.* Read this article and use it as background information for the exercise below.

Think of a significant decision made recently by a team you are familiar with. What was the process of decision-making? Map the steps in the process and consider:

- *How conscious and planned was the decision-making process?*
- *How aware were team members of their individual and collective decision-making biases?*
- *What evidence did it gather and how did it remove bias from the evidence-gathering process?*
- *Did it have a clear causal model to underpin the decision-making process (i.e. one of cause and effect)?*
- *Does it have a clear process to review the effectiveness of decision-making at a later date?*
- *What would a high-performance decision-making process look like for this team?*
- *What could you do as a team coach to help improve the quality of a team's decision-making?*

Your thoughts

Aligning individual and collective development within a Team Learning Plan

The team learning plan defines what the team and its individual members need and want to learn, how this will contribute to the business purpose and the responsibilities, which each member holds to the others in helping achieve the learning goals. It is as important a document as the business plan, because it underpins targets and goals with practical ways of developing capability and capacity.

The aim of a team development plan is to identify the collective learning needs of the team, in the context of:

- The team purpose and the capabilities needed to achieve it
- The support each team member requires from colleagues in achieving personal development goals, which may be related to team purpose or their own career self-management

Creating an effective team development plan requires seven steps:

1. Clarify what the team is there for (its purpose)
2. Clarify the knowledge, skills and other competences required to deliver the purpose a) at good enough level and b) as a high-performance team. (A useful question here would be: *What would be the impact of not having this competence at the appropriate level?)*
3. Agree which capabilities are needed across the team (i.e. everyone needs them), which are needed strongly only by some people and moderately or not at all by others, and those which can easily be accessed from outside the team, when needed
4. Agree how these can be incorporated into the personal development plans of each team member
5. Each team member, including the leader, shares their full personal development plan
6. The team discusses in depth:
    a. How can we take individual and collective responsibility for the learning that needs to take place?
    b. How can we support each other's learning (e.g. by co-coaching)?
    c. How will we monitor individual and collective learning?
    d. When and how will we review learning?
7. The team development plan becomes a formal document, establishing:
    a. Learning objectives
    b. Individual and collective responsibilities
    c. Resources required
    d. Timescales

Thinking of a team you are familiar with, how would you go about helping them create and follow a Team Development Plan?

Your thoughts

Managing disengagement of the coaching relationship

Given the objectives of leaving the team a) with significantly improved performance and b) better able to coach itself, how would you manage a gradual disengagement? Discuss with colleagues and capture your ideas below.

Your thoughts

How to build a coaching culture in work teams

A couple of years ago, I started to gather anecdotal evidence about the effectiveness of sheep-dip training for line managers as coaches. (Typically, a two or three day "Line Manager as Coach" workshop.) The results were even worse than I expected. Many managers went back to their teams and reverted to their old behaviours immediately. Others tried to behave as they had learned, but found that within a few days, they were back to normal.

What had gone wrong? As I listened to their stories – and in some cases also listened to their teams talking about their experience of the same events – it became clear that this failure was nigh-on inevitable. Line managers and their teams form a complex system. Over time, they develop patterns and habits of working together, and these can be hard to break. Once a system is established, it will react to any change from within or without by attempting to revert back to the way things were before -- even if those ways were dysfunctional. Given that coaching, when done effectively, can be quite an uncomfortable experience, it is hardly surprising that the system sought to return to equilibrium. From these experiences, we captured a number of significant ground rules for embedding coaching within work teams:

*If you are going to change the system, you have to change the **whole** system*.

Change one part and the system will resist. Change the whole and you have a high chance of making the change stick. In the team context, it is critically important to engage the whole team – manager and all his or her direct reports – in understanding and supporting the change to a coaching culture. An analogy with just training the line manager is ball-room dancing. If only one partner knows how to tango, a couple is not going to do well! In a team with a coaching culture, everyone understands the basics of coaching and can coach everyone else. (That includes, on occasion, the line manager being coached by a direct report!) Equally, everyone needs to know how to *be* coached, so they can help the coach help them.

Acquiring the coaching mindset takes time.

Coaching is both a mindset and a skill set. A concentrated workshop can provide basic knowledge, skills and some opportunities to practice in a safe environment outside the team. But the impact of coaching typically happens between coaching conversations, when the learner reflects on insights, ideas, issues and intentions. It seems that learning to coach and be coached is most effective when broken up into relatively small chunks, with sufficient space (at least a couple of weeks) to reflect, absorb and practice using what has been learned.

The line manager and the team need to have clear expectations of each other.

Research identifies a long list of potential barriers to effective coaching by line managers, from being seen to have their own agenda, to finding it hard break out of parent-child behaviours. All of these can be overcome, if the line manager and the team have clear expectations about the nature and purpose of coaching. One of the big mindshifts needed is from the assumption that the line manager will do coaching to team members, to the recognition that their role is to create the environment, where coaching happens. (The coach may be another team member or someone from outside, as well as the manager.)

The change process needs to be supported

Within the team, developing an environment of psychological safety is closely correlated with speed of acquiring a coaching culture. At the same time, teams progress more confidently if they feel that their learning journey is supported from outside, for example, by senior management. External support may take the form of a specialist team coach or facilitator – an outsider with the skills to help the team deal with issues such as unsurfaced conflict, or clarifying the team purpose.

Learning needs to be related to current issues for the team

Teams focused on delivering demanding targets don't have a lot of time for the abstract and theoretical. They do want to know what the benefits of achieving a coaching culture will be (both individually and collectively), but, for the most part, they want to see how what they are learning can be applied to practical and relatively immediate issues the team faces in delivering what is expected of it.

Putting this learning into practice – an experiment

We took our conclusions to a number of large UK and multinational employers and shared some ideas about how to design an approach that would address all the issues we had identified. The result is a series of experiments, in sectors from retail to higher education. The core of the experiment, in each case, is an on-line learning resource, consisting of podcasts, self-diagnostics and background reading. The number of modules varies according to the depth of learning required and the logistics of learning management in each organisation. Each member of a team is expected to work through these materials (taking typically no more than one hour) before the team meets for a *Coaching Conversation* – a session, often attached to the end of a regular team meeting, where they explore their learning from the pre-work together and discuss how they will apply it in their own environment. These sessions may be facilitated by an outside, or by the team leader (the experiments allow eventual comparison between the two approaches). They contract with each other to practise skills and processes they have learned. Over the course of the modules, the team is expected gradually to become more confident and capable of using coaching processes and the coaching mindset becomes engrained in the way they think about work issues generally.

First measures from these experiments are very positive, but we require a more, verifiable data before drawing clear conclusions. What we have learned is that a requirement of this form of learning – which, if not unique, is certainly uncommon – is a high degree of flexibility about how the materials are structured and presented, what order the team works through them, the pace and timing of the team's learning, and how it applies learning to work issues.

Both we and the organisations engaging in these experiments with us are very excited about the possibility of using this approach to bring about wider cultural change. Our expectation is that the development of coaching cultures within work teams will be highly instrumental in stimulating an overall organisational coaching culture. This is likely to be the subject of future research, using diagnostics of progress towards a coaching culture, at both team and organisational levels.

Team coaching ethical scenarios

Consider each of the three scenarios below. Share with colleagues any relevant experience you have had of these or similar situations. How would you deal with each of these situations, in your role as a team coach?

<table>
<tr><th>Scenario</th><th>Comments</th><th>What would you do?</th></tr>
<tr><td>The team leader has a hidden agenda.</td><td>Hidden agendas are often more transparent than the leader thinks. The primary issues here tend to relate to trust.

<u>Useful questions</u>
• How can the team coach ensure s/he has an honest conversation with the team leader about his or her motivations?
• When the team leader is unable to share the hidden agenda (e.g. because of instructions from above), is it ethical for the team coach to continue?
• Is it possible to build trust and be authentic in the presence of hidden agendas?

<u>Useful approaches</u>
• "What if?" scenarios</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>The team has a new manager, replacing one, who was removed for being ineffective. Some or all of the team got on well with the former manager.</td><td>The team coach's role is to assist the team to have the dialogue it needs to:
• Accept and come to terms with what has happened in the past and in the process of appointing a new leader
• Start the new "leader-member exchange" with honesty and commitment to continue to be open with each other
• Agree how the team and its new leader will work</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

	together to create a better working environment, build team reputation and performance <u>Some useful questions</u>: • What kind of inner conversations might the team be having? (Fears, frustrations, hopes etc) • What kind of problems might await the new manager? • What conversation, if any, would you have with the new team leader, alone? • What conversations, if any, would you have with the team and without the team leader? • If some or most of the previous manager's problem was contextual (e.g. lack of support from their own manager, how can the team and the new manager ensure that the same problems don't play out again? <u>Useful approaches</u>: • Emotional mapping • Conflict management	
Dominant Leader/ Weak Leader	This is one of the most difficult areas for a team coach to address. It's one of the reasons why pre-work with the team is so important. If you don't identify the dynamics of a dominant or weak leader (or a dominant group), the team coaching is almost certain to fail. Having identified the issue, the critical question is: To what extent are the leader and the team willing to acknowledge	

	and address it? If they are not, team coaching is not viable. If they are, then there has to be a contract where you will work both with the team as a whole and with the leader and where there is a *shared behaviour change* plan for both. It will be important to sit in on various kinds of meetings (collective and one-to-one) and help them practice these agreed behaviours.	

Leadership functions: keys to changing team dynamics

A seminal paper on leadership functions identifies 15 functions divided amongst two mutually dependent phases of team activity (Morgeson et al, 2009). The first phase, called transition, consists of evaluation and planning activities. The second phase shifts focus to goal accomplishment.

Transition phase leadership functions, maintain the authors, include:

1. Compose the team – bringing together the best available people for the job, taking into account complementary competences and ability to work together for a common goal
2. Define the mission – clarifying the team purpose
3. Establish performance expectations and set team goals – goals which are appropriately challenging and motivating
4. Structure and plan – dividing out tasks and responsibilities, scheduling and so on
5. Train and develop team members – including through coaching by the leader
6. Sense-making -- defined as "identifying essential environmental events, interpreting these events given the team's performance situation, and communicating this interpretation to the team"
7. Providing feedback – both to individuals and to the team collectively

Action phase leadership functions include:

1. Monitor the team – "examining the team's processes, performance, and the external team context"
2. Manage team boundaries – "representing the team's interests to individuals and groups outside the team in order to protect the team from interference as well as persuading others to support them" and co-ordinating activities with other teams
3. Challenge the team – its performance, assumptions and ways of working
4. Perform team tasks – "participating in, intervening in, or otherwise performing some of the team's task work"
5. Solve problems – diagnosing and resolving issues that prevent performance
6. Provide resources – for example, information, equipment, finance and people
7. Encourage team self-management – empowerment, accountability and responsibility
8. Support the team social climate – encouraging positive and supportive behaviours between team members

While a superhero leader may take on all of these functions in their entirety, in most teams some of the responsibility – or at least the delivery – of every one of them can be shared with the team or distributed among them at least to some extent. From our studies of high performing teams, we can see examples for all 15 leadership functions:

- *Compose the team*. Where team members interview and have a strong voice in selection of new members, it tends to have a positive effect on whether a hire will work out. In part, this is because they are able to bring different and multiple perspectives, compared to relying solely on the leader's impressions of the person. A moderating factor may be the team's willingness to embrace diversity in new members.
- *Define the mission*. In practice, with the sometimes exception of the leadership team, the mission is provided from above. The task for the team and the leader is to interpret the mission in ways that make sense for the team and align with both corporate and team values. If the team is to embrace and own the mission, it *must* have some input into its expression and the narrative around it. The mission then becomes a collaborative endeavour between the formal leader and the team

members. In some cases, the team becomes the custodian of the mission. For example, in a hospital pressure from above to hit arbitrary targets led the leader of a clinical team to lose track of the team's primary mission (patient care). A principled stand by the team gave him the courage (and the ammunition) to resist the pressures upon him.

- *Establish performance expectations and set team goals*. When people set their own goals and performance indicators, they tend to be more demanding.
- *Structure and plan.* When the entire team understands the goals and the priorities, they are well-equipped to manage this process without the leader's input, or with the leader providing oversight and approval. Over the decades, I have encountered a variety of organizations, where teams self-organize, deciding their own priorities and even, in some cases, how they should be rewarded. In recent years, Frederic Laloux has documented multiple examples of the benefits of shifting responsibility for who does what and when to the team members and away from leaders external to the team.
- *Train and develop*. The leader of a team is not necessarily the most competent and knowledgeable person in relation to the tasks the team undertakes. (If they are, it is harder for them to step outside and above a focus on the task.) The idea that the role of a leader is to coach the team is widespread, but highly questionable. A definition more in line with current understanding of effective team leadership is that the leader's responsibility is to support the creation of a coaching culture, where everyone in the team may coach each other. (Ideally, including the team members coaching the leader.)
- *Sense-making*. The assumption that sense-making is a top down process, with the leader interpreting events in the light of greater knowledge of business strategy and the wider business context, may also be challenged as overly simplistic. The perceptions of internal and external customers. For example, may also play a role in sense-making and team member may have higher connectedness with these resources than the leader. Long-serving team members may also be better than a less experienced leader at linking current events with team history.
- *Providing feedback*. The literature on leader-member exchange is replete with studies that conclude managers are poor at giving developmental feedback. A recent *Harvard Business Review* report (Whitlock, 2018) found that 44% of managers found giving feedback stressful or difficult and nearly half of these avoided giving feedback. The literature on psychological safety (which is strongly linked to team performance) finds that honest feedback between team members (and from team members to the leader) are key indicators of a psychological safe environment. In a healthy team, feedback-giving in all directions is an essential attribute. Both the leader and team members also have the ability to gather feedback from external stakeholders, to inform how the team evaluates its performance.
- *Monitoring the team.* Transparent processes that allow the team and its leader to recognise when tasks are going well and less well and how the team is performing against agreed targets are very basic tools of management. But who decides what the measures should be, how to collect them and when they should be adjusted to new circumstances? There appears anecdotally to be a strong connection between employees' perception that a measure is or isn't helpful to their job roles and the emotional connection with and commitment to the measure. If this is correct, then it makes sense for team members to have greater say in the design and implantation of measures and how they are monitored.
- *Managing the boundaries*. Teams do not normally work in isolation. Every interaction with someone outside the team has an impact on team reputation. It can be argued that a responsibility of a leader is to manage reputation upwards, while team members take greater responsibility for reputation management horizontally and below.

- *Challenging the team*. In a study of team learning that I conducted with European Union funding some 20 years ago (Clutterbuck 1998), I identified a number of roles that team members played. These included roles related to challenging the team's assumptions, ways of working and so on. If the leader is the only one providing this kind of challenge, it creates the potential for the team members to abdicate their own responsibility for innovation and self-challenge. The argument is that the leader, being wholly or partial external to the team, has a clearer perspective. In reality, team members can just as easily invite customers to present to them. Moreover, new team members can provide valuable different perspectives in their first few weeks with them team.
- *Performing team tasks*. The balance of the leader's role between facing upwards and facing downwards can be delicate and vary widely with context. If the leader is inside or partially inside the team, they have greater potential to become a role model. The danger is that they do too much of the day-to-day work (often because they enjoy it) and not enough stepping back and stepping out. If the team and the leader can regularly discuss together what the team needs from the leader, then a healthier allocation of work may result.
- *Solve problems*. How many times have we heard the maxim "Don't just bring me problems; bring me solutions"? The leader as heroic fixer disempowers his or her team. A better option for high performance is to develop the skills of the team individually and collectively to be creative and innovate.
- *Provide resources*. By virtue of hierarchical authority and the links that that provides with resource-holders, formal leaders are arguably more likely to be successful in ensuring the team is allocated the resources it needs. But outside of the formal structures resource acquisition takes place through the relationship's individuals have with colleagues in other teams. In a study of talent management (Clutterbuck, 2012) I was struck by the way that people demonstrated leadership qualities through informal interactions on the intranet. One of the conclusions of the study was that identifying issues that needed to be tackled (opportunities or problems), developing innovate solutions and bringing together the resources to implement those decisions often happened without any intervention from hierarchical leaders at all. People sharing ideas on the intranet would volunteer information and sometimes time to bring ideas from concept to reality. There is probably a threshold, where informal leadership of this kind has to give way to more structured processes in order to obtain the level of financial support needed. In the work team, however, making stakeholder engagement and resource acquisition a collective responsibility fits well within a digital world.
- *Encourage team self-management*. Yes, it's important for the leader to do this, but peer support is also a factor in how well people manage themselves. Collective self-management requires team members to accept responsibility for educating and supporting colleagues – for example, by coaching and mentoring.
- *The social climate*. It is often said that the leader creates the climate. Their mood affects that of everyone else in the team. Equally, the host isn't the only one who makes a party – the guests have a role to play, too. The social climate is underpinned by *fizz* (enjoyment of the work you do) and *buzz* (enjoying the company around you). The greater the say the team has in how work is allocated to fit with each member's interests and energy and in who joins the team, the more positive the social climate will be, irrespective of the leader's mood!

Implications for team coaching

Critical questions team coaching may pose to a team and its leader include:

- What kind of leadership does this team need to best achieve its mission?
- Which functions of leadership are most important for this team?
- Which of those functions, if any, should be solely the responsibility of the leader?
- Which would be best delegated to the team itself?
- Which should be shared responsibilities?
- How can we assess the quality of how we implement these leadership functions?
- What additional resources do we need to distribute leadership in this way?

Facilitating open and perceptive conversations around these topics opens the teams' eyes to all sorts of possibilities. The leadership functions reviewed in this article provide a useful fall-back when the team is unable to clarify the most relevant leadership functions for its circumstances. However, expect to identify others not in this list. For example, Morgeson et al include protecting the team from interference as part of boundary management, but for many teams this is one of the most important roles they expect of a manager. In a case represented for review in a recent team coach training workshop, the leader's inability to provide that protection was a major cause of the team's dysfunction.

Overall, the job of the team coach is to help the team take a much more perceptive and nuanced view of the role of leadership and to distinguish between the *role* of a leader and the *functions* of leadership. The permutations of how the team and its leader might work together then become much, much wider.

Positivity and team performance

Various studies show that high performing teams make positive comments (regardless of subject or context) much more frequently than negative comments, with the ideal ratio being about three to one. Part of the reason for this is that we react more strongly to criticism than to praise. The team coach can sit in on a team meeting and observe positive and negative comment, as well as the positivity/negativity of non-verbal communication. A practical way to capture this information is in a matrix, with positive and negative on one axis and internally directed v externally directed on the other. It helps to record the meeting, to help capture the exact words used and their context.

The team can now use this data to investigate together:

- What did we individually and collectively find most surprising? What beliefs about us as a team does this challenge?
- How did we each react to [various sample comments]? How did this influence what we said and did next?
- What patterns, if any, do we observe? How can we use our understanding of these patterns to recognise and counter them?
- What assumptions drive us towards over-optimism or over-pessimism? How can we be more aware of and more challenging of these?
- What "elephants in the room" may be affecting our positive/negative ratios?
- How can we avoid artificial positivity?
- How can we demonstrate appreciation of colleagues' constructive and caring negativity?

The aim is not to create some artificial balance but to establish a genuine climate of openness and enjoyment of both the work the team does and the stimulation of working together.

Raising collective appreciation of each other

In high performing teams, people have a strong respect for each other's competence, goodwill, honesty (trustworthiness), values and contribution. In teams with lower levels of performance, major gains in working climate and performance can be gained by taking a proactive approach to developing each of these attributes.

One of the simplest ways of raising collective appreciation is to ask everyone to look out for examples when other people have:

- Delivered a task particularly well or shown expert knowledge
- Performed an act of kindness or helpfulness
- Demonstrated that they can be trusted (to deliver, to keep confidences etc)
- Exemplified the team values
- Gone outside their formal job role to assist a colleague

Because people like to be appreciated, being thanked for these behaviours makes them more likely to do those same things more frequently in future. It also makes the person, who gave the thanks, more likely to notice positive behaviours and be even more appreciative. (By contrast, when positive behaviours are not noticed and/or not acknowledged, they become less likely.)

A simple adaptation of this principle is for everyone in the team to write for each of their colleagues one thing they are going to do to make their life easier. This promise is sealed in an envelope and only opened a month later, when the person and their colleague are together. The colleague is asked what they think is in the envelope. After they reply, they open the envelope to see if they were correct. Frequently, they will end up saying "Oh yes, and you did that too!" – simply making someone aware that you are trying to be helpful makes them notice more!

Making dumb groups smarter

HBR article Cass R Sunstein & Reid Hastie, Dec 2014 pp90-98

Summary

Groups err in decision making for two reasons: information signals (misinterpretation) and reputational pressures (changing views or keeping silent to avoid some real or imagined penalty). When these occur:

- "Groups do not merely fail to correct the errors of their members, they *amplify* them
- They fall victim to *cascade effects*, as group members follow the statements and actions of those, who spoke or acted first
- They become *polarised*, taking up positions more extreme than those they held before deliberations
- They focus on *what everybody knows already* – and thus don't take into account critical information that only a few people have."

All of the main decision-making traps (thinking short cuts or heuristics) are amplified in groups. In particular:

- The planning fallacy (underestimating the time a project will take and the cost). Groups are even more unjustifiably optimistic than individuals.
- Overconfidence (believing in the accuracy of our forecasts, beyond what would be reasonable from the evidence). Again, groups are more optimistic. "When people lack confidence, they tend to be moderate… As they become more confident, they become more extreme in their beliefs… The agreement of others tends to increase confidence and therefore extremism."
- Availability (seizing on the first things that come to mind, or the most vivid associations). Contrary to expectation, groups suppress creativity, because powerful ideas (or ideas presented powerfully) by one or more members overshadow individual contributions.
- Representativeness (assuming that because things are similar in one way, they will also be similar in others). When people in a group start with a moderate inclination towards one view, discussion tends to reinforce that view and push it towards extremes. It's particularly dangerous because "people , who are initially inclined to take risks become more so after they deliberate with one another".
- Egocentric bias (assuming that our own tastes and preferences are typical)
- Sunk cost fallacy (sticking with a project long after we should have cut our losses) – group pressure tends to prolong the procrastination
- Framing effects (how an issue is presented affects how we interpret the data). The authors give the example "People are more likely to agree to an operation if they are told that 90% of people are alive after five years, than if they are told that 10% of people are dead after five years." Rather than increase the chances that a group member will question the meaning of the data, groups tend to suppress rational analysis. Similarly, say the authors: "Suppose people are asked how likely it is, on a scale of zero to eight, that a product will sell a certain number of units in Europe in the next year. If the pre-deliberation median is five, then the group judgement will tend to go up; if it's three, the group judgement will tend to go down".

"In informational cascades, people silence themselves out of deference to the information conveyed by others. In reputational cascades, they silence themselves to avoid the opprobrium of others."

"The group will not perform well (in decision-making) if its members emphasise broadly shared information while neglecting information that is held by one or a few… Common information has a disproportionate effect on discussions and conclusions."

They suggest six solutions:

- Silence the leader
- Prime critical thinking (it makes people more likely to question and to share what they know)
- Reward group success rather than individual success
- Assign roles that ensure different perspectives are presented and given appropriate weight
- Appoint a devil's advocate
- Establish contrarian teams to make the opposing case

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Speaking up exercises

Relative status
30 minutes

Instructions to participants
Here are 13 factors that affect how confident people feel in speaking up. For each factor, score yourself relative to other members of the group, on the basis of:

- 1 = lower than average in status;
- 2 = equivalent on average in status
- 3 = higher than average in status.

The factors are:

1. Origin (ethnicity, nationality, skin colour)
2. Gender
3. Sexual preference
4. Age
5. Authentic (contact with your own personal motives and goals, contact with a god, the universe, a higher being ancestors)
6. Health (mental, physical)
7. Economic position (poor, rich, possessions)
8. Education (level, subject)
9. Social status in the specific group
10. Psychological well-being
11. Fluency of language (speaking the group's language without accent, using professional jargon fluently)
12. Magical power (possessing knowledge or skills the others do not have)
13. Seniority (short or long service within the organisation or profession)

Comments to team coach/ facilitator

According to Arnold Mindell, US physicist and psychotherapist, people scoring selves less than 25 points are unlikely to speak in meetings. If you think there is relatively high psychological safety in the team, ask everyone to share their scores and facilitate a discussion around how they can ensure that everyone has equal voice.