

WELCOME TO THE BOX OF TEAM MEETINGS

Work happens in teams.

The best leaders are those who can get their teams working brilliantly. As a Team Leader you will need to be able to run and be part of different types of team meetings to achieve certain outcomes.

There are meetings **WITH** your team:

1. Objective setting and review
2. Team performance review
3. Innovation/Idea generation
4. Learning sessions
5. Collaboration sessions
6. Communication sessions

And there are meetings **ABOUT** your team:

7. Talent discussions
8. Pay, bonus and recognition discussions
9. Succession Planning

Here are some simple Team Meeting cards to help you (and your team) get the most out of each of them.

All our suggestions and tips are based on the very latest trends in people management and what we have learnt from some of the most progressive and successful organisations around the world.

1. OBJECTIVE SETTING & REVIEW

Suggested timing: 1 hour every 3 months

Facilitated by: Team Leader or why not nominate someone in the team to help facilitate?

For: the whole team

Why?

- Update/refresh team high level and short term objectives
- Enhance team communication, increase accountability, motivate the team, identify gaps and challenges
- Review reasons for the success of some objectives and learn why others have failed

Tips and Hints

- Ensure that the goals you set for your team align with those of the broader organisation with whom you need to collaborate
- The more you can involve your team in setting goals for themselves, the more committed to those goals they are likely to be
- Your motto “Think outcomes not input!”
- When setting new goals don’t get too caught up in trying to make them SMART as the focus ends up on the process rather than the outcome
- Get the team thinking about a vision of 3–5 objectives, along with 2–3 success measures you’ll use to determine if you’ve reached them
- Work in no more than three month sprints to achieve or adapt objectives
- Celebrate the wins: If goals are met or exceeded, a reward can make us feel good – whether it’s a shout out at a meeting, a note of recognition, or team drinks

- Always allow a moment to recap key decisions or reflect on the insights gained from the meeting and agree on the steps that each person will take – don’t forget to give the introverts in your team a chance to reflect overnight before you make any firm decisions!
- Send follow up comms after the meeting with a recap of action items and accountabilities and a date for the next meeting
- Use an internal comms channel (e.g. Slack, MS teams, FB workplace, WhatsApp) to share progress



Meeting Starters

- What are we really proud of achieving over the last few months and why?
- What could have gone better over the last few months and why?
- Were our previous objectives realistic?
- Are we trying to do too much, or could we be more ambitious?
- How have we used our strengths as a team? Were there any obvious skills gaps?
- What can we do differently?
- How might our team objectives need to change?
- Let me explain the ambitions of our business over the next few months and answer any questions you have
- Which 3 objectives are we going to pursue as a team over the next 3 months?
- What 2 or 3 success measures for each will determine whether we have reached it?
- Are we clear on each of our roles to deliver?
- What could impact our ability to deliver our objectives, and how would we deal with that?
- How can we collaborate with other teams to deliver?
- What support will you need from me?
- What other resources will we need?



2. TEAM PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Suggested timing: 15 mins weekly or at the end of a project

Facilitated by: Team Leader

For: the whole team

Why?

- A chance to review performance – celebrate wins and look at areas for improvement
- Get your team comfortable sharing feedback with teammates
- Boost teams' performance, improve team dynamics, increase accountability and enhance team communication

Tips and Hints

- Keep the review informal and quick
- Don't book a meeting room – perhaps standing around a desk, in a cafe or even online
- Start with acknowledging the team's wins. What has gone exceptionally well this week or in a particular project?
- Then talk about what's not gone to plan. As the team leader show humility by criticising yourself - something you wish had gone better - this gives permission for the team to admit their own challenges
- Try and encourage peer to peer feedback to provide deeper insights into workplace strengths and ways to improve. Peers often have better insight into a team member's work
- Encourage your people to ask for insights or share advice with their colleagues in the moment, rather than waiting for a formal meeting
- Send around any actions or keypoints straight away
- Watch out for team members who are defensive when they get feedback and talk to them about it in their 1-2-1 check-ins



Meeting Starters

- I'd like to have a look at how things went this week ... I think I could have done xyz differently. Next time I'll do it like this, what do you think?
- Does anybody want to share how they think things went?
- Anything else anyone wants to talk about?
- What did we do exceptionally well this week/in this project and why?
- What can we learn from what didn't go so well?
- What does everyone else think about how they did?
- How are we spotting any failures when they occur? How can we improve the way in which we deal with it currently?
- What would make us perform better next time?
- What can I do to help you perform better as a team?
- Are we trying to do too much, or could we be more ambitious?
- Who's going to send around the list of actions?



3. INNOVATION/IDEA GENERATION SESSION

Suggested timing: 45 mins once every 2 or 3 months

Facilitated by: Team Leader

For: relevant team members

Why?

- Great teams innovate proactively and regularly
- Promote creativity, encourage diverse ideas and motivate your team

Tips and Hints

- Invite a diverse group of people to your session. Different skill sets, knowledge and experiences help you get a different perspective
- Provide the context and session goals at least 2 days prior to the meeting. eg. “We are getting together to come up with an idea to solve” ... (Problem statement). Ask them to come prepared if required
- Where possible, use a different space to where you usually get together with your team
- Good facilitation requires good listening skills, very sharp group awareness and the ability to help people express their ideas
- Whilst it’s important to create a safe space where all ideas are equal and welcome, at the end of the day, it may not be a democratic decision as to which idea(s) will get through. Be honest about who will have the final say
- If your team can relax briefly and laugh together, your creative energy will be much higher when you focus on the project at hand. A five minute quick opening exercise can help
- This the one of the rare times you need to aim for quantity, not quality: The greater the number of ideas generated the higher the chance of producing a radical and unconventional solution

- Ask your team to jot down their ideas before they come to the meeting. You’re more likely to get richer ideas that way
- Encourage wild and even “absurd” ideas. There should be no criticism, evaluation, judgement, or defence of ideas during the exercise



Meeting Starters

- Do we all understand the problem that we are working on? Any changes we’d like to make to it?
- In the next 10 minutes I want you to come up with as many ideas around what is stopping us sorting the problem
- I want each of you to look at the problem through the eyes of a different person eg. different stakeholders. How would they approach solving this problem?
- Let’s imagine we have solved the problem. I want you to map out the steps we would have taken to get there
- In the next 10 minutes I want you to come up with as many ideas to solve the problem as you can. No idea is too stupid, too crazy
- Now let’s look at what we’ve come up with. How can we group similar ideas together?
- I want you to put a tick or dot next to the ideas you like. You each have three ticks
- Looking at those with the most votes, which would we want to do now, and which should we park and come back to in the future?





Meeting Starters Continued

- What a great idea. Let's hear from (insert quieter person's name) now
- What do we know about (insert company name) and how they might approach this situation?
- What are the different ways we can go from (insert current state) to (future end state)?
- How can we build on what (person X) has just said?
- Are we going in the right direction?
- How can we prioritize this list?
- Does it fit with the user's needs? Is there demand?
- Does it meet the requirements in our problem statement?
- Is it different enough from what exists to add additional value?
- Is it something that can be implemented now or in the future?
- Is it something that can be adapted over time?
- Do we have access to the budget—enough to implement even partially?
- Is the technology available?
- What resources are required? Will we be able to roll it out with the available resources?
- Can we get feedback and buy-in from decision makers?
- Shall we start with a MVP (minimal viable product)?
What would that look like?



4. LEARNING

Suggested timing: 30-45 minutes every month

Facilitated by: Team Leader

For: the whole team

Why?

- Holding a learning meeting can support your team's development, in a fun and less formal way to traditional training events
- More cost effective than formal training events/programs
- A great way to reinforce the importance of always learning
- You'll have inspired learners with a new perspective

Tips and Hints

- Choose interesting topics that will spark an emotional reaction
- Invite your team to suggest ideas for work or life-related topics. By moving from just professional development to "human" development you will help spark new ideas, creativity and inspiration
- Schedule your learning meetings around the same day of the week/month so it makes it easier for them to become a part of your teams regular routine
- Establish the learning objective of each session so your people know what to expect e.g. "Collaboration", "Customer Experience" or "AI"
- Brand the series so they really get attention and make an impact. At the very least, send emails, and/or use comms channels to generate excitement. For each session, provide an overview of the topic, why people should attend, 3 to 4 bullet points of what they'll learn, and other teasers to encourage attendance. Sell the session by answering the following: What is the value of this workshop?

Why do they need it? And how is it going to help them in their job, life or career development

- Make it a 'lunch 'n' learn' with an engaging internal/external speaker
- Think of a problem that you see your team having, Google a helpful article/video and then send it to them saying that you will discuss at the start of your next team meeting or at the learning meeting
- Ask your team to take turns to share an interesting article that they would like to discuss
- Start a book club. Team members who volunteer to participate are provided with a copy of the book to read and discuss
- Watch and discuss TED Talks: TED Talks provide inspiration, spark creativity and lead to great discussions. Choose a topic and watch the related videos, discuss the content and share ideas about how it could be applied to your lives and to the business
- Host a 'Fail club': If you're not failing it's likely you are not innovating! Celebrate failure without blame by encouraging your team to confess their mistakes, how they dealt with the situation and what they would do differently next time



Meeting Starters

- What are your first thoughts on this? (TED talk, article, book chapter etc.?)
- What is the number one take-away from this?
- This is what I learnt ...
- Did you learn anything new that could be useful to you?
- What did you disagree with?
- Based on this, what can you or the team do more of/less of /start doing/stop doing?
- How can you apply what you learned from this activity in your life or the workplace?
- How will you use what you've learned in the future?
- What did you enjoy about the activity? What didn't you enjoy?
- What ideas do you have about what else we could learn about?
- Who could we invite to come and talk to us about what they know?
- Could you add this learning to your LinkedIn profile?



Suggested timing: Make it an agenda item on a team meeting every 3 months

Facilitated by: Team Leader

For: the whole team

Why?

- Strengthen relationships inside and outside your team
- Be known as the team that is interested in building relationships outside the team
- Gain new knowledge and a fresh perspective
- Help the team gain insight from others and maybe a better way to do something
- Expand your/your teams network to help them learn and develop their career
- Helps them gain a new understanding and respect for the other team/department
- Recruit potential new talent in your team

Tips and Hints

- Consider alliances with external organisations that you could combine resources and efforts to reach your objectives
- Use an online communication channel e.g. WhatsApp, Slack, MS Teams, Google Hangouts, Facebook Workplace so your team can share and discuss
- Provide opportunities for team members to try their hand at a new project or skill they are interested in for a few hours each month in another team

- Invite team members from other departments to come and shadow you/one of your team
- Encourage your team to build relationships outside of work – suggest they go to network events, speak at conferences or take someone to lunch and expense it
- Show your team the benefits of a great and up to date LinkedIn profile by showcasing yours!



Meeting Starters

- Can we achieve our objectives alone? If not what help do we need?
- Would collaboration help us compensate for areas where we have weaknesses and enhance our strengths? How?
- Who could we invite from another team to help us and what could we do for them in return?
- How can we establish a relationship with this person/organisation?
- How about we arrange a networking event around this topic?



6. COMMUNICATION

Suggested timing: Everyday!

Facilitated by: Team Leader

For: the whole team

Why?

- Your team want to hear from you and know what's going on
- The more you share with your team the more trust you will build
- Your team will more feel connected to the company objectives and how their role fits in
- You will know what's going well for your team and what might need to change. Create an environment where your team feel they can challenge, ask questions and give you feedback

Tips and Hints

- Motivate your team through a deeper sense of purpose beyond profit. Helping employees relate to the 'why' of your organisation immediately increases engagement
- Be honest with your team about your preferred communication style – if you hate speaking to a large audience let them know
- Storytelling is by far the most compelling and engaging way of communicating with your team. Share stories of your wins, your challenges, your motivations etc. in a blog, an email, at the start of your team meeting or a learning session
- Get your team to share their own stories
- As a leader you don't have to have all the answers – communicating a problem you might be struggling with and asking your team for help is very powerful

- Ask your team what communication would be interesting or helpful for them to hear
- Own your communication - don't just forward messages from your internal comms team or senior leaders. Add your own personality to make it more human and meaningful
- Be yourself – your team will know if your communication has been written by someone else
- Don't feel you can't be honest – your team will want to know the truth, even if it's bad news
- Consider the different personalities in your team and how they like to be communicated with - some will like face to face, some will be happy with written comms – ask each one of them in your one to ones
- Schedule in regular, informal sessions where your team can either see or hear from you
- Use an online comms channel (WhatsApp, FB workplace, Slack etc.) daily to keep your team up to date and give them an opportunity to ask you questions
- Hold short informal comms sessions with a few bullet points of what you want to cover, standing around a desk
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Meeting Starters

- Let me share the latest news with you
- This is what I've been up to this week
- This is a challenge I'm facing – can anyone help me?
- My focus next week is on ...
- I think this is good because ...
- What else would it be helpful for you to know?
- I'm going to ask ... in the team to say a few words about what they've been up to
- What do you think?
- Am I communicating enough/too much/too little?
- Is the information I'm sending on our comms channel helpful? What else would you like to see?
- Who could I invite from another team to talk to us about what they're doing?



7. TALENT DISCUSSIONS

Suggested timing: 1.5 hours every 1 or 2 months

Facilitated by: Facilitated by: HR or a Team Leader

For: cluster of Team Leaders (5+)

Why?

- Gives your team the chance to stretch, play to their strengths and take advantage of opportunities
- Helps you to support your team with their development and career aspirations
- Encourage cross-team movement. Give you a better understanding of the talent available in other teams

Tips and Hints

- The groundwork for a successful talent discussion is that managers have regular check-ins and career conversations with their team members so that they know them really well!
- Emphasis of the exercise is not on categorising people but creating opportunities for growth and movement
- It's about 'discussing ALL team members, not just the best or the worst
- Don't keep records of the meetings as this will restrict open conversation
- No 'one size fits all' approach: Remember, every person is different
- Retention and length of tenure will not necessarily equip your organisations for the future. Great talent management is all about movement – moving up, around, in and out

- Your team members are adults who are responsible for their own careers but it's important to show you are interested. Our behaviours are dynamic, not static. Labelling people as "top performers" or "low performers" creates the impression that employees belong to one group or the other. Labels don't just limit employees, but managers' perceptions too
- Keep it process-lite. The talent discussion needs to replace cumbersome processes. Focusing on the quality of the conversation will provide better results than focusing time on long-winded, subjective processes
- Hold follow-up career and development discussions with employees



Meeting Starters

- Our goal today is simply to spend an hour or so discussing our people and development
- What key skills are you lacking in your team? How can we help build those skills?
- How have you identified your team members' career aspirations? What has been your learning from this? Talk us through this
- Let's look at three of your team. What would make them want to leave? How can we avoid these?
- And what would make them stay? How are you providing this for them?
- Do we think our people are taking responsibility for their careers? If not, how can we all encourage them to do so?
- Who in our teams is ready for a move or a change?
- Who in our teams are really playing to their strengths? Who are in roles that aren't?
- Are we taking enough risks i.e. letting our people have a go at different roles even if they don't have the skills and experience?
- Are we being diverse enough in our thinking? Are we just promoting people like us?
- What are the ways in which you challenge your team members to grow? How are we challenging our employees to stretch their current abilities?

- What are the key strengths and skills they have that they do not have an opportunity to use?
- What gaps or vacancies do you have in your team?
- Does anybody here have a role that could benefit from a refresh?
- What job-rotation opportunities could we make happen between us?
- If we have team members not ready for a move, what else can we do to give them some stretch?
- Is there anyone who we think has been in their role too long? What can we do about that?
- Would any of you be willing to mentor someone in my team?
- Does anybody here have a project or a task that could be done by this person in my team who needs some development?
- Do we know what our competitors are doing around career development or does anyone have any suggestions of things that worked in their previous organisations?



8. PAY, BONUS AND RECOGNITION DISCUSSIONS

Suggested timing: 1.5 hours at least twice a year

Facilitated by: HR or a Leader from the business

For: cluster of team leaders (5+) across different business units

Why?

- Identify suitable ways to reward and recognise team members
- Influence fresh thinking in organisations approach to pay and reward
- Improve employee retention and engagement, celebrating success improves morale and boosts motivation, team rewards help build collaborative spirit

Tips and Hints

- Get to know how your team members are performing (through regular check-ins and feedback sessions) and what their contributions to work have been including an understanding of what they value and what motivates them
- Act at the point where a reward is truly deserved, not months after the event has occurred
- Focus on what your employees truly value or want
- The discussion is not about creating complex processes which requires cumbersome paperwork. It's about sharing do-able, process-lite acts that will encourage and motivate your team members and make them feel valued
- If like many organisations your bonus pay out is the same every year, aim to get the issue of money off the table by not paying bonuses and instead putting the entire budget into bigger salaries to give people freedom to spend their salaries as they think best

- Don't over inflate salaries above market rate for great performance – find other ways to recognise
- We know that if employees are paid well and aren't incentivised through bonuses, they find more constructive ways to motivate themselves to do a good job. Adjust pay only according to changing local markets. This will free employees to relax and have an open, honest conversation with their managers about their performance
- Weed out selfish behaviour and encourage true collaboration. Think of ways to replace individual bonus with a team bonus. For example- replace an individual sales commission with a monthly team bonus to reward everyone who touches the customer
- Encourage and trust employees to reward each other for taking risks, accepting challenges and inspiring others to follow suit – an adult to adult approach. For example- run a monthly 'Top 10' award asking one question- "Who most helped you to succeed this month?" It has nothing to do with how much revenue or profit they made – its sole focus is how they helped others
- Pick up the phone or send a quick email or thank you card to let them know you appreciate what they have done. If a simple 'great job' isn't sufficient spend a few minutes and try being curious about how they pulled it off. You might say something like, "That was really impressive. Will you tell me how you did it?" By showing interest in the story behind the accomplishment, you honour the results as well as the person who reached them
- Sometimes rewarding 'failure' can be useful in building a culture of innovation. Think about how you might acknowledge failure in a positive way. Recognise the managers that have practised this within their own team and call them out and ask them to share their success stories



Meeting Starters

- Talk about 5 different people in your team. What really makes them feel valued? What really matters to them?
- What does our approach to reward say about us? How does it represent our culture?
- Are any of our rewards going against the behaviour we want to encourage?
- How are we rewarding the behaviours that matter most to us as a business?
- What role do we want money to play in terms of reward?
- How can we ensure our pay structure is fair?
- What examples can you share from your experience in other organisations you've seen work?
- What are our competitors doing and do we think that's right for us?
- How could we remove individual bonuses and still reward our people, so they feel valued?
- What are the other ways we could show our people they are appreciated, other than money?
- How often do we reward the individual when it's been a team effort? How can we change this?
- What types of spot rewards have some of you used and what has been the response?

- How can we celebrate effort and progress made on a project that has failed?
- Any examples of rewards or recognitions you received that made a lasting impression on you?
- How can we ensure transparency in the way we reward our people?
- What tech platform should we use to publicly praise an employee/team?



9. SUCCESSION PLANNING MEETING

Suggested timing: 1 hour every 3 months

Facilitated by: HR or a Senior Leader

For: clusters of Team Leaders

Why?

- Build capabilities for the future, encourage movement and the creation of opportunity
- Creates an inclusive and diverse leadership pipeline
- Having conversations about your people and doing something with it boosts morale, inspires career confidence, presents numerous development opportunities

Tips and Hints

- Accept that unconscious bias (learned stereotypes that are automatic, unintentional, deeply engrained within our beliefs, universal, and have the ability to affect our behaviour) exists in every situation and in every organisation. Discuss ways to work through our biases based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or ability
- Accept that the quest is not for the 'Superhero leader': Instead identify people's strengths and help them play to these strengths
- Leaders are not solely responsible for identifying their successors: It is important to take a wider view of available talent than making it the sole responsibility of the incumbent as this may result in someone choosing a person similar to them
- Roles in the future will look different: The needs of the organisation and the roles themselves may look completely different in this fast-changing world. Use a future fitting approach by identifying capabilities you need in a disrupted world

- Accept that there is no specific model or framework to follow. The process has to be fluid and agile to keep pace with the massive ongoing changes
- We can't possibly be certain about who exactly will fit which role, by when. All we can do is look for some future-proofed attributes that will help our organisations to survive or thrive; Attributes such as curiosity, connectivity and insight, humility and self-knowledge
- Studies show that a diverse team culture creates greater performance, greater innovation and greater ROI over time. So, by changing the way we approach diversity, we make ourselves more competitive

Here Are Some Approaches That You Might Want To Consider:

- Collaborative evaluation process: Talk to people across the organisation to ensure people get 'multiple looks' rather than just being evaluated by their line manager. Additionally, clusters of leaders from different teams can help identify internal available talent
- Choose your leaders through their followers: Turn the top-down approach on its head. Use Network Analysis tools, where the teams, not the incumbents are asked a series of simple questions such as:
 - Who do you trust?"
 - Who do you go to for connections?
 - Who inspires you?
 - Who stretches and develops you?
- This will lead to a number of potential successors being identified who will have those key attributes that mean people will follow them. Identify your future leaders through the people who will be led by them



Meeting Starters

- What will our future workforce look like? What do our roles look like in the future?
- With our current flat organisation structure how can we create opportunities for growth and advancement?
- How are we fostering relationships with potential successors outside of our immediate team and outside of our company?
- What are the skills and attributes we would like in our future leaders?
- How can we create more movement to help build these essential skills?
- What are the leadership skills required in a disrupted world? How can we help them develop these skills?
- Talk about three key members of your team. What skills would help them gain more influence in their current role?
- What skill gaps are holding them back?
- What's unique and special about them and how are they deploying these unique qualities?
- What are they brilliant at? How can we make them world class at that?
- How do their behaviours impact the team? How does the team perceive them?
- How can we ensure our natural biases aren't impacting on the successors we choose?

