

Encore Leadership Corps Summit
Building a Team, Being a Team
Prepared by Leigh Tillman
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Meetings. Teams. People.

Meetings, conference calls, email chains are teams in action. Teams meet and communicate to be teams. These are structures of people working together.

Working together is where the “zing” of collaboration comes in and also where the need for clarity, shared expectations and agreements come in so all feel understood, respected, included.

Here are a few approaches to help teamwork enhance a project, engage team members, and be a win-win-win-win experience for all involved.

1. Knowing the Us

Teams are people. Meetings are of people. Who are these people?

Engage your team:

- Know your people as people
- Let difference be a strength and a known so it can bring richness and depth
- Build in time to hear people’s perspectives. Value this for it brings value.

Examples:

- Build ten minutes into monthly meetings to learn something about everyone on your team.
- Find out who likes to organize, to listen to others, to bake treats for team meetings?
- And find out who appreciates receiving positive feedback, specific tasks to do, quiet and space to work?

Learn what individuals want to give and receive. Build a group dynamic based on people getting to engage as themselves and therein be invested.

2. Structures and Agreements We Can Trust

When you have more than one person you are making agreements constantly. These agreements make us feel heard, included, understood, and supported. There’s an art to making agreements that make us feel invested.

We trust agreements and structures when:

- We are asked for our input in designing them or our agreement in utilizing them
- They are used consistently and accurately over time
- They seem pertinent and appropriate
- They are assessed for efficacy and we are asked for input in adjusting them

Example:

- Set meeting times. Start on time and end on time. If you need to go over time, ask if it is okay to take 10 more minutes. Ask for agreement to amend your agreements.

If you implement structures that you all agree with (helped develop) and you use them accurately and effectively, it is an embodiment of your team in action. This builds trust.

3. Real and Really Clear

Create realistic expectations of people, time, meetings, and what you can accomplish. Let's make things achievable so we can have successes!

- Know and communicate:
 - Why meet?
 - Who needs to be there?
 - What decision-making power does the assembled group have?
 - What can we accomplish?
 - What are realistic next steps?
- Be concise—what's necessary, useful, and possible?
- Constantly link aspirations, mission, and big picture to day-to-day work
- Generate next steps—always considering how we implement what we decide

Example:

- Be clear in holding a meeting, why you are meeting and what you can accomplish. Make implementation a part of any decisions you make.
- In strategic planning, figure out how to keep incorporating your plan into your work rather than letting it sit on a shelf. Build in implementation and assessment so as to make it a “live” document, therein constantly connecting the big vision with the day-to-day.

These three concepts go hand-in-hand. Knowing your people on your team, building structures and agreements you can trust and being realistic in your work all continually inform one another as you grow, adapt, and respond as a team. May you continue to be curious in improving, collaborative in responding and realistic in moving forward. Best of luck to you and yours!