TEAM HEALTH ASSESSMENT

SUPPORTING YOUR TEAM AFTER A CONFLICT

Part of addressing any conflict on a team is being attentive to the impact it has on both those who are and are not directly involved, while addressing any bigger picture concerns that may have contributed to the conflict in the first place. While there are aspects of a conflict that can be moved past, pretending the conflict didn't happen or hoping things go back to normal on their own is rarely effective.

The intention of the following is to help leaders discern where and how to focus your team's development energy. Feel free to bring it with you to a conversation with your HR Consultant to help you determine next steps.

GENERAL ADVICE

Gather people together: Don't underestimate the power of presence and conversation. Try holding individual and team meetings to allow people to share their experiences and concerns in order to learn from each other and move forward in a good way. While some education and skills may need to be refreshed, teams are more likely to benefit from discussions rather than topical training.

Focus your energy: Be selective. You can't overhaul a team dynamic overnight. Pick one to two things to focus on and watch the ripple effect. Attentive and intentional adjustments to process and communication over time can make a significant difference. Overdoing it will drain you and your team, and may catastrophize the impact of a single conflict, which could discourage people from addressing conflict in the future.

Normalize the awkwardness: No matter how organized, emotionally intelligent, trauma-Informed, or mindful you or your team are, conflict is inevitable and likely to be disruptive and uncomfortable. Acknowledge the difficulty but emphasize the benefits of working through it. Adopt a posture than holds uncertainty and doesn't shy away from difficult conversations, without expecting a plan or policy to be a magical fix. Expect that agreements made may need to be iterated over time in order to continue being useful.
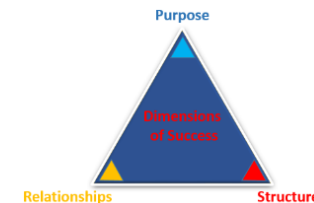
CONSIDER

- Where is your team in terms of its overall development?

- What impact has this conflict had on the broader team? What follow-up is required?

- What role (if any) do you and other team members have in helping the impacted parties remain accountable to any agreements they've formed?

- Which conversations are better suited to take place one-on-one and which are better as a group?

- What outcomes have occurred from the conflict resolution that can be shared with the team?

- What cannot be shared? How can you normalize that this may feel uncomfortable? What internal language can be used to refer to this season as a team that doesn't violate anyone's confidentiality or privacy?

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UVIC'S 3 DIMENSIONS OF TEAM SUCCESS:

Team health can be assessed in 3 broader dimensions of success: purpose, structure, and relationships. Each team will be unique in how much each of these areas is emphasized.

DIMENSION OF TEAM SUCCESS	SIGNS THIS MAY REQUIRE DEVELOPMENT	CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES
PURPOSE (WHY) A strong sense of purpose can be articulated through vision, mission and values but does not need to be. A purpose is the reason your team exists, and it relates to why you do what you do every day. A purpose is something that people care about and it motivates action from team members by connecting their heads and their hearts.	• Excessive busyness without sense of fulfillment • Unhealthy sense of competition • Hidden agendas • Apathy or doing the bare minimum • Lack of togetherness / sense of separateness • Lack of systemic awareness and understanding • Difficult to set goals that aren't strictly quota driven • Team bonds over complaining	• How clear and passionate is your team's sense of purpose? What impact have recent events had on the clarity of purpose? • How can you articulate and use what is core and common to your team to guide how you proceed from here? • How clear are team goals? How well can everyone see their contribution to reaching these goals? • Do you have a team charter? If so, what elements currently exist? What might need to be reviewed or adjusted considering recent circumstances? If not, which aspect of a charter might be a good place to focus your next steps? Elements of a team charter might include statements of… • **Purpose** – Why we exist • **Vision** – What we are aspiring towards • **Mission** – What work we are here to accomplish • **Values** – How we agree to behave as we achieve the above; what principles are core and common to our team • **Strategic Goals** – How we accomplish our mission step by step

How could clarity of purpose support your team in navigating conflict?

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DIMENSION OF TEAM SUCCESS	SIGNS THIS MAY REQUIRE DEVELOPMENT	CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES
STRUCTURE (WHAT): Team structure forms a foundation for effective team performance by providing administrative clarity and efficiency. Examples of structure include job descriptions, records management, team communications norms, meetings structure, or access to data and reporting. Developing team structures can take time and effort but when they are designed well they become invisible enablers that help focus team energy on what matters most.	• Lack of clarity about accountability • High rate of burnout • Inability to break down larger goals into practical steps • Overlap of activity / inefficiencies • Work is accomplished by individuals choosing to "be a hero" • Meetings seem boring, chaotic, and generally are a waste of time • Multiple communications channels with no discernable purpose • Complaints about fairness in terms of workload and compensation	• How clear is everyone's understanding of role descriptions, portfolio management, and general division of labour? • Review the Orientation Toolkit to check in about how new team members are socialized into the team climate. • Do your performance coaching, development, and management processes require review? • Do your hiring or onboarding practices need a review? • How well does everyone see how they fit into the bigger picture of the team? • How well has the team defined norms and business processes? Should these be reviewed? Review the **team norms** checklist • How effective are your team meetings? Where can the process of gathering be improved? • How clear is everyone's understanding of relevant strategy, policy, and procedures?

What element of structural clarity is necessary to support your team in navigating conflict?

DIMENSION OF TEAM SUCCESS	SIGNS THIS MAY REQUIRE DEVELOPMENT	CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES
RELATIONSHIPS (WHO) Relationships are the glue that holds things together, and the fuel that feeds team performance. When team members trust each other, they are able to have meaningful conversations, hear and value diverse perspectives and hold each other accountable to team values, processes and results.	• Lack of passion about work • Lack of comradery or connection • Creativity and innovation are individual but not collective- lack of brainstorming/ collaboration) • Absence of kudos, appreciation, or recognition for contributions • Lack of celebration of individual or group success • Siloing or workarounds to avoid interactions • Team members avoid time together that is not strictly work focused • Lack of care about individual wellness	• When was the last time your team connected relationally or socially? Is there something you can do together to set the stage for moving forward? • Does everyone on the team know where to go for support? Review UVic's Resources for Health and Wellness • How is your **recognition** practice on the team? Review the Recognition Toolkit **and cards,** specifically pages 11-15 for ideas about celebrating, recognizing and appreciating your colleagues. • What communications agreements might you need to make as a team to better equip you for responding to conflict next time? • How well does the team nurture trust and accountability? • How safe is it to provide and accept feedback? • How well do team members feel connected to each other? • How have you incorporated UVic's conflict principles into your work? • What learning might the team or individuals benefit from to prepare them to deal with conflict constructively in the future?

Where could improved relationships support your team in navigating conflict?