



Top Ten Tips

for

Sustaining High Performance Team Status

The formula and process

To convert High Performance Individuals, working either as a group or within a collegiate agency, into a sustainable **High Performance Team** requires the following elements and 11 key steps...

Conditions required: -

- Most/all team contributors are receptive to adapting, learning and receiving feedback
- The Leadership regime/culture encourages change and is prepared to empower more, with the likely consequences of delegating some degree of responsibility and authority to the people within the team
- There is a clear 'Vision' as to what a 'High Performance Team' delivers and does differently than the current status quo and what the benefits are. This should also include an indication of or, ideally, the expected standards to – sustaining the new Team dynamics (e.g. – Greater accountability of time-commitments; More rigour to planning disciplines; Transactional Communication/ Soft skills/EQ enhancement etc.)
- Time/resource commitment to the process – i.e. similar to a Project Managed framework with incremental steps, financial and time budgets, review & evaluation methodologies & clearly defined Objectives. (e.g. Recognised as No 1 in the Industry that retains talent as evidenced by reduction or 0% in churn of Team members plus applications from competitors' talent to join the team; Surpassing all previous deliverables and attaining new, ambitious targets that are measurable; Wins more/new Awards etc.)



The 10 point Formula: -

- 1. Diagnosis.** Conduct rigorous research to fully understand the current state of the group members as 'assets' within the team; an accurate reflection on the relationships/culture across the group and the Leadership style they receive/have. This may include profilers (possibly including 360°s); assessments of working practices, protocols and communication culture (both electronic and F2F) & 3rd party perspectives.
- 2. Set Criteria.** Identify what 'success' could or should look like. If it were possible to recruit the perfect people and have the perfect environment with the most efficient processes and practices with no 'baggage' - describe, in some detail, and identify how that would work and feel like. (e.g. Versatile Leadership style(s), adapting to the different circumstances with a contingency planning discipline; Anticipation of issues and responses informing how to optimise the approach to get the best outcome. (e.g. Testing for understanding and having a strong enough rapport to propose recommending refinements with confidence, which will be respected and acted upon with 100% follow through)
- 3. Devise an initial 'Template' or 'Map'** of the steps required between the current position(s) to reach the Ideal status. This should provide a sense of the time-frames and the levels of commitment required as well as an indication of what intervention may be needed. It will also acclimatise the team members to the process of changing their behaviours and practices
- 4. Share the Research findings** and the '**Map of Direction**' with the team. This should be candid and transparent in order to underpin the whole process with the glue of trust. The format of this may vary from a group discussion/facilitation to 1 – 2 – 1 feedback.
- 5. Devise a Platform or Foundation stage** to initiate the process. The process will almost certainly be impossible to predict, so just like agile project management, the initial phase will yield a lot of data and responses/reactions that will inform the plan and the subsequent steps. (e.g. A carefully designed bespoke Team Review session with Profilers; Team Challenges and forensic debriefings – ideally including a shared experience, where they overcome some degree of 'perceived' jeopardy together). The outcome of this will update the Plan and calibrate the process.



6. **Strategic Interventions** aligned to key stages. Explore indications of improvements/changes/issues as a result of the Actions/commitments from the Foundation stage beginning to emerge within the business. This will also include a menu of 'enablers' and 'mitigation' mechanisms aligned to key Business deliverables – such as 1 – 2- 1 Coaching support; Training sessions; Facilitation provisions, focussing upon how the Team are problem solving; Designing Initiatives; engaging with external partners etc.
7. **Continually look for progressive steps – as captured on the 'Map'** from the Actions/commitments applied from Interventions (Coaching; Training; Facilitations etc.) within the business. Highlight seismic improvements (e.g. reduced wastage; improved quality of meetings etc.) and any set-backs (variable levels of commitment or application of agreed plans) that need to be encouraged/addressed, supported by refined Actions/commitments.
8. **Full Team review every 3 – 6 months.** This can be regarded as 'Maintenance inspection' for the Team to examine progress in alignment with the Business' targets, but also how the 'Culture' and versatility of Leadership is evolving. At this juncture – it may be a smart step to have a 'controlled' catharsis intervention (e.g. Facilitate a 'Pressure Points' sharing session) in order to exfoliate irritants, distractors and potential threats to the enhanced motivation and harmony of the team.
9. **Give the team an ambitious challenge.** By heightening the bar for the Team to reach an incremental next step, it will reveal newly developed team dynamics (e.g. streamlined planning applications) and any undiscovered weaknesses (such as disenfranchisement harboured by an individual or poor balance of work/life priorities) that could erode performance or lose momentum. This, of course, would require to update/refresh the '**Map**' for reviewing; support mechanisms & directional positioning
10. **Audit 3rd Party's perspectives.** A sustained High Performance Team will usually be noticed or, when prompted, reflected by partners they are engaged with that will provide evidence of progress made and any areas that still requires focus for improvement. Findings from this activity will be easily superimposed on the '**Map of Direction**' as a co-ordinate for the Team to calibrate their behaviours/processes & communication etc.

If you or your organisation would be interested in learning more about managing conflict & dealing with difficult issues, please call 01937 579649 or email

info@dicksontraining.com