Valuing Individuals and Performance

Team Tool: Part 2

A Strong and High Performing Team

**Exercise duration***: 1-1.5 hours*

**Recommended Frequency:** *Annually*

**Resources needed:** *Square sticky-notes, pens, 2 sheets of flipchart or A3 paper*

**Team Size:** *Recommended for teams of 6- 20*

**Outcomes:**

Building on from Part 1, this exercise allows everyone to identify what a strong team looks like and evaluate both their collective performance against this model.

This exercise explores how team members can enhance how they work together and learn from each other. This exercise will expose both areas of collective strengths and development.

1. Either as a full team or in smaller groups ask team members to take 10-15 minutes to think about the recipe for a strong and high performing team.

At this stage, individuals should avoid being reflective about how the team currently function.

The focus should specifically be on the strength of:

**Knowledge, skills, behaviours** and **values**

needed to operate successfully and meet the ongoing needs within their service.

.

1. Coming together as a group, collectively agree the elements that contribute to a strong and successful team. Aim for around 9 – 15 components. **Allow no more than 10 minutes**
2. Write each element down on a separate square post-it note. E.g. A Strong Team recipe:

*Working efficiently and solution focused*

*Technical Knowledge of XXXX*

*Having fun and supporting each other*

*Sharing info & knowledge effectively*

1. Repeat step 3 so you now have 2 sets of identical square post-it notes.
2. For the next part of the exercise, it is time for the team to rank what they feel are the most and least important elements when it comes to team performance. Collectively, using the first set of sticky notes, work together and agree a diamond shape as below:

*Most important*

*Mid table*

*Least important*

1. Take this diamond model and place to one side.
2. Now, using the second set of sticky notes, the team members should make a second diamond shape. However this time they should think about how they collectively perform as a team. They should now rank how strong they feel the team collectively perform against each element. It is usually effective to do this via a “hands up” voting system.

*Strongest*

*Mid table*

*Least Strong*

At this stage, individuals should focus on how they work together as a collective.

1. You should now have 2 Diamond shaped models, one that ranks the most important performance areas for the team and another which ranks how the team perform against these areas. It is now time to reflect on these models.

Importance

Performance

**Reflection and Actions**

Looking at your team performance first explore;

* 1. As a team, what are our confirmed strengths? These will be the areas at the top of the performance diamond and where most feel we perform best.
     1. What is it that makes us so strong and confident in these areas? What works so well?
     2. Does this strength help us perform well in other areas?
     3. How important is this strength to the overall operation of the team?
     4. Is there anything we can do to stretch ourselves further in this area?
  2. As a team, what elements have we assessed ourselves as performing the lowest? This doesn’t need to mean the team are poor performers in this area, but that overall as a team, there may be something to work on. Explore:
     1. Why did we rank our performance at the bottom?
     2. What works well in this area? How can we build on this?
     3. Are there people with known strengths in this area that can help develop the overall team?
     4. Can we / do we need to draw upon additional resources, support and training to develop our performance in this area?
  3. Now, as a team, explore if there are any large gaps between performance and Importance as illustrated in the example below. This will help to highlight any priority areas for team development.

Importance

Performance

**Actions**

* 1. Throughout this exercise and also on reflection, take time with the team to identify a development “to do” list which is based on your priorities and service needs. For example,
* an informal “master class” in a particularly technical area of work may be needed;
* a team mentor in a particular area might be helpful or;
* a working group might be needed to focus on improving particular skills, systems or processes.
  1. Collectively assign tasks by asking people to take on items that complement their natural talents and encourage everyone to identify areas they wish to develop.