

# Team Kit **Introduction**

# A brief reflection ... ask yourself the following two questions

- **Your best team experience:**  
What has been the best, most effective and enjoyable team membership so far?
- **Your goals in learning more about teams:** What is your goal in learning more about how effective teams work?



# **This Kit is for team members and leaders, business partners, consultants and facilitators**



# Teams and Teaming: Defining features (1/3)

“A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable”

Katzenbach/Smith, p 45

- Small number
- Complementary skills
- Commitment to purpose
- Common goals and approach
- Mutual accountability

# Teams and Teaming: Defining features (2/3)

“Teams are collectives who exist to perform organizationally relevant tasks, share one or more common goals, interact socially, exhibit task interdependencies, maintain and manage boundaries, and are embedded in an organizational context that sets boundaries, constrains the team, and influences exchanges with other units in the broader entity.”

Maynard & Gilson, 411

- Organizational context
- Team boundaries
- Task interdependencies

# Teams and Teaming: Defining features (3/3)

“Teaming is an active process, not a static entity. ... Teaming blends relating to people, listening to other points of view, coordinating actions, and making shared decisions ... Enabled by distributed leadership, the purpose of teaming is to expand knowledge and expertise.”

Edmondson, p 2

- Teaming as an ongoing social process
- Social and communication skills
- Shared decisions and leadership
- Forums for building knowledge and learning

# Teams provide great opportunity – but require focused investment to realize their potential

## Teams are great ...

- **Problem solving:** Teams are usually better in coming up with answers to non-standard issues
- **Productive conflict:** Teams provide social contexts for productive conflict and drive individual engagement
- **Learning:** Teams foster individual development and organizational learning and allow to learn from mistakes

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## ... and demanding

- **Discipline:** Functioning teams depend on a number of preconditions which require attention, time and energy
- **Shared Leadership:** Teams require leaders to take risks engage in shared leadership
- **Tensions and intensity:** Productive team work is usually more intense than a individualistic approach to work

# Not every social group working on a task warrants the investment to become an effective team

## Work Group

- Both work result and work process are relatively clear
- Work can be broken down into additive tasks easily
- There is limited interdependency between individual's tasks
- A formal leader can set agenda, goals, and ways of working

## Team

- The task is complex and lacks standards answers
- Team members need to work together to achieve goals
- There are interdependencies between individual contributions
- The team defines goals, ways of working, and agenda



Team Kit  
**Kit Board**

 Purpose &  
Goals


**Purpose  
& Goals**

 Members &  
Skills

**Members  
& Skills**

 Leadership &  
Accountability

**Leadership &  
Accountability**

 Rules &  
Behaviors

**Rules &  
Behaviors**

 Communication &  
Relationships

**Communication  
& Relationships**

 Tensions &  
Conflict

**Tensions  
& Conflict**

# Key take aways (1/2)

→ Teams share some defining features, among them ...

- Small number
- Complementary skills, including social and communication skills
- Commitment to purpose
- Common goals and approach
- Mutual accountability, shared leadership and decisions
- Organizational context
- Task interdependencies
- Team boundaries
- Teaming as ongoing social process

## Key take aways (2/2)

- Effective teams require investment – but provide benefits which are hard to replicate individually and warrant the investment
- Not every collective effort calls for a team – sometimes a working group simply relying on specified and non-interdependent individual contributions is enough
- You probably need to invest in a team when dealing with a complex or ill-defined task requiring collaboration and interdependent individual contributions
- In order to drive team performance, you need look into the design and practice 6 key dimensions of teams: purpose and goals, membership and skills, leadership and accountability, rules and behaviors, communication and relationships, and tension and conflict

# Get to work: use the team characteristics checklist to start designing your team set-up

→ Download the team characteristics checklist and start thinking through your team set-up

## Team Characteristics

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Checklist

Use the checklist below to define the specifics of your team – be it a new team you are going to build, a current team you are a part of, or to reflect on and learn from a past team experience. Use the list as a thinking tool for yourself, in dialogue with a colleague or coach, or as a basis for a team discussion.

To which extent is the feature given or can be managed? How important is it for your work that the feature takes a certain shape?

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- Small number**  
*Direct exchange between all team members, personal relationships, equal share of voice in the process*
- Complementary skills**  
*Technical skills, functional skills, problem solving skills, social and communication skills*
- Commitment to common purpose**  
*A shared purpose beyond the immediate work product that is understood and communicated by all team members in a similar way*
- Common goals and approach**  
*Specific shared deliverables and goals, a shared way of working*
- Mutual accountability, shared leadership and decisions**  
*Every team member feels the right and the obligation to proactively contribute to the team process*
- Organizational context**  
*Level of team autonomy, solution space, link to enterprise strategy, key interfaces to other teams*

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