

Team Kit

Communication and Relationships

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**

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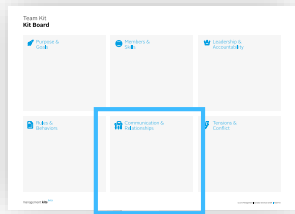
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**Communication
& Relationships**

Communication and relationships



Communication & Relationships

Involvement in team communication

Formal and informal exchanges

Building trust within team

Rhythm and media of communication

- How do you ensure productive interaction patterns between all team members?
- How can you build the social fabric that allows team members to fully engage?

Patterns of communication are a highly significant driver of team performance

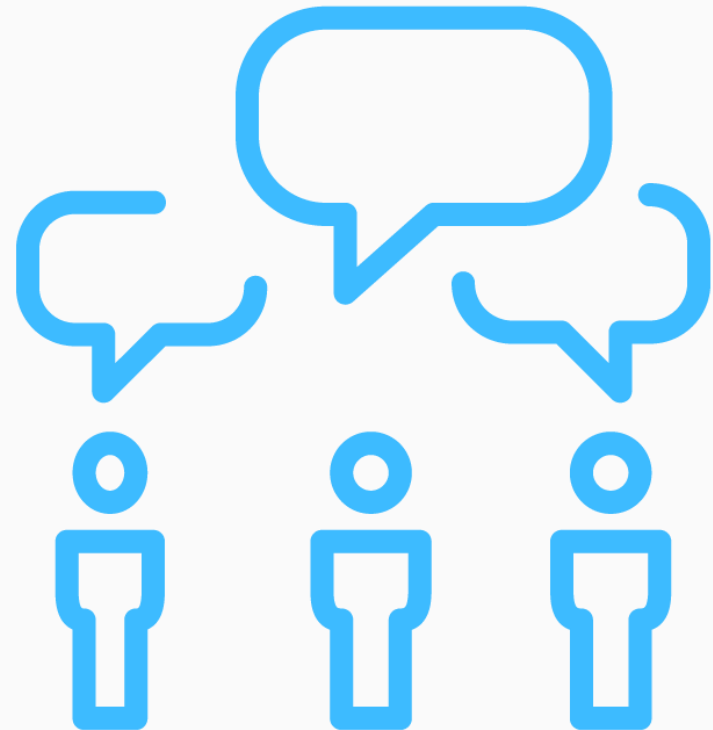
“Patterns of communication [are] the most important predictor of a team’s success”

Pentland (2012), p4

- *Patterns* of communication generally more important than
 - Individual intelligence and talent of team members
 - Personality of team members
 - Functional skills of team members
 - Substance of discussions
- Shaping communication patterns as key dimension of team building

Defining characteristics of communication patterns in successful teams

1. Everyone on the team talks and listens in **roughly equal measure**
2. Members **face one another**, and conversations, gestures are energetic
3. **Members connect directly** with one another – not just the team leader
4. Members carry on **back-channel or side conversations** within the team
5. Members periodically break, **go exploring outside the team**



Sources: Pentland (2012), p7, Pentland (2014)

Energy, engagement, and exploration as key elements defining communication patterns

Energy

- Face-to-face *best*
- Phone/video conference second best
- E-Mail and texting: worst

Engagement

- Distribution of energy among team members
- Function of *average* amount of energy in team
- The more equal, the better

Exploration

- Communication that members engage in outside of their team
- Most important for creative teams charged with innovation tasks

Sources: Pentland (2012), Pentland (2014)

Tactics

- Office space
- Leader example
 - Actively encouraging even participation
 - Conducting more face-to-face communication
- Eschew overly formal meeting conduct
- Train communication behavior (nonverbal communication, active listening, etc.)

«Simple tricks» and the ideal team player as «charismatic connector»



Trust as key enabler of effective communication patterns

- **Even engagement within teams requires a «social fabric» which supports**
 - Speaking up
 - Communicating freely
 - Being psychologically safe
- **This social fabric is built through frequency and intensity of contact**
 - Spending time together, sharing personal experiences
 - Depending on each other, and supporting each other in teams
- **Goal: Creating a “climate in which raising a dissenting view is expected and welcomed” (A. Edmondson)**
 - Precondition for energy, engagement, and exploration
 - Reducing the risk of speaking up and making one’s point

Key take aways

- Communication patterns are a key driver of team performance – empirically this is more important than e.g. individual intelligence, talent, personality and skills of team members
- Productive communication patterns can be cultivated observing equal contribution, leader example, creating communication opportunities and platforms, and training according communication behaviors
- Trust and a climate of psychological safety is a key enabler for team members to engage actively in open, productive communication