

Our take on team-building...

Working Better Together



OUR TEAM BUILDING SERVICES

Tailored Coaching Clinics for improving Team Culture



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1. Time for Team Building?



Whether it's an office, factory or school, teams are now the main way we organise work. Team-working skills are vital for everyone. Any time a group of people come together to work on a common task, whether it's an intact work team or an occasional committee, team-working comes into play.

And that's where teambuilding comes in... Working Better Together is the general label we use for our team-building approach. This prospectus outlines what we think it's all about. It also provides useful information on the 'ins-and-outs' of teambuilding for leaders looking to revitalise or reform teams or take them to the next level for a stand-out performance.

Teams are everywhere these days and the ability to get teams working better together is a major mission for most leaders. We need to know how to form teams – then facilitate them to work collaboratively. We need to maintain and improve teams – to help them continuously rethink how they can work better together. We also need to build commitment to common goals and challenges, as well as manage team relationships and performance. *It's a tall order...*

While most workplaces say they work in teams – fewer know how to really make teams work. We naturally form teams to achieve things together we couldn't do alone, yet working well together doesn't come so naturally. We have to learn how to do this. That's where team-building comes in. It has a proven track record as a tool to enhance team performance, but the term itself sometimes seems a bit nebulous. People know they need it, but often aren't sure what it is. We need answers to questions like:

- ? What is team-building? Does it really make a difference?
- ? What makes one team work better than another? Why do some succeed while others fail?
- ? What steps can I follow to build a good cohesive team that works well together?
- ? What are the traps to avoid and what do I can I do to design a good team-building session?

There's a daunting amount of team-building help out there in "web-land" – and almost as many different methods and approaches as there are providers. None are right for every occasion. Team-building doesn't come in *one-size-fits-all* packages, no matter what anyone says...

Working Better Together is the general label we use for our team-building approach. This prospectus outlines what we think it's all about. For leaders looking to revitalise teams or take them to the next level, we hope it gives useful insights into the 'ins-and-outs' of teambuilding. We don't have all the answers or pretend to be the best choice. In fact, we encourage you to think carefully about what you need, shop around, talk to providers – and of course, your team.

Even if you decide not to use our services, some activities in this prospectus might help you get clear on what you really want from team-building, what approach would best suit your outcomes, your culture and the personalities that make up your team and assist you to think about strategies to bring out the best in them.

Bill Cropper

2. Why Work in Teams?



From local councils to courier services, teams are part of everyone's working landscape. They're part of the furniture in most organisations. Why? Well for a start, most models of work are team-based. Organisations are way too complex for just individual effort anymore. Teams are seen as the way to meet future challenges where greater flexibility, speed, diversity, innovation and responsiveness are called for...

Whatever negative press they get, there's a bucket-full of hard evidence harking all the way back to the early 20th century Hawthorne Experiment, that shows teams magnify performance. When they work well together, they achieve more than any single individual can. As the saying goes: "None of us is as good as all of us."

➔ We all know the reasons for working in teams – things like:

- ☐ Teams tap collective thinking and doing power greater than any single individual
- ☐ Teams boost work performance, staff satisfaction, commitment and involvement
- ☐ Teams enable better co-ordination, communication and blend more skills together
- ☐ Projects are too big, too complex, too involved for a single person to do it all
- ☐ Teams get people to think together about new ways of getting things done
- ☐ Teams are the prime vehicle for continuous improvement, innovation and learning
- ☐ Teams are the key to more productive work cultures and improved service quality

While there's loads of rational reasons to work in teams, there's also good *social and emotional* reasons too. Here's a couple we think are important:

- ☐ Feeling 'included' or 'belongingness' – it's a frequently-mentioned job satisfaction factor
- ☐ Feeling 'supported' – knowing we can call on people to support, back us up and encourage
- ☐ Feeling 'involved' – sensing we can have a say, our opinions count, we're 'in the loop'
- ☐ Feeling 'energised' – good team performance increases individual confidence and energy
- ☐ Feeling 'heard' – knowing our ideas will be noticed, nurtured and not 'knocked'

"Teams seem to be everywhere in business these days - the advantages begin at the personal level - people feel the combination of cooperation and increased autonomy offered by a team offers more enjoyment and fulfilment" Daniel Goleman, *Working with EI* p. 217

It seems like we all want to work in happy, productive workplaces that are warm, welcoming, inspiring and supportive; that bring out our best, build our skills and positively challenge us – where people get along well with each other. Where we feel valued, we care about each other and there's – well, a *real sense of team*...

Like everything else though, teams break down, under-perform, disintegrate or stop functioning as well as they should. They need remodeling, revitalizing or re-forming. Put simply, teams need maintenance – **and that's where teambuilding comes in.**

3. What is Team-Building?



Put simply, it's finding ways of *Working Better Together*, which is why we use this label for our team-building clinics.

While we all have different ideas of what working better together means and how to go about it, our teambuilding work typically covers improvement areas such as shared visions, team design, conversations, team roles and relationships, culture and climate, developing new operating principles and finding better ways to work together more collaboratively and constructively.

"Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success."
Henry Ford

"We just don't seem to work very well together! Everyone does their own thing. We're not on the same page, we don't pull together or help each other out with problems. What we need is team building!" Sound familiar? It should! It's the 'catch-cry' of many leaders seeking miracle cures! Team-building tends to be an article of faith for many managers – but what is it really?

While there's no doubt team-building is important to establish rapport and re-energise groups, the term sometimes seems a bit nebulous. People know they need it, but often aren't quite sure what it is. So let's start by looking at some of the things team-building is about...

For starters, team-building is not a single thing. There's as many different definitions, methods and approaches out there as there are providers. No one approach is right every time. Team-building doesn't come as 'one-size-fits-all' – and don't let anyone tell you it does! In a very broad sense though, all team-building is about finding ways to work better together. It's about *making the most of what you do through collective teamwork and collaboration*.

Working Better Together can incorporate so many different things. While aims and outcomes vary from team to team, our teambuilding work typically covers team improvement ideas like:

- ☑ **Shaping shared visions and values** – where most teambuilding needs to start!
- ☑ **Forming and designing teams** – getting the team architecture right.
- ☑ **Talking better together in teams** – attending to our conversations and communication.
- ☑ **Learning better together** – tapping into opportunities for sharing learning and good ideas
- ☑ **Increasing team cohesiveness** – finding ways to stick together and then stay together
- ☑ **Enhancing team relationships** – respect, trust, openness, collaborative team behaviour
- ☑ **Social and emotional intelligence** – taking the emotional temperature of the team
- ☑ **Clearing up leadership** – for self-responsibility, empowerment and better co-ordination
- ☑ **Clarifying roles** – the expectations and assumptions we make about each other
- ☑ **Operational issues** – managing change/improvements for more cohesive service delivery

Each of these things can contribute to building a positive, team-working culture and supportive emotional climate where people can find ways to discuss team and task issues constructively, work through conflict without resorting to argument and acrimony, and identify ways to work better together in future

4. What can Team-Building do?



As well as looking at design, structure and composition, a lot of what teambuilding does depends on dipping deeply into the dynamics and interpersonal aspects of team functioning. It deals with underlying issues, concerns and processes present in all teams – patterns of behaviour, interaction, communication, roles and relationships – that all affect how well they work together.

We often find that people feel a need for team-building but the specific outcomes or areas they want to focus on elude them – they remain vague and insubstantial. The clearer you are on what you want to get out of team-building, the more effective it is.

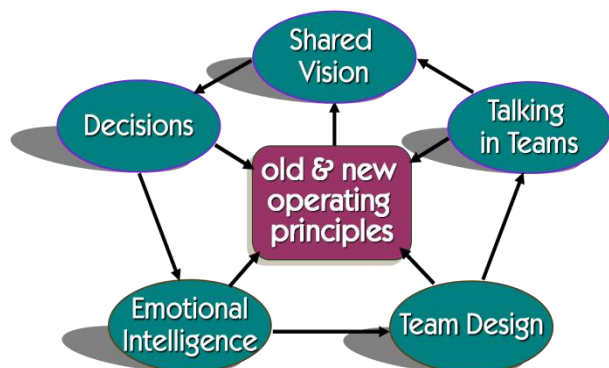
➔ Here's a string of ideas about what team-building does that we find useful:

- ☐ Builds understanding of what it takes to be part of a well-functioning team
- ☐ Helps people agree visions and goals and how to collectively achieve them
- ☐ Gets people to reflect on behaviours that help or hinder teamwork
- ☐ Creates cohesion – makes people more mindful of working in well with each other
- ☐ Increases belongingness and acceptance, boosts morale and improves team interactions
- ☐ Identifies barriers that get in the way and finds new ways of working better together

While every team has its own unique needs and challenges, most find they need to work on conversational, behavioural and relationship-building aspects such as:

- **Direction:** Where have we been? Where are we going? Are we all heading the same way?
- **Contribution:** Understanding each other's workroles and contributions we each make
- **Group Interaction:** Looking at how we all interact – being more aware of our own behaviour
- **Connection:** Who do I connect or relate to in this team? Who don't I? Why is that?
- **Rapport:** Do we give each other enough positive self-regard, respect and support?
- **Belongingness:** To what degree do I feel I identify with, and feel like I belong in this team?
- **Leadership:** Do I like my leader or agree with how leadership is handled in this team?
- **Decisions:** How do we make decisions in this team? How can we share and improve on this?
- **Team Spirit:** Building team spirit, trust, identity and making people feel recognised and valued
- **Team Improvement:** Identifying ways we can do the work better or work better together
- **Co-operation:** Increasing collaboration, co-operation and work more collectively as a team
- **Differences:** How can we deal better with conflict and resolve differences more amicably?
- **Responsibility:** Taking joint responsibility for what happens and holding each other to account
- **Climate:** Do we have a positive work culture and a safe and supportive emotional climate?
- **Communication:** Do we have open, constructive conversations where people share ideas

5. Five Elements of Effective Teams



Being clear on what it takes to work well in teams, makes a big difference to people fitting in and getting along better.

While it can encompass a vast range of possibilities, we think working better together boils down to 5 really key elements: shared vision and values, design, decisions, talking in teams and emotional climate...

Without paying attention to these 5 team foundations, people tend to bumble along, making the same old avoidable errors that get teams in a tangle. We've put them in a tick-table, so you can think about where your team is in relation to each and what they might need...

1. Team Visions and Values

- ☐ Defining the real purpose of this team – *why we're here and how we make a difference*
- ☐ Identifying common challenges we all get behind – *this energises and focuses effort*
- ☐ Shaping shared visions, values and operating principles – *so we're on the same page*

2. Designing the Team

- ☐ Deciding on a 'best-fit' team structure – *a team design that supports our vision*
- ☐ Developing new operating principles – *that facilitate integrated, collective action*
- ☐ Clarifying workroles and responsibilities – *understanding contributions we each make*

3. Team Decision-Making

- ☐ Sharing leadership and decisions – *handling divisive issues like power and control*
- ☐ Being clear on levels of authority and responsibility – *empowering people to act*
- ☐ Processes for handling problems – *we all agree on how key decisions are made*

4. Talking in Teams

- ☐ Learning how to talk together – *have constructive dialogues rather than debate*
- ☐ Increasing trust, respect and openness – *about what's really going on in this team*
- ☐ How we handle conflict and deal with difficult discussions – *these arise in all teams*

5. Emotional Intelligence

- ☐ How emotionally intelligent our team is – *tuning into and using emotions positively*
- ☐ Building better team relations – *learning to get along well with each other*
- ☐ Creating positive team cultures and emotional work climates – *making it safe to belong*

6. What do YOU need to work on?



A good team-building session firstly has a clear focus. It's not enough to simply get your team together off-site and run a bunch of icebreaker games.

If you want team building to work, you need to identify what to work on. You also have to demonstrate to the team that it relates directly to real work results they care about and on top of that, that it benefits them personally.

? What challenges do you face where you think team-building can help?

➡ Try this team-building checklist. It's a list of things we've helped teams with in the past and it can help to refine your specific team-building goals and challenges...

Think about specific team learning and development opportunities you want to work on with your team - a performance challenge, an opportunity to do some things differently in your team or a practical improvement to the running of the team.

➡ There are 2 steps we suggest to using the checklist...

1. Go through the left-hand column first. Think about things that keep coming up in your team that make you feel uneasy or you wish could be better or different somehow. Do these correlate with any of the team-building goals and challenges we've listed?

2. Then go through the right-hand column. For each item you checked in the left-hand column, contextualise your particular team challenge by framing it as a "How Can We....?" statement. This usually helps you to turn a general situation into a more specific team goal.

Reflect on the way your team currently works together. Are there things that make you feel uneasy or you wish could be different? Does your team need to.....	State your Working Better Together goals or challenges. Frame it as a "How can we...?" statement
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop (or revisit) shared vision, values or operating principles? Have more open discussions about where we've been and where we're going as a team?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Transit from being a more traditional workgroup to work more along the lines of a true team? Learn to work together more collectively on joint activities to increase cohesiveness and collaboration?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clarify how we can work better and more constructively together? Engage in more constructive dialogue about team functioning and issues that get in the way? Discuss strengths, weaknesses and how to work together in more complementary ways?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Think about how the team is designed and see what the scope is for re-inventing or reforming itself? Analyse our work processes or the way our jobs are put together?	

Reflect on the way your team currently works together. Are there things that make you feel uneasy or you wish could be different? Does your team need to.....	State your Working Better Together goals or challenges. Frame it as a "How can we...?" statement
<input type="checkbox"/> Clarify/re-think our roles and responsibilities, understand the contribution we each make and the expectations we have of each other about who does what around here?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Look at how we interact together – be more aware of interpersonal behaviour that contributes to a positive or negative team work environment?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Work out leadership and co-ordination roles – issues such as power, control and how we make decisions?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Work on conversational skills – improve our team-talk so we listen more carefully and considerately to each other and can be more open and honest in our discussions?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review how we handle conflict and defensiveness, give and get feedback to each other and deal with difficult issues that arise in all teams – differently?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Become more respectful, supportive and trusting of one another – increase psychological/emotional safety and openness about what's going on in this team?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Move more toward self-management and identify what's disempowering or restricting them? Find ways to empower people to do the job and not be so micro-managed and tightly controlled?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Build a more positive and supportive work culture and emotional climate – a sense team spirit or identity that makes people feel recognised, valued and belong?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Make more time for collective planning/problem solving, regular reflection or feedback sessions on work or team process/design issues? Agree on what the real priorities are and take responsibility for managing them better?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review how we learn and think together especially when tackling changes and challenges? Learn tools to help us to think more creatively together and innovate?	
<input type="checkbox"/> See how emotionally intelligent we are as a team. – learn how to express our feelings, control disruptive emotions and connect with each other better emotionally?	

? Are there other challenges or goals for your team not listed above?

Why not use this checklist with your team. Ask everyone to fill it out then compare and discuss responses. Keep a list of major points about 'Areas for improving teamwork' for the next time you have a chance to hold a team-building session.

6. Why do Teams Fail?



We're constantly inundated with token sentiments of good teamwork – they're a *'team-player'*, we want a *'team effort'* on this, we're all *'part of the same team'*. Yet while most workplaces say that they work in teams – far fewer know how to make teams work. Far too often, people find teams to be time-consuming, frustrating and exhausting, rather than exhilarating, involving and effective. Some teams succeed. Many more fail. *Why is that?*

As many leaders find out the hard way, you can't just snap your fingers to forge a true team – it takes constant effort. Teambuilding is something leaders should do every day – not reserve it for that annual one-day event that's often more about ritual than results. The truth is teams take a lot of work. It takes a lot of discipline and tons of practice to work well together.

➔ **There's many reasons why teams fail, but some of the most common we've come across in our team-building work include:**

- ☐ **Teams fail when they don't understand team-working:** Few of us ever really learn how to work well in a team. Beyond plain ordinary patience and commitment, teams means learning new tools, new skills, new styles of managing and new ways of working together.
- ☐ **Teams take a change in mindsets:** We don't always see what a big mental shift it takes to work effectively in teams. Teams need new thinking to work well yet many people try to graft their old ideas onto a new team design. These simply get in the way.
- ☐ **Avoidance of collective accountability:** Our culture promotes individualism not collective working, competition not collaboration, control not shared leadership and co-ordination, independence not interdependence, blame not shared responsibility.
- ☐ **Lack of trust, openness, connectivity and likingness:** Successful teams trust. There's rapport, likingness, mutual understanding and we take time to connect deeply with each other. Fear of being vulnerable means people clam up, get defensive, compete, cover up or play political power games – which all prevent trust-building.
- ☐ **We lack personal mastery to learn new ways to relate:** People lack the emotional self-awareness, social and conversational competencies needed to form and maintain healthy team relationships. Managers don't model new leadership roles and behaviours needed – members have trouble confronting self-interest and putting team before individual needs
- ☐ **Reluctance to deal with difficulties:** All teams have difficult moments. Constructive confrontation about beliefs, behaviour or decisions on the best course of action are not just inevitable but necessary. How teams handle conflict is a real test of their cohesiveness. Teams that trust can stay in dialogue over hard issues, challenge and question each other respectfully yet robustly and put views passionately and persuasively.
- ☐ **Lack of clarity around decision-making:** At the bottom of many team failures is a reluctance to come to grips with the real issues of power, decisions and responsibility. Empowerment, collective responsibility, joint control and shared decision-making are key values that underpin superior team performance.
- ☐ **Lack of shared vision and commitment:** Above all, teams often neglect to develop a truly shared vision. Clear mutual purpose, shared visions, and explicit values and operating principles provide an anchor and source of energy, inspiration and commitment. Lack of them leads to uncertainty over decisions/directions and half-hearted commitment to action.

7. Team Failure Factors...



There's always things that get in the way of working better together. They could be connected with roles, the way we talk to each other, fail to share information, include or consider people and many more things. When people can't or won't raise difficult issues or blockages to teamwork with others, they tend to fester, poison relationships and eventually effect team productivity and cohesion.

Before our *Working Better Together* clinics, we do a preliminary analysis with teams to find out what's going on and help focus team-building sessions. One question we always ask is:

? In what ways don't we work well together at the moment? What things get in the way?

➔ Here's a list of things teams typically name that get them tangled up. They're listed in a rough order of frequency. *How many ring a bell for you and your team?*

- ☐ Lack of shared vision, direction, common understandings
- ☐ Inability to harness commitment to common goals or mobilise the team
- ☐ Self-interest – tendency act in self-serving ways and demote team needs
- ☐ Team emotional climate, psychological safety and relationship issues
- ☐ A tendency in the team to be harsh or critical of one another
- ☐ Anger, frustration, destructive conflict, arguments or high levels of defensiveness
- ☐ Communication being abrupt, directive, confrontational
- ☐ Lack of support, praise, acknowledgement, recognition, trust, respect
- ☐ Poor team design – lack of clear operating principles to support team-working
- ☐ People being over controlling, authoritative, directive or demanding
- ☐ Communication difficulties, lack of involvement, people feeling left out of the loop
- ☐ Role delineations – people not always clear about what's expected of them
- ☐ Lack of open and transparent discussions – no time for collective planning
- ☐ Lack of synergy/cohesion – not meshing in with each other and pulling together

One other factor almost always turns up on team lists – “no fun”. Many of us feel while we do and should take work seriously, that being too sombre and serious detracts from team morale.

“Teams need to have some fun!”

“Most people would rather have fun at work. It may be obvious, but what we've observed again and again is that personal enthusiasm is the initial energizer and that enthusiasm feeds on itself. People don't necessarily want to ‘have a vision’ at work or to ‘conduct dialogue.’ They want to be part of a team that's fun to work with and that produces results they are proud of.” (From an interview with Peter Senge FC issue 24, p 178 online access by www.fastcompany.com)

We agree. If we can adapt Cindy Lauper's old song, it's not only “*girls just want to have fun*” – so do teams!

8. True Teams or Token Teams?



In today's workplaces, it's virtually impossible *not* to be part of a team – even if it doesn't always feel like it! Many conventional workgroups like to call themselves 'teams', but hardly change anything except their name.

In fact, the term 'team' gets used so loosely in most organisations that it's frequently a good idea to start a teambuilding effort by differentiating between a "true" team and a "token" one...

? **Teams? Groups? Is there really that much difference?** In many organisations, the answer is "Not much. Same old workgroup – just a different label."

"People rarely use 'team' with much concern for its specific meaning...most people remain unclear over what makes a real team. A Team is not just any group working together. Groups do not become teams simply because someone labels them as teams. 'Teamwork encourages and helps teams succeed, but teamwork alone never makes a team...'" Katzenbach & Smith, The Wisdom of Teams p. 21

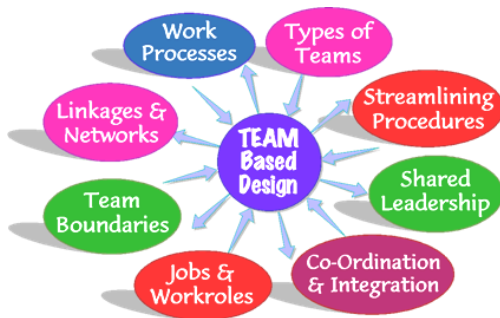
One of the most useful and powerful preliminary steps we undertake in our **Working Better Together** clinics helping people distinguish the difference between a **true team** and a **token team** – which is often a more traditional workgroup masquerading under the team title.

- ☐ **A True Team:** has a common vision and goals; direct themselves and works collectively on things a lot of the time. They also share out leadership responsibility and decision-making...
- ☐ **A Token Team:** is a loose collection of individuals, who mostly work independently on their own separate activities, often competing or working at cross-purposes with each other and rarely working collectively together on anything significant. We associate features like these with the traditional, 'boss-driven' workgroup.

➔ **Here are some key differentiating factors between true and token teams.** Tick items that ring true to you about the current group you work with...

TRUE TEAM...	TOKEN TEAM OR GROUP...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Common performance need or challenge ■ Shared vision and common goals ■ Interdependence – sense of cohesion, linking in and working together on things ■ Shared accountability for team results ■ Collective work arrangements – collegiate ■ Information sharing – skillful discussion ■ Support each other's success ■ Self-management, distributed leadership, empowerment and self-determination ■ Clear, agreed operating principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Individual goals over team achievement. ■ Conflicting priorities and cross-purposes ■ Individualism – everyone heads off in their own direction and works independently ■ Focus on own role/piece of expertise ■ Competition and conformity the norm ■ Debate, argument, polite discussion ■ Stick to own patch and little mutual support ■ Unwilling to share/take responsibility. Lots of <i>leave-it-to</i> or <i>blame-the-leader</i> behaviour ■ Rules/regulations to enforce conformity

9. Team-Building or Team Design?



Team-building often gets confused with **team design**. Both have the same outcome – *how to improve team functioning* – and there's some overlap in approaches, so it's understandable.

Many problems teams encounter are inherent in the way they're put together in the first place. We can run a *Working Better Together* clinic that can incorporate or focus exclusively on team design.

Many times we don't discuss what kind of teams we're in – we simply say we work in one. An early step we do in some of our *Working Better Together* clinics is to show people the sorts of team designs there are, help them identify what kind of team design they have now and explore ideas for what kind of team design would best fit the way they want to work in future.

➔ Designing a team well first often precedes the interpersonal issues of building it...

Often, problems teams encounter stem from deeper, systemic causes such as the way the team is constructed, workflows, boundaries between your team and others, how workroles are designed and what processes and operating principles teams follow, formally or informally.

- ☐ These are team **design** issues. They often require a more fundamental rethink. Traditional teambuilding won't often deal with many of these real, central issues. Yet, overlooking these often means your team is flawed from the start. Problems keep cropping up because they're built-in to the way your team is designed.
- ☐ Teamwork-based design is often as much, or more important, in well-functioning teams than team-building. Teambuilding may clarify roles and show people how to get on better with each other, but the team may still be doing the same old, ineffective work as always.

➔ Here's some ideas on what teamwork-based design can address:

- ☐ How work processes/activities are divided up and distributed into team workroles
- ☐ The boundaries between different functions, programs, projects, activities, workroles
- ☐ Designing better systems, structures, workflows and networks
- ☐ Assessing how useful current methods, practices and procedures are and improving them
- ☐ How leadership, decision-making power and co-ordination is distributed and shared
- ☐ How to develop broader, better jobs and co-ordinate things more smoothly
- ☐ Developing new operating principles or protocols to work together in different ways

Designing your team – or, if you're already in one, redesigning it, means exploring different options for team-based work and maybe changing your current workroles, processes and operating principles. We sometimes call this '*the hard-edge*' of team-building. It takes a radical re-think of these and other fundamental concepts to really make teams work. By the way, a team design that works well in one context may not suit another. Much depends on the vision, resourcefulness, commitment and creativity of the team members who are doing the redesign.

10. 7 Steps for Forming Teams



Teams don't just happen by accident. They need a plan of steps to follow and a set of tools to construct them.

Our *Working Better Together* clinics provision teams with practical tools they can continue to use back at work, while the action-learning segments we build in ensure you take-away a well-formed plan of steps and follow-up actions for team improvement based on our 7-steps model.

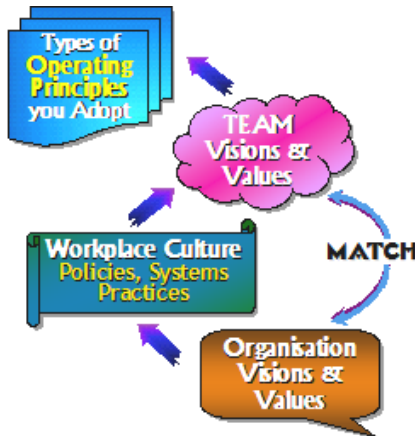
"Groups become teams through disciplined action. They shape a common purpose, agree on performance goals, define a common working approach, develop high levels of complementary skills, and hold themselves mutually accountable for results." Katzenbach & Smith The Wisdom of Teams

Whether you're forming, re-forming or renewing a team and no matter what kind of team set-up you're in, there's 7 common questions all teams need to work through. Addressing them helps you identify team-building actions to take and develop a plan of steps you can follow.

- **1. What is the purpose of the team?** Teams often need to revisit or clarify why they're here, what's important about the work they do and how they fit in the overall organisation picture.
- **2. What are the team's visions, goals and values?** Teams need a shared vision, agreed goals and common values – coupled with real commitment and leadership to "make it happen". Team-building or team design, it often starts with people picturing what kind of team they'd like to be, imagining the sort of work arrangements they'd like to see in their team, then developing a statement of purpose, performance challenges and improvement goals for their team.
- **3. What changes can we make to the way we work now?** Teams often forget to re-design the way they work together – to re-think work processes, workroles and system boundaries. This is often critical because it determines how much scope you have for working together differently, and coming up with change ideas and options for new work arrangements.
- **4. What new operating principles do we need?** Teams try to make changes but often forget to review their old work practices and operating principles – resulting in things reverting back to the way they were. New operating principles reinforce new ways of doing things.
- **5. How can we better manage and co-ordinate things?** Working this out is one of the most vital issues for team operation. Teams need to identify the best way to handle leadership and co-ordination, agree new decision-making protocols and how to share leadership/co-ordination
- **6. How do we learn together?** Teams that learn well together, tend to stay together. Effective teams regularly review what skills are already in the team, new skills they need and develop new team learning strategies for gaining new skills and sharing skills among the team.
- **7. How will we measure and manage our performance?** Identifying new performance improvement goals and measures and writing these up in a team charter is a good solid step. It's a vital benchmark to validate whether you've met challenges and made a difference.

The different kinds of teams people end up with depend on the choices they make in response to these questions. Think of them as a kind of roadmap for team formation and improvement. All teams inevitably address some of these questions but without a map like this, it's rare that any single team will work rigorously through all of them. They'll be gaps – and it's usually those questions we've overlooked or missed out on that cause teams trouble.

11. Shaping Shared Team Vision



What can we achieve together? The answer to this question is the vision teams who want to work better together need to build together. Picturing what kind of team you'd like to be, imagining the sorts of features and work arrangements you'd like to see, then developing a statement of purpose, vision, values, common challenges and goals gives teams clarity, purpose, cohesion and direction.

We run *Working Better Together* clinics dedicated to developing shared team visions and sorting out strategic and operational priorities based on the directions people agree as part of the process.

Developing vigorous visions, values and operating principles is integral to developing your team. Visions help us innovate, guide us inspire extra effort and energy. When a team collectively creates a shared vision (with guiding principles, practices and actions to get them there), it provides a common focus, a sense of commitment and mutual purpose.

"Shared vision is vital for teams that want to provide focus and energy. People learn best when they strive to accomplish things that matter to them. The overarching goal that the vision establishes brings about not just commitment but new ways of thinking and acting. It fosters risk-taking and experimenting. It also encourages a commitment to the long-term." Peter Senge

When we talk shared vision, we don't mean the big words hardly anyone understands that get enshrined in corporate strategic plans. We mean something that matters to you and your team – something more local and personalised that they can really connect with and relate to. Visions can also be about *how we will work together* not just about *what specific task we'll work on or particular work targets we want to achieve*.

➡ **Shaping a shared vision is an important step we recommend you do pretty much first up in any team formation process and revisit when you're team-building too.**

Most team-building efforts need to start with vision – where your team would like to be when it's doing the best it can and how things can be better or different. Visions help to:

- ☐ Articulate where we're headed, whether we're going the same way and how to get there
- ☐ Focus teams on real performance challenges to tackle and changes to achieve these
- ☐ Spell out what kind of team culture you want and clarify goals, directions and priorities

Visions and values go hand-in-hand – and our Working Better Together clinics often include them. Values proclaim what your team stands for – what we care about most and give priority to. They shape our thoughts, perceptions, choices, decisions and actions. In a team setting, values are beliefs, principles and attitudes you share in common about a whole range of different aspects related to organisational life

The practice of shaping shared visions and values involves everyone contributing to dialogues and conversations about their dreams, directions and destinations and how to make them a reality. You won't finalise a shared vision straightaway – it's starting that's important...

12. Conversations: the Team-Building Connection



Communication or rather, the lack of it, is a constant complaint in most teams. At the bottom of better communication is the need to learn how to have better conversations.

Working on having better conversations has a robust and positive team-building effect. Our Working Better Together clinics highlight improving your team-talk.

Much conversational behaviour is invisible to teams. It's so ingrained they're rarely aware of how much it influences the quality of their interactions. Yet most of the essential actions teams take happen through conversations. Think about how much your team gets done through conversations. Take them away, and teams wouldn't get much done at all. Conversations are:

- ☐ The forum where all relationship-building, problem-solving, decision-making, action planning and most other team interactions take place.
- ☐ Set the tone that determines the emotional climate of your team
- ☐ Enable us to engage, connect with each other, build rapport, resolve differences.
- ☐ Are how learning in teams happens – how we explore each other's views, think together and exchange information and insights
- ☐ Create a collective space to build shared vision and common understandings
- ☐ Are the way we talk over how we're working together and improve on what we do

When teams don't talk well together or conversations are off-colour, coordination breaks down, relationships and feelings suffer, mistakes and misunderstandings multiply and productivity plummets. You can derive enormous team-building benefits from practising different conversational tools and techniques to improve the quality of the interactions that happen in teams every day. Many of us meet together for years on end but never take time out to reflect on how we come across or converse with each other.

➡ **Some major blockages conversational team-building can help with include:**

- ☐ **Clarifying assumptions** we consciously or unconsciously make about each other (eg. *'Cheryl's only interested in facts and figures, not people stuff'*)
- ☐ **Understanding the impact we have on others** and how we come across (eg. *'When Sue screws up her mouth like that, I always think she's critical of my ideas.'*)
- ☐ **Replacing dead-end debate with dialogue** – many teams indulge in debate not dialogue, which enables creative solutions, fresh insights and mutual understandings to emerge.
- ☐ **Listening more attentively** – we spend most of our time talking, listening to mainly to self-confirm our own views and seldom inquiring openly about or building on other's thinking.
- ☐ **Learning to give and get constructive feedback** without raising defensiveness (eg. *'Pete always acts defensive when I say I'm not feeling listened to or valued around here.'*)
- ☐ **Challenging each other respectfully:** Often, real conversations can't happen because we're reluctant to dig down and challenge each other's thinking safely and respectfully.

13. Emotionally Intelligent Teams



Emotional Intelligence (EI) is at the heart of great teamwork. It's one of the big differences between effective teams and ineffective ones – and a key foundation for our *Working Better Together* clinics.

Good relationships and positive feelings help create healthy teams that pull together – and the key element may be whether people feel good about working in your team...

When they do feel good, people make more positive emotional connections with each other – they work better together, they're more creative, and usually far more productive.

- ☐ The more emotional connection there is in a team, the more people feel friendly, happy, enthused, interested and focused. Morale tends to be high – and climates are positive.
- ☐ The reverse applies too. Apathy, anger, aggression, anxiety, cynicism, contempt, or sullen silence set off negative emotional chain-reactions that can turn team climates toxic.

EI is about understanding our emotional patterns, seeing how they affect what we say and do and learning how to remain emotionally balanced. On a social or team level, it's also about our ability to read and connect with other people's emotions, get along well with team-mates and have good working relationships. It's the basis for building positive, productive work climates and 'can-do' cultures. It's what lifts levels of achievement, focus, optimism, joy, purpose and perseverance and decreases dysfunctional behaviour and other drawbacks to good teamwork.

➔ We often design *Working Better Together* clinics that weave together essential elements for building more emotionally intelligent teams such as:

- ☐ **Emotional Awareness:** Teams need to learn how to regularly reflect on how it *feels* to be in this team – the relationships, how we treat each other and the emotional climate we create.
- ☐ **Emotional Safety:** People must feel safe to articulate how they feel about things that impact them, others and the work of the team – and address issues of safety and belongingness.
- ☐ **Emotional Climate:** Teams need to take their emotional temperature from time to time – how respected, listened to, supported and understood each team member feels.
- ☐ **Connectivity:** Team members need to feel they belong to a worthwhile team with a healthy self-identity, feel appreciated, and feel they can connect well with others inside the team.
- ☐ **Efficacy:** that 'can-do', attitude – the self-belief this team can perform well –which leads to positive emotions that energize, motivate and enable people to achieve.
- ☐ **Openness:** bringing feelings out into the open and dialoguing about how they affect the team's work. Emotions avoided allow unspoken resentments to fester that can corrode trust.
- ☐ **Emotional Regulation:** whole teams get infected by one member's negative emotions so learning to be emotionally responsible and moderate negative feelings can be a climate-fixer.
- ☐ **Constructive confrontations:** Teams need to learn emotionally intelligent ways to handle difficult situations, confront each other constructively, give feedback and stay in dialogue.
- ☐ **Trustingness:** EI teams are open with each other and say what they feel, respectfully When a team's emotional terrain remains unmapped, tensions simmer and trust disappears.

14. Planning for Team-Building



The planning and preparation put into a teambuilding session is vital to success. There's no one right strategy or method to best bring out the potential in your team.

Think carefully about what you need. Talk to your team. Get very clear on what you want what you want (and don't want) from teambuilding and what approaches would best suit your outcomes, your culture and the personalities that make up your team before deciding the design and focus of your session.

The success of team-building begins well before the start of the session. It starts as soon as you mention you're thinking about it. It's sad but true: many people have become jaded about such events. They see it as a waste of time, full of fluffy-stuff with little relevance to real needs. They also expect *not* to be involved in the planning of it or asked about what it should focus on.

? What does team-building hell look like? Read this if you're curious....

On the day only about half your team turn up. Several are on leave. Others had a priority project that needed completing before the end of the week. People are upset - they're still reeling from a major setback with a budget cut and the manager who organised the session and was expected to be there, knew she'd be taking up a new position but failed to say this was the week she was leaving. To make things worse, two key leader spots haven't been filled - these people begin next week - nor had people been consulted on the aims or had any input into the session. Those that participated did so either politely or grudgingly - some made it clear this was a waste of time. The absent manager who planned the event single-handedly, insisted on filling it up with 'flowery' team relationship activities people moaned about. They said they wanted to work on real issues together not '*relationships*' - and strong undercurrents of distrust/dislike between team members became apparent even though the manager had said everyone got along well together in this team. Brainstorming sessions on strategies improved things, but since the team felt abandoned by management, they were not willing to commit to follow-up. In short, this team-building session was a dismal flop...

? How does this compare to your experience? You might think this is exaggerated but it's a real story of a team building session we walked into a few years back – and learned from.

Planning, preparation and consultation are the keys to success. Here's a few principles and planning-pointers we build into our *Working Better Together* approach. They may not always help you reach team-building heaven, but they might help you avoid team-building hell.

➔ Here's a few tips to keep in mind when planning team-building sessions...

- ☐ **Make it relevant:** Many detest team-building. They see it as trite, trivialising or irrelevant. Choose one or two real-work issues as your base. By all means throw in a few fun team-building games, *but don't forget reality*. Plan from the beginning to ensure by the end people feel a sense of achievement – that they've made real headway on defining a direction, solving a problem or coming up with a new way doing things.
- ☐ **Clear aims and outcomes:** Identify clear work-related aims and outcomes – and *don't say your goal is team-building*. If you do, some will arrive at the session minds already made up that this is a big waste of time with no business benefit. The best team-building often happens as people work on things that matter to them – planning a change, developing new strategic goals, rethinking a key work process or service.

- ❑ **Consult for commitment:** Consult beforehand about what issues people feel the need to tackle or talk over – and what outcomes they'd like to see from spending time away from work together. We run a convergent interviewing process (phone, email or face-to-face) to begin building the agenda before anyone enters the room. Not only are there no surprises this way, people feel they've been involved in planning the event, provided input into laying out the issues and so are more likely to be engaged and feel they have more ownership.
- ❑ **Balance talk with action – and work with fun:** All fun and it's too frothy and frivolous – all work and it becomes boring drudgery. Balance your session with a combination of solid work sessions threaded through with some fun team-building activities. Avoid trust-falls, build-a-brix and ball-games. Choose novel activities that relate directly back to work reality or even better, ask your team what fun things they'd like to do? Intersperse talk with action too. Some people see team-building as all talk-no action stuff, so ensure you do frequent action lists, ask “How can we apply this?” type-questions and why not also incorporate some real-time decision-making into the day?
- ❑ **Build team skills:** Team-building can be big on activities and light on learning anything useful. While all sorts of learning will happen anyway, try to build in some conversational, planning or problem-solving tools people can apply back in the workplace as part of follow-up. Ensure you model these back in your team meetings and problem-solving session too
- ❑ **Right-time your team-building:** Don't team-build in times of terror, transition, absence or high work-load. You probably think that if that's the case, they'll never be a right-time – change, work pressure, constant deadlines are never-ending. There is no ‘slow-time’. We know. What we mean is – avoid the obvious. Don't team-build when you know key people can't come, there are too many vacant positions or too many are distracted by full-on demands and are already working way past their bedtime. Another trap is thinking team-building is just what you need when people are reeling from bad news or big set-backs. We think it can *strike an off-chord* at these times. Let people settle down emotionally first.
- ❑ **Location and timing matter:** Away-from-work locations are better if budget allows – in a room that's big, light, airy and ambient, with plenty of room to move around. We think good team-building results can't be easily achieved in less than 2 days and if you can, build in an overnight stay and evening session. Not all team-building occurs formally – a lot happens when the team dines together, puts their heads together on a topic or issue they find engaging in an after-dinner session, then stays up discussing stuff over a few drinks. This also helps with networking and relationship building, which is your next consideration.
- ❑ **Provide plenty of time to network:** Plan in time during day and evening for people to network and ‘free-range’ on issues that arise spontaneously for them – especially if they don't get much opportunity for this at work, which is most often the case. Building strong teams starts with relationship-building – getting to see a side of each other that may be different to them at work. Most networking time can be free and unscripted to let people have casual conversation – although we often build in ‘conversational corners’, *dialogue* or ‘free-time talking circles’ where members cluster on an issue of concern to them. Planning more frequent or longer-than-normal breaks also helps.
- ❑ **Take the pressure down:** The last thing you want is people distracted by all the work they've left at work, dashing out to take calls on deadlines they're dealing with at a distance or worrying how much they have to catch up on when they get back. Talk over pressures/distractions before the session. Can you work out strategies to allay them. Can you arrange to cover the work while they're away? Can commitments be re-shuffled or anything be put back? And, whatever you do, definitely don't make the team work overtime to make-up for time they spent team-building. Treat it as valid and valuable work too.
- ❑ **Always end with an action plan for follow-up:** Whatever else you do at the end of a team-building session, put together a follow-up plan to continue the work back at work. Great ideas emerge at team-building sessions only to submerge back at work through lack of a follow-up plan to implement them. An action plan must have specific tasks, dates, and owners to keep the momentum moving and get some of those great ideas implemented.

15. What do our WBT Clinics cover?



Teambuilding can take a multitude of different paths. We tailor our *Working Better Together* clinics to suit the needs of individual teams and organisations. Our approach integrates proven team improvement concepts such as emotional intelligence, team roles, individual self-awareness, difficult-moments management, giving and getting feedback, team design and conversational team-building.

Working Better Together is not a singular workshop. We customise *Working Better Together* clinics to the topics and themes your team most needs to cover, so there is no standard outline. Still, choosing the right team-building focus and set of activities to include in your clinic can be confusing and many organisations like to have an idea of the possibilities up-front first.

So to make it easier and give you some ideas and options for what to cover, we've developed a menu of *self-contained 'sessions'* based on team-building themes we find people commonly gravitate toward. They don't cover all the possibilities and you can select from or add to them.

➔ **Here's a brief profile of the most popular team-building sessions we run....try ticking topic areas you think your team needs....**

Clinic 1: Teamworking and Teambuilding	Clinic 2: Shaping Team Visions and Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teambuilding: the art of working better together <input type="checkbox"/> The 5 Foundations for effective teams <input type="checkbox"/> True or token teams – what's the difference? <input type="checkbox"/> Team failure and success factors <input type="checkbox"/> Diagnostics: Team issues and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Questions for forming great teams <input type="checkbox"/> Exploring team leadership and followership <input type="checkbox"/> Expectations of me, others, and this team <input type="checkbox"/> Team groundrules and operating principles <input type="checkbox"/> Action planning: ways to work better together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Future-Directions: team change challenges <input type="checkbox"/> Developing team visions, goals and targets <input type="checkbox"/> Identify key themes for visions and values <input type="checkbox"/> A 4-step process for shaping shared visions <input type="checkbox"/> Values exploration: what do we stand for? <input type="checkbox"/> Mapping visions, values and behaviours <input type="checkbox"/> What new thinking/behaviours do we need? <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorm: team goals, actions and strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Aligning personal/team values – values wall <input type="checkbox"/> Identifying priority actions and directions
Clinic 3: Conversations – Talking in Teams	Clinic 4: Thinking & Deciding in Teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Principles for Constructive Conversations <input type="checkbox"/> Debate to Dialogue: different kinds of talk s <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Diagnostic</i>: what happens in our discussions? <input type="checkbox"/> Levels of listening and tips for listening 'up' <input type="checkbox"/> Traps of conversational assumption-making <input type="checkbox"/> What conversational roles do you play? <input type="checkbox"/> Balancing your say with hearing their say <input type="checkbox"/> Skillful listening and skillful discussion pracs <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking from different perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Asking questions and giving good feedback <input type="checkbox"/> The 5-P Model for more Skillful Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing ideas and information in teams <input type="checkbox"/> Ladder of inference and problem analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Group problem-solving simulation <input type="checkbox"/> How do we handle solving group problems? <input type="checkbox"/> Systems Thinking Maps and situation analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Patterns: How do we make decisions now? <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing Decisions – what kind and how much? <input type="checkbox"/> Decision-making – coercion versus commitment <input type="checkbox"/> Decision tracking – current and future decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Preferences: consult, consensus or concordance <input type="checkbox"/> Action planning for better decision-making

Clinic 5: Emotionally Intelligent Teams	Clinic 6: Dealing with Team Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Emotional Intelligence – the team connection ❑ What is EI – why it matters for good teamwork ❑ Impact of toxic emotions on team climate ❑ Emotional hijacks and the EI triangle ❑ Dealing with disruptive emotions ❑ Finding and expressing your feelings well ❑ Managing moods – your's and other's ❑ Empathy – creating connective relationships ❑ Diagnostic: common elements of EI teams ❑ EI Quiz – how emotionally intelligent are we? ❑ Actions for creating more EI teamwork cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Dynamics behind difficult discussions ❑ Starting difficult discussions well ❑ The '3-in-1' nature of difficult discussions ❑ 3 blockers: intentions, blame, assumptions ❑ Stages in dealing with difficult discussions ❑ Dissecting differences and comparing stories ❑ Replacing blame with contribution ❑ Facing feelings – core of difficult discussions ❑ Defusing difficult people and difficult moments ❑ Asserting yourself positively, cleanly and clearly ❑ Completing/following through difficult discussions
Clinic 7: Designing your Team	Clinic 8: Respect-building in Teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ What is Teamwork-Based Design? ❑ Different Types of Team Structures ❑ 7 Team Design Dimensions ❑ Steps in Teamwork-Based Design ❑ Work Analysis and Process Mapping ❑ Problems of current work organisation ❑ Developing Team Design Specifications ❑ Design Steps – Ideas, Options & Action ❑ Developing new workroles for team design ❑ Developing New Operating Principles ❑ Identifying Collective Work Opportunities ❑ Team Blueprints & Implementation Action Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Dissecting respect – what is it really? ❑ Diagnostic: signals of disrespect ❑ 7 practices or respect – what's our team like? ❑ Watching your language – minding your stories ❑ Giving feedback & challenging – respectfully ❑ Respect and the lost art of listening ❑ Practising respect in difficult situations ❑ Dealing with difficult people – respectfully ❑ Emotional hijacks and disrespect ❑ Self-Respect – key to respecting others ❑ Negativity and it's effect on your respect-o-meter ❑ Identifying respect-building actions – some tips
Clinic 9: Entrusting Teams to Lead	Clinic 10: Creating Cohesive Teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Leadership and co-ordination choices in teams ❑ Styles – how is leadership handled now? ❑ Distributed leadership – spectre of power-sharing ❑ Empowering yourself – key to self-managing ❑ Entrusting teams and trusting leaders ❑ Shared leadership and co-ordination strategies ❑ Self-managing behaviour for leaders and teams ❑ Disempowering systems and structures audit ❑ Expanding our co-ordination workroles ❑ Team accountability and self-responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Cohesion – sticking together and pulling together ❑ Identity – how much does this team matter to me? ❑ Diagnostic: the group cohesiveness index ❑ Cohesion: collective working and collaboration ❑ Coming unstuck – obstacles to cohesiveness ❑ Contribution – what do each offer this team ❑ What help and support do I want from others? ❑ Patterns of affiliation/support – strong or weak? ❑ Self-interest versus communal commitment ❑ Action plans to increase team identity/cohesion

16. Executive Team-Building Clinics



Smooth-functioning executive and senior management teams, who collaborate cleverly over planning strategic change directions, co-ordinate efforts to work on key initiatives and genuinely ‘think together’ about common challenges confronting their organisation, are essential to achieve outcomes that are integrated and aligned. We run a series of 1-day executive team-building clinics to help senior teams work more coherently and effectively.

It's often assumed because of their seniority and breadth of experience, that put in a team environment, executives automatically work well together, agree on the right directions, discuss issues cogently and come up with the right decisions. Research, experience and common sense show this is typically *not* the case. Superior senior teams don't just materialise magically.

Teamworking challenges executives and senior managers face are in fact little different at a personal level from any other team – though issues they deal with and outcomes they get impact more widely on the organisation. Some senior teamworking dilemmas include:

- ❑ **Allegiances:** Senior people virtually run their own organisations but are expected to also be committed members of an executive team. This creates strong cross-currents of interest and competition between team members which flow down to parts of the organisation.
 - ❑ **Competence:** Senior executives are under immense pressure to display competence and confidence at all times. This leads to covering-up uncertainties and trying to look right, that can get in the way of having frank, open and connective dialogue in teams situations.
 - ❑ **Pressure:** constant time-and-results-pressures can lead executives to take short-cuts in meetings, conversations, problem exploration and decisions, and underplay the need to attend to team process, cohesion and interaction quality.
 - ❑ **Independence:** Senior executives are independent initiative-takers, used to running their own show and trying to harness this energy into a collaborative team-effort can be elusive
- ➔ **We tailor executive team-building clinics closely to particular teams, contexts and challenges the team wants to work on but a general menu of topics includes:**

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| ❑ The executive team competencies checklist | ❑ Constructive conversations & deep dialogue: |
| ❑ Purpose and direction: what value do we add? | ❑ Rapport: building connections with each other |
| ❑ Clarifying our team performance challenges | ❑ Our expectations & assumptions of each other |
| ❑ Measuring our strategic team effectiveness | ❑ 10 Dimension of emotionally intelligent teams |
| ❑ Collaboration: how well do we really function? | ❑ Handling disagreement and turbulence |
| ❑ Cohesion: identifying our interdependencies | ❑ Dissonance and resonance in this team |
| ❑ Roundedness: balancing contributions/talents | ❑ Identifying off-task & on-task behaviours |
| ❑ Commitment, competition, conflicts of interest | ❑ Defensiveness: de-railing & domineering |
| ❑ Uncovering operating norms: helps & hinders | ❑ Decision-making patterns & team tendencies |
| ❑ Structure & task: work right on the right things | ❑ Confronting, challenging & questioning |
| ❑ Conceptual, strategic and systemic thinking | ❑ Holding each other accountable & feedback |
| ❑ Sorting out our strategic priorities for action | ❑ Identify executive team improvement actions |

17. Leading through Teams



Whether forming a team from scratch or fine-tuning an existing one, mobilising cohesive teams, helping people perform flexibly in a team setting, taking them through key steps, issues and choices critical to sustaining successful teams and getting people to work in well with each other, are all critical capability areas for all leaders. The Change Forum runs a public leadership learning forum called *Learning through Teams* for leaders who want to work with new or existing teams to reform and revitalise them.

Leading through Teams is one of 12 Modules in our *Learning-Centred Leadership Series*. This 2-or-3 day program is a step-by-step toolkit workshop for leaders who want to learn how to form teams or help their current team rethink and re-invent how they can work better together.

It's structured around 7 key dimensions for designing teams to help leaders address those fundamental design flaws or oversights we often miss that get in the way of great team functioning. *Leading through Teams* aims to help you:

- ☐ Identify practical steps you need to take to move to team-based work
- ☐ Analyse the way your group works now and develop new team designs
- ☐ Evaluate what stage of "evolution" your workgroup or team is up to
- ☐ Apply 7 key Team Design Dimensions to form, reform or transform teams
- ☐ Develop team visions, values, goals and new operating principles
- ☐ Identify ways to lead teams towards self-management and self-responsibility
- ☐ Plan priorities for team-building, development and team learning strategies
- ☐ Identify new performance measures and ongoing improvement strategies

➔ Here is a preview of some of the things we cover in *Leading through Teams*...

DAY 1: TEAM DESIGN MECHANICS	DAY 2: LEADING TEAMS THAT WORK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difference between true and token teams <input type="checkbox"/> Team-based work: What & Why? <input type="checkbox"/> Designing Teams: 7 Key Dimensions <input type="checkbox"/> Forming Teams: Issues, steps & strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Teambuilding and team formation steps <input type="checkbox"/> Team operating principles and blueprints <input type="checkbox"/> Collective vs. Individual work styles <input type="checkbox"/> Developing team visions, goals and targets <input type="checkbox"/> Redesigning teams and work processes <input type="checkbox"/> Options for designing team-based work <input type="checkbox"/> Expanding team workroles and boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Team leadership choices: shared leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitating teams – models, tools and steps <input type="checkbox"/> Joint decision-making and self-responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Team roles, dynamics and interactions <input type="checkbox"/> Building a positive team culture <input type="checkbox"/> Getting participation and engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Common elements of EI teams – diagnostic <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging Team Learning and innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Setting team performance measures <input type="checkbox"/> Developing Team Learning strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Creating a Change Agenda and Action-planning for team formation and development

18. Our Team-Building Track Record



Bill Cropper, principal consultant for The Change Forum, has a wealth of practical experience in teamwork-based design, strategic change management, leadership learning, team-building, coaching and group facilitation in a wide range of federal, state and local government organisations throughout Australia.

Bill's been working with organisations wanting to make the move to more innovative forms of team-based work since the early 1990's. He's been instrumental in team formation and renewal efforts in many organisations, trained hundreds of teams, team leaders and facilitators in team formation practices and presented concept-papers on team formation and design at several international productivity forums.

He's a long-standing advocate of participative leadership and team-based work as keys to sustaining change and creating successful business futures. As well as his ongoing passion for learning-centred leadership and team-based approaches to 'living-at-work' work, Bill is keenly interested in the benefits of conversational coaching and dialogue to promote more productive, open interchanges and facilitate personal growth and change mastery.

For the past 10 years, Bill's delivered extensive rounds of public leadership learning forums, *conversational coaching*, *emotional intelligence* and *dealing with difficult discussions* clinics. Thousands of managers, team leaders and other professionals from wide-ranging organisation backgrounds including community services, education, tourism, health, housing, transport, have benefited from attending his interactive learning clinics.

In addition to his scheduled series of public programs and change management work, Bill receives regular requests to run tailored team-building and team design workshops under the banner of *Working Better Together* for work teams wanting to build a more positive team culture, harness commitment to a shared vision, handle conflict constructively and build more emotionally positive team climates. The Change Forum has also developed a number of practical guides and best practice manuals to help teams and leaders tackle team design and teamworking issues, including a series of seven, self-directed on-line learning modules for global access on self-managed team design, formation and performance management entitled *High Performing Teams...*

? Interested in talking to us about a **Working Better Together** session for your team?

If you'd like more information on what a Working Better Together workshop can do for your team contact:

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