



# Making Your Team a High-Performance Machine

**High-Performance Teams are amazing to watch. Everyone brings their unique talents and strengths to the team, everyone leaves their ego at the door and there's lots of camaraderie and enough levity to keep work fun.**



Most members of high-performing teams report that it's fun and satisfying to work on collaborative teams because they are asked to contribute at their highest potential and they learn a lot along the way. Characteristics of high-performing teams include the following:

- People have solid and deep trust in each other and in the team's purpose -- they feel free to express feelings and ideas.
- Everybody is working toward the same goals.
- Team members are clear on how to work together and how to accomplish tasks.
- Everyone understands both team and individual performance goals and knows what is expected.
- Team members actively diffuse tension and friction



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- Packaging
- Aluminum Siding
- Glass and Glazing
- Industrial and Automotive Tools



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in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

- The team engages in extensive discussion, and everyone gets a chance to contribute – even the introverts.
- Disagreement is viewed as a good thing and conflicts are managed.

In a recent article by Matthew Schieltz, of Demand Media, he notes that there are some basic steps to creating a high-performing team that can sustain its high level of results:

### Step 1:

**Figure out the team’s purpose and assemble the group’s members.** Create teams with a wide range of skills and experience.

Look for strengths and weaknesses that complement each other. Effective teams respect and embrace differences of opinions.

### Step 2:

**Identify an effective leader who can motivate and enhance team performance by fostering communication among the team’s members, keep the group on task and challenge members to work at their absolute best.** Look for someone who uses a transformational style of leadership to inspire and motivate team members.

### Step 3:

**Align the team’s mission with the overall objectives or vision for the company or organization.** Put your team’s mission in writing so that the team can see the “big picture” and work with one common goal in mind.

### Step 4:

**Discuss the team’s ground rules.** For example, discuss confidentiality, communication among group members and how disagreements will be handled. Set practical rules, such as attendance at team meetings, how often and where the team will meet.

### JEFF BLEACHER



“Working as a team always has its challenges, but having accountability is the key to making sure the team is functioning in a high-performance mode. Accountability and trust are critical to making sure that a high-performing team’s results are sustainable.”

### KEN FALK (on the right)



“Great teams have a cohesiveness that gets developed over time as people work together. Each team member carries his or her own weight and respects how the team operates and the opinions of others on the team. Once respect starts to slip, the team will no longer be as productive and performance will not be as sustainable.”

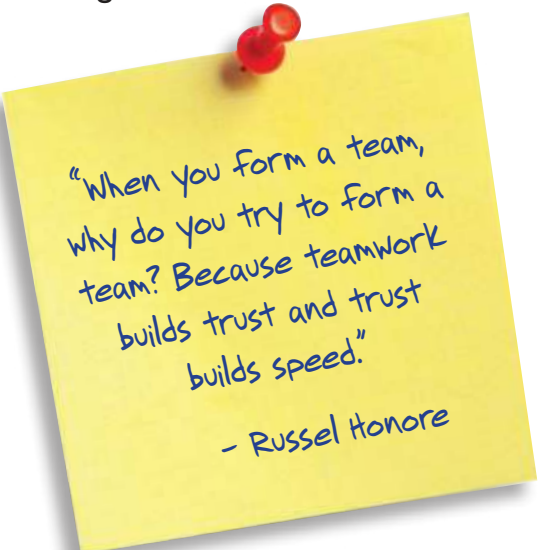
“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”  
- Henry Ford



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## Step 5:

**Set team goals.** Measurable goals and benchmarks support the group’s overall mission, but the team should develop the action plan and break these actions down into measurable, attainable goals and set a deadline for meeting each goal.



## Step 6:

**Develop a system of accountability.** A hallmark of high-performing teams is their ability to be accountable to each other and to meet goals. Without accountability teams will likely fail.

In Summary: high-performing teams create a dynamic competitive advantage for any company in today’s tough market. Give your company a chance at success by building a high-performing team. By doing so, you’ll gain traction and move forward faster. Good teams build trust and trust builds speed.

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## LARRY REICH



*“It’s natural to view disagreements or differences of opinions as a negative part of teamwork. But, from what we’ve seen with our clients, the best teams are those who engage in extensive discussion about an issue and all opinions are given time to be aired out. Good teams know how to manage conflict and chaos.”*

## PATRICK GENDRUE (on the left)



*“When everyone is working toward the same goal there is a synergy and energy that makes work satisfying and meaningful. When team members engage in meaningful collaboration amazing things can happen and the entire organization is energized.”*