



MAGENTA PERFORMANCE
PARTNERS

TEAMWORK

Making your team works, and
enjoy the journey.



MAGENTA INSIGHTS

INTRODUCTION



Tight and smart teamwork creates competitive advantage - in the competition for your customers' interest and affection, and in the competition for the best talent.

And tight and smart teamwork creates an experience for both the team leaders and the team members that is, at a personal level, highly liberating, satisfying and enjoyable.

High-performing teams comprise high-performing individuals, high-performing leaders, and high-performing team 'work'.

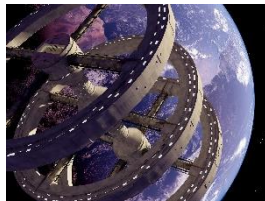
Magenta's Team 'Works' CODE is a framework that captures the 15 ingredients that enable outstanding team 'work' to develop, thrive and endure. These ingredients are the cogs that have to 'work' behind the scenes for any team to perform at an exceptional level.

The framework offers leaders a checklist to help them form strong new teams, to help already strong teams work together at even higher levels, or to pinpoint where and why their existing teams may have become dysfunctional.

MAGENTA'S TEAM 'WORKS' CODE

The 15 ingredients that enable outstanding team 'work' to develop, thrive and endure

CLARITY



- Context
- Goals
- Connection
- Culture
- Roles

OPERATING DYNAMICS



- Trust
- Recognition and celebration
- Real support
- Accountability & decision making
- Belief

ENABLED



- Self-directed
- On target and on time
- In 'flow'
- Clear communication
- Seek improvement and adaption

CLARITY

A failure of clarity is so often the ‘fail point’ for leaders. It’s no less so for leaders seeking to achieve high levels of teamwork.

Context – we all need to know ‘why?’ And it’s best if this comes before the ‘what’, ‘where’ and ‘when’. Elements that help provide a strong context for team performance include:

- why the organisation and the team exist – its purpose
- why we need to work as a team – rather than collaborate as a group of individuals
- what’s going on in our market and organisation
- what is our competition up to
- what are our customers feeling and seeking to achieve
- where have we been, and what have we learned
- where are we going
- when we need to have achieved our goals

Goals – Teams exist to achieve results that cannot be achieved by people operating individually. Clarity of the team goals enables clarity of roles, urgency, priorities, risks and dependencies, and aligned individual decision making. The latter is vital to free up the team leader’s time so that he or she can focus effort where it will add the most impact.

Leaders need to ensure the team goals are defined in terms and scope that are sufficient to enable team members to understand what success will look and feel like.

Connection – clarity about how and when team members should connect with each other, and with the team’s stakeholders, sits at the centre of team effectiveness. Incomplete and inconsistent connection quickly dents team effectiveness.

Culture – where team members can clearly articulate the two or three things that are most valued in terms of their team’s desired (and, hopefully, actual) culture they are able to line up their own decision making and behaviour in a way that is consistent with and supportive of that culture. Equally important, being overt about the key features of the team’s culture and values make it much easier for new team members to be successfully on-boarded – and enhances the elegance and impact of the accountability within the team.

Roles – everything becomes a mess very quickly if team members do not have a clear view of their own role in achieving the team goals and the roles of each of their team mates.

OPERATING DYNAMICS

The 'Operating Dynamics' represent the components of teamwork that, much like the operating system in computer terms, enable and drive all of the other team activities.

The word 'dynamics' is derived from the ancient Greek '*dynamis*', which means '*power*'. We refer to these five factors as the team's operating dynamics because they represent the source of power behind outstanding teamwork.

Trust – the absence of trust distracts, slows you down, reduces creativity and problem-solving effectiveness, and is unenjoyable. The best performing teams understand the full dimensions of trust, target specific activities to build it, and regularly measure it. Trust enables transparency, and transparency usually speeds up decision making and accurate execution of tasks.

Real support – this is the aspect that most defines you as part of a high performing team. When you observe a fellow team member struggling to perform and deliver on their role in the team, do you sit back and watch (or criticise), or do you step up and see how you can help. Members of high-performing teams have an awareness of their teammates' roles, well developed antennae that provide early warning of teammates whose performance is off the pace, and a first instinct to deliver practical support to get them back on track. This support is not a substitute for the individual's accountability to the team, and nor should it be without a response expectation and a time dimension. But it should be the first reaction to under-performance in the team.

Recognition and celebration – high-performing teams truly value the achievement of their goals. And they recognise the degrees of stretch, complexity, hard work, joint effort and commitment associated with their achievement. It's because of the nature of the achievement, and their commitment to connection, that high-performing teams embrace a strong instinct to recognise and celebrate the achievement of goals – individually and as a team.

Accountability and decision making – exceptionally performing teams talk about accountability, and what this means in terms of day-to-day activity, decision making and dialogue. As well as individual and joint accountability for specific performance deliverables, and contribution to the team dynamic, this also includes accountability for doing the best possible thing to further the team's prospect of success in the many (usually) unseen "moments of truth", when easier options will often be tempting.

Belief – if team members do not believe that the team goals will be achieved it's likely their effort and alignment will suffer. Strong belief provides energy, drive and confidence, which in turn remove distractions and propel people through road blocks.

ENABLED

Teams exist to deliver results. This requires their performance potential to be enabled.

Whether the performance is on a stage, in a boardroom or office, on a field, in a military setting, or around an operating table, having the team deliver to the best of its ability is critical to getting the best possible result.

Self-directed – a self-directed team member is clear on the goals and his or her role in achieving them and feels appropriately empowered to get the job done. Self-directed team members hold a genuine sense of ownership of the team's goals and the processes associated with achieving them.

On target and on time – high performing teams deliver. They maintain a sharp focus on the goals, the milestones on the way to achievement of those goals, and the time that each of the milestones needs to be achieved.

In 'flow' - also known as being 'in the zone' where the alignment of the levels of skill and challenge create a focused, positive and energised motivational state. The term 'flow' was coined by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. As a concept it provides a useful reminder for teams and their leaders to continue to develop their skills and to continue to stretch their thinking about their goals and what might be possible as a team.

Clear communication – is real communication. And this is the opposite of unreal communication wherein false harmony is generated at the expense of a self-actualising, achievement orientation in the team. When communication is clear and real listening is strong, understanding is enhanced, decisions are more informed (and better relayed), solutions are creatively explored and adopted, and accountability is brought to life.

Improvement and adaption – the great teams have very capable individuals. But these individuals don't rest on their performance laurels. They adopt a 'growth' mindset. And they put this mindset to work by getting together at regular intervals to debrief the effectiveness of their teamwork, and to challenge and enhance the efficacy of the processes, structures and approaches they utilise to get the results they seek. Clarity of context and goals, and high levels of trust and belief provide the impetus for this, but the team members need to ensure time and headspace is created to enable a continuous improvement stance to flourish.

SOME OF THE THINGS WE'VE LEARNED FROM OUR WORK WITH HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS

Members are clear about why they need to work as a team – rather than merely collaborate well - to achieve their goals.

Most actively and regularly articulate an aspiration to be a high performing team.

It's very easy for a team to slip into a level of dysfunction – passively or more determinedly. And, where the team members are willing, it's also easy to address and turn around most causes of dysfunctionality.

When the number of team members gets beyond two dozen it becomes increasingly difficult to see the team fully express itself as a team – though aspects of teamwork (such as common purpose and values) can still thrive and add organisational value.

If common language in teams is important, the ability to have safe and elegant 'critical' conversations is essential.

HOW DO YOU RATE THE BENEFIT YOU DRAW FROM YOUR CURRENT TEAMWORK?

Each of the 15 ingredients described in this paper are very accessible, and, with purposeful effort and follow up, each can be built strongly in any team.

If superb teamwork is critical to your team winning in the market, to your enjoyment of your leadership role, and to the legacy and opportunities you create for your organisation and your team members, we encourage you to review your team's working dynamics through the lens of Magenta's 15 Team Works 'CODE' ingredients'.

This will enable you to identify strengths to leverage, as well as areas where some smartly-targeted activity might provide a step-change in the quality of your team's teamwork.



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