

TOOL

Organizational Conditions for Effective Teams



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Organizational Conditions for Effective Teams

Purpose

This tool helps teams and leaders assess the organizational conditions that support—or hinder—effective team functioning. It highlights key elements such as purpose, alignment, leadership, trust, and time so you can identify strengths and areas for growth.

When to Use

Use this tool when a team is struggling to be effective, when you want to strengthen team performance, or when reflecting on how organizational structures and systems are impacting collaboration. It is especially useful for leadership teams or facilitators supporting multiple teams.

How to Use It

Review each element and its indicators, then rate the extent to which each is present in your context. Capture evidence and examples to ground your ratings. Use the results to identify patterns, prioritize areas for improvement, and determine next steps. This tool is best used as a reflection and conversation starter—not as an evaluation—and can be revisited over time to assess progress.

Organizational Conditions for Effective Teams

Rate each element on scale of 1 to 5 (with one being lowest and five being highest) based on how strongly you agree with the indicators.

Element	Indicators	Rating	Evidence and Comments
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone in our school or organization knows what our vision and mission is. Our goals are posted in many places, and we reference them regularly. I can see how everything that everyone is doing leads to meeting our goals. 		
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our school or organization has fewer than four annual goals. These goals build on previous years' work and are easy to remember. Annual foci are determined based on student (or client) needs and through a clear decision-making process. 		
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every team works to meet our school or organization's goals. I understand the work that every team is doing and am updated regularly on the work done in other teams. The work of other teams complements ours, and it doesn't feel like there's any redundancy in teamwork. 		
Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our site or organization leadership and staff have remained stable for at least five years. Staff turnover has been less than 10%. For the most part, implementation of our core programs has been consistent for several years. 		
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of team members have the skills necessary to engage in collaboration. Members want to be a part of the team. It feels like the right people are in our team. 		

Exhibit 13.4. © Elena Aguilar, *The Art of Coaching Teams: Building Resilient Communities that Transform Schools*. Jossey-Bass, 2016.

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Element	Indicators	Rating	Evidence and Comments
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our site or organization’s leaders have many strengths. • They are vocal advocates for team development and set a vision for effective teams. • They allocate resources for team development. • They are effective team leaders. • They monitor the work of teams, appreciate our work, and push us to refine our work. 		
Culture of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Indicators of a Learning Organization, Exhibit 9.1 there is evidence of two-thirds of the indicators. • There is no evidence of a toxic culture. 		
Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are articulated and transparent decision-making processes in our school or organization. • Outside of our team, we understand why decisions are made and sometimes have input into them. 		
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Indicators of Trust, Exhibit 13.3, there’s evidence of 35–40 of the elements. 		
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team’s facilitator always has time to prepare for meetings. • Team time is sacred and rarely canceled. • Team time is exclusively focused on work that will lead us to meet our goals. • We have enough time to meet our goals. 		

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