

TOOL

Examples of Norms or Community Agreements



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Examples of Norms or Community Agreements

Purpose

This tool provides examples of procedural and behavioral norms that support productive, inclusive, and focused team interactions. It is designed to help teams clarify how they want to work together and create a shared sense of accountability.

When to Use

Use this tool when establishing team norms at the start of a cycle, revisiting or resetting agreements, or when team interactions are not aligned with the kind of culture you want to create.

How to Use It

Review the examples and use them as a starting point to generate your own agreements—select, adapt, and refine them together so they feel meaningful and actionable. Consider balancing procedural norms (how the team operates) with behavioral norms (how team members interact). Revisit norms regularly to reflect on how well they are being upheld and to make adjustments as needed.

Examples of Norms or Community Agreements

Procedural Norms

- Start and end on time
- Announce comings and goings at the start of the meeting
- Computers open only during appropriate work time
- Cell phones on silent or vibrate and ideally out of sight during meeting times

Behavioral Norms

- Be fully present mentally and physically
- Keep kids at the center
- Tell the truth without blame or judgment
- Assume positive intent
- Pay attention to heart and meaning
- Be open to possibilities
- Be unattached to outcome
- Welcome and manage discomfort
- Challenge our own and others' assumptions
- Be willing to push each other's thinking
- Look at every issue from multiple perspectives
- Be responsible for the way we say things; say them so people can hear them
- Follow through on agreements
- Monitor airtime
- Actively participate
- Invite and welcome the contributions of every member and listen to each other
- Take risks and be vulnerable learners
- Air disagreements during the meeting if they involve everyone; air disagreements with individuals as soon as possible after a meeting
- Don't interrupt each other
- Acknowledge ideas and contributions even if you disagree with them
- Listen to understand
- Speak directly to people about issues; no gossiping, ever!
- Agree to disagree

Exhibit 5.1. © Elena Aguilar, *The Art of Coaching Teams: Building Resilient Communities that Transform Schools*. Jossey-Bass, 2016.

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