



Keys to the success of high-performance teams

The challenge

Some teams perform remarkably well and achieve results far superior to what each member would have been able to do individually. But most of the time, teams function poorly. Infighting hobbles progress and discussions turn in circles; people take sides or form cliques, or, conversely, hastily seek superficial consensus before fully examining the full range of ideas and suggestions; etc. In this context, divergent perspectives become a drawback, rather than an advantage.

Four prerequisites for success

Four main factors play an essential role in turning a set of individuals into a high performance team.

Strong commitment to a common goal

High-performance teams rally around a **common goal**.

- Establish an ambitious and credible objective that motivates people to get involved
- Emphasize how this objective fits into the greater scheme of things
- Ensure that this goal is visible to everyone at all times

High-performance teams stand out in terms of their **high degree of commitment**.

- Encourage every team member to contribute to all relevant topics
- Tolerate relatively unstructured participation and a certain degree of excitement

An organization designed to serve the mission

Teams must be constituted and organized to carry out **the assigned goal**, and not based on precedence.

- Select a structure that is small enough to permit easy collaboration among the members
- Give yourself leeway to regularly adapt the team as needs evolve

High-performance teams are not focused exclusively on one leader, but **share leadership responsibilities**.

- Ensure that every member feels responsible for the success of the entire team
- Don't hesitate to rotate leadership to capitalize on the full range of available skills

4

keys to success

Intense relationships based on mutual respect

In high-performance teams, **different viewpoints** are not seen as problematic, but are valued.

- Help team members get to know and understand one another better
- Teach them to manage conflicts without taking challenges personally

High-performance teams manage to establish a strong bond of **trust** among the members.

- Organize formal and informal opportunities for team members to become better acquainted
- Avoid changing team composition too often to let relationships be built

A culture of achieving results and learning

High-performance teams systematically focus on **results**.

- Recognize intangible as well as tangible results
- Don't stop at attaining the established objectives, but always reach higher

High-performance teams are distinguished by their ability to **learn**.

- Systematically learn from failure as well as from success; try to improve continuously
- Share lessons learned with the rest of the team