



# Cracking the Code on Building Effective Leadership Teams

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Effective leadership teams have the potential to achieve incredible results, but exceptional teamwork is not common. Research indicates that only 1 in 5 teams can be classified as high-performing, and a mere 10% of efforts to develop effective teams actually translate into tangible business impact (Segal, E., 2021).

In today's challenging landscape, leadership teams are up against more significant hurdles than ever. The combination of amplified change, increased complexity, and a decline in trust towards corporate leaders has placed unprecedented demands on Leadership Teams (Hawkins, 2021). These teams are now more diverse, and geographically dispersed, and must navigate more complex systems. This is to say that being effective as a leadership team has become increasingly challenging.

Leaders have the responsibility to drive effectiveness of their team(s). They are responsible for coaching and cultivating a collaborative environment within the Leadership Team. Repeated surveys of Leadership Teams indicate this is a very difficult and challenging task—especially as conditions change rapidly and Leadership Teams must evolve their mindset and perspective.

As a leader, what can you do? Start simple to get a baseline understanding of what the team is up against. 3 simple questions to ask are:

- **What must you do?** Define the goals and mandate of your team. Clarify the mission and purpose that propels your collective efforts forward.
- **Who do you do it with?** Assess the capabilities of your team members. Ensure roles are clear, tasks are understood, and commitment is firm.
- **How should you work?** Establish effective team processes. Define decision-making methods, set up learning mechanisms, and cultivate a collaborative dynamic within your team with room to challenge each other.

Leadership Team effectiveness hinges on trust but you shouldn't start there. Firstly build a common clear understanding of the tasks and roles of each team member. Secondly, make it so that there is a good grasp of and trust in each individual's capabilities. Thirdly look at an effective dynamic within and between team members (Hogan, 2012 in Hawkins, 2021). From there, trust will start to emerge and increase when the team works together more and more on challenging topics.

**MU Experts provide a reliable alternative for leadership development. Our expert's advice, based on MU Leader Selection Science®, leads to improved performance and diversity of Leaders.**

MU Team Effectiveness helps effectively appraise the Leadership Team within its unique context. This process identifies areas for improvement or specific requirements for both the Leadership Team as a whole and its individual members. Utilising the MU Leadership Team Analysis™ method, MU ensures a methodical evaluation of the Leadership Team's context, effectiveness, and developmental needs. This involves the expertise of an MU professional who conducts the assessment, followed by ongoing support to coach the team in the identified areas of development.

When our clients who worked with us for decades asked us to support them in their journey to become better leadership teams we encountered many challenges, different in every context. Nevertheless, what always came back both from clients and from MU Experts to build effective, collaborative and successful teams was:

- **Be laser focussed:** Effective teams are not one-size-fits-all. Tailoring strategies to the unique context of each team is imperative for achieving specific, impactful results. Identify as few as possible areas for improvement, relentlessly focus there and track progress.
- **Contextualise and embed:** While internal team dynamics are crucial, constructing effective teams goes beyond that. The team's working context should be in focus for enhancing effectiveness. Pay special attention to the team's comprehension of its operating environment and the requisites for success within that context.
- **Track and Measure:** "If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it." Feedback on the team and thorough analysis are essential for identifying areas that require improvement. Establish consistent checks and measure progress to secure sustainable change.
- **Work Evidence-based:** Move away from activities with minimal impact and embrace proven methodologies to enhance team effectiveness. These methodologies should not only guide leadership behaviour changes but also lead to tangible improvements in alignment with business priorities.

Having a clear focus, a plan, a methodology and a structured tracking of what has improved, will secure a sustainable increase in team effectiveness over time. And we know that effective leadership teams have the potential to achieve incredible results and build successful organisations for generations to come.

In summary, the combination of a clear focus, strategic planning, a systematic methodology, and structured progress tracking is pivotal for cultivating lasting improvements in team effectiveness. We all acknowledge the transformative power of effective leadership teams not only for immediate success but also to build successful organisations for generations to come.



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