

Team Clock Application Guide

Whether you are a leader of a new team, trying to enhance the performance of an existing team, or planning for a team that hasn't yet been created, it is important to have a recipe for success. Here is a simple checklist of factors that should be considered:

New teams

□ Inherit the healthiest aspects of your history:

All of us have histories of both healthy and unhealthy relationships. Unfortunately, we often transfer the baggage from previous connections to our new teams. To the best of our ability, it is important to be aware of an unhealthy history and attempt to prevent a repetition. Conversely, when you experience a successful adaptation to change, deliver those lessons to your next team with enthusiasm.

□ Over-invest in the earliest stages:

Putting forth maximum energy and commitment in the earliest stages of a relationship provide a long-term reward throughout the history of the team. By paying careful attention to the contributions made during the investment phase, teams can prevent the need to back-track to fix difficulties rooted early in the team's culture.

□ Trust that the initial labor-intensive struggle will help bear the fruits of innovation later on:

It is often most difficult to see the potential of our investments when we are consumed in building foundations. The temptation to give up occurs frequently before the reward is paid. Stay the course. The growing pains are worth it.

Existing teams

□ Take a retrospective inventory of the team's history:

Every member of your team brings the strengths and vulnerabilities of their history to the table. While it is not always possible to mitigate all vulnerabilities, making a conscious effort to honestly identify what is being inherited by the team creates the best opportunity to maximize healthy behaviors and minimize unhealthy contributions.

□ Make an honest appraisal of missed or mismanaged opportunities:

Sometimes, mistakes in the investment phase of a team's growth do not become apparent until tested in the trust phase. The earlier a symptom can be caught, the better the chance a corrective action has to be effective.

□ **Go back and repair as needed so that forging ahead doesn't inherit previous mismanagements:**

Occasionally, teams accept and normalize behaviors they later regret. Sarcasm, for instance, can lighten the mood in the early stages of a team but can prevent closeness later on. At times, disrespect gets tolerated because confronting it is uncomfortable. Healthy teams are brave enough to step back and fix bad choices as they occur as an alternative to passing unhealthy behaviors on to the next stage.

Future teams (teams that don't yet exist)

□ **Keep an inventory of the lessons from previous teams:**

Every time you participate in a relationship or a team, you get a chance to know yourself a little better. Each of us has our own unique tendency to move around the Team Clock in a particular way. Each of us tends to get stuck in predictable places. Knowing yourself and your tendencies enables you to make the healthiest contribution each time you embark upon a new situation.

□ **Map out your ideal path through the Team Clock:**

It is tempting to be eager about the satisfying stages of a relationship without adequately investing in the phases that require discomfort. As you plan for future involvement in teams, make sure to acknowledge the functional value of struggle, conflict, risk and distance as you map out your ideal path.

□ **Acknowledge the continual nature of the loop: life will not let you stay stagnant:**

Change is inevitable. Healthy teams, like all living things, shift constantly. Teams are always growing and changing because they are comprised of living beings. Living beings, by nature, don't stay the same. Never stop adapting.