

TEAM PLANNING MEETINGS

Your Team's Power Play

THIS RESOURCE WAS PREPARED FOR VIASPORT BRITISH COLUMBIA BY NOW WHAT FACILITATION, A TEAM OF FACILITATORS WHO HAVE EXTENSIVE EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND MEETING FACILITATION.

TEAM PLANNING MEETINGS - YOUR TEAM'S POWER PLAY

Team planning meetings provide a structured format to focus on surfacing issues and can be used for whatever challenge your team is facing at any given time. They set the stage for normalizing conflict as a part of your team's culture. Having the same structure for the meetings every week is important, as it provides consistency to aid in establishing predictability, safety and trust.

Once you have established predictability, you can use the meetings to help with conflict in a variety of ways, such as sharing information, dealing with specific conflicts and checking in with the team. The key is that the meetings don't just occur when problems come up; they are predictable and regular. Then, when challenging conversations are required, there is already a set forum in which to hold them.

A FORUM FOR MITIGATING AND RESOLVING CONFLICT

1. Sharing important, potentially conflictual information
2. Addressing specific concerns that have come up
3. As a regular forum for checking in to give feedback to one another

DURING THE MEETING

The meetings should be an hour long and, for best results, should happen in a private space. If at all possible, have a neutral facilitator. This could be rotated between team members or someone who has some experience chairing meetings—someone who is universally respected.

Be sure to start and end the meetings on time. This creates predictability and accountability. If you don't get through your whole agenda, bring forward items to the next meeting.

CONNECTION BUILDING

All conflict is managed through connection. Taking the time to get to know the people on your team outside of their roles can go a long way in mitigating conflict.

Setting up small group conversations around a topic that is intentional at the beginning of each meeting provides an opportunity to know one another on a deeper level. Some topic examples are:

1. What excites you when you wake up each day
2. Tell the story of how you got your name
3. Who is your hero and why

MEETING GUIDELINES

Teams are made up of members who may have different ideas of what is and isn't acceptable conduct. This can lead to negative behaviours, such as members being late for practice, gossiping, or texting during meetings—and will ultimately result in frustration on the part of other team members and leaders.

Guidelines establish a baseline for behaviour and set group norms. They provide an agreement to refer to if they're not being followed in the future. They should be developed by the group that is agreeing to them—not created as a solo exercise by a team member, leader or board executive. You need your team's buy-in for this to work.

TEAM PLANNING MEETING OUTLINE

Here is a sample team meeting timeline.

Connection Building Activity 7 minutes

Review of Meeting Guidelines 5 minutes (This will need 15 minutes or more during your first meeting[s] when the guidelines are being established. You can adjust the rest of your timeline accordingly.)

Purpose of Meeting 5 minutes

What is working well? 10 minutes

What are we worried about? 15 minutes

Options/Ideas 10 minutes

Plan 10 minutes (Choose who will document and send out the plan summary during this time.)

PITFALLS TO AVOID

- Shaming and blaming
- Facilitator bias
- Skipping meetings
- Giving up
- Missing or ignoring conflict
- Trying to fill the gaps in conversation
- Gossip
- Pre-and-post-meeting "meetings" (when select team members meet on their own)

MONTHLY TEAM PLANNING MEETING SCHEDULE