

Guidelines for Launching a Team

Consider the steps below as you launch your team and establish its way of working. It is important to discuss these steps early in order to set expectations, tone, and productive functioning.

Step 1: Identify Your Individual Goals

Articulate your individual goals for the team project:

- What are the skills that you would like to practice?
- What do you personally hope to achieve?

Each team member should articulate his/her goals and share them with other team members.

Step 2: Define Your Team's Purpose

As a team, discuss your individual goals, and reconcile any differences. Based on your discussion, write down the main purpose of your team. Think about how your team will measure success.

- What is the main purpose of our team?
- What criteria will we use to measure success?

Step 3: Identify Your Team's Resources and Conditions for Member Satisfaction

As a team, list the resources you bring to the group, and the conditions you need to thrive:

- What skills, knowledge, and experience do we possess?
- What are the conditions under which we thrive?
- What are the conditions under which we disengage?

Step 4: Determine your Team's Leadership Structure

Think about how your team will manage its activities:

- What leadership structure will you adopt? Rotating leadership, assigned roles, one overall leader, or no leader?
- What are the pros and cons of your chosen structure?

Step 5: Discuss Your Norms for Collaboration

Formulate guidelines to govern how you will work together. The aim is to specify norms of “definite dos” and “definite don’ts,” not to document precisely how you will work together. Please address the following dimensions of teamwork:

	Always Do	Never Do
How will we discuss ideas and options?		
How will we make decisions?		
How will we schedule and run our meetings?		
How will we assign responsibilities for tasks?		
How will we hold each other accountable for commitments?		
What are our expectations for meeting preparation and attendance?		
How will we communicate with each other?		
How will the team manage conflict?		
How will we provide feedback to each other?		

Step 6: Discuss How Your Team Will Self-Correct

- How will your team self-correct when an individual or the team does not follow the agreed upon principles, guidelines, and norms you have discussed above? Identify at least two different ways you will do this.
- How/when will you identify whether the team is on track to achieve its overall performance objectives? How often will you do this, and using what process?