

MODULE 3: Developing and Leading High-Performing Teams

Characteristics of High-Performing Teams Exercise –

- What are some common team challenges to this characteristic? (What gets in the team's way?)
- What would you do if your team needed development in this characteristic?

HIGH LEVEL OF TRUST

- **Challenges:**
 - People who assert "you should trust me."
 - It's not a given. Trust needs to be earned over time.
 - It is hard to recover if trust is lost.
 - What if you make a bad decision, a decision I disagree with, or fail to deliver on something you promised?
 - Do you course correct?
 - Do you micromanage?
 - Authenticity – may be difficult for some people who don't feel their authentic self will be well-received. (Note that the bullet says "perceived authenticity." Create perceptions and own the perceptions we are creating.)
- **How to develop:**
 - Team-building efforts
 - More open communication / transparency
 - Tone at the top
 - Give people benefit of the doubt (assume positive intent)

HIGH LEVEL OF RESPECT

- **Challenges:**

- As a new leader, learn and know the skills and talents of your team members
- Be aware of workflow issues and unequal volumes of work
- Demonstrate appreciation for/perception of value
- Unreasonable demands/lack of awareness
- Culture that doesn't value opinions
 - If you raise issues or try to have a dialogue is that unwelcome and results in lack of respect?
- If there is fatigue – on individual or team level, how can the team help one another to re-find that energy?

COMMITMENT TO A CLEAR AND COMMON PURPOSE

- **Challenges:**

- How do we define purpose?
- What is purpose?
- What to do if there are different visions of purpose across the team?
- Who is the decider of what the purpose is?
- Reaction of "what's in it for me?"

- **How to develop:**

- Focus on overall organizational purpose and your team's role in serving that goal
- Answer questions on how you got to this purpose and why you got there
- Work to get buy-in from the team
 - Could require adjustment the purpose

ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO MANAGE CONFLICT

- **Challenges:**

- Willing to acknowledge that a conflict exists?
- Do team members have the will and skill to address the conflict?

- Will: Am I concerned enough to raise/acknowledge an issue?
- Skill: Do I know how to handle the situation once I've raised an issue? (e.g. compromise, consensus, etc.)
- **How to develop:**
 - Focus on nurturing a culture/environment that is open to airing objections.
 - When reach a decision, rally behind the winning idea.

FOCUS ON RESULTS

- **Challenges:**
 - Lawyers are trained to issue-spot, find weaknesses and flaws, and strive for perfection. What's good enough to be able to consider results?
 - For an in-house lawyer, how do we measure a win/success?
 - Time?
 - Efficiency?
 - Risk/reward balance?
 - What's valued most?
- **How to develop:**
 - Prioritize making time to debrief wins and losses with the team.
 - Try to develop metrics to get a clearer picture of what's valued?
 - What disciplines do we embed in our team/organization to measure success? (Maybe at start of the fiscal year?) Have a conversation with our stakeholders?

ALIGNMENT OF AUTHORITY AND MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Challenges:**
 - Desire for authority and consensus
 - If everyone wants it, can lead to lots of churning
 - If no one wants it, no one will be accountable (fear-based, risk-avoidant result)

- Bottleneck if only one person has authority
- When people don't know whether they do (or don't) have authority
- **How to develop:**
 - Address this in the forming stage of team development
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities of all team members
 - Know who is the decider, know how far team members can go
 - Engender trust and demonstrate confidence/trust in the team
 - Acknowledge accomplishments and make it clear that you are "all in this together" (have their back)
 - Clarity of communication about who has authority