

Steps to developing Team values



Step 1:

Schedule an initial meeting with the team in a meeting room for around an hour to an hour and a half. Have a flip chart or white board available. This is a talk-out-loud brainstorming session with your group. Attempt to get everyone involved. You could ask people to do some reflective thinking about their ideas beforehand

Step 2:

Identify the common values all team members should share. These values tackle the issues of how people in the team should treat each other. Examples would be trust, integrity, honesty, fairness, listening, sharing and respect.

Step 3:

Ask team members to provide work-related examples of each of the common values and what the value means in these situations. The purpose for this descriptive exercise is that it is not uncommon for team members to have different definitions of what a value means. For example, fairness to one person might seem like preferential treatment to another. Backgrounds, past experiences and culture can all play a role in how values are defined.

Step 4:

Identify the values that focus on the different parts of the team's work responsibilities. These are the job-related values that impact customers, work flow, decision-making, dealing with other members of the team and quality products and services, among others. The common values that were previously established also work well in this category. For example, being respectful to customers might be suggested by team members.

Step 5:

Ask team members to provide recent examples of these values and how they interact with the team's work responsibilities. Topics such as sharing information, listening to customers and taking personal responsibility for decisions and actions may surface. Using respect and listening as an example, have team members provide what they believe is respectful behaviour to a customer. Ask for the words they use, how the words are expressed and what they do when the customer gets angry.

Step 6:

Review the team values that have been developed for final clarification among team members. This is the summarising part of the meeting. Ask team members if there are any questions or concerns, or if something on the list needs further clarifying. Gain agreement on the list of values and how they are defined.

Step 7:

Schedule an initial 30-day follow-up session to determine how well the team values are working from the perspective of team members. If some values are being violated, then the team can discuss what happened and make any adjustments. If necessary, a revised team values list can be created at this meeting.

Step 8:

Draft the final team values into an easy to read format and send to all the team members within one day after the brainstorming session. Include the follow-up meeting in 30 days. Create a periodic meeting when the team values are reviewed and updated if necessary.