

advancing women in business

every  
woman  
NETWORK



WORKBOOK

# LEADING A POWERFUL TEAM

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## ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

**EVERYWOMAN IS AN ORGANISATION** that works to advance women in business. Through our work with thousands of women and men in business we have met many outstanding, and powerful leaders.

Great teamwork is frequently recognised as providing the ultimate competitive advantage because it is both so powerful and so rare. Teams are made up of individual people with their own view of the world, and as a consequence are prone to dysfunctionality.

Creating and leading a successful team is challenging and can be a daunting experience, especially if this is your first time in a managerial position. A group of employees does not automatically make a team!

The purpose of this workbook is to stimulate your own thinking around the factors that are important in creating and leading a powerful team. It brings together key research, selected information and some frameworks to help you explore your own thinking, that can then be shared and further developed with your own team.

This workbook contains a mere sample of the vast research, perspectives and information out there, but we hope it inspires you to continue your own investigation and practice in how to lead your team to be the best it can be. All sources are referenced, and suggested further reading is recommended at the end.

Our online seminars will support the key learning points in this workbook and provide the opportunity to ask our experts any questions you may have.

Good luck! We look forward to hearing about your experiences and successes.

## AN OVERVIEW OF LEADING A POWERFUL TEAM





# An Overview of Leading a Powerful Team

A LEADER OF A POWERFUL TEAM is focused on how they can make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

Whilst the theory is pretty simple, the practice can be rather challenging. In reality there are many distractions: your boss wants a presentation, a customer is particularly challenging, you're re-structuring after downsizing and you're implementing new systems, and usually many such things happen simultaneously. It's sometimes easy to forget that a huge part of success is down to leading your team to be powerful, and to win.

Before you start this workbook, take a few moments to complete the following:

## EXERCISE

Which teams (in any sphere) would you consider to be 'powerful teams' and why?

What does 'powerful team' mean to you? What are the qualities of a powerful team?

Think about a time when you have been part of what you consider to be a 'powerful team' and what qualities did your team display?

How did that experience impact your own engagement and enjoyment at work?

We aim to equip you with insights and key principles for success. The areas we will consider are;

1. Authentic Leadership
2. The 7 Most Desired Qualities of a Line Manager
3. Lencioni's Five Fundamentals of a Powerful Team
  - Trust
  - Embrace conflict
  - Commitment
  - Accountability
  - Focus on Results

"Leadership will flow to those whose vision can inspire the members of the team to put their best abilities at the service of the team. These leaders will create rather than demand loyalty; the best people will want to work with them. They will communicate effectively with a variety of people and use the conflict among diverse points of view to reach new insights. They will exert influence by the values they choose to reinforce. They will make leaders of their team members."

**JOHN CLARKESON -FORMER CEO OF BOSTON  
CONSULTING GROUP**

## SECTION 1. ENGAGEMENT MATTERS



# Engagement Matters

**WE ALL SPEND** a substantial part of our lives working and there is a direct correlation between workplace engagement, performance and quality of life. Increasing workplace engagement is key to achieving sustainable growth.

## What does employee engagement impact?

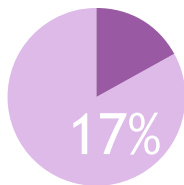
- Their rational commitment
- Their discretionary effort
- Their performance
- Their emotional commitment
- Their intent to stay with a business
- Their loyalty

## UK Workplace Engagement Scores (Gallup sample 2012)

Total UK universe of 27M employees

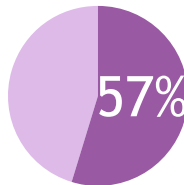
### Engaged

“Loyal, productive, find work satisfying.”



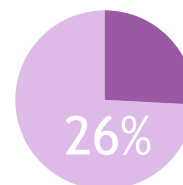
### Not Engaged

“Not psychologically committed to role, may leave if opportunity presents itself.”



### Actively Disengaged

“Disenchanted: vocal or militant in showing their negative attitude towards their work.”



Only one in six employees are engaged at work in the UK, psychologically committed to their jobs and likely to be making positive contributions to their organisations.

The bulk of employees (57%) are ‘not engaged’ meaning they lack motivation and are less likely to invest discretionary effort in organisational goals or outcomes.

There are 26% who are ‘actively disengaged’, indicating they are unhappy and unproductive at work and liable to spread negativity to co-workers. So in rough numbers this translates to over 15 million people not engaged and 7 million actively disengaged workers in the UK in 2012.

*Source: Gallup Employee Engagement Index Summary UK*

Based on performance data from 2,500 businesses and 105,000 employees.



## SECTION 2. AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP



# Authentic Leadership

**LEADERSHIP IS ALL EMBRACING** and not just the preserve of high profile CEO's. Leadership is about results. Great leadership is the ability to excite people to extraordinary achievement, and in addition to results, provide meaning.

Our working environments and dynamics are changing, with traditional boundaries disappearing creating greater ambiguity. Flatter hierarchies are being driven by the need for agility, cost reduction and an increase in individuals wanting to be the architects of their own working lives, as opposed to lifelong employees of a few companies. As organisations endeavour to eliminate the cynicism and mistrust created from past corporate scandals, they are developing more and more trusted alliances and collaboration. The demand, therefore for 'authentic leadership' has never been greater.

## What does 'authentic' leadership look like?

- Authentic leaders tune into the organisation to understand what is going on beneath the surface and modify their behaviours to respond to the needs of their teams whilst remaining true to who they are.
  - This is about sensing mood and feeling around your workplace and the team then maximizing your own awareness of what's beneath the surface. Notice the behaviours and the mood around your business and around your team. What is it telling you? What do you feel your team want or need from you given this environment?
- Authentic leaders understand themselves and what core values drive them, what strengths differentiate them and what weaknesses demonstrate that they need others. They take this understanding and determine what to disclose to strengthen relationships and inspire the action of others.
  - Think about what behaviours are important to you and that you value in others. How does this come across in the way you communicate and act?
- Authentic leaders understand what motivates their teams in the broadest sense and therefore know when to empathise and be more personal and then when to step back to keep people focused on organisational goals.
  - Think about really understanding each of your team, how well do you really know and understand each of them? Think about what's important to them and happening to them in their life - in and outside of work.
- Authentic leaders create a clear and compelling vision that articulates personal values and that creates a vivid picture of where your team fit in. They include clear and actionable steps on what needs to be done and why, to ensure that energy is translated into desired outputs.
  - Think about what your vision is for your team or part of the business. Think about what the future may look, feel and sound like? Think about how your team fits into this - what and how may they personally benefit? Think about how you can communicate this so that you reflect your values and their needs? Then start to think about how you can connect your vision and its articulation into tangible steps towards this.

Understanding and developing authentic leadership is an expansive topic which we are introducing here. The following exercise poses questions to help you explore what this means to you and how you embrace key principles whilst developing your own style. Authentic leadership is about being the best leader you can be that is true to your personality and identity, your values and your talents.

## EXERCISE

Consider answers to the following questions and how you build this thinking into the way you lead your team.

What business context are you leading in? What industry sector, think about how competitive it is? What are the performance dynamics of your team? What are you seeing, hearing and sensing from them?

What core values drive you? What strengths differentiate you? What weaknesses demonstrate you need others?

What motivates your individual team members? What are their professional aspirations, interests and goals outside of work?

What does your clear and compelling vision look like, bringing to life your personal values and creating a vivid picture of where your team fit in?

"Treat your people well and they'll treat you well... It has to come from the heart not the head"

HERB KELLEHER – CO-FOUNDER,  
FORMER PRESIDENT & CEO OF  
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES IN AN  
INTERVIEW AT STRATEGY-BUSINESS.  
COM

## SECTION 3. YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER IN DEVELOPING YOUR TEAM



# The Qualities of a Leader

BELOW IS A LIST OF STATEMENTS that describe the leadership qualities employees are looking for in their line managers.

Which 7 traits do you believe are the most essential leadership qualities? Rank them in order of priority from 1 to 7 with 1 being the most important.

Leadership qualities employees are seeking from line managers	Rank
Encourages challenges to the status quo	_____
Maintains emotional distance from people	_____
Is able to analyse and think creatively	_____
Is honest and consistent	_____
Sacrifices oneself in the interests of their work	_____
Seen as a communicator, networker and achiever	_____
Seen to be the best professional	_____
Is able to draw people together with a shared vision	_____
Trusts others to lead	_____
Is charismatic	_____
His or her view of reality is the only one that counts	_____
Is decisive, determined and ready to take risks	_____
Knows the answers when asked	_____
Shows genuine concern for others	_____
Never seen to be vulnerable	_____
Is accessible, approachable and flexible	_____
Manages change sensitively and skilfully	_____



## Research Findings - Follower Needs

**RESEARCH CARRIED OUT** by Beverley Alimo-Metcalfe, Emeritus Professor of Leadership Studies at Leeds University, underlines that a good leader need not be our traditional vision of a 'super man' or 'wonder woman', it is about being someone who values their staff and leads with integrity and humility.

### The 7 most desired qualities/traits of the line manager (priority order)

#### 1. Genuine concern for others (seen as the most important of all)

They show a genuine interest in staff as individuals, valuing their contributions, developing their strengths, coaching and mentoring; having positive expectations of what staff can achieve.

#### 2. Seen as communicator, networker and achiever

They are able to communicate goals enthusiastically. They work in partnership with both internal and external interested parties, to gain their confidence and support, able to celebrate accomplishments.

#### 3. Trust others to lead

They trust staff to take decisions and initiative, delegate effectively and encourage staff to develop their skills as leaders by providing opportunities for them to take on increased responsibilities.

#### 4. Is honest and consistent

They have integrity that is about honesty and consistency but also reflects the attitude of placing the good of the organisation before personal gain. They demonstrate humility and a willingness to modify their views after listening to others.

#### 5. Is accessible, approachable and flexible

They are not status conscious and place great importance on face to face communication. They seek to ensure staff at all levels feel comfortable and are able to access them as an individual.

#### 6. Is decisive, determined and ready to take risks

They are able to give a sense of direction and take decisions whilst engaging with colleagues in the process.

#### 7. Is able to draw people together with a shared vision

They are able to shape a clear vision and are able to actively engage 'stakeholders' in developing it, drawing others together in achieving it.

Source: Beverley Alimo-Metcalfe – Emeritus Professor of Leadership Studies Leeds University, A Fellow of the British Psychological Society with an international reputation in the field of leadership studies.

## SECTION 4. THE FIVE FUNDAMENTALS OF A POWERFUL TEAM



# The Five Fundamentals of a Powerful Team

THIS SECTION INTRODUCES YOU to Patrick Lencioni's powerful model that illustrates the five dysfunctions that go to the heart of why teams, even the best ones, struggle. In this section we will explore the model, what it means, and pose questions that will help you to begin to create actionable steps to improve the effectiveness of your team.



These fundamentals of a team form an interrelated model which all starts with trust. Until there is a strong existence of trust, teams are unlikely to be able to build strength around the other fundamentals.

Let's think about how truly cohesive teams behave:

- They trust each other
- They engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas
- They commit to decisions and plans of action
- They hold each other accountable for delivering against those plans
- They focus on the achievement of collective results

## EXERCISE

Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to your team. Answer the statements honestly and don't overthink it.

1 = Rarely

2 = Sometimes

3 = Usually

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Team members are passionate and unguarded in their discussion of issues.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Team members call out one another's deficiencies or unproductive behaviours.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Team members know what their peers are working on and how they contribute to the collective good of the team.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Team members quickly and genuinely apologise to one another when they say or do something inappropriate or possibly damaging to the team.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Team members willingly make sacrifices (such as budget, headcount) in their departments for the good of the team.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Team members openly admit their weaknesses and mistakes.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Team meetings are compelling and not boring.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Team members leave meetings confident that their peers are completely committed to the decisions that were agreed on, even if there was initial disagreement. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Morale is significantly affected by the failure to achieve team goals.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. During team meetings, the most important and difficult issues are put on the table to be resolved.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Team members are deeply concerned about the prospect of letting down their peers.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Team members know about each other's personal lives and are comfortable discussing them.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Team members end discussions with clear and specific resolutions and calls to action.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Team members challenge one another about their plans and approaches.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Team members are slow to seek credit for their own contributions, but quick to point out those of others.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Scoring

Combine your scores for the preceding statements as indicated below.

Absence of Trust	Fear of Conflict	Lack of Commitment	Avoidance of accountability	Inattention to Results
Statement 4 ____	Statement 1 ____	Statement 3 ____	Statement 2 ____	Statement 5 ____
Statement 6 ____	Statement 7 ____	Statement 8 ____	Statement 11 ____	Statement 9 ____
Statement 12 ____	Statement 10 ____	Statement 13 ____	Statement 14 ____	Statement 15 ____
TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____

If you score 8 or 9 then dysfunction is not a problem for your team. Keep investing your time and energy in them as every team needs constant focus and work. Without which, even the best teams can move towards dysfunction. There are always opportunities for improvement, so identify these and develop a plan to continually enhance the overall team.

If you score 6 to 7, then dysfunction could be a problem. Start at the base of the pyramid with trust and understand how strong the level of trust is within the team. Team members need to feel confident in opening up to each other and sharing vulnerabilities (interpersonal shortcomings, development areas, mistakes, requests for help) without fear of reprisal.

Without trust, teamwork is very challenging so think of ways you can improve this. There are a couple of different things that can help; such as sharing personal histories (childhood info – number of siblings, hometown, school & childhood background, favourite hobbies, first job ....). This can help team members to understand context for each other, promotes understanding and empathy and can help build first steps in trust.

After this you could think about team effectiveness exercises, exploring the single most important contribution each makes for the good of the team. You could also think about sharing personality profiles with each other, for example 'Myers Briggs' or 'Insights' colour profiling, amongst others. As you feel that trust is strengthened then work your way up the pyramid to conflict and so on. You may want to seek support in this development from an HR business partner or some external 3rd party help if your company agrees.

If you score 3 to 5 then it's a good indication that the dysfunction really does need to be addressed. With this score it is likely that the basis of teamwork 'trust' is not strong enough and you really need to focus your efforts here. Think about how you can create a team environment that promotes trust and consider the exercises above. There are many ways to enhance trust in teams, these suggestions are merely a start. We will cover more of this in the accompanying webinars.



As a leader, it is imperative that you demonstrate vulnerability to your team to encourage them to do the same and do not punish vulnerability in others. Having established a strong foundation of trust you can move on to how you can help your team embrace conflict. Firstly, acknowledge that conflict is productive. Recognising in the moment when conflict is happening and emphasising it is a good thing will ease discomfort and give people the confidence to continue.

Think also about 'calling out' sensitive or buried issues. Putting them back on the table and working through them with your team will help you to positively embrace conflict. When you've worked through it, complimenting and recognising your team will help to positively reinforce these behaviours.

# The Fundamentals Explained

## 1. Trust

No quality is more important than trust. Trust is the foundation for building a team.

### 1. How do you know when you have it?

- i. Team members are comfortable being vulnerable about their behaviours, fears, weaknesses and mistakes
- ii. Team members are open and honest with one another

### 3. Members of trusting teams...

- i. Admit weaknesses and mistakes
- ii. Ask for help
- iii. Accept questions and input about their areas of responsibility
- iv. Give one another the benefit of the doubt before arriving at a negative conclusion
- v. Take risks in offering feedback and assistance
- vi. Appreciate and tap into one another's skills and experiences
- vii. Focus time and energy on important issues, not politics
- viii. Offer and accept apologies without hesitation
- ix. Look forward to meetings and other opportunities to work as a group

### 10. Members of teams with an absence of trust...

- i. Conceal their weaknesses and mistakes from each other
- ii. Hesitate to ask for help or provide constructive feedback
- iii. Hesitate to offer help outside their own areas of responsibility
- iv. Jump to conclusions about the intentions and aptitudes of others without attempting to clarify them
- v. Fail to recognise and tap into one another's skills and experiences
- vi. Waste time and energy managing their behaviours for effect
- vii. Hold grudges
- viii. Dread meetings and find reasons to avoid spending time together

## EXERCISE

Think about your current team when answering these questions.

How long have you been together as a team?

What value do you place on the relationships and understanding you have with each of your team members?

How well do you and your team know each other?

What's the single most important contribution that each member makes to the team?

<i>(example) Jill</i>	<i>Organisational skills</i>
<i>(example) Andrew</i>	<i>Relationship building</i>

## 2. Embracing conflict

No quality is more important than trust. Trust is the foundation for building a team.

### 1. How do you know when you have a team that can deal with conflict?

- i. Team members engage in passionate discussions on issues and decisions key to their success
- ii. Team members question, challenge and/or disagree in the spirit of finding the best answers

### 3. Teams that engage in conflict:

- i. Have lively, interesting meetings
- ii. Extract and exploit the ideas of all team members
- iii. Solve real problems quickly
- iv. Minimise politics
- v. Put critical topics on the table for discussion

### 6. Teams that fear conflict:

- i. Create environments where back-channel politics and personal attacks thrive
- ii. Ignore controversial topics that are critical to team success
- iii. Fail to tap into all of the opinions and perspectives of team members
- iv. Waste time and energy with posturing and interpersonal risk management

"Strength lies in differences,  
not in similarities."

STEPHEN COVEY, AUTHOR  
OF '7 HABITS OF HIGHLY  
SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE'

## EXERCISE

How confident are you to call out sensitive issues and force team members to work through them?

How comfortable are you as team leader to engage in healthy conflict on challenging topics that may be key to your success? What would make you more comfortable?

How often do you find the same topics coming up time and time again?

What needs to change to stop this happening?



### 3. Commitment

#### 1. How do you know when you have commitment from the team?

- i. All opinions and ideas are put on the table and considered
- ii. Team members can achieve genuine buy in on important decisions - even when some initially disagree

#### 3. A team that commits:

- i. Creates clarity around direction and priorities
- ii. Aligns the entire team around common objectives
- iii. Develops an ability to learn from mistakes
- iv. Takes advantage of opportunities before competitors do
- v. Moves forward without hesitation
- vi. Changes direction without hesitation or guilt

#### 7. A team that fails to commit:

- i. Creates ambiguity among the team about direction and priorities
- ii. Watches windows of opportunity close, due to excessive analysis and unnecessary delay
- iii. Breeds lack of confidence and fear of failure
- iv. Revisits discussions and decisions again and again
- v. Encourages second guessing amongst team members

## EXERCISE

To what extent are you and your team clear around direction and priorities?

How united are your team behind the decisions that are taken even when there may not be consensus or certainty of the outcome?

How frequently do you review key strategic decisions made and how do you communicate any changes to those decisions to your wider team and stakeholders?

## 4. Accountability

### 1. How do you know when your team feel accountable?

- i. Team members commit to the standards of performance and goals in place, and hold one another accountable
- ii. The manager is not the only one keeping team members on track

### 3. A team that holds one another accountable...

- i. Ensures poor performers feel pressure to improve
- ii. Identifies potential problems quickly by questioning one another's approaches without hesitation
- iii. Establishes respect amongst team members who are held to the same high standards
- iv. Avoids excessive bureaucracy around performance management and corrective action

### 5. A team that avoids accountability...

- i. Creates resentment among team members who have different standards of performance
- ii. Encourages mediocrity
- iii. Misses deadlines and key deliverables
- iv. Places an undue burden on the team leader as the sole source of discipline

## EXERCISE

How visible are your team's goals and standards to each other when contributing to team performance?

How well are deadlines and key deliverables met by you and your team?

How do you reward your team's achievement versus individual achievement?

## 5. Attention to Results

### 1. How do you know when you have a results driven team?

- i. Team members set aside their individual egos, needs and agendas to focus on what is best for the team
- ii. The number one priority is their collective results that define team success

### 3. A team that focuses on collective results...

- i. Retains achievement-orientated employees
- ii. Minimises individualistic behaviour
- iii. Enjoys success and suffers failure acutely
- iv. Benefits from individuals who subjugate their own goals and interests for the good of the team
- v. Avoids distractions

### 6. A team that is not focused on results...

- i. Stagnates and fails to grow
- ii. Rarely gets ahead of the competition
- iii. Loses achievement orientated employees
- iv. Encourages team members to focus on their own careers and individual goals
- v. Is easily distracted



## EXERCISE

How focused on achieving your stated goals are you and your team?

How easily distracted is your team?

“There are plenty of teams in every sport that have great players and never win titles. Most of the time, those players aren’t willing to sacrifice for the greater good of the team. The funny thing is, in the end, their unwillingness to sacrifice only makes individual goals more difficult to achieve. One thing I believe to the fullest is that if you think and achieve as a team, the individual accolades will take care of themselves. Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships.”

**MICHAEL JORDAN, FORMER PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL PLAYER**

## SECTION 5. PERSONAL ACTION SUMMARY



## Personal action summary

**YOU SHOULD BY NOW** have answered a number of key questions that will prompt your thinking around successfully leading your team.

You've seen information about the power of engagement, considered authentic leadership and what this could mean for you, understood research about what employees need most from their manager, worked through the fundamentals that make a powerful team and thought about what you want to focus on with your team.

Now is the time to convert this into some clear and timely actions for yourself:

[illegible]

Some final reflections:

- How engaging am I?
- What will I do differently today to be more effective in leading my team?
- How will I know I am making an effective and sustainable difference?

every  
woman

This workbook has been produced and edited by everywoman, with content commissioned from associate expert Kate Fletcher. And is part of the everywoman portfolio of resources that have been specially created to support and develop women as they advance their careers and businesses.

### everywoman Expert



**Kate Fletcher** has been involved with business and sports teams for 25 years both as a leader and team member. At UK Board level in FTSE 100 and 250 companies, she has successfully led teams to double their revenue and profit, transform customer relationships, achieve the highest company employee engagement ratings and successfully led teams through transformational change. In sport, Kate has been member of a team competing in the Round the World Yacht Race, been a member of the winning European Cup Winners Cup hockey team and played English National League hockey for 12 years. Kate is passionate about inspiring and supporting women to business success.

### Further reading

- *Why Should Anyone be Led by You? What it takes to be an authentic leader* - Goffee and Jones
- *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* - Patrick Lencioni
- *First Break All the Rules* - Marcus Buckingham
- *Now Discover Your Strengths* - Marcus Buckingham

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