Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

Compliments of Canada Life

Team agreement worksheet

1. **What is good about this team that you wouldn't want to lose if there were to be some changes?**
   For example, what are the positive ways people communicate when we agree or disagree, when solving problems, raising concerns, or when people are feeling stressed?

Remember to ask, "And what else?" until the answer is "that's it, that's all". This indicates that the person has had a chance to share all that they feel is relevant.

2. **What would need to change for you to be excited about coming to work, feel supported to do a good job, and be able to leave with energy at the end of the day?**
   Please provide positive, specific and measurable changes. For example, if you want more feedback, indicate specifically how much, how often and what type of feedback works best for you. By being specific and putting it in positive terms, it's much easier for us to determine and measure whether or not it's getting done.

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If you are doing this as a team exercise, you may wish to take a break or press pause after the first two questions so you can analyze and summarize themes and patterns for the larger group and check back in on your understanding before you move on.

In the next two questions, you're asking about behaviours, words and actions that will take your team towards or away from their vision of an ideal team. To help with this, the following are some potential examples of "towards" and "away" behaviours. It's important, however, that your team describes the specific behaviours, words and actions that are relevant to them.

Potential "towards" behaviours

- Praise for others' efforts
- Asking if anyone needs help, when able
- Valuing diverse opinions
- Respectful discussion
- Healthy conflict resolution
- Transparency
- Honesty

Potential "away" behaviours

- Gossip
- Sarcasm
- Rolling eyes
- Sighing loudly
- Excluding people
- Grandstanding
- Arguments
- Personal attacks

3. What are the behaviours, words or actions that will take your team towards this ideal?

What are exceptions to this? For example, it may seem ideal to have an open-door policy, but for someone with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), this may be unreasonably distracting and interfere with their ability to get work done. Acknowledging this, the agreement could be amended to an open-door policy or notice that someone needs to focus on a task at the moment. This can be a virtual notice or a sign on a door.

Remember to ask, "And what else?" until the answer is "that's it, that's all". This indicates that the person has had a chance to share all that they feel is relevant.

4. **What behaviours will take your team away from your ideal vision?**
   What could be exceptions to this? For example, it may seem ideal in some settings to avoid swearing, but someone with Tourette syndrome who has an involuntary tic where they blurt out a profanity, may not be able to comply. Acknowledging that their behaviour is not voluntary means that agreement should be amended to avoiding voluntary swearing.

Remember to ask, "And what else?" until the answer is "that's it, that's all". This indicates that the person has had a chance to share all that they feel is relevant.

5. **What would YOU personally be willing to do differently, or continue to do, that would contribute to your vision of an ideal team?**

Remember to ask, "And what else?" until the answer is "that's it, that's all". This indicates that the person has had a chance to share all that they feel is relevant.

6. **If for some reason you were having a bad day, how can someone respectfully bring to your attention that you might be engaged in an "away" behaviour or having a negative impact on others?**
   For example, would you prefer they say something in the moment or privately?
   What words should they use?

Remind everyone that holding someone accountable is not a personal attack. Share some examples of some language that someone might use to hold someone accountable:

- "That feels like it might be a 'towards' move because…"
- "Can we chat about that? It feels like it might be an 'away' move."
- "That feels like an 'away' move. Do you feel differently?"

Once you have their answer to this question, ask "And what if that doesn't work? What would be the next step?" You want the first response to be supportive, but eventually, if it doesn't work, the agreement should be clear about when the issue must be escalated.

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7. **How can you or your teammates demonstrate that you are taking accountability when you've had a potential negative impact on someone else or used "away" behaviours?**

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