

High Performing Teams (HPTs)

At LAPD Solutions, we talk about the ingredients required to create a High Performing Team (HPT), but as with so many things involving people, the difference between discussing it and doing it is enormous. The team and individual effort that is required to achieve them is truly unknown until you work hard at creating and maintaining one. But to be clear, the lion's share of the effort is in the creation, as once it is accomplished, maintenance is far easier.



Remember that the choice of performance measures should align with the team's goals and the specific context of their work. It's useful to combine these measures to get a comprehensive view of a high-performing team. Additionally, ensure that [performance management](#) is an ongoing process rather than a one-time evaluation. See CiaCs (Check-in and Chats) below.

I want to clarify that LaPD Solutions Ltd see HPTs as the combination of **two** measurements that go beyond just the meeting of KPIs or other such targets. We also suggest that you measure the three Cs, which are **Connection**, **Cohesiveness** and **Collaboration**, which are essential to creating and maintaining High Performing Teams.

Those two measurements and their ingredients include:

1. Team **Performance** Measurement.



2. Team **Behavioural** Measurement.



(Please note some of these can overlap and can impact both measurements).

Team **Performance** Measurement:

These, as you'd expect, are the data based in terms of targets, including

1. **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**: Define specific KPIs that align with the team's objectives. These could include productivity metrics, revenue generated, customer satisfaction scores, sales targets reached or surpassed and project completion rates.
2. **Goal Achievement**: How well the team meets its goals and targets. High-performing teams consistently achieve or exceed their set objectives.
3. **Efficiency and Productivity**: Measure how efficiently the team operates. Consider metrics like time to complete tasks, resource utilisation, project timelines, and costs, including breakages, errors, wasted resources and overtime.
4. **Time and Resource Management**: Evaluate how effectively the team manages its time and resources. This includes budget adherence, resource allocation, and time management.
5. **Benchmarking**: Compare the team's performance to industry benchmarks or similar teams in the organisation to identify areas for improvement.



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Team Behavioural Measurement

1. **Emotional Intelligence:** Ensuring that **everyone** can show how they have actively worked on their self-awareness and self-management and how they have done this (with whose assistance).
2. **Psychological Safety:** This either exists for all or it doesn't. If the team is working as closely as they say they are, there will be plenty of evidence of this between team members, the team leader/manager and even across other teams they collaborate with to support this. They will also have set up a system to share best practices through Best Practice Managers (BPMs). These people are not necessarily managers by title.
3. **Regular Reviews:** Regular (monthly) CiaCs (Check-in and Chats) to ensure each person has what they need to do their best and is working as efficiently and effectively as they can. will have been set up. These will be tailored to meet the preferences of each member whilst producing what HR requires on a quarterly or six-monthly basis.
4. **Quality of Work:** This can arguably come under performance above, but our thinking is this: do colleagues feel comfortable having their peers check their work to ensure individual's and the team's output quality, identifying areas where resources or improvement are required? This shows collaboration.
5. **Collaboration and Communication:** Evaluate the team's ability to work together effectively. Are team members communicating well, sharing knowledge, and resolving conflicts collaboratively and constructively?
6. **Employee Satisfaction:** HPTs often have very satisfied and engaged team members. Employee surveys or feedback can gauge job satisfaction and team morale.
7. **Adaptability:** Assess how well the team responds to change and adapts to new challenges. This includes their ability to learn from failures and iterate on their processes.
8. **Innovation and Creativity:** Consider the team's ability to generate innovative ideas and solutions. Encourage a culture of creativity and track the implementation of new ideas.
9. **Customer Feedback:** Collect and analyse feedback from customers or end-users to gauge the team's impact on their satisfaction and loyalty and openly discuss this. (Again, this can arguably come under performance).



If you want to start creating a High Performing Team, you need to meet with your team to present and discuss the various reasons and goals you must all work hard to agree on and achieve. Create a team behaviour contract to support the creation and maintenance of your HPT. Ingredients include courage, honesty, social awareness, patience, time, CLEAN communication, transparency, responsibility, and consequence conversations. ([Handout](#)).

Please note that an **Organisational Culture Engagement Team (OCET) MUST** be an HPT.

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There is so much to consider here as we are all different; we see things differently, even from one person to the next. We have biases and carry baggage from disagreements and other interpersonal distractions, which we must resolve. We must create a team circle of trust through consistent, trustworthy behaviour, collaboration, and cooperation. This will have to be worked on over time, and all the bumps along the way ironed out.

As Simon Sinek says, “I can’t simply say to you, trust me and you will”, “I can’t simply instruct two people to cooperate and they will, it’s not how it works, it’s a feeling”!



To make this goal become a reality in the real world with your colleagues, you must become as objective as you can (not easy) and, ideally, sense test this with a colleague responsible for telling you exactly what they think about your approach. Honesty is the **ONLY** way forward here.

Also, consider that there may be a need for a very open and honest conversation with a leader or leaders before you decide on an approach with your team. It may be that those bumps need fixing first; otherwise, your team will challenge you on that. How can we mend, fix, compromise and create if we ourselves are unwilling to take that courageous first step?

Key thinking from various areas of research:

1. 85% of remote workers want to continue working in a hybrid environment despite the easing of pandemic restrictions (ONS, 2021).
2. 63% of survey respondents had difficulty communicating with colleagues during lockdown (Gov News Direct, 2021).
3. 20% of businesses report compromised team communication and productivity because of remote working (ONS, 2021).
4. Productivity increases when executives work in a high-performing team, compared with a team with average performance levels (McKinsey, 2017).
5. Psychological safety (ES^2) is expressing oneself without fear of negative consequences. In practice, this means that employees can be open and speak their minds, take moderate risks, and exercise creativity (or problem-solving) without fear of repercussions. Empower those you pay to do the work you employed them to do!
6. Cohesive teams are 21% more profitable (Gallup, 2020). An emotionally intelligent team is more productive because personal investment on the part of each member builds engagement and innovation. (Atlassian 2019). In addition, 97% of employees believe that team alignment influences the success of a project (Clear Company 2017).
7. Cohesive leadership teams are twice as likely to achieve above-average financial performance (McKinsey, 2017).
8. When a workplace is challenging but not threatening, teams remain constructive. In a psychologically safe environment, our brains release Oxytocin which builds trust.
9. Google’s “Aristotle” research project on team efficacy placed psychological safety at the top of its prerequisites for high-performing teams (2016).

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10. Positive conflict and open communication can highlight inefficiencies, leading to improved processes and innovation.
11. Research shows that behaviour-based training significantly improves team coordination and performance (McEwan, 2017). So, invest in Soft Skills development.
12. You can make sense of your team's DNA by assessing their emotional intelligence. Bringing emotional intelligence, personality styles and preferences to the group's awareness can be game-changing. Benefits include increased innovation and commitment to delivery.
13. ARCHWAY Approach® - Accountability, Responsibility, Consequences, Holistic (whole team), Why (purpose), Alignment (Values), YOU (Authenticity).
14. Teams who fail to commit develop an avoidance of accountability. This can rapidly impede team performance, as noncommittal members are unlikely to hold their peers to account for delivery. To outperform, teams need to be able to push through adversity. "A strong sense of renewal" is a core feature of high-functioning teams (McKinsey 2017).
15. By definition, high-performing teams deliver results. In such teams, individuals put the group's goals ahead of their own (such as ego, career development or recognition). Increasing diversity is one of the biggest levers for improving a team's performance. Diverse teams typically yield 35% higher financial returns than industry medians, according to McKinsey (McKinsey, 2017). Cognitive diversity also enhances decision-making, innovation, and employee satisfaction (McKinsey, 2020). And whilst on the topic of diversity, **ensure** everyone knows how to work with neurodivergent colleagues.
16. Even now, many hiring decisions are still based on gut feeling, leading managers to hire in their own image (look up horns and halo bias). A 2017 study revealed that decisions made and executed by diverse teams delivered 60% better results. Businesses looking to create high-performing teams cannot afford to forgo diversity (Cloverpop, 2017). Think of the various types of people you want to create that diversity and about flexing styles.
17. The ability to ignite passion through people is critical for leaders of high-performing teams. To create competitive advantage, leaders must be behaviourally agile, setting stretch goals and building trust. Insights into team dynamics can help leaders identify opportunities for performance improvement and drive team accountability for delivery.

There is much to consider on these pages, which may seem overwhelming. It's not meant to make you watch every step in every way; we just can't do that, especially in times of stress.

It's about working collectively, collaboratively, and supportively to ensure we treat each other respectfully, we make time for each other, and we have each other's back with an open ear.

So please feel free to contact Mac if you want to discuss any of the above with your teams in an online discussion to embed this thinking.

