

Strategies for Creating, Developing and Leading Productive Teams

Dr. Wendy Johnson

Session Purpose

WELCOME

This session will focus on:

- Strengthen how leaders create, develop, and lead productive teams.
- Move from good intentions to intentional leadership practices.
- Connect clarity, trust, accountability, communication, and development to team performance.
- Practice conversations that help teams move forward with confidence.



Two-Day Learning Journey

OVERVIEW

- **Day 1:** Build the foundation for productive teams.
- **Day 2:** Lead through challenges, accountability, and engagement.

Both sessions combine strategic teaching blocks, discussion, role play, reflection, and action planning.



Session Description & Outcomes



Description

High-performing teams do not happen by accident, they are the result of intentional leadership, clear expectations, and consistent development. This session is designed for leaders who are responsible for building, developing, or leading teams and want practical strategies to improve performance, engagement, and accountability.

You will explore the core elements of productive teams, including role clarity, communication norms, trust, accountability, and alignment with organizational goals. We will examine how leadership behaviors directly influence team dynamics and outcomes, and how leaders can adapt their approach to meet the needs of diverse, cross-functional, remote, or hybrid teams.

Through guided reflection, real-world examples, and applied exercises, you will assess their current team effectiveness, identify common barriers to productivity, and learn actionable strategies to strengthen team performance. Emphasis is placed on creating sustainable team practices that support results while fostering collaboration, ownership, and continuous improvement.



Learning Outcomes

OUTCOMES

- Define what makes teams productive and high performing.
- Clarify purpose, roles, expectations, and accountability practices.
- Identify team strengths, communication patterns, skill gaps, and development needs.
- Apply practical strategies for difficult team dynamics and performance conversations.
- Commit to leadership behaviors that build trust, cohesion, engagement, and productivity.



Today's Guiding Question

FRAME

- Productive teams do not happen by accident.
- They are created by leaders who communicate clearly, follow through consistently, and develop people intentionally.
- As we move through both sessions, keep this question in mind:

Guiding Question:

Why does productive team leadership require intentionality?



Part 1

Building the Foundation for Productive Teams

Wednesday, July 29 | 8:15 AM - 10:00 AM



Foundation of High-Performing Teams

- What makes a team productive and high performing?
- Why clarity, trust, shared purpose, and accountability matter.
- Where leaders must be intentional in setting direction and expectations.



Clear Purpose and Goals

FOUNDATION 1

- A team performs better when members understand why the work matters.
- Clear goals reduce confusion and help people prioritize the right work.
- Purpose gives daily work meaning beyond a task list.
- Leaders must connect individual contributions to the larger mission.



Defined Roles and Expectations

FOUNDATION 2

- Role clarity prevents duplication, gaps, and frustration.
- Expectations should define responsibilities, decision rights, communication norms, and measures of success.
- Leaders should not assume people understand what success looks like.
- Clarity is a leadership responsibility, not a one-time announcement.



Trust and Psychological Safety

FOUNDATION 3

- Trust allows people to speak honestly, ask questions, and admit mistakes early.
- Psychological safety does not mean avoiding accountability.
- It means people can engage in honest dialogue without fear of embarrassment or punishment.
- Trust grows through consistency, fairness, confidentiality, and follow-through.



Clarifying Purpose, Roles, and Expectations

- Why role clarity matters in productive teams.
- How unclear expectations create confusion, overlap, and frustration.
- How to connect individual roles to team and organizational goals.
- The leader's responsibility to clarify expectations and follow through.



Connect Roles to Team Goals

ALIGNMENT

- Explain how each person's role supports the larger outcome.
- Show the connection between daily work and team priorities.
- Use goals to reinforce alignment, not just task completion.
- Help team members understand how their work creates value.



Building and Developing the Team

- Productive teams are built by understanding both work requirements and people needs.
- Development requires knowing strengths, communication styles, career interests, and skill gaps.
- Leaders strengthen productivity by coaching, aligning, and supporting growth.
- The goal is not only to manage work, but to develop capability.



Part 2

Leading Through
Challenges, Accountability,
and Engagement

Thursday, July 30 | 8:15 AM -
10:00 AM



Welcome Back: Part 1 Review

- Productive teams need clarity, trust, shared purpose, and accountability.
- Role expectations must be communicated, reinforced, and followed through on.
- Team development requires knowing people beyond job titles.
- Part 2 shifts from team foundation to leadership action.



Common Team Challenges

- Lack of role clarity or unclear team goals.
- Poor communication or inconsistent follow-through.
- Conflicting personalities and low trust.
- Lack of motivation, engagement, or resistance to change.
- Skill gaps, inadequate resources, or ineffective leadership.



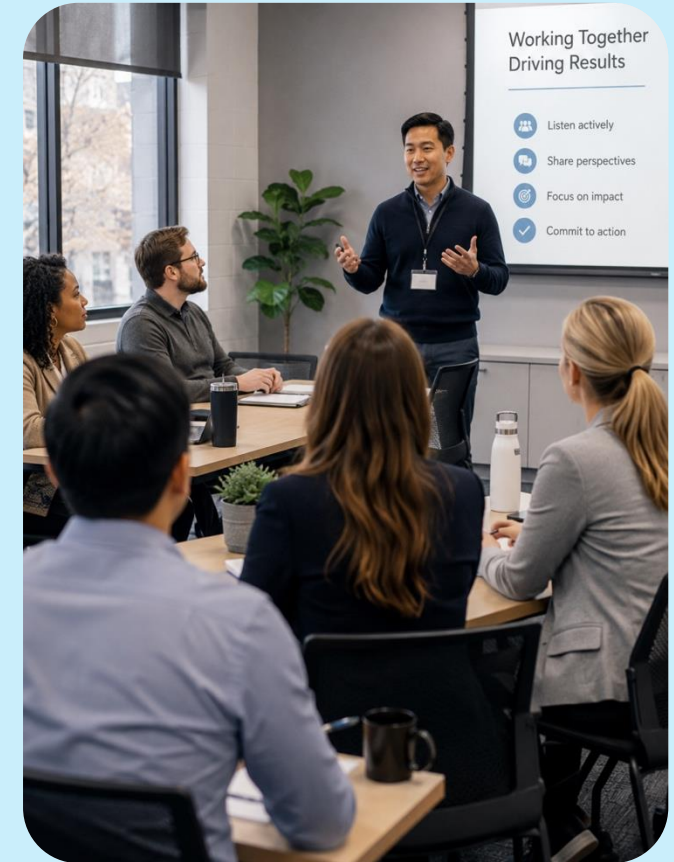
Practical Strategies for Team Challenges

- Define roles and success metrics.
- Establish communication rhythms.
- Build trust and psychological safety.
- Align work with strengths and career goals.
- Communicate the “why” behind change.
- Provide training, mentoring, and feedback.



Empathy and Accountability Belong Together

- Empathy helps you understand context, barriers, confidence, and support needs.
- Accountability keeps expectations, standards, and outcomes visible.
- Empathy without accountability can lower standards.
- Accountability without empathy can damage trust.
- Productive leadership requires both.



Courageous Leadership, EI, and Listening

- Productive team leadership requires more than task management.
- Leaders must demonstrate courage, emotional intelligence, and active listening.
- These behaviors determine whether people trust the leader enough to engage honestly.
- This is where leadership presence becomes visible.



Emotional Intelligence in Team Leadership

Emotional Intelligence

- Recognize your own reactions before responding.
- Read the emotional tone of the team.
- Stay steady during conflict, uncertainty, or resistance.
- Focus on outcomes, not just activity.
- Promote inclusivity, trust, and thoughtful communication.



Leadership Self-Assessment Pulse Check

PULSE CHECK

What leadership behavior do you need to demonstrate more consistently to build trust, accountability, and engagement?

- Rate yourself on one courageous leadership trait.
- Rate yourself on one emotional intelligence behavior.
- Choose one behavior to practice more intentionally.



Cohesion, Accountability, Engagement, Productivity

- Team cohesion is the degree to which people work together with trust, alignment, and commitment.
- Cohesion supports collaboration, productivity, communication, job satisfaction, and retention.
- Cohesion is strengthened through consistent leadership practices, not occasional team-building activities.



Strategies That Create Cohesion

COHESION

- Maintain regular communication.
- Clarify goals, roles, policies, procedures, and training needs.
- Use team-building and cross-functional projects with purpose.
- Provide recognition and feedback.
- Reinforce trust and accountability practices.



Engagement and Productivity Practices

ENGAGEMENT

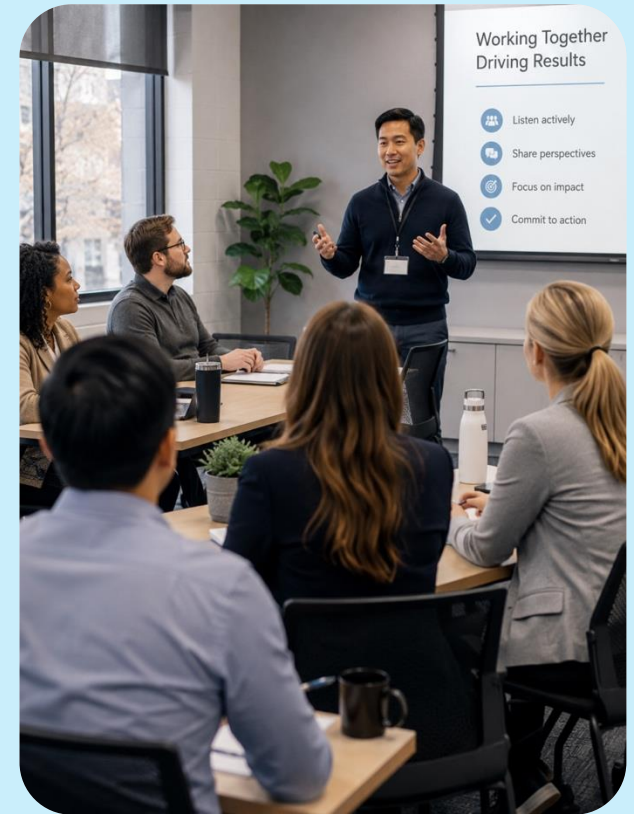
- Create an inclusive culture where people can contribute.
- Invest in professional development.
- Inspect progress without micromanaging people.
- Use SMART goals and clear measures of success.
- Minimize unnecessary meetings and communicate transparently.



Key Takeaways

SUMMARY

- Productive teams are intentionally built.
- Clarity prevents confusion and reduces unnecessary tension.
- Trust supports collaboration and honest communication.
- Accountability drives results when expectations are clear.
- Courageous leadership requires action, not avoidance.



Closing Reminder

Strategies for Creating, Developing and Leading Productive Teams

Productive teams are created when leaders provide clarity, build trust, address challenges, and follow through with purpose.



Questions...

Strategies for Creating, Developing and Leading Productive Teams



