

Occam's Horses



Team Information

- Team Leader: Alexander Stirling
- Company Name: Occam's Horses
- Operating Industry: Consultancy / Professional services
- Description: Senior management team (lead
- Function: Strategy and planning
- Coverage: Global
- Size: 1000-4999

Introduction

The Team Health Check is a bespoke tool designed to create objective discussion about team performance. The main purpose of this report is to give you, the team, a shared understanding of your strengths and areas for improvement. It combines the perspectives of all team members and lets you:

- Work out how well this team measures up against the eight critical aspects of high team performance.
- Bring to the surface the issues that may not have been openly discussed.
- Hear what the team really thinks.
- Identify priorities to move team performance to the next level.
- Review progress by retesting several months later.

Why does this matter?

Like it or not, all teams can struggle. They are made up of people with different perspectives who are usually doing their best to make things work. When teams underperform, the impact on their people and results in their organisation can be huge. When teams work well, you see the difference in energy and focus for them and others around them.

Leaders and team members know it takes rigour and commitment over time to change. And they often don't know where to start. Using the Team Health Check gets quickly to the core issues that make or break a team's high performance.

The benefits of using the THC

Teams tell us that the THC triggers open, honest conversations which enable them to face up to what they need to change and spark strong, positive shifts in performance.

The benefits they notice are:

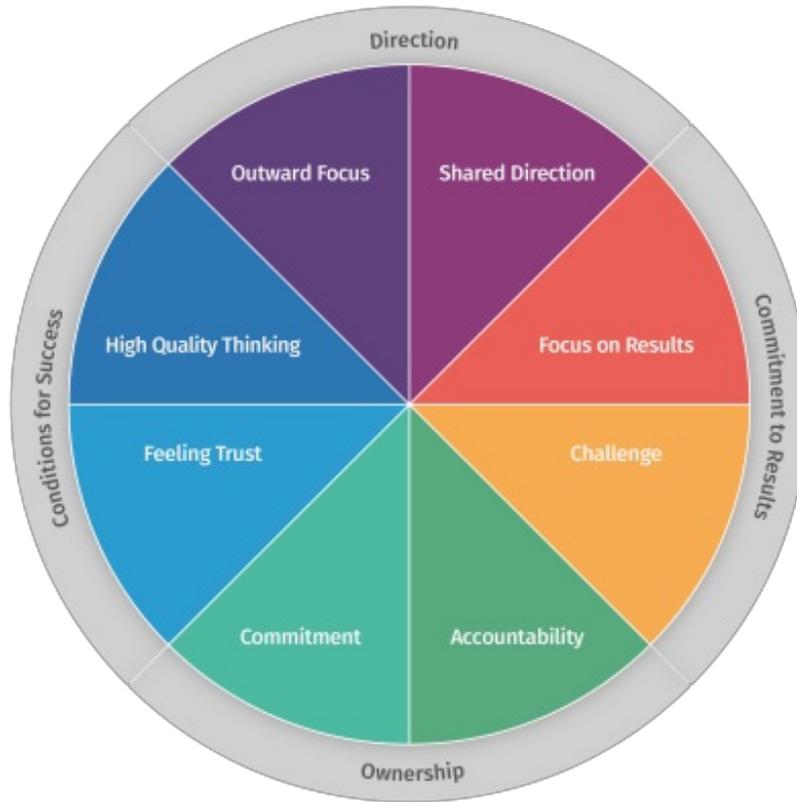
- **Better, speedier decisions** because they have robust conversations, harness different viewpoints and commit to an agreed way forward.
- **Feeling more positive and delivering better results** to internal and external clients.
- **The positive ripple effect** of giving more clarity and focus to their own teams.

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1. The Team Health Check Model

Based on meta research, current thinking and our combined experience of more than 50 years, we identified 8 factors which high performing teams demonstrate in action. These are grouped into 4 themes: Direction, Commitment to Results, Ownership and Conditions for Success. We've tested and refined this with teams and leaders in global organisations worldwide.



The model isn't intended to be exhaustive – we've focused on factors we found make the most difference.

Clarity of Shared Direction

When team members have a shared understanding of what they are trying to achieve, why and what success looks like, it results in the best outcomes. Team members need to show the way and model the right behaviours - both in terms of direction and how people behave and work together.

Focus on Results and Outcomes

The team pays attention to the things that matter and their proper direction. Team members make tough calls, consciously divide their time and stay focused on their joint goals.

Courageous Challenge

The team confronts reality and has frank conversations. This creates energy and a sense of striving for success. There is positive challenge with the intention of improving outcomes rather than protecting egos and turf or playing political power games.

Joint Accountability

Team members take responsibility for their own part in delivering the team's goals and helping others to achieve them. Failing to deliver or letting others down is not OK.

Commitment

Walking in the room, you feel the team's energy and purpose - team members are heard, decisions are clear and there's clarity about what has been agreed.

Feeling Trust

Everyone treats each other with respect, is open on uncomfortable issues and takes time to understand others' needs. It's OK to admit mistakes and weaknesses.

Enabling High Quality Thinking

Teams that demonstrate high quality attention, create space for each other to speak and explore their thinking with real curiosity generate new thinking and deliver results.

Outward Focus and Communication

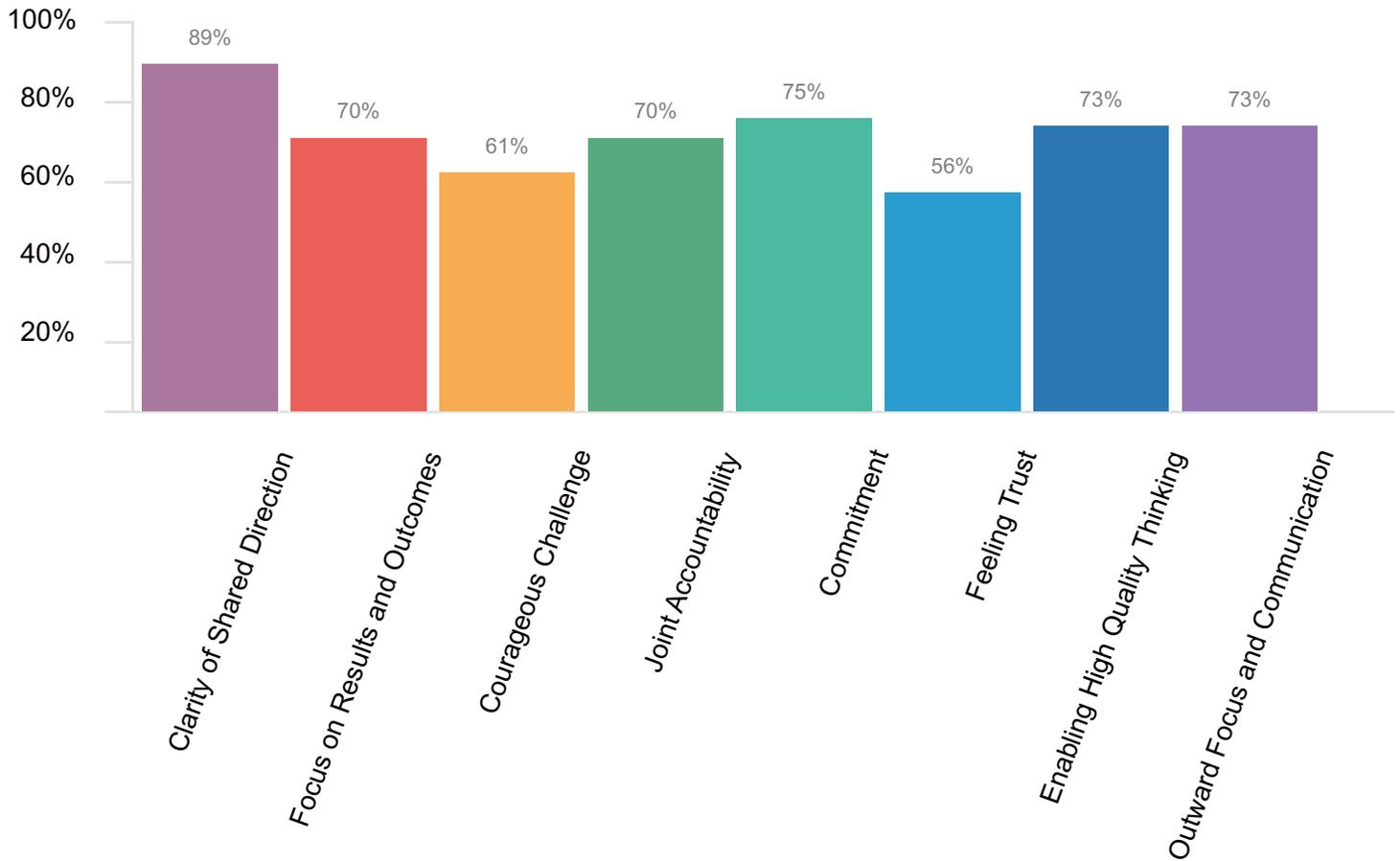
High performing teams are never insular: informed direction and decisions rely on knowing what's going on outside the team. They gather external information and use it well to ensure they change course when needed.

2. How your THC Team Report is organised:

1. The Team Health Check Model.
2. How Your Team Report is organised.
3. Your team results - average results for this team for each of the 8 sections.
4. Your team results - average, low and high scores.
5. Section breakdown - average percentages and range of scores.
6. Intuitive Table - your 'gut instinct' about current performance.
7. Key strengths and areas for improvement (top 3).
8. Breakdown of results for each item in the team assessment.
9. Team viewpoint - the combined verbatim views of team members.
10. Actions for your team.
11. Ideas for enhancing your team performance.
12. Making the most of the Team Health Check: the value of future review and reassessment for continued success. Contact details.

3. Your team results - average results by section

This graph gives you an 'at a glance' view of your team's results so that you can immediately see your team's strengths and areas for growth. If all team members responded 'Always' for all statements in a section of the team assessment, the result would be 100% for that section. If all team members answered 'never' for all statements in a section, the result would be 0%.



Tips for interpreting your results:

The first three graphs and tables of this report are generated by this team's combined answers to the 49 statements of the Team Health Check instrument.

In our experience average scores over 60% represent strengths for this team and are important to acknowledge, while scores under 40% indicate priority areas for action. Average scores between 40% and 60% suggest that further exploration will be worthwhile.

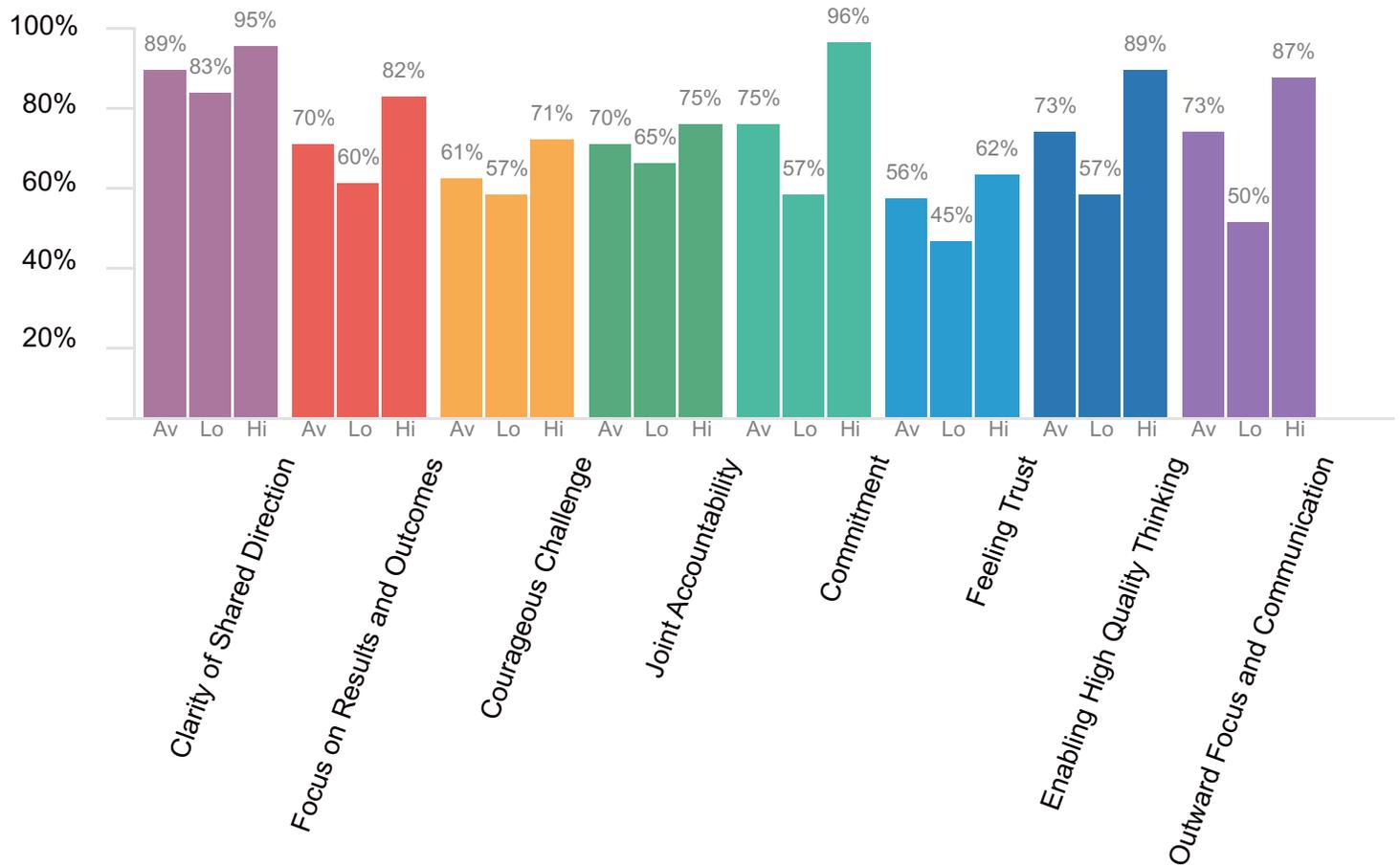
Looking at the results alongside the descriptions above of the eight critical factors of the Team Health Check model will help you to identify key issues that impact on this team's high-performance.

To get clarity on precise issues to be addressed, see the results by individual statement below (8. Section Breakdown of Results by Statement).

You can also compare the charts, graphs and tables in this report (the quantitative data) to the personal viewpoints expressed by team members in the **Team viewpoint** section. What similarities and differences do you notice? How can this team best move forward?

4. Your team results - average, low and high results for this team

This graph gives you a picture of the combined view of your relative strengths and weaknesses and of the range of perspectives within the team.



Tips for interpreting your results:

Look at the team averages and the range of scores in each section. Wide ranges in view are worth exploring further – why did people respond in such different ways?

5. Section Breakdown

The following shows a breakdown of results by section. This shows the range and average as percentages. A wider range means differing views which will be worth exploring.

Section	Range	Av.
Clarity of Shared Direction	83% - 95%	89%
Focus on Results and Outcomes	60% - 82%	70%
Courageous Challenge	57% - 71%	61%
Joint Accountability	65% - 75%	70%
Commitment	57% - 96%	75%
Feeling Trust	45% - 62%	56%
Enabling High Quality Thinking	57% - 89%	73%
Outward Focus and Communication	50% - 87%	73%

Remember: average scores over 60% represent strengths for this team; scores under 40% indicate priority areas for action. The team should investigate average scores between 40 and 60% and any wide range of percentages.

6. Intuitive Table

The data and graphs so far are based on the team's responses to the 49 statements in the Team Health Check. The following table shows this team's 'gut instinct' about current performance on the eight critical aspects. The numbers under 'strong, mixed and weak' relate to how many people made that selection.

Section	Strong	Mixed	Weaker
Clarity of Shared Direction	2	2	
Focus on Results and Outcomes	3	1	
Courageous Challenge	1	2	1
Joint Accountability	3		1
Commitment	2	2	
Feeling Trust		4	
Enabling High Quality Thinking	3	1	
Outward Focus and Communication	1	2	1

Tips for interpreting your results:

Explore similarities and differences between the intuitive table and the more objective data and graphs in earlier sections of this report. What are the similarities and differences between them? Invite team members to share their reasons for their intuitive views. This can help crystallise what the team decides to address.

Where the intuitive table shows wide ranging views in any section, explore why team members have such differing 'gut instincts' about the team's current performance. What evidence can they offer? What are some seeing that others are not? What is essential to move this team forward?

7. Key strengths and areas for improvement

Building on part 6, this table shows the team's view of 3 key strengths and 3 areas for improvement using the 49 statements of the Team Health Check. Note the 'Frequency' here – this shows the number of members of the team who chose this statement. Where many members of the team share the same view the frequency will be higher.

The team's current strengths in order of importance

Statement	Frequency
We have a shared understanding of what this team is for	3
We have a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve	3
Everyone clarifies and commits to areas of accountability	2

Scope for improvement in order of importance

Statement	Frequency
We give each other frank feedback including the team leader	2
We say when we are stuck and the team addresses it	2
Team members share their unspoken reservations or unexpressed feelings about the team and its issues	1

Tips for interpreting your results:

Use this table to pinpoint strengths to celebrate and build on as well as specific areas of team performance to address.

To test this against the data, compare these intuitive views to the results in section 8 below (Breakdown of Results by Statement) where you can identify the set of highest and lowest average responses. This will reveal overlaps and differences between the team's view of their performance and objective results. For example, a number of team members may believe that "We have a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve". The Breakdown of Results by Statement may substantiate this (e.g. "Always") or show the combined team response contradicts this (e.g. "rarely"). Both results are worth investigating.

This comparison will also reveal additional strengths (statements to which the combined team has responded "Always" in Section 8) and areas of improvement (statements to which the combined team has responded "Sometimes" or below). These combined intuitive and objective results bring home to the team their full range of true strengths and the priority areas they must address to increase performance.

8. Breakdown of results by statement

The following shows a breakdown of this team's responses by statement. Scores range from 0-4. Each statement has beside it the lowest, highest and average rounded response (mean). Scoring is as follows, 4 = "always", 3 = "usually", 2 = "sometimes", 1 = "rarely", 0 = "never".

Use this section to understand the team's precise response to each of the 49 statements of the Team Health Check instrument.

Clarity of Shared Direction	Low	High	Av.
1. We have a shared understanding of what this team is for	3	4	4
2. We have a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve	3	4	4
3. Everyone knows why it's worth getting there	4	4	4
4. We agree on how we behave with each other	3	4	3
5. We model the behaviours we want to encourage in others	2	3	3
6. We all agree on what success looks like and how we will know when we have achieved it	4	4	4
Focus on Results and Outcomes	Low	High	Av.
7. Where we are headed stimulates us and keeps us focused	3	4	3
8. We pay attention to what really matters to the business/organisation	2	4	3
9. We divide our time well between discussions about the past, present and future	1	3	2
10. Team members willingly make sacrifices (such as budget, turf, head count) in their departments or areas of expertise for the good of the team	3	4	4
11. We sort out any failure to reach team goals	2	3	2
12. Team members are slow to seek credit for themselves and are quick to credit others	2	3	3
13. We make the tough calls about priorities	3	4	4
Courageous Challenge	Low	High	Av.
14. We say what's really on our minds	2	3	3
15. We discuss the most important and difficult issues openly	1	3	2
16. We give each other frank feedback including the team leader	1	3	2
17. We challenge each other's thinking to pull out the best ideas	2	3	3
18. We question what's in and out of scope for this team	2	3	2
19. Team meetings are compelling and not boring	2	3	3
20. We work through conflicts satisfactorily	2	3	3

Joint Accountability	Low	High	Av.
21. Everyone clarifies and commits to areas of accountability	3	4	4
22. We make sure each other's plans and approaches are the best they can be	2	4	3
23. We call it when someone falls below our agreed standards and behaviours for the team	1	2	1
24. We all look out for each other. No one is left to struggle on their own	2	3	3
25. We do what we say we will do	3	4	4

Commitment	Low	High	Av.
26. When you walk in the room, there is positive energy and an enthusiastic atmosphere	2	3	3
27. Team members know what peers are working on and how that contributes to the team	3	4	3
28. We ensure we have the information we need to make informed decisions	3	4	3
29. We all feel our ideas and opinions are given a fair hearing before decisions are made	2	4	3
30. At the end of discussions, we are clear what has been decided and who will do what	3	4	4
31. Whatever the disagreements in the meeting, everyone leaves confident that we have committed to the same decisions	1	4	3
32. We speak up and commit to what we each need to do to implement the decisions	2	4	3

Feeling Trust	Low	High	Av.
33. Team members openly admit their weaknesses and mistakes	1	3	2
34. When Team members say or do something inappropriate or possibly damaging to the team, they take the initiative to apologise and put things right	1	3	2
35. Team members know about one another's lives outside work and are comfortable discussing them	3	4	3
36. Team members share their unspoken reservations or unexpressed feelings about the team and its issues	1	2	2
37. We take time to understand each other's needs and concerns in each new situation	2	3	2
38. The team celebrates successes and spends time to learn from failure	2	3	3

Enabling High Quality Thinking	Low	High	Av.
39. We stimulate each other to think creatively	2	4	3
40. We listen with respect and interest, treating each other as equals	3	4	4
41. We are curious to explore each other's thinking	2	4	3
42. We take the time to discuss and explore important topics fully	2	3	3

43. We say when we are stuck and the team addresses it	1	3	2
44. We speak up and appreciate each other's positive ideas, behaviours and actions	2	3	3
45. We enjoy working together and can have fun and be serious at the right times	3	4	4

Outward Focus and Communication	Low	High	Av.
46. We keep a focus on our internal and external customers and clients	3	4	4
47. We record clearly the decisions and actions we need to communicate more widely	1	4	3
48. We solicit feedback and take action	1	2	2
49. We ensure that the messages communicated inside and outside this team are consistent and well understood	3	4	4

9. Team Viewpoint

This section combines the team's unedited verbatim responses. Use it to build on the report so far to find critical areas and concrete steps forward. Compare the verbatim responses with the data and intuitive responses to help you make clear commitments to what you want to address and how you will follow up to keep momentum going.

Questions to consider as you read this:

- How do these echo the data and your intuitive responses?
- What themes do you see?
- What must this team work on now?

What are the key strengths of this team you want to acknowledge and build on?	Why is this important?
Common goals, great work ethic, committed, dedication to success and great quality work	We are recognised as being a strong team and respected by our peers, our clients and future clients
The team are all committed to the successful conclusion of each stage of the project we are working on and there is a mutual target of progressing together quickly and effectively. Team members are known to give up their spare time to communicate with each other and work out how to resolve issues which might impede progress.	It is important that we feel this way so that nobody feels that another team member is holding up the rest of the team or not pulling their weight, not only within the team but reflected to the rest of the company that we are a strong team who get things done.
High feeling of responsibility; high quality thinking; common focus; target-led	Dependable and respected team for high quality work with innovative ideas. Confidence from rest of company and the Board. Commercially astute.
We work together well to achieve satisfactory results for the whole company	We feel pride in our work and we can show the rest of the company that we are reliable and efficient.

What are the key areas you want to focus on to enhance the performance of this team?	Why is this important?
Recognising team individuals' efforts as well as joint team efforts; looking to see how we can encourage career progression	Making sure that each member of the team feels respected and valued at every level
We all work very hard and all seem highly committed as individuals, but sometimes I think we don't acknowledge success very often and see it as the team's success and not a particular person's success. In the same way, this makes it hard to publicise to the rest of the team when we are struggling. We need to trust that whatever we say is respected.	We never spend any time looking at what we have achieved so far, only celebrating that we can go forward. It is important to reflect on our achievements and also perhaps where we could have improved. I think this would help us feel more like a successful team than a group of people who work together and have a joint target which has been met. When you have support around you, you work better and more confidently.

We should probably improve confidence in accepting feedback and acting upon it.

If everyone trusts that their feedback is important even when it is negative, then we can quickly act upon it and resolve issues and improve situations. We can then work together more effectively and quicker to meet our targets which means less work and more confidence for everyone in the team.

It would be great if we felt more comfortable with each other as we spend so much time together. We work together well but don't always feel that we are open with each other.

We would feel more confident and trust each other better - if we enjoyed each other's company on a personal level rather than just a professional level we would be less likely to head for the door at the end of the day but maybe spend time discussing issues.

Where will you start?

Regular meetings and goal-setting - team and individual
Regular celebrations of what we have achieved not only what still needs doing
Building trust within the team so that you are comfortable to admit you might need more help or time so that team members don't feel swamped and defeated

At the end of each section of the project, before the next planning meeting, we could celebrate the successful outcome of the previous phase and get the team sharing and feeling that success collectively
At the same time, invite each other to talk openly about what they were unhappy about or where they need support
Commit to supporting each other

Articulate the value of feedback and its implications to the project
Spend more time together as a team getting to know one another better so we feel more comfortable highlighting difficulties
Commit to supporting each other so that nobody is struggling

Regular social occasions, not only work-oriented ones to get to know each other better
Show appreciation of work done by your team member which has helped you to be more productive and eased your workload
Model behaviour you want others to display. Listen to your team members' opinions rather than expressing yours

10. Actions for your team

This report is a snapshot of your team's view and can help you work out where to start. The action you take will depend on your team and circumstances, so we don't prescribe your next actions. Here are some suggestions to help you think through your approach:

- **Acknowledge and appreciate strengths** as well as areas for improvement. Gallup's research with more than a million individuals showed that when leaders invest in team strengths, individual engagement can increase eight-fold.
- **Get the foundations in place** - If you spot development needs in Shared Direction, Feeling Trust or High Quality Thinking, these are the critical places to start building the team.
- **Establish trust first** - then it is easier to build Courageous Challenge and Joint Accountability. These in turn build more trust.
- **Use these results with care** - You will have a view from studying the report, take time to test and explore your views as a team. Highly effective people "Seek first to understand, then to be understood" (Stephen Covey).
- **If you are the leader of the team** - You will know that your behaviour has a big impact. Ask yourself: How can I model the change I want to see? What do I need to start doing / stop doing or change for the team to step up? It can be hard to both facilitate these discussions and step back and get a clear view. What (if any) support might you need to get the outcomes you want?

11. Ideas for enhancing your team performance

If you need to build	Take time to
Direction (Outward Focus and Communication; Clarity of Shared Direction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss and agree your vision and shared goals. Why do we exist? What's our purpose? What do we need to achieve together? Why does that matter?• Clarify how you want to work together - what are the standards of behaviour you sign up to?• Spend time to identify your key stakeholders and how you engage them. Who are your supporters and where do you need more productive conversations?• Prompt team members to gather external intelligence. High performing teams seek a diverse set of external and internal perspectives to improve their own thinking
Commitment to Results (Focus on Results and Outcomes; Courageous Challenge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be rigorous - agree and follow processes for delivering great results• Step back and confront the issues that are not being discussed - Invite challenge and contrary views• Agree key priorities in line with the shared direction. Be ruthless and push back• Look at the reality of what you need to stop, start and build on to be effective now. Are you clear about the behaviours needed as well as the tasks?
Ownership (Joint Accountability; Commitment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work out joint and individual roles and responsibilities - What's clear and what's blurred? How actively do team members support and challenge?• Notice if there's energy in the room. If there isn't, what's missing from the seven other elements of high performance that will fire up the team? If energy drops temporarily, address this (you could refocus, change activity, move or take a break)• Review the levels of commitment in the team. If someone's not on board, what are you all going to do about it?
Conditions for Success (Enabling High Quality Thinking and Feeling Trust)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create an environment where individuals give each other attention and listen well• Encourage openness (boss goes first!) e.g. by sharing what shaped you and who you are• Look for where you can help and share where you're struggling• Explore assumptions - about expectations, cultures, norms and acceptable behaviours - and generate fresh thinking

12. Next Steps

Thank you completing your THC report. We welcome input and ideas and would be delighted to hear about your experiences.

We hope taking the THC questionnaire has given you greater clarity and inspired your appetite for change. Many clients value the clarity on progress and sense of achievement they get from repeating the THC after 6 months and again a year later. This highlights successes and picks up any dynamics or changes that need addressing for optimal team performance.

“My team didn’t recognise their accomplishments enough: people were surprised by how far it had moved. Having something very structured, something that’s very data centric, something that’s very analytical gave everybody the opportunity to step back and have that realisation collectively.”

- Andrea Blackman, Managing Director of Product Strategy and Marketing, Moody’s Analytics, London

If other teams in your organisation could benefit, please let them know about Team Health Check too.

You can access your reports online by visiting www.theteamhealthcheck.com and logging in.

How to contact us:

info@theteamhealthcheck.com

0800 0853520



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