

From having a good
team, to having a
brilliant one.



KALEIDOSCOPE
Health and Care



From having a good team, to having a *brilliant* one

How our team functions can determine whether our working lives are frustrating or fulfilling, mind-numbing or meaningful, jarring or joyful. And yet, we often set up, work in, lead or support teams without pausing to reflect on what the ingredients are for greatness.

A genuinely high performing team brings out the best in all its members, but that rarely happens organically. It takes considered effort to create the conditions to thrive. Drawing on decades of academic research and industry best practice, we've brought together the characteristics that enable teams to do their best work.

If you are setting up a brand new team, your team has experienced upheaval or change, or even if it just doesn't feel like you are all on the same page - these characteristics will help you identify the opportunities to grow and improve together.



Our approach

At Kaleidoscope we take an appreciative approach to conversations about teams and how they work. Appreciative because we know our clients are doing great work, but there is potential to do even more. It is valuable to recognise what is already going well.

We start with an exploratory conversation to understand what is important to you, so we can meet your needs. Each project is tailored very closely and may draw on disciplines like strategy, research or evaluation.

We then bring your team together to co-produce how they can become a higher performing team, and consider what it is that enables them do **more** of the best work.

Indicators of
**'high
performance'**...

Long term
performance e.g.
consistent market
growth and
profitability

Consistently
low avoidable
safety
incidents/
accidents

High volume of
individual
reported
quality/safety
issues

Measurable
levels of staff
satisfaction
and wellbeing

Consistently high
levels of
customer/patient
and partner
satisfaction

Industry/
academic
literature



Eight characteristics of high performing teams

High-performing teams have a **clear, shared purpose**...

...with a focus on building the right **conditions**...

...and creating the **inclusive, developmental culture** to succeed.



Purpose driven strategy

Meaning and impact

Structure and clarity

Capability

Dependability

Culture of continuous improvement

Psychological safety

Diversity, equity and inclusion

A clear purpose and strategy with defined, stretching and compelling goals

Members believe their work matters and has a demonstrable positive impact

All members pull in the same direction, in a unified if not uniform way

Members have the skills and knowledge, opportunity and motivation to do what they need/want/are expected to do

Members can count on one another, on partners and on supporting systems/ processes to do high quality work

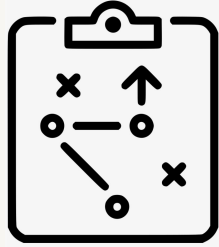
There is a culture of continuous quality improvement and good practice in learning

Members feel they will not be penalised or embarrassed for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes

Members represent a range of identities and treat one another with fairness and feel like they belong



1. Purpose driven strategy



A clear purpose and strategy with defined, stretching and compelling goals

Why is this important?

- Common purpose distinguishes you from everyone else and provides a reason to get out of bed
- Clear purpose and strategy provides a broad basis for making decisions on what to do and what not to do
- It results in people reporting levels of pride, commitment, achievement and resilience at work and in life

Indicators

- ✓ There is a clear (30 words or fewer), stretching, compelling and worthwhile purpose/strategy
- ✓ Purpose/strategy guides what matters, what work is done, how it is done, how decisions are made
- ✓ Members understand and believe in the purpose/strategy
- ✓ Values are aligned

Show me a good example

- “For [Buurtzorg](#), its purpose— **to help sick and elderly patients live a more autonomous and meaningful life**— is paramount, so much so that Jos de Blok, its founder, has documented and published Buurtzorg’s revolutionary ways of operating in great detail, to invite competition to imitate him.”



2. Meaning and impact



Members believe their work matters and has a demonstrable positive impact

Why is this important?

- Research repeatedly shows that people deliver their best effort and ideas when they feel they are part of something larger than the pursuit of a salary or promotion. In particular:
 - the ability to connect their work to the team's/organisation's work and vision/purpose
 - knowing the specific work that they do matters to someone other than me.

Indicators

- ✓ The work of individuals and of the team matters to members - they are proud of the work and believe it is important, serving a clear purpose.
- ✓ The team routinely measures their impact.
- ✓ The team celebrates their impact often and together.

Show me a good example

- [A 'compact with physicians'](#) at Virginia Mason hospital, Seattle: "Everybody wants to feel like they're part of something that matters, something bigger than themselves. And with our mission of transforming health care and putting patients at the top — that's huge."



3. Structure and clarity



All members pull in the same direction, in a unified if not uniform way

Why is this important?

- An individual’s understanding of job expectations, the process for fulfilling these expectations, and the consequences of one’s performance are important for team effectiveness.
- Employees who strongly agree that their job description aligns with the work they do are 2.5 times more likely than other employees to be engaged.

Indicators

- ✓ Members clear on what they are doing as a team - there are simple and clearly defined goals, roles, ways of working, making decisions and common, credible plans to do the work.
- ✓ Purpose and strategy are the anchor for how all this is defined.

Show me a good example

- “Success at Danaher doesn't happen by accident. We have a proven system for achieving it. We call it the [Danaher Business System \(DBS\)](#), and it drives every aspect of our culture and performance. We use DBS to guide what we do, measure how well we execute, and create options for doing even better.”



4. Capability



Members have the skills and knowledge, opportunity and motivation to do what they need/want/are expected to do

Why is this important?

- The combination of skills and knowledge, together with opportunity and motivation, facilitates continuous improvements in behaviour.
- According to [Gallup polling](#), globally, 1/3 employees strongly agree that they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day. Doubling that ratio could realise +6% in customer engagement scores, +11% in profitability, -30% in turnover and -36% in safety incidents.

Indicators

- ✓ Members feel confident that their skills and knowledge are well matched to what they need/want/are expected to do.
- ✓ The team creates the conditions members need to enable them to do what they need/want/are expected to do.
- ✓ Members feel motivated to do what they need/want/ are expected to do

Show me a good example

- [Geisinger](#) invests in supporting their leaders to be 'bilingual': "being equally fluent in both management and clinical domains. This means they are just at home in the boardroom as in the clinic and are able to ensure that the voice of clinicians is heard at the highest levels."



5. Dependability



Members can count on one another, on partners and on supporting systems/processes to do high quality work

Why is this important?

- Trusting that one's co-workers share a commitment to quality is vital to excellent team performance - by a 6-to-1 margin, people are more upset with a colleague who has the ability but does not try than with a colleague who tries hard but does not have much ability.
- Reliable systems and processes are vital to support members to do their best work, and can impact of levels of capability.

Indicators

- ✓ Members feel they can count on each other and partners to do their best work.
- ✓ Members feel they can count on their supporting systems/processes to do high-quality work, consistently and on time.

Show me a good example

- The Ritz-Carlton approach is based on to how their employees will work individually and together to create dependable service outcomes. Ritz-Carlton does not hide these ways of working - rather publishing [their standards](#) on their website.



6. Culture of continuous improvement



There is a culture of continuous quality improvement and good practice in learning

Why is this important?

- Where people feel their opinions and ideas matter and can make a difference there are significant improvements in reported levels of engagement, retention and productivity.
- The desire to learn and grow and make a difference is a basic human need and required to maintain employee momentum and motivation

Indicators

- ✓ Time is deliberately and regularly set aside to ask how things can be 'better'.
- ✓ Members are skilled risk takers.
- ✓ The team leads with questions inside and out.
- ✓ Intellectual and professional humility characterises how team members turn up for each other and their work.

Show me a good example

- “[Turn the Ship Around!](#) reveals how the Santa Fe skyrocketed from worst to first in the fleet by challenging the U.S. Navy’s traditional leader-follower approach. Struggling against his own instincts to take control, he instead achieved the more powerful model of giving control to his subordinates.”



7. Psychological safety



Members feel that no one will be penalised or embarrassed for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes

Why is this important?

- Every person deserves to feel safe to express themselves.
- Shown to underpin improvement across a number of areas, including information sharing, satisfaction, learning behaviours, engagement and overall performance.
- Despite its importance, only 47% of employees across the world describe their workplaces as psychologically safe.

Indicators

- ✓ Members feel safe taking interpersonal risks e.g. asking for help, sharing ideas, learning from mistakes, asking questions and raising concerns.
- ✓ Team members create conditions whereby people can be far more candid than is usual.

Show me a good example

- [Pixar Animation Studios](#) has produced over 20 feature films, all of which have been commercial and critical triumphs. “This success is based on the company’s Braintrust, a small group that regularly meets to provide candid feedback [...] People in the Braintrust room feel ‘safe enough to candidly say what they felt was wrong, missing or unclear’.”



8. Diversity, equity and inclusion



Members represent a range of identities and differences, treat one another with fairness and feel like they belong

Why is this important?

- Every person is worthy of respect and care, simply because of their personhood.
- There is an overwhelming evidence base that shows more diverse, equitable and inclusive organisations are higher performing across a number of dimensions - including six times more likely to be innovative, twice as likely to meet or surpass financial goals and twice as good at making decisions.

Indicators

- ✓ There are high levels of difference across the team.
- ✓ The team actively tracks and responds to signs of unfairness.
- ✓ Time is deliberately and regularly set aside for continuous learning and unlearning on issues of power, privilege and systemic oppression.
- ✓ Team members feel able to be, and valued as, their authentic selves.

Show me a good example

- On Our Radar have spent decades of listening and learning to develop a deep understanding of issues of unfair systems in a their industry - journalism - and set out [a manifesto](#) to inform their intentions and actions to tackle them.

The industry and academic research



- Google's Project Aristotle
- Daniel Coyle's work on Organisational culture
- Richard Rumelt on Good and Bad Strategy
- Amy Edmondson - psychological safety in healthcare settings
- Burke and Litwin's Organisational Performance Model of Transformation
- Prof Ron Heifetz's Adaptive Organisations / leadership work
- Prof Susan Mitchie's COM-B model of behaviour change
- Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith on the 'Discipline of Teams'
- Edgar Schein's work on Organisational Performance and Change
- Dan Pink's work on motivation (Purpose, Mastery/Capability & Autonomy)
- Prof Marshall Ganz and Hahrie Han on public narrative leadership and social movement development
- Prof Mark Moore's Public Value Model for strategic organisational decision making and development
- Paul Bate and Trish Greenhalgh on the role of stories in shaping organisations
- Priya Parker on the 'Art of Gathering'
- Davies and Nutley; Garvin; Edmondson on Learning Organisations
- Simon Sinek's 'Start with Why?'
- Ron Fisher's 'Transition Curve'
- High performing healthcare organisations e.g. Buurtzorg; Virginia Mason
- Professor Thomas Lee - healthcare workforce engagement
- The work of Fred Laloux, Aaron Dignam, Bruce Daisley, Adam Grant and Gary Hamel on human centred, models of strategy, organisational design, development, performance and leadership
- Brené Brown's research on vulnerability and belonging
- The work of bell hooks, Layla Saad, Reni Eddo-Lodge, June Sarpong on diversity, equity and inclusion