

 Mindset Exercise 30-60 min Group No

The Best Possible Team

The Best Possible Self exercise is a well-known positive psychology exercise for cultivating optimism. The BPS exercise involves envisioning oneself in an imaginary future in which everything has turned out most optimally. Research has shown that writing about and imagining a BPS improves people's mood and well-being (King, 2001; Peters et al., 2010; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006) and increases optimism (Meevissen, Peters, & Alberts, 2011; Peters et al., 2010). The Best Possible Team exercise is an adaptation of the original BPS exercise to be used with teams (e.g., work teams, sporting clubs, etc.). This exercise first invites team members to envision an ideal version of the team individually, and subsequently, team members share their visions to find common aspirations and differences in views. Finally, the team works together to create one best possible team scenario based on the information gathered in the prior steps.

Author

This tool was created by Lucinda Poole (PsyD) and Hugo Alberts (Ph.D.).



Goal

The goal of this tool is to develop a new, shared understanding of a team functioning at its best and increase the team members' optimism.



Advice

- Encourage clients to come up with a realistic picture of their ideal team to avoid feelings of disappointment and worry that could emerge if the ideal team is too far from the actual team.
- In Step 5, it might be helpful to provide the group with The Top 5 Values tool to facilitate the process of defining their core values. This tool contains a list of over 100 values.
- The team might like to display their core values (Step 5) somewhere to serve as a visual reminder of what the team stands for.



References

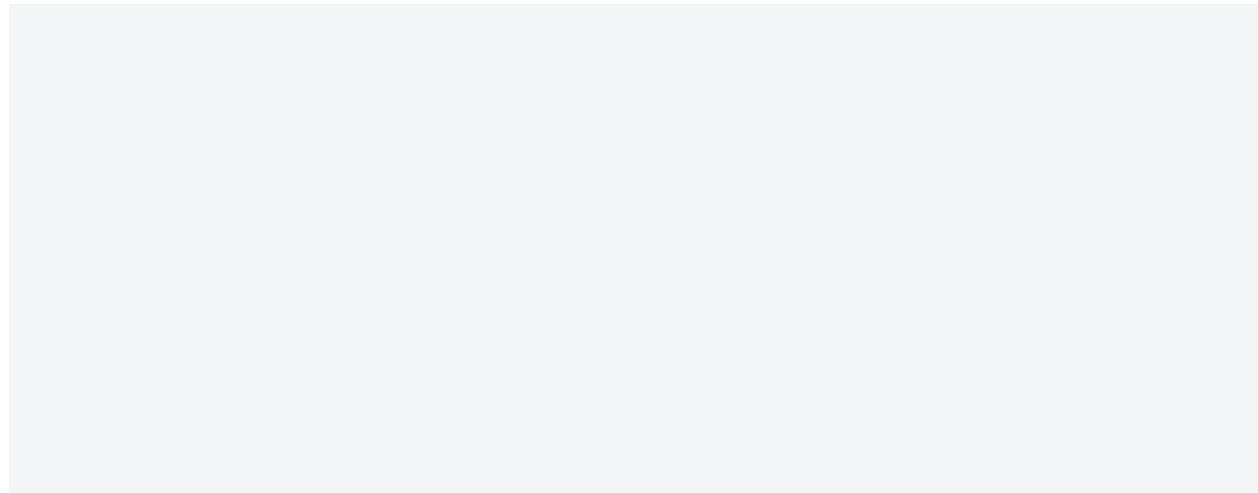
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The Best Possible Team

Instructions

Step 1: Imagine your best possible team

This step involves writing about your team at its best possible 'self.' Imagine your team functioning at its optimal level, with all of its members performing to the best of their abilities and the team achieving all of the set goals make. You will write for 10 minutes about this best possible team. While writing, do not worry about grammar or punctuation; rather, focus on expressing all thoughts, feelings, and emotions that show up for you. You may want to have several sheets of paper for this step.



Step 2: Share individual visions with the group

Have team members share their vision of their best possible team with the wider group. Invite team members to take turns to summarize (or read if preferred) what they wrote in step 1.

Step 3: Similarities and differences in visions

On a whiteboard or piece of butchers paper, draw two columns and label them 'Similarities' and 'Differences.' As a group, discuss (and write down) the similarities and differences between the individual team members' visions. For example, if multiple team members mentioned something along the lines of 'respectful communication,' this would be added to the 'Similarities' column. If only one team member mentioned 'more frequent team meetings,' this would be added to the 'Differences' column. Take time here to make sure that every team member's vision has been considered and incorporated into the table.



Step 4: Create a new best possible team

As a group, integrate your findings from Step 3 to come up with a new shared best possible team. Pay particular attention to the Similarities column from Step 3, as this reflects the group's common aspirations. Work collaboratively to write down a detailed description of this new ideal team.

Step 5: Define core values

The final step of the exercise involves defining the new values of the new ideal team. In the space provided, have the teamwork together to come up with 3-5 core team values:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.