

### Supporting people in doing their best work within the context of a team

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Some teams are stable, long term groupings with well-defined tasks and team roles.

However, other teams may be formed only for a set period of time, in order to complete a specific project or purpose, and then people disperse to take up other roles. Some of these teams may be located in the same place (or same geographical area), some may be geographically spread, whilst others could even be 'virtual' teams, with very little day-to-day contact.

In the light of these challenges, what does it take for people to identify with a team and feel confident and capable of doing their best work within that team?

At Caplor Horizons, we believe that individuals need to have strong connections within a team – not only to the people who make up the team, but also to its shared goals and objectives. We describe these connections in terms of six 'senses'. They are: a sense of purpose, a sense of trust, a sense of integrity, a sense of inclusion, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of generosity.



If each of these six 'senses' can be cultivated and strengthened, not only by each individual but also by the team as a whole, we believe that people will demonstrate both commitment to the team and offer positive and productive contributions.

The following page outlines some key questions about each Sense – does each individual have this sense and is there evidence of it within the activity and behaviour of the team on a day to day basis?



## CaplorHorizons Questions



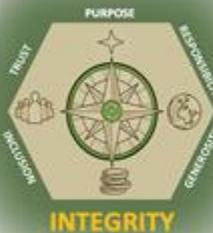
Do the team members share a common understanding of the overall purpose of the team? Do they have clarity around the team's goals and objectives? Is there an envisioned future and a destination to work towards – a guiding star – that each member can imagine?

Do individual team members know their own purpose and how their contribution fits into the bigger picture? Do they understand the significance of each unique contribution? Does this understanding support their overall sense of purpose – a willingness to work hard to achieve clearly defined results?

Is there a strong sense of trust between the team members and between team members and their team leaders? Does this trust relate to personal integrity, or to professional competence, or to both?

Do team members have inter-dependent relationships in which trust is of high importance (e.g. is one person's ability to perform well dependent upon someone else's contribution and achievements)?

Does the sense of trust extend beyond the team, or is it limited to team members?



Is there a shared set of values and beliefs within the team that determines what is ethically acceptable? Do team members abide by the rules and standards that they have previously agreed? Is there clarity about the response to activity or behaviour that falls outside the team's agreed standards?

Do people consistently look to 'do the right thing'? Are ethical questions or concerns raised and discussed? Is there an atmosphere in which drawing attention to failings, or challenging the status quo, is encouraged as a means of seeking improvement?



Do members identify with the team as a 'secure base' and do they experience a sense of belonging? Do people feel included, regardless of their individual differences? Is diversity within the team truly valued?

To what extent are people encouraged to explore different perspectives and points of view? Do they feel that there is a 'sense of fairness' in the way that the team is managed, which suggests that each individual is valued equally? Do all members feel that they can contribute and have an impact, whatever their perceived position within the hierarchy?



Do team members accept personal responsibility for their own work and commitment to the team? Do they feel that they have the autonomy to do what needs to be done and that they have permission to take reasonable initiatives to achieve results?

Do they feel secure enough to propose ideas or take considered risks that will enable them to learn and progress? Do team members accept responsibility for mistakes and avoid a culture of blame?



Are individual team members willing to 'give away' knowledge, time, resources and learning that might be of benefit to others? Is there a willingness to offer (and ask for) support?

Is there a sense of shared success and shared responsibility for failure? Is there an open process of feedback that enables individuals to grow and improve performance without others feeling personally threatened?

## To what extent do you feel that these 'senses' exist within your team?

Look at the questions (on the previous page) that relate to each of the senses and think about your own team. Then look at the scale that relates to each of the senses. You will see that the scale runs from 0% to 100%.

**0% would indicate a complete lack of evidence that the sense is experienced within your team.**

**100% would indicate that there is evidence that the sense is experienced all the time within your team.**

The reality is that you will probably perceive your experience to be somewhere in between! Think about your own team and mark an "X" on the scale, roughly indicating the extent to which you believe that the sense exists for you. Don't worry about being completely accurate – this exercise is just to give an impression and to find the range of perceptions amongst team members.



0% \_\_\_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_\_\_ 100%

**PURPOSE**



0% \_\_\_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_\_\_ 100%

**TRUST**



0% \_\_\_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_\_\_ 100%

**INTEGRITY**



0% \_\_\_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_\_\_ 100%

**INCLUSION**



0% \_\_\_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_\_\_ 100%

**RESPONSIBILITY**



0% \_\_\_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_\_\_ 100%

**GENEROSITY**

### Facilitator Notes

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1. Give each person a copy of the questions and scales (see previous two pages) and then either draw a large version on individual flipcharts (one scale per flip chart) for large groups, or draw all six scales on a single flipchart for smaller groups.
2. Ask learners to work individually and decide upon a % score to put on each of the scales. The stronger the sense, the higher the score will be.
3. When everyone has completed their scores, gather them all together on the flip chart(s). It might be useful to ask: "On this scale, does anyone have a score higher than 80%?" If so, ask for the score and mark it on the flipchart with an 'X'. Repeat as necessary, decreasing the % each time (e.g. 60%, 40%, 20%, less than 20%).
4. When everyone has submitted their scores, there will be a range on each scale, e.g.:



5. Look at the range of scores and ask someone with a high score to explain why they gave that score.
6. Look at the range of scores and ask someone with a low score to explain why they gave that score.
7. Consider the different responses and ask others for comments. Invite other people to explain why they gave their scores.
8. Conclude the review of each Sense by asking two questions:
  - a) What are we getting right, in relation to this sense, that we need to retain?
  - b) What do we need to do to strengthen this sense and ensure that all team members experience it more fully and consistently?
9. At the end of the exercise summarise responses and use the information to inform the team development plan.

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*This activity was developed by Geoff Cox and Ann Alder, with support from the Advisor team at Caplor Horizons. It takes inspiration from the original ideas of Professor John Adair, in his early work on 'Action Centred Leadership', but has since been revised and updated.*