ESTABLISHING GROUND RULES

This is a process you can use to create a set of "ground rules" or "standards" by which all team members can be held accountable during virtual or in person meetings.

By creating ground rules, all team members will have discussed and agreed upon the most important norms of behavior that will facilitate high performance. Team ground rules acknowledge agreed upon teamwork standards and act as a constant reminder of effective individual team player behaviors.

<u>Use When</u>

o You have a brand new team

o Team meetings are hindered by poor team player behaviors

o There are misunderstandings about team member motives

o The team needs to tighten up and be more efficient

o Team members agree they all want to be clear and play by the same rules

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THE GROUND RULES PROCESS

<u>Steps</u>

1. Have all team members agree to participate.

2. Distribute sample ground rules.

3. Have each team member read the samples and choose 3-5 ground rules they would like to see implemented on this team. They may choose from the sample statements, adapt a sample statement, or create an entirely new or different ground rule.

4. In a round robin fashion, have each group member tell the team a statement they would like included in the final list and why. Make sure the team facilitator/leader captures each statement on a flip chart in front of the group. Move through all team members until everyone's items are represented. Be sure to combine items where appropriate.

5. Use a multi-vote technique to pare down the list to ten items or less. Multi-voting simply means everyone gets three votes. They can vote for three different items once or use multiple votes on any specific item. In either case, each individual gets three total votes. The facilitator should say how many want #1 and record the number of votes, how many what #2 and record the number of votes and so forth. After the voting is complete the team can choose their top 6-10 items for their tailored list of ground rules.

6. After the specific ground rules have been decided upon, the team should have a discussion about how to use the ground rules (e.g., put them on laminated cards and carry them, review them at each staff meeting, revise them when new members join the team, etc.)

SAMPLE GROUND RULES

- We will contribute to an open environment by voluntarily sharing relevant information, exposing personal agendas, being candid, and recognizing the feelings of our teammates

- We accept 100% responsibility for the success of the team and each team member

- We speak for ourselves

- We will listen for understanding and value differing viewpoints

- We will not be critical of another's idea, unless we can offer an alternative solution

- Once a decision or goal is established, I will commit 100% to achieve the desired objective

- We will recognize and celebrate the successes of our teammates and the team

- We will operate as a team-based organization with a consistent mutual supporting agenda that eliminates finger-pointing and back-stabbing. We will accept personal and team responsibility for team action

- We acknowledge each other's opinions, and that there can be more than one right answer

- We maintain an atmosphere that fosters open communication, demands innovative thinking, and that is stimulating and challenging

- We will play "flat out" by fully expressing our feelings and addressing common objectives head on

- We treat each other with respect

- We maintain confidentiality on our issues and interactions

- We utilize our meeting guidelines

- We have an obligation to express our perspective

Adapted from the Team Building Sourcebook, S. Phillips 1989