

Team Coaching Readiness Assessment

This particular assessment in the High Performance Team Coaching (HPTC) system is aimed at identifying if the conditions for team effectiveness are adequately in place before you start coaching (based on the six conditions defined by Ruth Wageman and Richard Hackman in their multiple author book, *Senior Leadership Team Coaching*). Assessment is best facilitated by someone external to the team, even if the team leader will be doing the ongoing team coaching. These factors contribute to creating a safe environment for the team coaching to occur.

The five key conditions to assess and establish in a team include:

1. Ensure they are a real team with clear membership and interdependent goals.
2. Identify if they have a compelling direction and purpose.
3. Explore if they have the right people with the right knowledge and skills on board.
4. Determine if they have a solid team structure – clear roles and responsibilities, goals, working agreements, etc.
5. Identify if they have a supportive organizational context – the right information and resources to achieve their team goals.

Once these five conditions are addressed at a sufficient level, then the sixth condition for team effectiveness, competent team coaching, can start on a solid foundation.

Emphasizing these coaching readiness factors is critical. Starting team coaching without these factors in place or at least being addressed can lead to failure. It may feel good to just dive in with the coaching and start a conversation with a team, but your efforts will be like putting good paint over an unprimed wall ...it won't be long before the paint starts to peel.

The following **Team Coaching Readiness Assessment** is a helpful tool for coaches and leaders to identify if the team's design and structure is appropriate for coaching to occur. The goal is to have more positive or "yes" answers than negative or "no" answers on the assessment. However, it is not a black and white diagnostic tool. Rather, it is a guide for reflection and discussion to ensure that the team is set up for success.

If there are conditions on the assessment that could be major impediments to the team's success, then a coach can support the team leader by clarifying problematic conditions and creating a plan to address these. If there are mostly "no" answers to the questions, then the team structure and design need further development and support, which could be accomplished through coaching the team leader individually rather than coaching the team.

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Discussion Questions between the Coach and Leader

- Does everyone know and agree on who is on the team?
- Do you have the right number of team members that you need – no more and no less? Several researchers have indicated that five to 10 members is the ideal team size.
- Do you have the best mix of team members (knowledge, skills, talent) to achieve the team purpose?
- Do you expect the team membership to be relatively stable during the team coaching period?
- Do you have a compelling purpose for the team?
- Do you have goals that require all team members to participate in their success?
- Does the team meet regularly?
- Are there any performance issues that need to be addressed first or separately?
- Does the team have the resources required to achieve their goals?
 - Time
 - Money
 - Information

- Does the team have clear working agreements / norms for how people work together?
- How motivated is the leader to engage in team coaching (low to high)?
 - Not engaged
 - Somewhat engaged
 - Highly engaged

- How motivated are team members to engage in team coaching?
- Is there support from the leadership outside of the team (i.e., the leader's leader) to engage in team coaching?
- Is the team able and willing to dedicate time to achieve the coaching goals?
- Does the team know how to define and/or measure success?
- Are there potential obstacles that might get in the way of the team participating in coaching? If so, what are they?