

The Balancing Act

Tips to Balance Your Life and Keep You Emotionally and Physically Fit

Teaming to Succeed: Working Better Together

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”
- Henry Ford

We have all been a part of them: toxic teams. Groups where everyone seems to be on different wave lengths and have different work styles. But you may have also been a part of a “dream team.” One that just “clicks” to deal with the tasks at hand and create a collective with results that exceed expectations and leaves everyone filled with pride.

While you may encounter some difficult terrain navigating team dynamics, there are some key actions you can take to not only become the team MVP, but also to achieve your goals as a group. Be sure to:

Lay it out.

The first thing you should do as a team is to make sure that your goals are totally clear, completely understood and accepted by everyone. Break down what needs to be accomplished and how you’re going to get there together. Clarify who is responsible for what based on everyone’s strengths and weaknesses and enlist a strong person to lead the team. Just look out for overlapping responsibilities, which can cause conflict by making sure that each role is distinct.



Find your flexibility.

We are all good at different things. Great teams happen when all of these skills are put together to balance and complement one another. Even if you’ve always done things a certain way, be open to trying something else. Roll with the punches, consider different points of view, be willing to compromise and try to accept criticism without getting defensive. This will let you draw out the best ideas and create a collaborative team culture.

Provide support.

Give compliments when your team members have worked hard or overcome a challenge; embrace collaboration over competition. If a teammate presents an idea that you think is great, speak up. This will bring everyone together and allow you to celebrate both individual and group successes. Just avoid the temptation to play the blame game. Don't immediately point the finger when your team's goals aren't met and instead work together to find a solution for the future.

Communicate constructively.

The best teams know how to communicate with each other while being able to open their ears and listen. If you have a problem, talk about it before it becomes a huge issue. When you are listening to your teammates, make a conscious effort to really "hear" what is being said instead of simply responding. Teams need people who speak up, share their thoughts and ideas clearly and show respect for others and what they're trying to accomplish.

Jump in.

Team players don't hide in the corner or sit passively on the sidelines. They speak up, take initiative and make things happen. If you want to be a better member of the team, work hard and get the job done. If you're asked to do something, do it. If you need to be somewhere for the team, be there and on time. Consistency is the key to success. By going the extra mile you will not only ensure that the project is completed but delivering what you said you would will help you gain the respect of your teammates.

Avoid gossip.

Nothing upsets team dynamics like badmouthing or petty politics, yet all of this is very common in team situations. Don't get distracted by useless things that have no impact on what you're trying to accomplish. If you find a team member gossiping, change the subject and move on. Rumours stop if there is no one to spread them. This will help to establish and maintain trust amongst the team.

Strong team players that work well with others come in many different forms. You do not have to have a particular personality or possess specific qualities. Team MVPs look beyond their individual success and are strictly committed to the success of the group. Teamwork, although a challenge, is a great opportunity to shine. Be positive, help others, open up and set an example and you will find you and your team working better together and achieving your collective goals.

Looking for additional support? Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help. You can receive support through a variety of resources.

Call your EAP at 1 800 387-4765 for service in English or 1 800 361-5676 for service in French.