

What undermines a successful team?

When was the last time you did an audit of your staff team(s)?... And when you did, what did you focus on?

In a climate of targets, being results driven, and focusing on what you want, it's easy to forget about what can get in the way of achieving your potential success – especially where staff are concerned. This isn't about a 'blame culture', it's about things to be mindful of, things that may get forgotten or be taken for granted. Here are 3 examples:

1. Communication methods

A team can stop communicating effectively if it relies on methods that aren't well used by all, or methods that are over used. Emails are a good example here. Over reliance on email can lead to both misunderstandings and insufficient information being passed on.



The language of emails is often void of any emotion or emphasis that you'd get when face-to-face or on the phone. You also miss the body language which comes from face-to-face communication. Such non-verbal clues will tell you when someone is under pressure, being humorous, etc.

As communication has an impact on expectations and outcomes, ensure your methods are appropriate for your team, and use questions to gain clarity where necessary.

2. The "team photo"

When's the last time your team took a close look at the image they portray to others ... metaphorically speaking?

How you see yourselves as a team will affect how you act towards those around you. If you could observe your team at work (including yourself), what would you see? If others could describe your team - what would they say?

Ensure your "team photo" is updated regularly to reflect the actual picture!

3. When the team's world is THE world

This happens when teams isolate themselves from the wider organisation, and it can happen for several reasons, including:



a) **over-emphasis of the systems and procedures** which the team has created for itself; this precludes any other ways of working

b) **lack of the big picture understanding**; this can happen when teams can't see the essential part they play within the organisation as a whole – either because they choose not to look, because they aren't reminded of this ... or even because they forget!

Ensure your team has at least one person responsible for keeping communication lines open between it and other stakeholders, They'll need to be skilled in gaining clarity about how any changes impact on their team and its members.

Hope this has provided food for thought!

A final tip ... Take or create opportunities to showcase your team's strengths & what it does!