

The Art of Coaching Teams: Building Resilient Communities That Transform Schools

By Elena Aguilar (Jossey-Bass, 2016)

S.O.S. (A Summary of the Summary)

The main ideas of the book:

- ~ To truly transform schools, we need teams of highly functioning groups of teachers working together.
- ~ This book provides the tools, tips, protocols, and theory needed to coach teams to become highly effective.

Why I chose this book:

Anyone who has ever led a team knows that it's much more difficult than it looks. At times teams are stuck in destructive conflict and other times they're mired in a culture of nice. In either case, these teams are not significantly impacting either teaching or learning. If you lead a team, this book will help you navigate unhealthy conflict and resistance, and show you how to set your team on a path toward productivity.

I liked that in addition to relying on research, Aguilar grounds her work in her experience as both a team leader and team coach not just for effective teams, but ineffective ones as well. Because of this, she is able to give the kind of specific tips that go beyond platitudes about team functioning. She includes a ton of practical tools you can use as well.

This book is for anyone interested in building or leading teams. It is aimed at all kinds of teams from a school leadership team or a district math team to a school science department or seventh grade team.

Ultimately, this is a book about leadership and what's involved in bringing people together to accomplish the challenging work of schools and districts.

The Scoop (In this summary you will learn...)

- ✓ The key indicators of an effective team
- ✓ How to intentionally create the trust needed for a team to thrive
- ✓ How to build an emotionally intelligent team so people can make comments like, "I think I've shared a lot already. I'm going to listen to others on the topic now."
- ✓ Five different techniques a team can use to make decisions
- ✓ How you can use what the research says about adult development to foster learning on your team
- ✓ How to deal with team members who dominate the discussion or put up resistance
- ✓ The Main Idea's professional learning suggestions that go along with the book (email Jenn for the **handout**, too)

Introduction

To truly transform schools, we need teams of highly functioning groups of teachers working together. It's messy and it takes years for teams to develop the skills necessary to function productively, but teams *can* learn these skills. This book shows team leaders how to coach teams to become highly effective. Through her work coaching both disastrous and thriving teams, and her research, Aguilar has developed a set of skills and competencies needed to help teams prosper. As a result, she has created a "how-to" book that outlines the essential skills for team success—how to craft agendas, make decisions, create communication protocols, and more. The book also aims to develop leaders—people who are able to successfully lead a group of teachers to improve teaching and learning. While it is a lot of work, it is worth it. Truly effective teams accomplish impressive results, including: growth in student learning, growth in teacher practice, and increases in teacher retention. If you think about schools that are able to make real changes and give students what they need to succeed and thrive, chances are that the adults are working in high-functioning teams built on trust and respect. If the ultimate goal is to truly address the needs of all children, we need to support the adults who work with them. This book shows how.

Chapter 1 – Indicators of an Effective Team

What is an effective team? Why do we need teams? What kind of teams can have a positive impact on children?

Individuals can't transform schools alone. When we put them together into groups, they have more skill, knowledge, and experience to address the most challenging problems in schools. But not every team functions well. The first step is for the team to understand what it means to be effective. All great teams should attend to the following three dimensions: (1) Product, (2) Process, (3) Learning:

Product: A great team gets something done that is valuable, useful, and impacts the clients it serves.

Process: A great team's collaboration skills improve as a result of working together.

Learning: The skills and knowledge of team members increase as a result of being a member of this team.

To add to their understanding, below are indicators of an effective team, all of which will be discussed in more detail in upcoming chapters. Teams can use the self-assessment in Appendix B as a tool to discuss how well their team is working and reflect on how to improve their performance:

Indicators of an Effective Team

1. **Purpose:** Team members understand and agree on the team's purpose and goals.
2. **Results:** The team accomplishes its goals.
3. **Meeting Process:** Meetings are focused, facilitated well, and result in clear outcomes.
4. **Decisions:** There are clearly defined agreements about how decisions are made.
5. **Commitment:** Members buy in to the decisions without hidden concerns, and actions reflect the team's commitments.
6. **Contributions:** All contributions are recognized and utilized. Different styles are accepted.
7. **Creativity:** The team experiments with different and creative ways of doing things.
8. **Collaboration:** Members share their experience and expertise to enhance team productivity and development.
9. **Respect:** Each member feels valued as an individual and everyone is treated with respect.
10. **Interpersonal Communication:** Communication is open and balanced.
11. **Productive Conflict:** Members participate in honest debate around ideas and issues related to the work.
12. **Unproductive Conflict:** Members work constructively on issues until they are resolved.
13. **Procedures:** Effective procedures guide team functioning.
14. **Accountability:** Team members hold each other accountable.
15. **Evaluation:** The team regularly evaluates its process and productivity.

Chapter 2 – Knowing Ourselves as Leaders

How will my awareness of myself as a leader enable me to build a strong team? What kind of leader do I want to be?

Before we step into the room to facilitate a meeting or create an agenda, we need to think about who we are as leaders. A number of factors affect our leadership style and actions: our brains and emotions, our personality, our cultural competence, our views of leadership, and the existing power dynamics. This chapter explores how we can better know ourselves as leaders.

All leaders have feelings and emotions. We can't avoid them. But we can develop strategies to help navigate them productively. This is where emotional intelligence (EI) helps. EI is the awareness and management of those feelings and consists of: self-awareness (ability to recognize our own feelings), self-management (how we respond to emotions), social awareness (ability to understand the emotions of others), and relationship management (ability to manage conflict and form healthy relationships). These are all skills that can be *learned*. This is good because research shows that, "EI is the strongest predictor of successful job performance and that 90% of top performers are high in emotional intelligence." (pp.17-18) Having these skills can help you understand why that meeting didn't go well or why that individual didn't follow through on her work. Furthermore, research shows that the leader's emotions shape the team more than the emotions of any other member. There's more about how leaders shape the EI of the team in Chapter 6.

In addition to our EI, our personality also affects our role as a leader. It affects whether we are introverted or extroverted, whether we make decisions by intuition or prefer hard data. Understanding our personality certainly affects our self-awareness, and understanding the personality of our team members helps with relationship management and social awareness. Leaders can have their teams use a personality assessment like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to determine everyone's personality type.

Our cultural competence is another area that affects our leadership in teams. Understanding one's own cultural identity and appreciating others with different cultural backgrounds influences everything from how we communicate to how we manage conflict. For example, one principal who came from the Midwest to lead a school in an urban area alienated her staff due to the references she used, her style of communication, and the language she used. Had she examined her cultural competence, she might have been better able to develop trust with staff earlier on. There is a set of ten questions on p.23 to help leaders reflect on their cultural competency.

Yet another area that affects our leadership style is how we view leadership and power dynamics. How we view leadership may be influenced by how we grew up—for example, who were the leaders in our family and how did they lead? By fear? Our ideas about what makes for a “good” leader are complicated by the fact that our society doesn't have *one* clear idea of good leadership. A principal might lead in a way she feels works for her community but the superintendent has a different idea of how she should lead. There is no consensus on the criteria for good leadership in schools. And finally, your leadership doesn't exist in a vacuum. Power dynamics have been shaped by historical, social, and economic conditions. For example, only 25% of superintendents in the US are women and that's not because women lack the skills for the job. When we walk into a team meeting we need to understand that we don't leave these power dynamics at the door. Questions on pages 30 and 33 can help you think about these leadership issues.

Chapter 3 – Creating a Culture of Trust

What can I do to build trust in a team?

After knowing ourselves as leaders, the next thing to do to build a strong team is to *intentionally* create a culture of trust. Trust, as Stephen Covey defines it, is the feeling of confidence we have in each other's *competence* and *character*. To build this in teams, not only do you need to create the appropriate structures, but you need to model and monitor behaviors that reinforce trustworthiness. It is important to intentionally build trust with your team and not assume or hope that it will develop on its own. Appendix C has some community-building exercises you can use, and below are ways to build and maintain trust.

- **Know Who You Are and Who You Want to Be:** We trust leaders who truly know themselves, so take the time to begin to know yourself (see Chapter 2). No one trusts an inauthentic leader, so check your actions for mismatches between who you are (“I value shared leadership”) and your actions (“I repeatedly ignore suggestions”).
- **Know Each Other:** Do more than provide community-building activities that surface everyone's favorite ice cream flavor. Instead, introduce activities that allow members to begin to share who they are (again, see Appendix C for ideas).
- **Expect Everyone to Keep Commitments:** Without following through on commitments, trust is lost. Don't be shy about kindly reminding team members to bring sample student work to the next meeting, and make sure that you, as the leader, follow through, too!
- **Be Transparent:** Make sure you let team members know why you are doing what you are doing in an honest way, “It seems like this activity isn't working right now, so I suggest we take a 5-minute break.” Be careful about any hidden agendas you or the administration might have. And if you ever make a mistake, apologize and own up to it rather than concealing it.
- **Incorporate Feedback and Reflection:** To help build trust, find regular times for feedback and reflection. You might carve out a few minutes at the end of each meeting to ask a few simple questions and emphasize that you are open to feedback, “I appreciate your feedback so I can improve my facilitation skills.” It's also important for the team to regularly reflect on their team process (there's a sample team self-assessment in Appendix B and a shorter “team temperature check” on p.52).
- **Focus on Members' Strengths, Practice Appreciation, and Celebrate Successes:** Tap different individuals to share their unique skills, strengths, and abilities (remember part of trust is confidence in each other's *competence*). This means you'll need to get to know each person individually to find out about his/her strengths. In addition, be sure to celebrate small and large successes as well as practice appreciation on a regular basis (perhaps have members share a quick appreciation at the end of meetings).

Chapter 4 – Defining Purpose, Process, and Product

How do we figure out what to do in our team? How do we make sure we're doing work as a team that will positively impact students? We've all been to meetings that left us feeling it was a waste of time. This chapter shows how to prevent this by creating meetings that are *focused*, *meaningful*, and *productive*. This involves intentionally defining the team's: 1) purpose, 2) process, and 3) product.

1. Purpose: Every team needs a clear purpose. *Why* does your team exist? Of course, the team should support the organization's mission, but what specifically is the connection? And can every member of the team state it? It's the leader's job to ensure they can. To help clarify the team's purpose, the leader can bring in student data and ask the team to examine it to clarify how they will support the school's goals. This will keep the students' needs at the center of the team's purpose.

High-functioning teams adopt a mission and vision to guide their work. On pp. 69-71 of the book is a process you can use to help a team develop its own mission and vision, or if you've inherited a group, you revisit the team's mission and vision and modify as needed. Below is a sample team mission:

Our team exists to create a safe and nurturing community for our students so that they can take risks, be vulnerable learners, and reach their student achievement goals.

2. Process: In addition to knowing their purpose, an effective team needs a process to get things done. *How* a team works together includes: a) the team's core values, b) norms or community agreements, and c) team member roles and responsibilities.

Identifying core values usually comes before establishing norms. Individual members can make a list of their own core values before the leader guides the team toward establishing *team* core values (see Aguilar's website for details on this process). A sample team core value might be, "We build trusting relationships because we know that people learn best in the presence of compassion and trust." To function well, team members need clear roles. Some teams have roles such as: facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, and process observer. Individuals can rotate in these roles, or specialize in one of them. In either case, the roles must be outlined ahead of time so everyone knows what they entail (see pp.74-76 for sample role descriptions). The next chapter is dedicated entirely to norms. Every team needs to clarify the expectations for how the team will work together. People have wildly different ideas about what's appropriate for team communication and team process.

3. Product: It may seem obvious, but teams need something to work on. Effective teams create a 'work plan' which outlines the goals, actions, and benchmark indicators. This work plan guides the work of the team. Below is an excerpt of a work plan with a SMARTE goal (the 'E' is for equitable), actions, and benchmarks:

Sample Team Work Plan Excerpt:		
<i>District or School Goal 1: 95% of students will make at least 20% growth in reading on our school's reading assessment.</i>		
<i>SMARTE GOAL 1: To support the above goal, we will use at least 20 reading strategies, 4 assessment tools, and analyze results.</i>		
Dates	Strategic Actions	Benchmark Indicators
September	• Administer pre-assessments, analyze pre-assessments, introduce 1 st set of reading strategies, share student work from 1 st unit, etc.	• Pre-assessments analyzed • Student work analyzed

Chapter 5 – Creating Norms as a Foundation for Trust

What can I do to build trust in a team? How can norms or community agreements help us become an effective team?

This chapter delves more specifically into the creation of community agreements, or norms as they are often called. Norms are a key part of building a healthy team culture, and yet many people have had negative experiences with them. (Aguilar jokes that you might be miffed that she has given over a whole chapter to norms!) It is frustrating when teams spend the time to create norms, and they remain in a file. Norms must be actively used to be effective. Furthermore, norms should be clear and specific, number no more than seven, and be created by the team. It is helpful to think about creating two types of norms, both *procedural* and *behavioral*. Below are a few examples of each and there are more on p.108:

Examples of <i>Procedural</i> Norms	Examples of <i>Behavioral</i> Norms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start and end meetings on time • Have computers open only during appropriate work time • Keep cell phones on silent and ideally out of sight during meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep kids at the center • Assume positive intent • Monitor airtime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the truth without blame or judgment • Be willing to push each other's thinking

Creating norms often involves some tension, so be prepared to manage your own discomfort. It is impossible to meet everyone's needs with one set of norms. There is a sample agenda on pages 100-107 to help you conduct a meeting to create norms. Overall, the agenda has team members look at sample norms, brainstorm ideas for possible norms for the group, and then post sticky notes next to their top five choices. From here the goal is to classify, clarify, and organize the top norms so the group can narrow down the list to a small number of norms everyone can live with.

The next important piece is to make sure your norms serve as meaningful tools, not simply as words on a paper. The first step is to help the team clarify what the norms *look like* in action. You can ask the team to discuss each of the chosen norms and create a list of bullet points that describe each in more detail. Then, to keep these norms alive during meetings, consider including them on every meeting agenda. At the beginning of the meeting you might ask the team to focus on one particular norm and then at the end ask members to reflect on how well they stuck to that norm. In addition to this routine, a useful structure for keeping norms present and holding members accountable to them is the role of *process observer*. This person's job is to pay attention to the group dynamics in terms of the selected norms and report out on them at the end of the meeting. (There's a job description for this role in Chapter 4.) However, if this person doesn't hold people accountable for their team behaviors, it ultimately falls upon you as the facilitator to ensure that norms are upheld.

Chapter 6 – Developing the Emotional Intelligence of a Team

How can I help everyone get along? How can we deal with the stress of working in schools?

Chapter 2 highlighted the importance of a leader's emotional intelligence. This chapter addresses the emotional intelligence of *the team* because research shows that EI is key to an effective team's functioning. In fact, EI might be the most important predictor of whether a team succeeds. What exactly *is* the emotional intelligence of a team? It doesn't mean that individuals have high EI. Instead it means that in a group, members express feelings, are aware of each other's emotions and how these impact the group, and the group has strategies to address these feelings.

It's the facilitator's job to ensure that feelings are *acknowledged* and *managed*. For example, a leader might *acknowledge* someone's moods like this, "Karina, you seem distracted today and perhaps sad. We're missing out on your contributions and that's OK, but I'm wondering if there's anything we can do to support you?" To *manage* emotions, a leader might say this, "It seems like our conversation has gotten stuck in blaming others, and it's bringing our mood down. Do others agree that we should shift the conversation into what's within our sphere of control?"

What's particularly important in an emotionally intelligent group is that it's not just the leader who's acknowledging and addressing feelings. For example, in an EI team, an individual would be able to say to another member who has been arriving late to meetings, "We really need you here when we start. We value your contributions, and it's hard for us to make progress on our work when you're not here." Rather than feelings of resentment building up week after week over an issue like this, emotionally intelligent teams address issues and don't let them take center stage for long periods of time. It becomes clear why it's such important work for a facilitator to focus on developing the EI of the team. Below are a few indicators of a team with high EI and the book has many more:

- When a new idea is put on the table, there's curiosity and questions about it.
- Team members monitor their verbal participation, "I've shared a lot already. I'm going to listen to others on the topic now."
- Team members address the emotions of others, "I'm wondering what's going on with you right now, you seem upset."
- Team members offer feedback in the moment, "I feel like we may have rushed through that discussion. Do others agree?"

How to Build an Emotionally Intelligent Team

If the above describes what an emotionally intelligent team looks like, how does the facilitator get them there? It's certainly easier to build those behaviors up front if you get to launch a new team. To begin, make sure that the team creates norms that address *relationship* issues. For example, rather than the expectation to "Be on time," it might be better to adopt this norm, "Speak directly to people about issues." This gives team members more guidance to manage emotions and relationships. In addition to norms, routines can help strengthen the EI of the team. For example, consider opening meetings with an optional check-in so members can share their emotional state for just a few minutes. Or end with a few minutes of appreciations to ensure that meetings close with a positive tone.

However, it is much harder when facilitators need to address already existing unproductive behaviors in a team. Implicit norms that are unhealthy can start to take over a team. For example, team members may speak poorly about the administration, regularly arrive late to meetings, or be complicit in not holding each other accountable when people neglect commitments. The first step is for the leader to name these unspoken norms, "I notice that whenever we talk about the curriculum, the conversation turns into complaints about the district. This seems to make us feel disempowered and angry. What is the impact on our team if we continue with this type of conversation?" The group needs to become aware of this negative impact before it can shift toward problem solving. The facilitator can use a *structure* to ensure that the team sees its own behavior—such as the creation of the *process observer* role as was mentioned earlier. The facilitator can also share observations about behaviors as they arise, "Bob, you shared that opinion already. How about if you hold off until everyone else has shared now?" or "What do you guys notice about how we're communicating with each other?" There are over 40 suggestions for building the emotional intelligence of a team on pages 130-131, however, most of the suggestions in this book boost a team's emotional intelligence.

Part of addressing the emotional intelligence of teams and individuals is realizing that educators often face unexpected change. Whether it's a change in a teaching assignment or a colleague quitting, most educators are facing constant change, and team leaders need to develop change management skills. One resource to take a look at is M.J. Ryan's book, *How to Survive Change You Didn't Ask For*. Below is an overview of some key tips from this book that leaders can share with teams:

Tips for Managing Change You Didn't Ask For	
1. Focus on the solution, not the problem.	6. Follow the advice you would give someone in a similar situation.
2. Ask yourself what you are free to choose right now.	7. Move your body to counteract the effects of stress.
3. Celebrate successes, even small ones.	8. To minimize worry, set aside 15 minutes daily as "worry time."
4. Before saying no, consider how ideas <i>might</i> work.	9. Ask what <i>really</i> matters to keep the change in perspective.
5. Get out and help someone else.	10. Focus on the positive resources you have to make the change.

If team members are so stressed by change, they can't function. Give them the tips above and try simple breathing before a meeting begins. Check in with people's emotions at the start of meetings and gently ask what they can set aside so the meeting can continue.

Chapter 7 – Cultivating Healthy Communication

How can I facilitate effective communication in a team?

When Aguilar asks what team leaders find most challenging about facilitating a team, the top response is dealing with one person dominating the conversation. While a common reaction might be to blame this talker or simply create more rules or consequences, to truly turn this into a fully functioning team, it is important to get at the *root* of the problem. To do this, explore questions such as: Why is this person talking so much? What have we done as a team to ensure that we have good conversations? How willing am I, as the leader, to risk changing the way we communicate? What does our team need to actually have good conversations?

For example, on one team, two individuals always dominated the discussion and steered it toward student behavior. What was happening underneath the surface was that they were both insecure about the gaps in their own teaching and were worried about being exposed. Rather than just being frustrated by these two teachers, the facilitator tried to understand the root of the problem and how the teachers' emotions were influencing their actions. Rather than blame, the leader tried a more productive response, "I hear that you're frustrated by student behavior. How about if we carve some time out of our agenda to problem solve together? I can help you bring your concerns to the administration and we can agree to spend the rest of the meeting discussing what's on the agenda?"

It's easier to be proactive about setting the foundation for good team conversations rather than address problems in communication later. To begin to do this, ask yourself, as the leader, a few questions about the team's communication. How do I feel about the conversations we currently have? How would I like our team's conversations to look? Answers to these questions might touch on some of the issues addressed in the norms: "I would like active listening, probing questions that go beneath the surface, respect for the opinions of others, and awareness of the emotions of others." It might be easier to think about what you *don't* want in the team's conversations (disengagement, gossip, blaming others, etc.) The team should discuss these issues as well. Then have the team's *process observer* observe the team to gather data on *who* speaks, *how frequently*, and *what kind* of contribution they make (clarifying question, probing question, comment, or opinion). Then the team can discuss the patterns of participation they noticed. Another activity the team can engage in to raise awareness about and improve their conversations is a self-assessment tool called "How Do I Listen?" While someone speaks, team members think about *what kind of listening* they do and check off the appropriate boxes below:

- ☐ Listening to find connections. Your mind thinks, "Oh, I remember when that happened to me, too!"
- ☐ Listening to find a story of your own to share, "I can tell her about that time I..."
- ☐ Listening but wanting to jump in and finish the speaker's sentence.
- ☐ Listening to find a point you agree or disagree with.
- ☐ Listening to understand the other person's perspective.
- ☐ Listening to ask a clarifying question because you want more information.
- ☐ Listening to ask a probing question to keep the other person's reflective capacity.
- ☐ Listening but feeling impatient, wishing the person would stop talking.
- ☐ Fake listening. Being bored and occasionally nodding and spacing out.

After discussing the results of these two activities, the team can discuss what they would like to hear and see for effective communication to take place and what they don't want to see. In addition to helping the team become more *aware* of their current patterns of communication, you can also help the team *improve* communication in several ways. Break the team into pairs or small groups and have them practice active listening. Explicitly teach and model language to challenge ideas productively and to ask questions nonjudgmentally. Help the team continue to develop their self-awareness of their conversation patterns and use discussion protocols to structure productive conversations. In order for the team to get better at having healthy conversations it will take time and feedback. As the leader, you may need to give individuals feedback on their participation in the team. It can be hard to give this type of feedback, so be sure to ask for permission. Begin by appreciating what the team member is doing well, and then be specific, kind, and allow for growth. Overall, improving the EI and communication in a group takes a great deal of time, but it is well worth it.

Chapter 8 – Making Good Decisions

How can decisions be made in a way that builds trust? What are different ways to make decisions?

Not many teachers or school leaders have mastered the skill of decision making. However, this is a crucial skill given that decision making has the power to either build or destroy trust in a group. The ability to guide a team effectively through decision making also involves skills introduced in other chapters, in addition to this one, such as structuring productive conversations (Chapters 7 and 11), managing conflict (Chapter 12), and planning meetings (Chapters 10 and 11).

The first skill team leaders need is the ability to anticipate *when* decision making will occur. Sometimes groups make decisions without even knowing that a decision is being made. Careful planning on the part of the facilitator can ensure that this does not happen. Below are five common activities that happen during a meeting, and how much decision making usually occurs during each:

Information Sharing: One-sided sharing of information, events, or data reports usually does not involve decision making.

Community Building: Building community through getting to know the team may involve decision making at times.

Learning: Professional development usually does not involve decision making unless it gets into planning and problem solving.

Planning: Many decisions are made in planning anything from curriculum and assessment to norms.

Problem Solving: Looking at data or challenges and creating action plans involves many decisions.

To help clarify when *decisions* need to be made, the leader may want to use an agenda template like the excerpt of the one below:

12/9/14 – Instructional Leadership Team Agenda			
<i>Norms:</i> 1) Assume positive intent 2) Be fully present 3) Seek to understand 4) Stay on topic			
<i>Roles:</i> Process Observer – Sharon, Timekeeper – Francisca, Note taker – Martin, Facilitator - Elena			
<i>Intended Outcomes:</i> 1) To analyze self-reflection data from PLC meetings 2) To identify PD topics and plan for January staff PD			
Time	Activity or Topic	Purpose	Decision-Making Process
3:30-3:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review agenda and outcomes Team building activity 	<input type="checkbox"/> Information sharing <input type="checkbox"/> Planning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Building <input type="checkbox"/> Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving	None
4:15-4:45	• PD Planning...	X Problem Solving	1. Voting with stickers 2. Consensus

Before decisions can be made, the team needs to know how much they are empowered to decide. Otherwise you end up leading the team through a decision-making process and then team members are surprised to find they are only being asked for their input while someone else is making the final decision. In advance of the meeting, the leader needs to outline the level of empowerment team members will have. Sometimes it's worth the time and effort to engage everyone in the decision, at other times you may just want to make the decision yourself with input from the team. Below is one way to think about levels of empowerment:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Level 1: Administrators decide and then tell staff. | Level 3: Staff decide but consult an administrator for final approval. |
| Level 2: Administrators gain input before deciding. | Level 4: Staff decide and act without needing anyone's approval. |

After team facilitators identify when decisions are to be made and how empowered the team will be, next they need to decide what type of decision-making *process* they will use.

Five Decision-Making Processes

Below are five different types of decision-making processes groups typically use. Each has different advantages and drawbacks. The detailed steps to conduct each one are in the chapter.

1. **Consensus:** This process involves building consensus until the entire team votes at a 4 or 5 (out of 5) in a Fist to Five vote. This takes a lot of time to debate and listen in order to get to this consensus, but it means everyone buys in to the results.
2. **Multi-voting:** After an idea-generating session leads to many options (like 14 norms when the team wants to choose 5), everyone gets several votes (for example, four votes using stickers), and the scores are tallied to reveal the winning options.
3. **Compromise:** When a group is strongly divided, ask each group to give up a few items, and a middle option is created that includes ideas from both sides. A disadvantage is that both sides may feel as if they have lost something and are not satisfied with the outcome.
4. **Majority Voting:** Everyone is familiar with choosing the majority position after people have voted with hands or a secret ballot. The team needs to have time to discuss before voting, but this can be a quick option.
5. **Unilateral Decision:** This is when one person is designated to decide for the group. This can be tricky in a low-trust group.

Chapter 9 – Supporting Adult Learners

How can knowledge of adult learning help me facilitate a team? How do I apply principles of adult learning to coaching teams?

No matter what type of team you coach in a school or a district, one of your primary roles is to support team *learning*. However, sometimes the team or even the leader doesn't see their role as that of a learner. For example, a department head may think that her team meets for the purpose of discussing curriculum, hiring, and programmatic issues, not for *learning*. Whether your team meets to plan professional development or to analyze student data, it's important to remember that team members are also learners. After all, schools are learning organizations.

What the Research Says About Adult Learners

In order to best support the needs of all members on our teams, it helps to know what the research says about adult learners. Below are principles of adult learning based on the work of Malcolm Knowles, a pioneer in the field, as well as what has been learned about brain science, learning theory, behavioral and cognitive psychology, and sociology. These principles address what we know about the key characteristics of adult learners.

1. **Adults must feel safe to learn.** Our emotional states are extremely important in our ability to learn. If we feel fear, frustration, or anger, our brains shut down to learning. Think of a PD session that ends with an administrator saying, "After today's PD session we'll expect to see these strategies in action in all classrooms next week." The resulting feelings of anxiety and fear impede learning. As leaders, we need to be aware of emotions and show up as learners ourselves.
2. **Adults come to learning experiences with histories.** Adults begin the learning process with a history of experiences, interests, and knowledge. By treating adult learners as empty vessels, we not only miss rich opportunities to build on what they already know, but we erode trust. As leaders, we need to make a point of finding out about our team members' experiences and skills and finding ways for them to share this at meetings.
3. **Adults need to know why.** Once adult learners are aware of and believe in the goal, they are more likely to commit to the learning. For this reason, we should include an *aim* on our agendas and connect the day's learning with overall school goals.

- 4. Adults want *agency* in our learning.** Adults learn better when they have some say in the who, what, when, where, and why of the team's learning. Facilitators need to make sure team members feel heard, have input and can give feedback.
- 5. Adults need *practice* to internalize learning.** In order to improve, adult learners need to be able to practice new skills and receive feedback from someone they trust. It is critical to provide time for practice and reflection at team meetings.
- 6. Adults *want* to learn.** Remember that humans naturally want to learn, and even when someone seems uninterested or resistant, that person will learn when the conditions are right. As leaders, we need to ensure we establish the conditions (listed above) for learning.

A Common Challenge to Learning – Dealing with Resistance

One of the most common challenges in coaching a team is dealing with resistance. Resistance can take many forms from giving superficial compliance or never taking action to questioning the goal of the request. It helps to look both inward and outward to address resistance. First, resistance is often something else in disguise—fear over what will happen or a lack of skill to follow through. When people feel afraid, angry, or unprepared, the last thing the leader should do is to react in anger or lecturing. Instead, our most underutilized resource is *compassion*—have empathy and try to understand the resistance.

In addition to asking, “Why are *they* so resistant?” we also need to look at ourselves. Are we avoiding the resistance? Have we been clear about expectations? Did we put in place those team structures needed to allow for healthy conflict and productive decision making? Did we spend the time to create needed trust? After showing compassion and thinking through our part in the resistance, it's important to realize that some people aren't open to learning at this time. Battling that type of resistance is futile. Instead, rally those who are open to learning and change. If the problem is even larger and there are numerous resistant staff, it may be the case that this is a highly dysfunctional or toxic organization, and this becomes too large of a task for one individual to fix.

Chapter 10 – Planning for Productive Meetings

What should we do when we meet?

Ask a group of teachers to think back to a *good* meeting, and you will hear a range of reasons they felt it was good: the meeting's purpose was clear, the agenda was realistic, it started and ended on time, they actually *did* something and didn't just talk, they learned something new, etc. This chapter describes what you can do to *plan* for a productive meeting.

Meeting Goals and Outcomes

The first step is knowing what you're hoping to achieve. If the sole purpose is to share information, people will feel like the meeting is a waste of time. In the digital age when it is easy to disseminate information there is no need to take up everyone's time with this. *Do* call a meeting if the information is sensitive and you need people to talk about it. *Do* call a meeting if you need people to be actively involved in learning something or engaged in planning or problem solving. But leaders often call a meeting because they are afraid that everyone won't read an email. If teachers want to attend fewer meetings, they need to commit to reading all correspondence. One idea to hold people accountable for reading emails is for the leader to send a message and then ask everyone to respond with one comment and one question by a certain date.

To make sure a meeting is productive, the first thing the leader should plan for is the overarching *reason* for the meeting. See the excerpted sample work plan below which shows how a leader planned the goals for a series of team meetings for an entire month:

Team's October Goal 1: Conduct in-depth assessments and interviews with focal students, observe each other's focal students and share feedback, plan a science text reading comprehension lesson together, video ourselves teaching this lesson and share videos		
Team's October Goal 2: Implement “Month of Compassion,” observe each other's focal students, arrange service-learning events for November		
Date	Goals that Align to Above	What (Activities)
1 st Tues	Goal 1: To figure out how to learn more about our focal students. Goal 2: To observe each other's focal students during the Month of Compassion unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design interviews to use with focal students. • Design protocol for observations during Month of Compassion unit.
2 nd Tues	Goal 1: To gain a deeper understanding of our focal students. To co-plan a reading comprehension lesson and assess each other's skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share interviews with focal students. • Plan science text reading comprehension lesson.
3 rd Tues	Etc.	

In addition to the larger purpose, it is helpful to outline specific *outcomes* for each meeting. Sometimes when a meeting isn't productive it's because the leader hasn't thought through the outcomes or hasn't communicated these well. At times the problem is that there are *too many* outcomes. Below are two sample meeting outcomes for two different types of teams.

Team	Outcomes for Meeting
School leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To analyze the impact of our PD for reading comprehension in Semester 1 so that we can revise our plan for Semester 2. • To analyze teacher retention data to inform our plan for next year's new teacher support systems.
District math leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report on the implementation of the new math curriculum and share challenges and successes. • To plan for district-wide PD on new curriculum.

Meeting Activities

Third, after deciding on a meeting's purpose and outcomes, you need to decide what *activities* will result in these outcomes. Several activities have already been introduced in previous chapters such as community-building activities in Chapter 3 and decision-making activities in Chapter 8. Below are some additional suggestions for activities that serve different purposes:

Activities to Make Meaning: Helping a team make meaning of a document or other material usually involves some combination of writing and talking. These are both ways to help people reflect. The goal is to get the team to process the material, make connections to prior knowledge, ask questions, and come to a new understanding. The **Meaning-Making Protocol** on pp.212- 21 has the team read the document to make connections, ask questions, and identify any feelings that come up. Next, structured talking and sharing helps the team deepen their understanding, a vital part of being able to make decisions! Unfortunately, facilitators often skip this step.

Activities to Identify Next Steps: A team leader often has to facilitate a team in drawing conclusions after they've made sense of information. One protocol teams can use is the **Data Driven Protocol** from the National School Reform Faculty (nsrfharmony.org). This activity helps teams make observations about data and then draw conclusions and identify next actions.

Activities to Address a Dilemma: Teams can be an excellent structure to solve difficult problems. The **Consultancy Protocol** is a structured way for teams to address a dilemma or solve a problem. With this protocol, one member shares a problem and then the team thinks, reflects, asks clarifying questions, gives feedback, and shares insights about the dilemma. The full protocol is in Appendix E.

Activities to Provide Feedback: The **Feedback Protocol** is another excellent tool teams can use. The team can use this structured approach to give a teacher feedback on his lesson plan or teaching (via a video) or to give feedback to a coach on her coaching (via a video or a transcript). (See Appendix E for the full protocol.)

Activities to Discuss an Article: It is often useful for a team to discuss an outside reading. Two protocols the team can use to discuss a text in a structured way are **Text Rendering** and **Three Levels of Text**, both of which can be found at nsrfharmony.org.

Activities to Create a Positive Culture: There are a number of activities a team can do to build a positive culture such as a short check-in at the beginning of each meeting ("How are you right now?" or "Share a moment from your week in 30- seconds.") Perhaps five deep breaths would help the team to relax. Sometimes a group can choose one particular norm to commit to focus on for the meeting.

How can you, as the leader, choose from these many activities? The activities should certainly fit the goals for the meeting. In addition to this, it helps to consider where the team is in its development—how far along is your team with their trust and functioning? Also, consider the time of day of the meeting because this impacts the energy level of the group. Finally, think through whether you want the group to work in pairs, as a large group, or have individual reflection time.

Chapter 11 – Additional Considerations for Planning Effective Meetings

How can I design meetings that develop an effective team?

This chapter introduces some additional practices leaders can use to prepare for an effective team meeting.

Feedback

Aguilar always begins the planning of a team meeting with the written feedback she received about the *previous* meeting. By asking what worked and didn't work after every meeting, she can look for patterns that inform what to include in subsequent meetings. If a particular activity didn't work for anyone, she no longer includes it. If everyone benefited from a different exercise, then she'll be sure to use that one again. Whether you ask team members to respond anonymously or not, you can gather important information about group dynamics as well as your own facilitation skills. This allows you to sharpen your facilitation skills, differentiate the learning you provide next time, and plan to address any issues in team functioning. At times critical feedback can hurt, but asking for this type of feedback cultivates a culture of constructive feedback.

The Facilitator's Agenda

Many leaders create an agenda for participants but they don't create a more detailed agenda just for themselves. A "facilitator's agenda" is an excellent tool to hold additional information such as more exact time stamps, how you will have the group break into pairs, your talking points, and even answers to anticipated questions. Planning for a team meeting takes a significant amount of time—on average one to two hours of planning for every hour of meeting. This may seem like a significant amount of time but it will help you be prepared and feel more confident as digressions, challenges, and decisions come up during the meeting.

Prepare Your Internal Self

Who do you want to be and how do you want people to view you at the meeting? The final aspect to consider when planning for a meeting is how you want to show up at this meeting. To do this, you need to think about how the team functions and what they need. If there were some comments that frustrated you at the previous meeting, perhaps the team is going through a transition and needs you to create a calm and safe space. What will you plan to do the next time if someone does something to frustrate you? How can you

better listen and understand the team members? This is about improving your emotional intelligence and communication skills. Once you think through what the group needs from you and how you want them to feel when they leave the meeting, consider writing an intention on your facilitator's agenda that you can reflect on after the meeting.

Chapter 12 – Navigating Conflict

How can healthy conflict make us a more effective team? How do I manage unhealthy conflict in my team?

Given that team leaders often bring up conflict as one of the biggest obstacles to their work, why is conflict not addressed until the penultimate chapter? This is intentional. Leaders can't effectively deal with conflict until they have built the foundations of a team and created the necessary conditions discussed in Chapters 1 to 11.

To begin, team leaders must know how to distinguish between *healthy* and *unhealthy* conflict. Healthy conflict is when team members exchange ideas, sincerely ask questions, show a willingness to listen, and even experience moments of discomfort. It is what allows us to have the type of honest conversation about our practice needed to improve our work. This type of conflict actually strengthens our work as well as our bonds. *Unhealthy* conflict does the opposite; it destroys trust and sucks energy from our goals.

The problem is that teams are often so fearful of conflict that they avoid it all together, and this includes healthy conflict. Many people are uncomfortable with conflict and do anything to stay clear of it. However, without healthy conflict we won't experience deeply passionate debates and discussions that are necessary to improve our decisions and our work. If we want our teams to engage in healthy conflict, we need to help them develop the necessary skills and reassure them that as facilitators we know how to deal with the inevitable unhealthy conflict that will arise as well.

How to Cultivate Healthy Conflict

Whether your team is stuck in a culture of nice or damaging conflict, you can help them learn the skills needed to cultivate healthy conflict. Below are a few suggestions.

1. *Raise Awareness of Team Members' Relationship to Conflict*: It helps to surface the different ways people view conflict. Our ideas about conflict come from our backgrounds, our families, and our personalities. Give the team time to discuss questions such as, "How was conflict expressed in your family?" and "What does healthy conflict look and sound like to you?" Perhaps have the team find their Myers-Briggs types to help understand personality differences as they relate to conflict. Overall, it helps to share ideas about conflict.
2. *Get Buy-In on the Need for Conflict*: Help the team understand the need for conflict. While it may be clear that destructive conflict is bad, it may not be so obvious that artificial harmony can be just as bad. Have the team discuss what they might be capable of achieving if everyone were to share more honest opinions and provide constructive feedback.
3. *Articulate a Shared Vision for Conflict*: It helps for a team to develop a collective vision for what healthy conflict should look and sound like so they will know what type of behavior is acceptable in discussions and debates. Have the team brainstorm a list of acceptable discussion behaviors and then narrow it down to those items that everyone can agree to. Some items might include, "We ask questions to probe for deeper understanding" or "We hold student needs at the center of our work."
4. *Identify Sentence Stems That Promote Healthy Conflict*: Sometimes people just do not know how to express themselves in a way that is critical and yet constructive. You can provide a list of sample sentence starters like the following (see p.253 for more):
 - I have some concerns about that suggestion. Could you explain it more?
 - Can you help me understand your perspective. My experience has led me to a different conclusion.
 - I have a request to make. Are you open to hearing it?
 - It would help me get behind that idea if I could hear more about...

How to Respond to Unhealthy Conflict

Team members will only feel safe engaging in healthy conflict if they know that the team will directly address unhealthy conflict as well. Below are some suggestions for doing that. When we think of conflict, we usually think about a difficult *individual*. However, the actual problem is rarely the result of one person's behavior. We have to consider the culture and systems that support this behavior. Below are a few areas to investigate that may be contributing to the conflict.

1. *Return to Norms*: If there is unhealthy conflict, it may be because of a breakdown in norms. It may be as simple as reminding the team, "We agreed not to interrupt each other." Or it may be time to have everyone recommit to how they want to work together. One idea is to ask to videotape the team and then show the video so the team can see how they're interacting with each other.
2. *Hone Your Own Emotional Intelligence*: Sometimes our own emotions are distracting us from effectively leading a team. We need to become aware of our own triggers and the resulting feelings. A leader's emotions are contagious in a group so we need to develop the awareness to show up to meetings with a confident and calm demeanor.

3. Identify the Source of the Conflict: While a team may assume that a conflict is just interpersonal, it helps to get to the *root* of the problem. There are many possible sources of the conflict to explore. Perhaps the team is in conflict because people hold different values. Or maybe the facilitator did not provide enough time or information for the team. Perhaps some dysfunction in the organization is causing the conflict. The problem may be that one individual does not have the experience, knowledge, self-esteem, or emotional intelligence to contribute positively to the team. We can begin to see a path to a solution if we open up our ideas about what might be causing the unhealthy conflict. If you are in a school with a lot of dysfunction, then your work becomes much more challenging. You will need to find allies to begin to shift the entire school's culture, a task that is difficult for a facilitator to do alone.

What if None of These Suggestions Work?!?

Sometimes you get to the point where none of the above suggestions work. If that's the case, here are a few *more* ideas.

1. Have a Hard Conversation: Sometimes preventative work with a team isn't enough. At times, you will need to have a hard conversation with an individual. One resource, *Having Hard Conversations* by Jennifer Abrams, suggests you name the conflict, give specific examples, and emphasize the effect of the behavior on colleagues. Be willing to have a discussion and resolve it. Another resource, *Crucial Conversations* by Patterson et al., suggests you prepare for a tough conversation by first asking yourself: What do I really want for myself? For others? For the relationship? and, How would I behave if I really wanted these things?

2. Build Culture: As was mentioned earlier, most conflicts are not the result of just one individual's behavior. Examine the culture that has allowed this behavior to prosper. Then, rather than spending most of your energy on the few challenging members of the group, focus on those who are willing to change or even those who are neutral or disengaged, and build a healthy culture with them.

3. Enlist Help: You may not have the conflict resolution skills to address all problems on your own. You may need to find a school counselor or a conflict mediator to help mediate the conflict. Or, as a last resort, you may need to involve the supervisor of those individuals in conflict. You may ask the administrator to attend a meeting or have a direct conversation with those involved. Be sure to say, "I need to ask Mr. X [supervisor] to attend our meeting to let him know we've arrived at an impasse and to offer support."

Chapter 13 – Assessing Organizational Conditions

How can I assess the conditions in which I'm leading my team so that I can figure out where to best focus my energy?

There are many conditions *outside* of the team itself that affect any team's ability to function. This chapter looks at those factors—such as resources and the larger organization's culture—that deeply impact your work in building and developing a team.

Purpose, Focus, and Alignment: Teams feel more inspired when they see the connection between their work and the work of the school and that of the other teams. To help, include school goals on your team agendas. However, sometimes teams exist in schools without year-long goals or even without a mission. If your school does not have a particularly tight focus, you can still set clear goals in your team in order to get things done. However, it is more difficult to develop a team in a school without a mission. If you're not in a top leadership position, make the case those who are that a living mission would help align all teams and give them a clear purpose.

Stability: When there is a great deal of staff and leadership turnover, this creates anxiety. This may be an issue beyond your control, but you can focus on creating a team that is so effective and supportive—even if it's an island in a sea of dysfunction—that teachers are inspired to stay at your school because of it!

Leadership: Teams thrive best in schools where leaders champion teams, give them the time they need, and exemplify exceptional team leadership on their own leadership teams. However, if this isn't the case, you can still advocate for the time your team needs.

Team Composition: Another factor that shapes a team's functioning is its membership. If you can choose your team members, or better, the number of teachers on your team, this is ideal. A team of 10 is too large to give everyone 3-5 minutes to speak and there are logistical obstacles to meeting as well. If you can't influence this area, then work with the people who show up.

The Larger Culture of Learning and Trust: When the school has a culture of learning, then people feel comfortable taking risks, making mistakes, and engaging in healthy debate. Teams need to have trust in their organizations in order to thrive. If this is not the case for you, try to create a micro organization within your team in which learning and trust thrive while engaging other leaders in discussions about what it will take to shift the larger organizational culture. To learn more about trust at your school, there is a 55-item self-assessment tool on pp. 282-4.

Time: Teams need sufficient time to work together, particularly teams in the early stages of their development. However, team meetings are often canceled or taken over for other unrelated tasks seen as urgent. It is worth fighting to preserve this time and arguing that team time is just as important as other urgent matters that come up.

Overall, recognizing all of the factors that influence the functioning of your team will help you become more aware of what you need to do to develop your team and yourself as a team leader.

THE MAIN IDEA's PD ideas for TEAM LEADERS based on *The Art of Coaching Teams*

Below are professional learning suggestions for a group of team *leaders*. You can conduct these activities with this group as a team and then they can go back to their teams and turnkey some of these ideas and activities. ***See the **handout** that comes with this!!

1. Have the team leaders write or think on their own about a time they were a part of a team (not necessarily in a school) where things got done and everyone thrived. What was it about this team that made it so successful? Discuss this as a group. (Bonus idea: see the listening exercise in #9 below. Do that activity during this discussion!)

2. *The Art of Coaching Teams* covers many topics, only a few of which are addressed below. Consider having everyone do a **self-assessment** of where they are in their development as a team leader. They can use the 'Facilitator Core Competencies' with over 50 items in Appendix A or you use the chart below which corresponds to the 13 chapters in the book to have them evaluate themselves. Then they can follow up in the corresponding chapter with areas they need to improve (this is on the **handout** for team leaders):

Chapter	Team Leader Skill	Rating 1-5 (5 = high)
Chapter 1	I know the indicators of an effective team.	
Chapter 2	I know who I am as a leader and what kind of leader I hope to be.	
Chapter 3	I know what to do to build trust in a team.	
Chapter 4	I know how to help the team define a clear purpose that will positively impact students.	
Chapter 5	I know how to establish living norms that guide team behavior.	
Chapter 6	I know how to develop the emotional intelligence of my team. I help everyone get along and deal with stress.	
Chapter 7	I know how to facilitate effective communication in a team.	
Chapter 8	I know different ways to make decisions and how to help the team make decisions in ways that build trust.	
Chapter 9	I know how to use my knowledge of adult learning to plan and facilitate a team meeting.	
Chapter 10	I know how to plan for productive meetings (choosing appropriate activities, protocols, etc.)	
Chapter 11	I know how to incorporate feedback when planning meetings and create a facilitator's agenda.	
Chapter 12	I know the difference between healthy and unhealthy conflict, how to cultivate healthy conflict, and how to address unhealthy conflict.	
Chapter 13	I know how to assess the conditions in which I'm leading my team so I can figure out where to best focus my energy.	

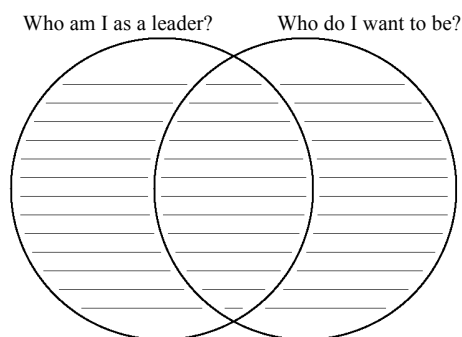
3. Aguilar writes that successful teams attend to **product, process, and learning**. As team leaders, sometimes we emphasize one more than the others. Discuss your understanding of these three elements with a partner and share which area you think you focus *most* on with your team, which you focus on the *least*, and how that might be impacting your team:

Product: A great team gets something *done* that is valuable, useful, and impacts the clients it serves.

Process: A great team's *collaboration* skills improve as a result of working together.

Learning: The *skills and knowledge* of team members increase as a result of being a member of this team.

4. If we want to develop ourselves as leaders of teams, we need to take some time to think about **who we are as leaders**, and what we think about leadership. Take some time individually to think about your *personality type* (are you more extroverted? Base decisions on information or intuition? See some Myers Briggs personality types); your *emotional intelligence*: self-awareness (ability to recognize our own feelings), self-management (how we respond to emotions), social awareness (ability to understand the emotions of others); and your *relationship management* (ability to manage conflict and form healthy relationships), as well as other aspects of your leadership style. Then use the Venn Diagram below to fill in the circles with who you are and who you want to be as a leader of a team. Discuss this with the group. (Note that the Venn Diagram below is on the **handout** for team leaders in a larger size.)



5. There is a lot to do to address the issue of **trust** on your team. Start with this one small activity. First, discuss Stephen Covey's definition of trust on p. 41: "the feeling of confidence we have in another's *character* and *competence*" (note the emphasis is mine). Discuss what this means. Next, to help the team develop confidence in each other's *competence*, it helps to first know what areas of expertise or strength each team member has. Have each team leader list their team members and try their best to fill out this chart. If they can't, they should commit to meeting individually with team members to learn more about them in the next few weeks. (This is also on the **handout** for team leaders.)

Team Member	Strength or Area of Expertise (to possibly share with the team)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

6. Rather than planning one meeting at a time as a team leader, think about creating a larger **Team Work Plan** to guide the planning for your team as described in Chapter 4. Look at the example below excerpted from the chapter and then use the blank template on the **handout** to map out your next month of team meetings based on a school goal and team goal. To do this, you will need to come up with the actions your team will engage in and the indicators you will use to assess success:

Team Work Plan Example		
<i>District or School Goal 1: 95% of students will make at least a 20% growth in reading on our school's reading assessment.</i>		
<i>Team SMARTE GOAL 1: To support this goal, we will use at least 20 reading strategies, 4 assessment tools, and analyze results.</i>		
Dates	Strategic Actions	Benchmark Indicators
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer pre-assessments • Introduce 1st set of reading strategies • Analyze pre-assessments • Share student work from 1st unit, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-assessments analyzed • Student work analyzed

7. In developing the **emotional intelligence (EI) of a team**, it's helpful if the leader knows the *indicators* of strong EI *and* what these indicators might look or sound like in practice. Have the leaders brainstorm sentence stems or short descriptions for each indicator. They can then model these sentences/behaviors with their team, or do this actual activity with them (the **handout** has a larger version):

Indicators of Strong Team Emotional Intelligence	What this looks or sounds like in a team (Write a sentence starter or describe the associated behavior.)
Team members paraphrase each other's ideas.	"So, you're saying that..."
Team members are aware of the frequency of their own contributions and monitor their verbal participation.	
Team members are aware when comments made bring up triggers for them.	
Team members are aware when they are having a difficult day and how this might impact the team.	
Team members express empathy for each other.	
Team members offer feedback in the moment on the group's process.	
Team members find things to be optimistic about.	
Team members note their appreciation for the contributions of others.	

8. To help the team practice **decision making** and further the goal of developing team EI, have the group look at the 12 ideas to build team EI on p.130 of the book. Then, using one of the decision-making strategies on p.6 of the summary (that you have chosen ahead of time) – either consensus, multi-voting, compromise, or majority voting – bring the group through a mock decision-making process to *choose 2 of those 12 EI strategies* the group thinks would be most effective in a team.

9. To help the group become more aware of the importance of **listening** in developing healthy group conversations, use the following self-assessment tool called "How Do I Listen?" during one part of today's meeting (I suggest to use this during the discussion in activity 1 above.) *After* the discussion, ask team members to think about *what kind of listening* they did (on the **handout**):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to find connections. Your mind thinks, "Oh, I remember when that happened to me, too!" | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to find a point you agree or disagree with. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to find a story of your own to share, "I can tell her about that time I..." | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to understand the other person's perspective. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to ask a probing question to keep the other person's reflective capacity. | <input type="checkbox"/> Fake listening. Being bored and occasionally nodding and spacing out. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening but wanting to jump in and finish the speaker's sentence. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to ask a clarifying question because you want more information. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening but feeling impatient, wishing the person would stop talking. | |

10. Have all team leaders bring in an agenda they wrote for an upcoming team meeting. At this meeting, have them individually write a '**facilitator's agenda**' (see p.8 of the summary) with much more detail (how to conduct each activity, anticipated obstacles, more specific time stamps, etc.) and with keeping the principles of adult learning in mind (see pp. 6-7 of the summary) Then in pairs have everyone give feedback on the level of detail in the new facilitator's agenda and how well it attends to the needs of adults.

11. Almost all team leaders experience some **resistance** or pushback on the teams they lead. Have one team leader at a time bring a dilemma about a resistant team member to this meeting. Then, use the **consultancy protocol** to discuss and get help with this resistance: (www.nsrffharmony.org/system/files/protocols/consultancy_0.pdf)

Conclude the Meeting

Three ideas to conclude the meeting: 1) Perhaps you can assign someone as the Process Observer (see p. 3 of the summary) at the start of the meeting and then have this person share observations about the group's *process* now. 2) Ask for feedback on the meeting and your facilitation skills to use to improve the next meeting, or 3) Ask everyone to turn and talk and share *one* idea from today's meeting they plan to use with their own teams.