

# Winning Teams

---

## Building a Legacy of Leadership & Cooperation

Everyone wants to work for a winning team. Winning is more fun than losing... Work is more satisfying... And high performing teams are safe places to be. Everyone gets paid more and gets more pleasure out of their job.

But, most teams don't work very well. What can you do? Instead of firing your staff or changing jobs, why not help transform the team you're already on? Start with yourself. If you really want to work for a winning team, you have to step up your own performance. Teams that achieve amazing results have one thing in common – they don't leave everything up to the leader. Individual team members are all leaders in their own right who are proactive and accept personal responsibility for the group's actions.

The reality is that you do have a choice in whether your team and your company wins or loses. It doesn't depend on a few people at the top. It depends on you.

1. **Help each other.** Teams that are willing to collaborate prevent a lot of problems - and when you help others you increase the odds that they will help you in your own hour of need.
2. **Be disciplined.** Teamwork comes down to self-control and discipline on the part of everyone. Leaders cannot be everywhere at once or drive a team to the top all alone. It takes discipline to do jobs that aren't fun, to meet high standards, and to stick to deadlines.
3. **Use your own skills effectively.** Unless you are competent and reliable, your teammates can't afford to trust you or turn over tasks to you 100%. So give your team and your supervisors a reason to believe in you – a record of reliability.
4. **Value your differences.** Think-alike, act-alike teams can be pleasant to work on, but they aren't effective. Diversity brings balance, new ideas and strength to a group.
5. **Communicate, communicate, communicate.** How well you and your team members keep each other informed will be the deciding issue in whether you achieve goals or not. Everybody in a working group needs to know what is going on at all times.
6. **Sacrifice.** A team is not built upon a group of individuals who all want to take credit for successes and never accept blame for mistakes. Your fellow team members will find out if you snitch on others, sell out the group to take credit, or look out for yourself above all else.
7. **Trust each other.** Do you keep your promises? Do you play fair? Are you willing to put yourself at risk to do the right thing? Teamwork requires you to have faith in each other.
8. **Help new people join the team.** Usually, when a newcomer fails on a team, it's not all their fault. Usually, the team failed the newcomer as well. You don't have to coddle people or make their jobs easy, but you do have to offer training, respect, communication and support.
9. **Build each other up.** Don't waste energy being arrogant, critical, or singing your own praises. Look for the good in your team mates and be grateful for all the things they do well.
10. **Focus on group processes.** Catch problems while they are small and fix system glitches before they have time to do a lot of damage. Make sure that your group work flow and patterns support the vision for the company as a whole and support the way all of you like to work.
11. **Have a sense of humor.** Your personality, attitude and character are on display everyday, and your team will rise or fall based upon the behaviors of its members. So smile, laugh, show genuine concern for others and you will be able to stand united through tough times.
12. **Back up the leader.** In many ways team members hold more power over results than team leaders. So step up and accept the responsibility that is yours.