



# TEAM BUILDING

CREATING HIGH-PERFORMING TEAMS

**Center for Human Capital Innovation**

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## What is Team-Building?

Team-building is the process of identifying, motivating, and empowering individual employees to achieve a common goal, charter, or mission. Creating a *high-performance team*, however, is not just a matter of organizing a group of people to work together on a set of tasks. Building a team that can reach its greatest potential can require members to overcome challenging circumstances, such as lack of common identity, cultural conflicts, and poor channels of communication. Furthermore, once a team has come together, it takes careful diligence to sustain its effectiveness.

Team-building and sustenance can be challenging, yet has significant benefits in the long run. Researchers found that high-performing teams within organizations provided 23% more economic benefit than other comparable groups, and similarly, that teams have 29% more financial return when they have a clear purpose and common understanding of goals.<sup>1</sup> Overall, high-performance teams are able to execute tasks more quickly, solve complex problems, and provide other competitive advantages for any organization that depends on teams working together.

## What Makes a High-Performing Team?

Although there is no simple step-by-step process for creating a high-performing team, and no two high-performing teams operate in the same way, it is understood that the most effective teams share several common traits. The Society of Human Resource Management identifies several commonalities of high-performance teams:<sup>2</sup>

- **Purpose, roles, and responsibilities:** High-performance teams share a commitment to a common purpose and work to achieve the same day-to-day objectives. Members have clear roles and responsibilities within the team and know what is expected of them.
- **Talent, skills, and work ethic:** An important component of a high-performing team is recruiting and retaining talented team members who motivate each other. Although team members may have different sets of skills to offer, their skills complement one another to help ensure there are few competency gaps within the team.
- **Incentives and motivation:** Intrinsic motivation is an important part of encouraging high-performance within teams; for example, when team members can pursue challenges that have personal meaning to them or when team members are given new responsibilities and

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<sup>1</sup> *Accelerating Performance: How Organizations Can Mobilize, Execute and Transform with Agility*; Colin Price & Sharon Toyne

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/developingandsustaininghigh-performanceworkteams.aspx>



opportunities. Extrinsic motivators such as rewards and recognition, are also important to incentivize high-performance.

- **Leadership:** For a team to be successful, it is important for its members to espouse strong formal or informal leadership abilities, such as providing expertise to one other, efficient task delegation, and mentoring or coaching other team members.
- **Conflict and communication:** When teams can communicate with each other honestly and candidly, the group is able to address conflicts as soon as they arise. Open communication is a critical part of ensuring all team members are aware of what is expected of them.
- **Empowerment:** When members of high-performing teams are empowered with opportunities to develop new skills, foster professional interests, and given more responsibility for team outcomes, they can make the greatest contributions to their teams.
- **Norms and standards:** High-performance teams discuss and agree to a set of operating procedures, including regular team evaluation and accountability, mutual respect, fostering a supportive team environment, and dedicated work ethics.



## Team-Building at CHCI

At CHCI, we believe a high-performing team is a collaborative group of people who share a common vision and goal, and are able to hold each other accountable to achieve great results. Creating these high-performing teams, however is no easy task; it requires the right mix of strong leadership, empowerment, and goal clarification between team-members. CHCI offer a series of team-building workshops for organizations that recognize the need for team-building for any employee group.

## About CHCI

CHCI provides business solutions through “best and next” practices in strategic human capital management. CHCI provides measurable, real-world strategies that support your organization to attract and retain high-performing people, build a diverse and inclusive workplace, and leverage individual and team performance throughout the enterprise. For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Anne Loehr, Executive Vice President: [anneloehr@centerforhci.org](mailto:anneloehr@centerforhci.org) or (571) 970-4250, Ext. 113.