

# Level Up!

Building The Highest  
Performance Teams  
- The Leader's Toolkit -

Dr Pete Stebbins PhD

with Alistair Kerr

*"The High Performance Teams Program that Pete runs has enabled my school to have a clear vision and set of actions for moving from good to great. I can't recommend the program highly enough."*

**Kurt Goodwin, Principal Mt Archer State School**

*"Dr Pete is one of those rare speakers, writers and facilitators who can take the complex and make it simple for all to understand. However just because it's simple doesn't mean it's easy, and so of possibly even greater usefulness is the step-by-step guide provided in 'Level Up!' to enable leaders of all organisations to implement across all the teams in their settings. Dr Pete has also managed to achieve the 'golden egg' of focusing on both performance and wellbeing which is of ever greater importance in the modern world of work."*

**Nick Burnett, Next Level Greatness and former School Principal.**

*"I can highly recommend Dr Pete Stebbins' work because bottom line - it works! Pete is very generous, down to earth and inspiring. I have found the strategies and processes he has shared are well researched, clear and effective. As a result of exploring these tools for HPT, my own confidence and understanding have grown. It is an exciting time to be a leader and with Pete's support, I believe we are in good hands. Thank you! Thank you!"*

**Teresa Anderson, Head of Campus Capricornia School of Distance Education**

*"Pete is an exceptional speaker on building High Performance Teams. He is able to connect with the group and is practical as well as influential. His work changes mindsets and gets results."*

**Judi Newman, Lead Principal Coach, Dept. Education Queensland**

*"Dr Pete Stebbins is a legend. His ability to support our school leadership team whilst challenging each and everyone of us to reach goals has been enlightening and extremely rewarding. His knowledge, passion and enthusiasm as well as his clearly defined structures ensures success for all. He is true to his word and commitment and will ensure that you receive the support, stretch and strategies you need."*

**Ben Kidd, Principal Rangeville State School**

*“The High Performance Teams Program, facilitated by Pete, was the platform for our leadership team to collaborate and plan as well as support each other. Using the key performance indicators and action plan we were able to purposefully transition into leading with a focus on staff diversity, communication and wellbeing.”*

**Janelle Groves, Principal Meringandan State School**

*“Pete is one of those rare and exceptional people who consistently delivers meaningful results, inspiring others to stretch themselves, learn and grow. Pete challenges individuals through executive coaching, and builds expertise in others through his insightful, engaging and challenging workshops. Pete is consistently rated by participants as one of the most inspirational facilitators they have encountered.”*

**Fiona Loughlan, General Manager, IHCA**

*“Pete’s work on High Performance Teams is extraordinary. Seeing the power of his measured work, numerous case studies and examples is testament for any school or organisation looking to learn from his years of experience. In the future of work where teams and resources are leaner than ever, now is the time to read and apply “Level Up!” and create world class educational experiences that reach every teacher and student and enable them to achieve their potential.”*

**Jane Anderson, Author of “New Power: How Authentic Leaders Drive Real Change in the 21st Century”**

*“Without exception Pete provides clarity, enthusiasm and professionalism to every project, engaging with all stakeholders to ensure the end result is awesome. His insight and dedication to delivering on promises is exemplary.”*

**Elizabeth Wilmot, Facilitator, Executive Coach, Innovator**

*“In my public service career spanning 24 years I have attended numerous team days and Dr Pete was the standout facilitator in that time. Pete was the only facilitator that, after he left, there was a noticeable cultural change. For me this was due to both his engaging personality and straightforward understandable style of presenting complex psychological team dynamics that every team member could understand and implement back at the workplace.”*

**John Allen, Director Training Capability**

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# Foreword

## High Performance Teams:

### An Open Letter to Educational Leaders!

School leaders need to embrace the challenge of building High Performance Teams in order to maximise staff and student outcomes. Teamwork sits at the heart of every effective organisation – and especially in successful schools. I firmly believe that it is the teams of dedicated school leaders, teachers and support staff who ultimately hold the future of our planet in their hands as they shape the hearts and minds of the next generation of leaders from their classrooms.

Dr Pete Stebbins tells us that *High Performance Teams* are the ultimate competitive advantage in business as well as the foundations of every successful school and he's got that right! After many years working as a leader in education I have seen great initiatives rise and fall not so much based on the efficacy of the strategy itself, but rather due to the ability of the teams of teachers to work together to effectively implement the initiative.

In schools High Performance Teams are easy to spot due to their deep and effective communication and collaboration, which helps to develop shared ownership and trusting relationships. They also ensure clear delegation of key responsibilities and a shared understanding of both team and school improvement priorities to enhance collaborative engagement.

What I particularly like about *Level Up! Building The Highest Performance Teams* is the explicit focus on the varying levels of team performance and the very practical approach outlined to enable teams to progress to Level 5 The Highest Performance Teams! Once again Pete provides very clear real-life examples and non-examples of best practice that all school leaders can

easily understand and integrate into their professional practice both as members of teams themselves, but also as leaders who need to 'right size' their approach – differentiate to meet the varying needs of teams operating at different levels within their school.

Professor John Hattie reminds us that '*accomplishing the maximum impact on student learning depends on teams of teachers working together effectively*' and indeed the time is 'NOW' for all school leaders to make building the Highest Performance Teams a top priority! It is for this reason, I hope you will both enjoy reading (and implementing) *Level Up! Building The Highest Performance Teams* by Dr Pete Stebbins.

Read on!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leslie".

Leslie Single  
QASSP President



# Introduction

## The Power of Shared Experience

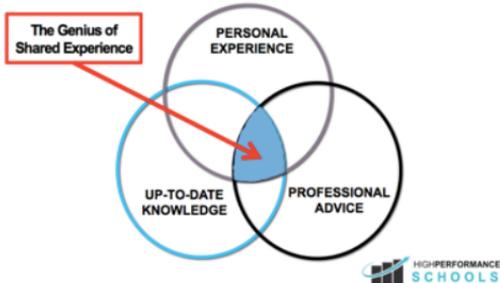
*“The only source of knowledge is experience.”*  
– Albert Einstein

After many years of researching how to build High Performance Teams I have finally come to understand why Albert Einstein was right when he nominated ‘experience’ as the ultimate source of knowledge. However, I beg to differ with Einstein ever so slightly, yet for our purpose very importantly, between ‘personal experience’ and ‘shared experience’ – let me explain...

When it comes to building High Performance Teams, the most powerful sources of insight are found amidst ‘shared experiences’. The power of shared experiences lies in the genius of distilling all the expert advice, latest theory and personal experiences of a group of leaders into a few powerful insights that can shape future strategies and decisions.

After so many years of living amidst the shared experiences of leaders building High Performance Teams, I have repeatedly seen the

problems created by relying too heavily on advice, theory or personal experience alone. Much of my own work and understandings about team transformation have needed to be revised more times than I care to remember after colliding with the shared experiences of the real world.



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The old saying *'When your plan meets the real world, the real world always wins'* rings true for much of my own career in team transformation. Making the choice not to simply ignore the facts from these real-world encounters but rather to grow and learn from them was my own 'poison chalice' as I tested the limits of my colleagues and friend's patience through endless re-thinking and revisions of our approach to High Performance Teams. Needless to say, knowing so much yet knowing so little, was at times a deeply frustrating and humbling experience.

I have been working in and around teams my entire life. Like so many teenagers, my work history began in part-time roles as a junior team member working supermarkets, shops and cafes. As an adult, whilst studying psychology, I worked in professional teams in community welfare and hospital and health services. Post-graduation, I worked as a team leader in a corporate consulting group and over the years progressed into executive roles becoming the Chief Executive of a much larger group of companies where I lived the experience of managing multiple teams within my own company whilst delivering team development services to clients.

During my career, I have been fortunate to have worked with, and learned from, some of the most capable leaders in Australia across the Education, Health, Government and Corporate Sectors. The mistakes made, and the lessons learned across the many leadership and team transformation projects we have worked on, represents several lifetimes of shared experiences and learning about building High Performance Teams. The accumulated wisdom from these scars of real world experience ultimately became the 'common sense' behind our approach to building High Performance Teams.

High Performance Teams are an essential foundation for any organisation grappling with change. With globalisation and

advances in technology, the pace, magnitude and impact of workplace change today dwarfs anything that has ever come beforehand. To survive and thrive in this next industrial revolution we need to collectively improve team performance across all organisations and let go of the old idea that knowledge should be used as a competitive advantage by withholding it from others.

After all, we all live on the same planet, need income to feed ourselves and our families and jobs that are meaningful, satisfying and contribute to a better future. Thus, my ultimate goal in writing *Level Up!* was to synthesise and distil the many lifetimes worth of insights I have been privileged to share in order to create a practical and accessible guide for anyone willing to put in the work necessary to build the Highest Performance Teams.

Whilst this book will resonate with a large audience of senior executives, human resources professionals and management consultants across many industries, I'd like to specifically dedicate this book to school leaders – principals, deputy principals, faculty and year level leaders who lead teams of teachers.

I passionately believe that High Performance Teaching Teams hold the future of our planet in their hands, as they shape the hearts and minds of the next generation of leaders from inside their classrooms. It is my great hope that the shared experiences contained within these pages helps to fast-track the high performance journey in all organisations – especially in schools where student outcomes are maximised when every team in every school is a High Performance Team!

Venturus Est Optimus!  
Pete Stebbins



# Part 1.

## Unanswered Questions: The End of The Beginning...

*“Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”*

— Winston Churchill

# Chapter 1

## Why High Performance Teams in Education?

*“Not finance. Not strategy. Not technology. It is teamwork that remains the ultimate competitive advantage, both because it is so powerful and so rare.”*

– Patrick Lencioni

### **The Value of High Performance Teams**

High Performance Teams remain not only the ultimate competitive advantage in business but also an increasingly crucial predictor of organisational survival. In a rapidly changing world where technology advances are radically downsizing employment opportunities, the importance of high performance teamwork (genuine collaboration to achieve innovation that maintains or grows competitive advantage) has shifted from an aspirational goal to an essential minimum standard to maintain both organisational survival and individual job security. Into the future, the basic requirement for all teams to be the Highest Performance Teams possible will be ever more urgent as ‘advances in technology will lead to 40% of all Australian jobs being redundant in the next 10-15 years’ (CEDA, 2015).

### **High Performance Teams in Education**

*“The beautiful rests on the foundation of the necessary.”*

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Why High Performance Teams in Education?

To say that society is changing rapidly is a gross understatement. The children of today are growing up in a world where the jobs they are being trained for will no longer exist by the time they graduate. If that weren't enough, they also face the stark prospect of economic, social, and environmental challenges that seem to grow by the month. As this mess is largely of our generation's making, we are duty bound to equip the next generation with the skills they need to face, and overcome, these seemingly impossible challenges.

This can ONLY be done through a curriculum that uses the most effective (high yield) teaching strategies, which can ONLY be implemented by teaching teams working under the right preconditions – a high yield crop needs quality soil. Teaching teams can only be at their most effective when working within a high performance culture. Thus, in education, High Performance Teams are the essential foundation required for every teaching team to implement high yield education strategies effectively, to allow students to maximise their learning and be better prepared to 'solve the unsolvable,' leaving the economy, environment and society in better shape than we have left it before them.

### **School Culture: The 'Hard Edge' to the 'Soft Stuff'**

Although the idea of making High Performance Teams in schools a top priority in order to maximise teacher effectiveness (and thereby improve student outcomes) is a 'no-brainer' for most education leaders, it still remains a controversial issue for some. Unfortunately, a minority of education administrators mistakenly devalue investing in High Performance Teams – believing instead that they should assign 100% of their resources and development efforts directly to the 'end-user' (the students) and devote no resources to support the

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‘deliverers’ (the teams of teaching staff) that will ultimately ‘make or break’ the school culture and outcomes.

How short sighted, and wrong they are. Renowned education expert Professor John Hattie puts it bluntly: *“Accomplishing the maximum impact on student learning depends on teams of teachers working together...”* Thus, if we are to take seriously our moral responsibility to help the next generation ‘solve the unsolvable’ then we must ensure that ‘every team in every school is a High Performance Team!’

### **School Improvement: The Known Unknown**

School leaders are 100% responsible for encouraging psychological safety and developing the ‘ways of working’ among their teaching teams to enable the foundational conditions for the delivery of high yield educational strategies to students. Yet many school leaders remain divided about the best (most effective and efficient) ways to fix common problems within the education system such as poor student performance, disgruntled and/or unmotivated teachers, and how to best support the middle leaders who seem to be struggling with these challenges...

In my role supporting school leaders, my team and I run many large-scale multi-day development programs. At the outset of these programs it is common for school leaders to highlight the ‘hot’ issues they are facing within their schools. Consider the following quotes as typical of what we have heard from various school leaders coming to grips with school improvement over the years...

- *What are we going to do about our poor outcome data on ‘reading’, ‘writing’, ‘spelling’, ‘math’? Are the teachers even delivering the curriculum correctly? What is their team leader (HoD) doing about it???*

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- *What are we going to do about middle leader 'X'? I am constantly hearing staff complain – they just don't seem to be up to the task...*
- *I'm sick and tired of the negative attitude of staff – why won't they take responsibility for their own happiness and show some initiative...*
- *What's wrong with people? They are more than happy to gossip and backstab but won't give each other the very feedback they need to address the problems...*

The level of conflict, peer group pressure, and the politically and industrially sensitive nature of the school environment leaves many school leaders of struggling schools anxious and uncertain about what should be done to resolve the many challenges they face. This is made so much worse when the executive leadership team, regional administrators and influential parents and community members are also divided about what the 'right' solutions are to address the problems of low performance schools.

Here are some of the more memorable (and dysfunctional) responses we have heard from leaders when we suggested improving team performance should be a priority in schools:

- *We don't have time to focus on building relationships with our staff – our students are the priority issue!*
- *We don't focus on teamwork! We spent a half day on it at the start of last year and it didn't work then so why bother with it now?*
- *Investing in building staff capacity won't get instant results on our data! Besides, it will take too long to 'move the needle' and I'll get in more trouble with the P&C and my bosses. I don't want any more conflict nor risk being transferred or losing my job...*

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- *Let's simply wait it out to the end of the year and move around the problematic staff into different teaching teams – so they don't have to work together!*
- *Let's double down and make them all do the 'Program X' Reading Skills course again AND employ a literacy coach and tell them to solve the team work issues...*
- *Let's refurbish their classrooms and maybe buy a new fridge for their staff room so they'll stop complaining as much...*

Up front it must be acknowledged that all of these arguments are well intentioned – everyone clearly wants the best for their schools. However, let's address why these attitudes towards school improvement are ultimately misguided. All arguments in the school performance debate can be boiled down to 4 themes:

1. **Time and Resources** – Some argue that time and resources should be spent only on the 'end user' (students), however as we've already explored, this focus is too narrow – we also need to focus on those delivering the service (teachers and education administrators). Others argue that changing culture simply takes too long, however we must remember that 'Rome wasn't built in a day', but it was built to last – you get out what you put in, and any investments of time and resources in positive staff culture will repay themselves many times over and far outlast any 'quick fixes'.
2. **Relationships vs. Strategy** – Some argue that teaching strategy is more important than workplace relationships to 'move the needle' in school performance data. However, this is simply not true. There is universal agreement among education researchers that positive relationships

sit at the foundation of ALL effective teaching and learning in schools (with the debate about the efficacy of various strategies sitting above this pre-condition). Thus, at the very least, improving workplace relationships and team performance should be an equal priority with initiatives on specific teaching strategies.

3. **Waiting It Out** – Some argue that we can simply ‘wait out bad behaviour’. However, everything we know about the psychology of change highlights that this is incorrect. People will continue to exhibit behaviour that serves their need. Left to their own devices they will not change.
4. **Bells and Whistles** – Finally, there are those who argue that investments in new programs or facilities are the ‘answer’. Adding a new coat of paint over a rusty infrastructure is a ‘quick-fix’ that may look good from the outside, but over time cracks appear and reveal the problems that still exist at the core – so too with our teams, there may be great excitement during the honeymoon phase of a new program or new facilities, however soon enough the underlying problems reappear.

### **Beneath The Surface: Fixing Foundations vs. Quick-Fix Makeovers**

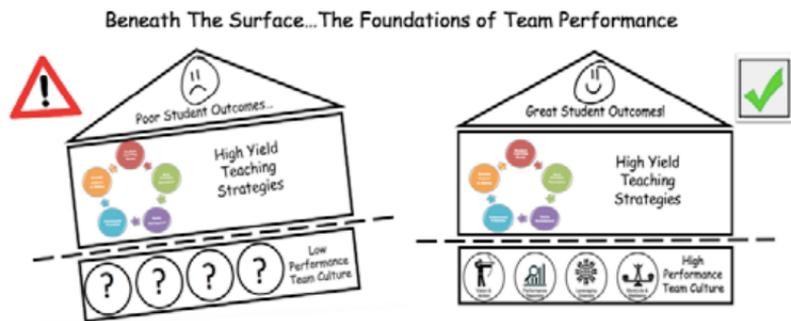
*“CFO asks CEO: What if we train our people and they leave?  
CEO replies: What if we don’t and they stay.”*

– Unknown

Given the need for self-preservation, it is understandable that many school leaders feel obligated to prioritise the most ‘visible’ or ‘obvious’ short-term problems from the customer (student/parent) viewpoint instead of investing in the ‘less

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visible', but more valuable, long-term task of building the solid foundations of High Performance Teams. Thus, staff are most often trained in whatever topics relate to customer complaints, quick-fix makeovers and new equipment that customers can see is purchased and displayed prominently ("wow... the school is really doing something"). However, the constant pre-occupation with quick-fix makeovers to 'show' improvement to outsiders without addressing problems in the foundation of the school's culture creates a dark legacy in the form of disillusioned staff and poor student outcomes.



When a school gets caught in the quick-fix makeover trap it becomes a case of 'the tail wagging the dog'. This short-term reactionary approach to school improvement is similar to applying a 'band-aid' to a wound (on the surface things might seem like they are improving but underneath nothing is getting any better) and only exacerbates the problem! It's no wonder that this approach leaves staff angry because they feel 'undervalued' ("WTF! Is getting new equipment more important than looking after us as staff?...") and 'unfairly criticised' ("Why are we having to be trained on teaching strategies we already know when the real problem is about an inconsistent approach to student behaviour?").

The idea of only focusing resources on addressing short-term customer perceptions (and not using resources to address the underlying needs of your staff) would be absurd in any other industry where it is widely understood that improving staff morale and wellbeing is a crucial aspect of sustainably improving the quality of customer service. The famous management guru Peter Drucker said, *“Culture eats strategy for breakfast”* and many school leaders are firsthand witnesses to the ‘implementation failures’ that occur when new and improved teaching strategies are introduced to schools where there is low morale, poor team culture and a resistance to improvement and change. In the vast majority of implementation failures, school leaders (knowingly or unknowingly) chose the ‘quick-fix’ path to appease their customers instead of ‘looking after their staff’ and building the solid foundations of High Performance Teams.

### **“Looking After Your Staff”: The True Nature of Psychological Safety**

Business guru Sir Richard Branson (flamboyant founder of the Virgin group of companies) over-simplified, but none-the-less summed up, the issue of high performance culture well when he said: *“If you look after your staff, they’ll look after your customers.”* To date, we are yet to witness any change management or improvement failures in schools where there is a high value placed on teamwork, support and the capability of staff.

When it comes to building a culture of high performance, the statement *“If you look after your staff, they’ll look after your customers”* is overly simplistic and regularly misinterpreted by management consultants so it deserves clarification. ‘Looking after your staff’ is NOT about ‘making them happy’ (as we all know you can’t force other people to be happy as happiness

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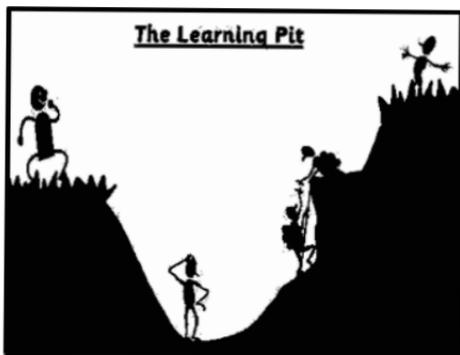
is a personal choice), but rather ‘looking after your staff’ is about creating the optimum conditions for high performance (a combination of high job satisfaction and high engagement). Drilling down, one of the most important factors to create these preconditions is ‘psychological safety’.

In 2012, Google (global leader in IT, eCommerce and innovation) embarked on an ambitious initiative — code-name: Project Aristotle. The goal of the project was to meticulously study hundreds of Google’s teams (containing some of the world’s top talent) and figure out why some teams stumbled while others soared. The results were extremely instructive in moving forward our understanding on the DNA of High Performance Teams. Results showed that it wasn’t the sum of the innate talent of the team members that contributed the most to team performance, rather higher performance teams created higher levels of ‘psychological safety’ within the team which enabled team members to communicate and empathise with each other compared to lower performance teams. By making sure teams had clear goals and a culture of dependability, teams were psychologically safe to provide honest (sometimes brutal) feedback to each other, take informed risks, and explore innovations and improvements while managing the inherent setbacks and failures in a way that accelerated learning yet avoided unnecessary conflict and blame.

### **The Learning Pit of High Performance Teams**

We were unaware of Google’s research at the time, however we now see how our own work on High Performance Teams has progressed down a parallel path. We have come to understand that in order for people to improve they must enter the ‘Learning Pit’ (ref. James Nottingham) where they

must deal with the uncomfortable task of taking risks – trying something new and growing their own capability.



Such risk taking in the workplace is most effective when people feel secure or safe in terms of (1) their underlying job security (having a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities along with the goals

and timeframes for which they are to achieve them), and (2) their social status (having a clear understanding of team norms around working together effectively, giving feedback and managing conflict, as well as understanding the work/life context of each team member, and the similarities and differences in wider social circumstances which may at times impact upon team functioning).

## The High Performance Teams Framework

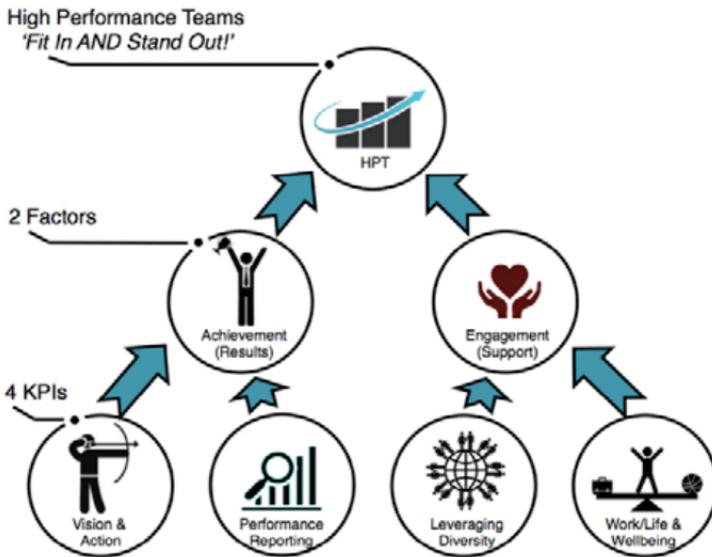
*“Life is a journey not a destination.”*

— Thoreau

We developed the High Performance Teams Framework to help teams unpack their spoken and unspoken group norms around Achievement (the connections between vision and action and performance reporting which underpin job security) and Engagement (the connections between leveraging diversity and differences to effectively work together and understanding each other’s work/life context). In the High Performance Teams Framework, Achievement and Engagement are the

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twin factors that underpin all High Performance Teams. These twin factors are then unpacked further into specific domains that are subsidiary indicators or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of success in each factor. The factor of Achievement is a combination of Vision and Action (KPI 1) and Performance Reporting (KPI 2). The Factor of Engagement is a combination of Leveraging Diversity (KPI 3) and Work/Life and Wellbeing (KPI 4).



### **Mixing The Metaphor: The Leader Builds A House But The Team Builds A Highway**

To engage school staff and leaders on the importance of High Performance Teams as a concept for wider school success, we experimented with some simple concepts and metaphors. Initially we found the 'House Metaphor' (as described above) was really useful in helping leaders understand the importance of building High Performance Teams as the 'foundations' for subsequent successes (and also the challenge of prioritising

## Why High Performance Teams in Education?

HPT when it may be less visible than other ‘quick fix makeover’ strategies).

However, the ‘House Metaphor’ was not as useful when applying the HPT Framework into the day-to-day operations of teams. Using a ‘static’ or ‘fixed’ object like a house inadvertently gave people the wrong impression that High Performance Teams only needed to be built once and then would last for many years without any further assistance – when clearly this is not the case (and many leaders (myself included) have suffered much unnecessary stress and frustration caused by buying into the idea that you can make one strategic investment to ‘fix’ team performance and then never need to ‘fix’ it again). We all know that human beings are not ‘static’ or ‘fixed’ objects but rather ‘dynamic’ and regularly ‘changing’ in their moods, energy levels, health and interests. Thus, we needed a different metaphor to explain HPT not merely as a ‘concept’ but rather as an ‘action’ guiding the journey of High Performance Teams in their constantly changing worlds.

The ‘Journey Metaphor’ became quite useful for many organisations. In schools, we knew that there were always two fixed overarching goals (student improvement and teacher effectiveness) however the ‘actions’ needed to achieve these goals needed to be continuously adjusted depending on the needs of staff and students which varied daily, weekly, monthly and yearly.

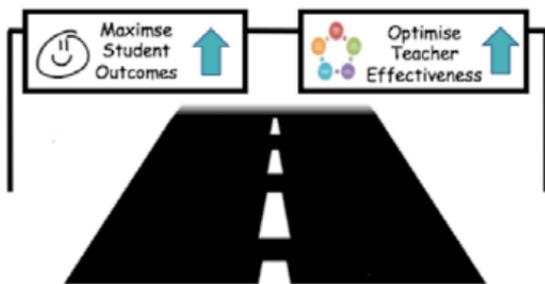
*“The success of teaching teams is dependent on establishing and adhering to norms and protocols.”*

– Richard Du Four

Thus, the most important issue was helping teams understand the ‘journey’ they were on and in particular the rules, norms

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and protocols they could all adhere to in order to increase both the speed and safety of responding to the regular changes needed to optimise student improvement and teacher effectiveness. Using the idea of destination signs over a highway (see diagram below) the idea of ‘road rules’ as a concept to guide the journey of High Performance Teams quickly became the most useful concept to maximise team ‘buy-in’.



### The Road Rules of High Performance Teams

The ‘road rules’ metaphor goes like this:

*“In order to safely navigate through our daily lives there are a number of structures that we are all aware of, and agree to live by. Take for example road rules – If you are driving, baring extremely negligent and reckless drivers, you can safely assume that all traffic (in Australia) will drive on the left-hand side of the road. This rule not only keeps everyone on the road safe (avoiding head on collisions), but it also allows for the most efficient flow of traffic as all drivers are clear on the direction that the traffic is flowing in.”*

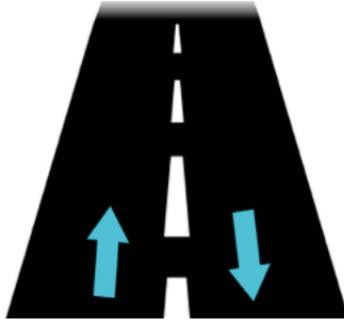
*Work is no different than being out there on the road. In order for us to succeed at work, by maximising performance and minimising potential conflicts and misunderstandings, we need to recognise the need for clear and explicit ‘road rules’ (or frameworks).*

*While some staff may argue that ‘road rules’ reduce diversity or freedom of expression by compelling everyone to conform to predefined norms, nothing could be further from the truth.*

## Why High Performance Teams in Education?

*Implemented correctly, 'road rules' need not be restrictive, and should be implemented only to the extent that they are useful for encouraging safety and clarity – As long as you follow the speed limit you can drive any make, model, or colour of car you like!"*

What are the  
"Road Rules"  
for success at  
your School...  
do all staff  
know them?



This simple metaphor proved successful in helping people understand the importance of HPT as the foundation for effective teamwork – setting the ‘culture’ right to maximise the benefits of the ‘strategies’ teams were implementing across the school.

# Chapter 2

## The High Performance Schools Project

*“Accomplishing the maximum impact on student learning depends on teams of teachers working together...”*

– John Hattie

With school leaders and staff engaged and motivated to explore how to build High Performance Teams we began the journey of collaborating and co-constructing strategies to address each of the KPIs by getting teams to engage in discussions about what they were already doing in each of the 4 KPIs of High Performance Teams (and areas they could improve in) using what we called ‘the 4 magic questions’:

- **KPI 1: Vision and Action** – *“How do all staff clearly connect their daily, weekly and monthly actions to our school’s vision and values?”*
- **KPI 2: Performance Reporting** – *“What types of team-specific data do we collect and report to drive both improvement and satisfaction within our staff AND how regularly do we look at it?”*
- **KPI 3: Leveraging Diversity** – *“How do we ensure that the diversity within our staff promotes inclusion and becomes a strategic advantage?”*
- **KPI 4: Work/Life & Wellbeing** – *“How do we fast-track our understanding and ability to support each other’s work/life needs and wellbeing?”*

As a result of these discussions teams would quickly consolidate and make ‘explicit’ the team norms, systems and processes that were working well. Importantly, the identification, overt

recognition and explicit documentation of these effective team strategies meant other teams could copy or adapt such strategies for their own use AND new team members joining the group could be ‘culturally on-boarded’ much faster than previously. Beyond teams identifying what they were already doing well were a series of ideas or innovations to experiment with to improve team performance in various KPIs such as changing the way meetings were run, actively discussing the school’s mission, vision and values, and teaming activities to both understand individual differences and get to know each other’s work/life context/circumstances better. These strategies were then organised into an ‘action plan’ which included accompanying outcome measures, and as we followed their progress over time, we could measure the impact of implementing High Performance Teams strategies on staff wellbeing and job satisfaction and most importantly student outcomes!



### **A 3 Stage Approach to Sustainable Change**

The High Performance Schools Program uses a 3 stage approach designed to enable teams to embed the 4 KPIs of High Performance Teams (HPT) into both their normal working environment and wider organisational accountabilities and responsibilities (see diagram on Page 26).

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Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
<b>ESTABLISH FOUNDATIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baseline assessment</li><li>• Foundation workshops</li><li>• Team Action Plans &amp; Data Walls</li><li>• Implementation of organisational health and performance eCheckin</li><li>• 360 Assessment and development planning for leaders</li></ul>	<b>DRIVE FOR RESULTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quarterly extended team meetings with professional development sessions</li><li>• Monthly action plan updates in team meetings</li><li>• Monthly eCheckin analysis and scorecarding</li></ul>	<b>COACH FOR SUSTAINABILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manager coaching and support</li><li>• Continued professional development and intermittent observation and feedback on team meetings and self-governance</li><li>• Program completion workshop – forward 12-month strategy</li></ul>

During Stage 1 of the program, each team completes an intensive 2 Day foundations workshop that assesses baseline team functioning, the creation of team data walls and forward HPT action plans. During this stage of the program, the facilitator works very closely with the team and encourages the team's leader to participate in workshops as an 'equal voice' within the team. A pulse survey focusing on the key HPT indicators (HPT Pulse Survey) is embedded into the team's 'business as usual' operations to provide real-time feedback for the team to aide in team level accountability and support. Among leadership teams, 360 assessments are also implemented during Stage 1.

In Stage 2 of the program teams receive ongoing professional development as well as targeted support to ensure optimal team meeting dynamics and effectiveness. Ongoing coaching is provided to the leaders to assist with embedding the HPT framework and progressing the team action plan. Data from the HPT Pulse Survey and team feedback cycle is monitored to drive improvement and sustainability. During Stage 2, the impact of the team leader increases as the HPT facilitator gradually decreases their attendance at team meetings and provide background coaching support.

In Stage 3 the impact of the team leader increases to the maximum level. The HPT facilitator has significantly reduced

contact with the team, only playing a ‘critical friend’ role observing team meetings and providing intermittent targeted professional development. Coaching assistance continues with the team’s leader as they are now the key driver for supporting the team in implementing ongoing action plans and normal operational and strategic activity. Stage 3 concludes with a program completion workshop where the team presents a summary of their implementation journey, the outcome data achieved to date and, most importantly, their key learnings and forward 12-month strategy.

### **Early Adopters & Outcomes: West Key State School**

*“Without data you’re just another person with an opinion.”*  
– W Edwards Deming

West Key State School (pseudonym) was an early adopter of the High Performance Teams Program and an early crucial test of the idea that building High Performance Teams could improve not only staff wellbeing and satisfaction but also student outcomes. West Key is a regional school located in the South West Region of Queensland, Australia and caters for around 350 students ranging from Prep to Year 6. The Principal of West Key State School made the decision to invest in his leadership team’s development as part of a broader continuous improvement agenda:

*“By most measures we were an average to good school, but I wanted to take things to the next level. I wanted to see our school thrive! I wanted students rising to the challenge – stretching themselves to new levels of achievement. I wanted to see our teaching teams energised and motivated to pursue best practice and be subject matter experts and leaders in their fields. I wanted our administration and leadership team to dig deeper to find the courage to challenge people to be their best and have the humility*

## Level Up!

*to share their struggles along the way. Looking back now, the results speak for themselves.” (Principal West Key S.S.)*

### **Progress Through the 3 Stages of HPT**

#### **Stage 1: Establish Foundations**

Within Stage 1, the West Key State School Leadership Team collected baseline data and worked on setting goals for the school over the following 12-month period.

*“The work that we did as a team in the beginning was critical for us as a leadership team, because it gave us the time, tools and space to deeply and honestly reflect on where we were as a school and to recommit to a shared vision of striving for excellence. Of all of the work that we did this was the most difficult but most crucial. Since reshaping our school vision we now have a collective focus on a schoolwide approach to pedagogy and team wellbeing. With everyone pulling in the same direction, things just got easier.” (Principal West Key SS).*

#### **Stage 2: Drive For Results**

During Stage 2, West Key State School had embedded their school’s High Performance Team Action Plan, and the data they were receiving from the weekly HPT Pulse Survey had created a self-correcting system.

*“The biggest surprise for me as a Principal was that once we began to develop our school HPT Action Plan the next level of leaders at our school took a step up. I found that compared to the past when I was driving the agenda, now the team was driving the agenda. We were starting to get data back about the team and having some honest conversations. Again, things were different compared to the past because the framework encouraged everyone to focus on issues rather than personalities.” (Principal West Key SS).*

#### **Stage 3: Coach For Sustainability**

During Stage 3 participating schools undertook a review and

established local level Community of Practice (CoP) strategies to maintain post-program momentum.

*“Looking back, I can honestly say that we have changed our school culture for the better. Now I’m excited to see where we will go as a school over the next year. I was grateful to work with and learn from other Principals and to see that they face similar challenges to me. We’ll definitely continue to collaborate next year.”* (Principal West Key SS).

### **Outcomes: Results Upon Program Completion**

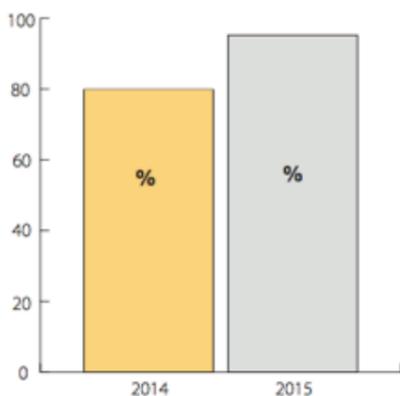
On completion of the High Performance Teams Program, West Key State School attained a number of impressive results across both Achievement and Engagement compared to the previous year.

- **Engagement & Workforce Wellbeing:** There was a significant positive increase in staff wellbeing based on the results from the weekly HPT Pulse Survey. Subjective comments made by staff such as: *“It just feels nicer to be at work this year”* were also supported by the School Opinion Survey results (see Graph 2 on Page 30) registering a significant positive increase compared to trends from previous years.
- **Student Achievement:** The significant positive trends found in staff engagement and wellbeing were also noted in key measures of student achievement, with West Key State School outperforming the state averages for improvement across all NAPLAN domains (see Table 1 on Page 30).
- **Parent & Community Engagement:** As might be expected, parents and caregivers of West Key students also reported a significant positive increase in satisfaction with the school (see Graph 3 on Page 30).

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**Graph 2: School Opinion Survey – Staff School Report (all items)**



**Graph 3: School Opinion Survey – Parent / Caregiver School Report**

**Table 1: Effect size gain relative to the state**

Year Levels	Strand	West Key SS	Qld State Schools
03–05	R	0.38	0.10
03–05	W	0.50	0.01
03–05	S	0.33	0.08
03–05	G&P	0.22	0.08
03–05	N	0.16	0.08

Achieving so much improvement in such a short timeframe and shortening the change journey dramatically improved the lives of students, staff and parents. The results from West Key SS were typical of the early adopter schools and increased our confidence and commitment to sharing our work and engaging with an increasing number of schools in the next phase of the High Performance Schools project.

## **Going Big: The Statewide Roll Out of the High Performance Schools Program**

Over the next 3 years, the High Performance Schools Program was rolled out across Queensland with many regions, clusters and schools taking up the opportunity to get involved. In that time, we worked with 938 education leaders across 179 schools supporting 4554 teaching and non-teaching staff implementing the High Performance Teams Program. Many of the schools completed the program in ‘clusters’ doing the workshops and training components as a combined group of leaders or ‘Community of Practice’.

During the program, all schools developed Action Plans with improvement strategies for each of the 4 KPIs which they implemented within their teams. School leaders were reporting very powerful benefits from focusing on improvement strategies within each KPI. Vicki Baker, Principal of Griffin State School, was one of many school leaders who gained tremendous benefits by focusing on improvement across the 4 KPIs. Vicki’s results are representative of many of the stories from school leaders who we met along the way.

**For KPI 1: Vision and Action, Vicki described the following benefits:**

**Insight: Vision – Less is more and actions speak louder than words.**

*At times throughout the year it felt like we were building the airplane as we were flying it. The thing that helped us to keep our stress levels low and our efforts focused was to keep what we wanted to achieve simple and to create a detailed action plan. We mapped each of the 4 KPIs to our Annual Improvement Plan and created a simple one-page summary. Looking back now, I’m proud to say that by being focused we’ve ticked everything off. I think this is because we kept it simple. We could have tried to do everything, and done nothing well. Instead we’ve exceeded our expectations.*

**Insight: Transformation – Having a great strategy is only good if you have the right people empowered to action it.**

*Being a new school I was very conscious during recruitment of getting the right people on the bus and then setting them free to do what they do best. We set out to build a team of professionals with personality – there's nothing worse than being beige. As we didn't yet have a defined 'middle management' all staff were expected to take on leadership roles across the school – with everyone on the same page around our vision, it's been easy to trust that they will work rigorously and intentionally to enact the vision, and I haven't been disappointed.*

**For KPI 2: Performance Reporting, Vicki described the following insights:**

**Insight: Meetings – Clear agendas enabling active participation by everyone is vital.**

*It amazed me how implementing such small changes to our meetings like the clearly defined rotating roles of chair and moderator, the 'safety nets' of meeting ground rules, red and yellow moderator cards, having clear timings and accountabilities for each section of our meeting agenda improved both the quality and efficiency of our meetings. I couldn't imagine doing meetings any other way now.*

**Insight: Team Data Walls – Seeing it is just as important as hearing it to get 'buy in' and accountability.**

*As educators, we're asked to collect so much data and some staff struggle with how to make sense of it. Building our own data wall with data that matters to us, and presenting it in a way that is easy to understand has helped all members of staff to start to see data differently – students' photos are on the wall so that the data comes alive and is more personal. Our students are all visible. A collective responsibility for their achievement is shared by all staff.*

**Insight: Lead Indicator Dashboards – Tracking and discussing lead indicator data maximises continuous improvement as well as outcomes.**

*Our core academic focus in the past year was reading. It was*

*pleasing to see our first ever NAPLAN results where 44% of students in Year 3 and 30% of students in Year 5 achieved in the upper two bands in the nation. At the beginning of the school year staff measured this data to get a baseline as well as to set our focus for areas of improvement and in the short 12-week time they had prior to students taking the test we know that a significant difference was made to the achievement data of students. The numbers don't lie – connecting lead indicator data to inform decision making and coordinate staff actions works.*

**Regarding KPI 3: Leveraging Diversity, Vicki described the following insights:**

**Insight: Leveraging Diversity – Mapping our personalities and interests gives us insights into how to prevent personality clashes and promote healthy communication.**

*Getting to know the different 'thinking style preferences' of each of the members of the leadership team was one of the most helpful aspects of the session work we did within the High Performance Teams program. It has given us a common language which helps us to play to each other's strengths and I'm sure has helped prevent misunderstandings.*

**Insight: Feedback Culture – Having a common language around effective feedback accelerates high performance.**

*To get the school up to speed, clear communication was vital. We quickly worked out our own set of 'road rules' and what our negotiable and non-negotiables were going to be. Our feedback protocol helped us to fast-track this journey. I look back now and can't believe that the school has only been open for a year - the candour, quality and regularity of feedback that has been built up within the staff team since the beginning of the year amazes me.*

**Finally regarding KPI 4: Work/Life & Wellbeing, Vicki described the following insights:**

**Insight: Team building – People change and forget to tell each other so the journey of team building never ends!**

*For us as a staff team getting to know each other on a personal*

## Level Up!

*level and what makes each of us tick was extremely important – the better you know someone, the better you're able to help them with what's important to them. We were fortunate that we could organise a retreat at the beginning of the school year. One of the activities that we did at the retreat was to bring along two artefacts: one that had significance personally and another professionally and share this with the team. The insights from this quickly built trust. We still have conversations relating back to that activity and plan to keep team building at the top of our agenda.*

**Insight: Work/Life Awareness – Life strategy is about having a plan for your life and engaging with others to support your goals!**

*For me the program has highlighted the importance of career planning for our staff particularly balancing the needs of our career stable (veteran) and career progressive staff. As school leaders, we need to be thinking that our team's individual career and life goals are a year-round conversation, not just a 'once off' at yearly performance planning.*

**Insight: Resilience – Looking after each other begins with first looking after yourself – know your signs of stress and manage the four elements of your wellbeing!**

*As a school leader, I have to put my hand up and say that I'm not always the best with work/life balance, and I know I'm not alone in this. While I've felt guilty about this in the past, the High Performance Teams Program has helped me to put work/life balance in perspective and I've now got some very practical tools to help me keep focused to prevent burnout.*

## **Unanswered Questions: The End of the Beginning**

*“Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”*

*– Winston Churchill*

At the conclusion of each 12-month program, the HPT outcome presentations of each school showed impressive improvements time and time again. Results showed significant improvements in staff and student outcomes across a whole range of critical data including NAPLAN results, School Opinion Surveys (parent and staff) and HPT Pulse Survey data. Some schools had made modest gains or simply held some indicators stable which was impressive given the changes and challenges they faced during the program whilst other schools had made dramatic leaps forwards – data showing results that seemed almost too good to be true yet it was true and the school leaders responsible for such great results themselves were somewhat puzzled by the extraordinarily amazing results.

Having such great success among so many schools so quickly built a community of engaged and enthusiastic school leaders keen to keep progressing their High Performance Teams strategies beyond 12 months. They quickly organised themselves into Communities of Practice and adopted a range of peer mentoring and group coaching ideas centred around progressing high performance strategies they were using in their schools. We continued to support their journeys and as time progressed more and more people began asking us *“So just how far can our teams go with this? What are the highest performance teams possible... and how do we get there?”*

These were great questions but in all honesty (and embarrassment) we did not know the answer. As experts on High Performance Teams in schools we already had the data and plenty of positive outlier teams we could re-examine in relation to this question. The realisation of this next important task, not only marked the end of the beginning of our work, but also infused us with an urgent professional and moral responsibility to find the answer to the question:

***What are the highest levels of performance teams can aspire to?... And how do we get there?”***

# Part 1:

## Unanswered Questions: The End of The Beginning

### 1 Page Action Plan

Topic	Key Learnings	Takeaway Messages	Actions/Next Steps
Why High Performance Teams in Education?			
The High Performance Schools Project			

# Part 2.

## Search & Discovery: The Highest Performance Teams

*“Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much”*

– Helen Keller

# Chapter 3

## How High? The Search For The Highest Performance Teams

*“Faster, Higher, Stronger.”*  
– Olympic Motto

### **High Performance Teams: The Unanswered Questions...**

During the early stages of our research on High Performance Teams we learned that for the same amount of effort, the rewards were much bigger for High Performance Teams than their comparison teams. However there remained another mystery to solve - and it related to the very core of what it means to be human. You see, there is one truly unique quality that the human race possess that relates to performance. No, it's not opposable thumbs (although these certainly help!) – it's human potential which is defined as *“having or showing the capacity to develop into something more in the future.”*

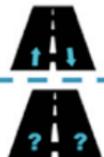
“Developing into something more in the future” was easy to understand when applying it to newly forming teams or teams managing conflict as the potential for something bigger and better was obvious. However, for teams already performing very well – what was their next step? As we continued our journey working with High Performance Teams we became obsessed with answering these two perfectly reasonable questions:

1. *“What are the highest levels of performance that teams can aspire to?”*
2. *“When it comes to improving team performance, how do we know where we are at and what is next?”*

Many initial promising answers to these questions turned out to be false starts or dead ends, however after much data analysis and trial and error, I believe that the pieces are now falling into place and we have finally begun to grasp the answers. In the Education Sector, we have been working with hundreds of school leadership teams in cluster programs over the last three years which has given us a treasure trove of case studies showcasing the strategies teams have implemented (inputs) and the outcomes they have achieved along the way (outputs). These case studies demonstrate the power of the High Performance Teams Framework as an enabler for genuine transformation of school cultures for both staff and students inside of a single school year (which is quite a feat)! More instructively, taking a helicopter view of case study outcomes has enabled us to compare the various teams that took part and (most importantly), identify the positive outlier teams and unpack their successes in a way that we can all learn from.

## High Performance Teams: Levels 1 to 5

Reviewing the enormous amount of outcome data we had collected gave us some powerful insights into the various levels of team performance, which formed the basis of the HPT Level Up Table. (see below)



HPT Level	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Challenge (Approach)
<b>Level 5 Elite HPT</b>	<b>10x (Leverage)</b>	<b>100% (Legacy)</b>	<b>Super-Stretch (&amp; Coach)</b>
<b>Level 4 Adv HPT</b>	<b>5x (Strategic)</b>	<b>90% (Growth)</b>	<b>Stretching (&amp; Coach)</b>
<b>Level 3 HPT</b>	<b>2x (Collaborative)</b>	<b>75% (Understanding)</b>	<b>Improving (&amp; Mentor)</b>
<b>Level 2 Functional</b>	<b>1x (Constructive)</b>	<b>50% (Acceptance)</b>	<b>Systems (Manage)</b>
<b>Level 1 Dysfunctional</b>	<b>-2x (Destructive)</b>	<b>0% (Distrust)</b>	<b>Structures (Manage)</b>

\*Value = Total direct and indirect productivity benefit/cost

**HPT Level Up**  
BLACK START TEAM ASSESSMENT

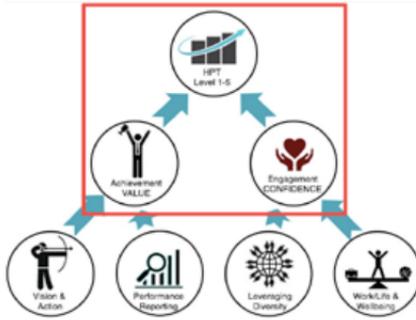
## **10x – What Are We Talking About?**

*The term '10x' is very trendy right now (therefore something we would normally avoid using) AND justifiably so as the concept cuts straight through to the heart of 'value creation' – something every High Performance Team needs to both understand and regularly measure. The origins of 10x began in attempting to describe the difference between the 'best' and 'worst' engineers, where the 'best' engineers were 10 times as 'productive' as the worst. As the concept was applied into other fields the outcome measure of 'Productivity' (producing the most outputs per input) was refocused towards 'Value Creation' (producing the most valuable outputs per input).*

*When we think about 10x and High Performance Teams, value creation can take two forms: (1) Efficiency of Inputs (i.e., finding new ways to complete a process faster or with less inputs – think about solving a Rubik's cube puzzle with the minimum number of movements and fastest possible time) OR (2) Reach of Outputs (finding new ways to share useful information with others who can leverage this to benefit a much wider audience). Often in 10x situations both (1) and (2) are operating together leading to exponentially higher 'Value Creation' such as in the teaching team examples described later.*

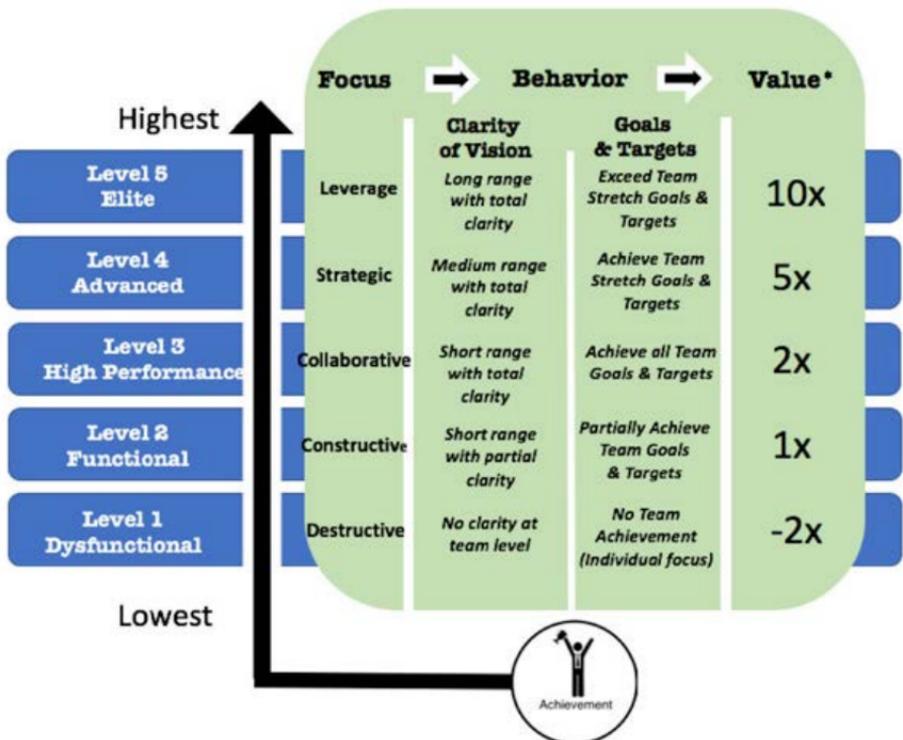
As you can see, teams can be classified according to both the VALUE of the outputs they produce (a combination of direct and indirect productivity benefits) through achieving their targets and goals over the short- and long-term, and the CONFIDENCE they create as a team to share information with each other and provide frank and fearless feedback to achieve their goals. They can also be classified by the main

team CHALLENGE they face in order to Level Up as well as the relevant leadership approach that is needed to help the team advance to the next level (for more on leadership implications read the *Level Up Leaders Toolkit*).



Unpacking the outputs of ‘VALUE’ and ‘CONFIDENCE’ into the HPT Domains of ACHIEVEMENT and ENGAGEMENT gave us a framework to deepen our understanding of the input strategies, motivations and behaviours that teams

utilise to increase the outputs of Value and Confidence across the various levels of team performance.



## Level Up!

First let's look at Team **ACHIEVEMENT**. As you can see in the expanded Table on Page 41, the **VALUE** that a team creates is rooted in the team's **FOCUS**. This **FOCUS** then results in the way that team members behave in relation to the **CLARITY OF** (the team's) **VISION** and the team's **GOALS & TARGETS**.



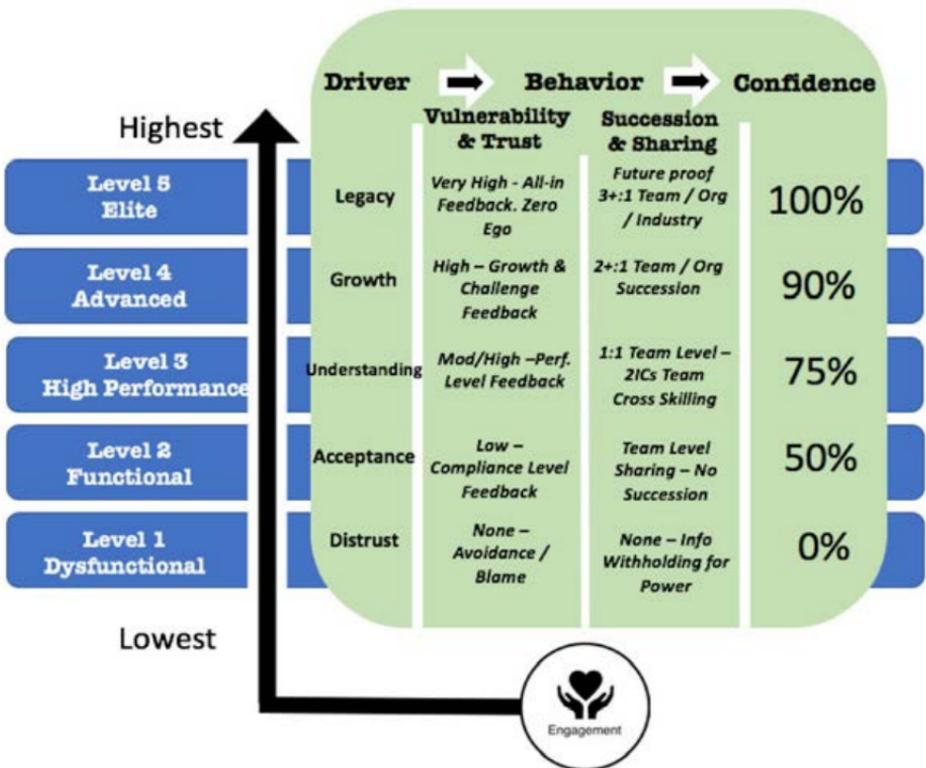
When we consider how the High Performance Teams Framework assists teams to create the outputs of higher levels of Clarity of Vision and achieve increasingly ambitious Goals and Targets, the input strategies from KPI 1 (Vision & Action) and KPI 2 (Performance Reporting) provide the necessary strategies for teams to Level Up their Achievement.

For example, Level 3 strategies for KPI 1 (Vision & Action) enable teams to have strong 'buy in' to purpose, vision and goals with Level 4 strategies enabling the alignment of all strategic and operational plans and Level 5 strategies comprehensively mapping the management and governance activities of the team to ensure strong collaboration across the wider organisation. The outcome of these strategies is inevitably higher clarity of vision for the team.

HPT Team Development Strategies				
HPT Level	KPI1: Vision & Action*	KPI2: Performance Reporting*	KPI3: Leveraging Diversity#	KPI4: Work/Life & Wellbeing
Level 5 HPT Elite Teams	Collaboration & Governance Map	Lead Indicator Dashboards	Feedback Dynamics: Skills Drills	Work / Life Strategy Shares
Level 4 HPT Advance Teams	Vision Aligned Strategic & Operational Plans	Team Specific Data Walls	Above & Below the Line Team Protocols	Resilience & Wellbeing Plan
Level 3 High Performance Teams	'Buy In' Team Purpose, Vision, Goals & Actions	Effective Meeting Protocols	Team Profile & Talent Map	Trust Matched Teaming & Pulse Conversations
HPT Foundation Modules	Why Teams Fail	10 Insights	Level 5 Teams	Sustainable Culture Change

Similarly, for KPI 2 (Performance Reporting) the Level 3 strategies around High Performance Team Meeting Protocols ensure a very goal focused agenda is maintained which is then reinforced through Level 4 strategies around comprehensive team data walls with real time metrics on key team activities and actions and finally Level 5 strategies which focus on the development of Lead Indicator Dashboards turning data into a sharp and narrow analytic tool to achieve vision-focused stretch goals and super-stretch goals.

Turning to Team ENGAGEMENT the CONFIDENCE that team members hold in the team is rooted in the team's DRIVE. This DRIVE then results in the way that team members behave in relation to their level of VULNERABILITY & TRUST and knowledge SHARING & SUCCESSION planning.



## Level Up!



When we consider how the High Performance Teams Framework assists teams to create the outputs of higher levels of Trust and Vulnerability as well as increase the amount of Sharing and Succession Planning, the input strategies from KPI 3 (Leveraging Diversity) and KPI 4 (Work/Life & Wellbeing)

provide the necessary foundations for teams to Level Up their Engagement.

For example, Level 3 strategies for KPI 3 (Leveraging Diversity) focus on team profiling and talent maps which create a deeper understanding of the individual differences and varying career focuses among the team with Level 4 strategies focused on identifying the key Above & Below the Line Behaviours that optimise team performance along with the ‘insurance policy’ of a protocol for ‘Calling Behaviour’ to guide difficult conversations when they arise. Level 5 strategies revolve around skills drills and role plays about ‘high risk’ feedback conversations both within the team and with stakeholders and customers.

Similarly, for KPI 4 (Work/Life & Wellbeing) the Level 3 strategies around Trust Matched Teaming and Pulse Conversations ensure an appropriate level of disclosure is established and a holistic focus to team wellbeing is maintained with Level 4 strategies getting deeper into the personal resilience and wellbeing needs of team members. Further, Level 5 strategies are focused on sharing work/life strategies to enable team members to understand the future goals of their peers and how these goals may predicate succession and change in the team. The outcome of these strategies is inevitably higher vulnerability and trust along with a deeper understanding of succession needs within the team.

## HPT Team Development Strategies

HPT Level	KPI1: Vision & Action*	KPI2: Performance Reporting	KPI3: Leveraging Diversity#	KPI4: Work/Life & Wellbeing
	Level 5 HPT Elite Teams	Collaboration & Governance Map	Lead Indicator Dashboards	Feedback Dynamics: Skills Drills
Level 4 HPT Advanced Teams	Vision Aligned Strategic & Operational Plans	Team Specific Data Walls	Above & Below the Line Team Protocols	Resilience & Wellbeing Plan
Level 3 High Performance Teams	'Buy In' Team Purpose, Vision, Goals & Actions	Effective Meeting Protocols	Team Profile & Talent Map	Trust Matched Teaming & Pulse Conversations
HPT Foundation Modules	Why Teams Fail	10 Insights	Level 5 Teams	Sustainable Culture Change

## Level 5 Exemplars: High Performance Teaching Teams

*“A teacher affects eternity; they can never tell where their influence stops.”*

.– Henry Adams

Crossing the bridge back from theory to practice, let's take a practical look at some examples of Level 5 Value and Confidence we have seen from the Highest Performance Teaching Teams we have worked with.

### Level 5 Value: Leverage (10x) at West Key State School



Leveraging to Level 5 (10x Value) can occur when teams have absolute clarity about their long-range Vision & Action AND are able to set and exceed team stretch Goals & Targets. For the teaching teams at West Key State School, every member of staff is crystal clear about

## Level Up!

their vision of “enabling every teacher to positively impact every student to grow and live a successful life”, and every member of staff is crystal clear about the school’s stretch targets for student academic achievement (i.e., reading). This level of clarity is critical for 10x success as it creates a series of strategic questions about positive problems they need to solve around continuous professional development for teachers and information sharing and feedback among staff in order to achieve such lofty vision and stretch targets...

As you can see in the Table on Page 46, the 10x solution for West Key State School lies in the implementation of their PLC and information sharing strategies such as the use of Lyn Sharratt’s ‘Faces on the Data’ whole of school data wall. By using this strategy teachers from across the school (who wouldn’t normally get to meet together in teaching teams) can identify similar reading level students (i.e., over-achieving younger students and under-achieving older students) and informally swap ideas and collaborate to fast-track student growth – this occurs without needing any additional funding or support and significantly improves the child’s performance and thus longer-term social and economic contribution – hence 10x Value.

<b>Value (Focus)</b>	<b>Teaching Team Example: PLC Reading Strategy</b>
10x (Leverage)	<i>Learn It, Differentiate It, Practice It, Use It, Share In Team &amp; Organisation &amp; Leverage Skills &amp; Relationships</i>
5x (Strategic)	<i>Learn It, Differentiate It (U2B, Av, Below), Practice It, Use It, Share Differentiation In Team</i>
2x (Collaborative)	<i>Learn It, Practice It, Use It, Share It In Team</i>
1x (Constructive)	<i>Learn It, Practice It, Use It</i>
-2x (Destructive)	<i>Learn It, Agree To Use It (But Don't)</i>

## Level 5 Confidence: Legacy (100%) at West Key State School



Level 5 Legacy strategy is a natural outcome of teams that are entirely 'Confident' in each other's commitment to their core purpose (vision and mission) and preparedness to give and receive frank and fearless feedback. For the teaching teams at West Key State School they have been able to reach this level of Team Engagement

through the consistent and supportive use of Peer Coaching strategies for Peer Observation and Feedback.

By having a simple and explicit protocol for peer observation and feedback processes which harnesses the power of evidence-based coaching conversation techniques, the teachers at West Key were empowered, enabled and ultimately became fierce advocates of continuous feedback and development both within PLC groups and among less formalised networks of peer teachers that shared common interests and professional development goals. (see table below)

<b>Confidence (Driver)</b>	<b>Teaching Team Example: Peer Coaching - Observation &amp; Feedback</b>
100% (Legacy)	<i>Pursuit of Excellence - extra deep dives, role plays, multiple mentors &amp; cross-team/ whole of school shares &amp; training others in feedback skills</i>
90% (Growth)	<i>Continuous Improvement - Skilled Use of Framework, Full Team Level Participation, Reciprocal Feedback &amp; Follow Up Support</i>
75% (Understanding)	<i>Open &amp; Interested – Consistent Use of Framework Full Participation &amp; Reciprocal Feedback – Individual &amp; Team</i>
50% (Acceptance)	<i>Cooperative &amp; Compliant Individual Level – Inconsistent Use, Passive Participation &amp; Minimal Input</i>
0% (Distrust)	<i>Avoidant &amp; Cynical – Don't Participate &amp; Discourage Others</i>

## **You Can't Skip A Level...**

West Key State School didn't just jump to Level 5 Leverage without building a strong performance base and readiness through consolidating teaching teams and Level 3 and Level 4 performance as part of the journey. We have discovered that Level 5 10x Value strategies in teaching teams, such as a 'Whole of School Faces on the Data' strategy, cannot be rushed or introduced on teams performing at lower levels without first consolidating and Levelling Up their capability and readiness for higher levels of value creation.

Equally, like other schools on the journey, West Key did not simply flick a switch to get to Level 5 Legacy but rather built up confidence over time – making mistakes along the way that they openly shared with their peer schools to help fast-track each other. When the focus of observations was not made clear at the outset, feedback was rushed or the coaching framework was not applied to the discussion, a loss of confidence in the process was an inevitable outcome and it became a case of 'two steps forwards, one step back' as the teaching teams gradually moved up through the layers of confidence. However, once at Level 5, there was such a rigour and commitment to feedback and development that teams barely even thought about their 'within team trust' and were far more focused on sharing and learning with the wider group of teachers in the school and collaborating with other schools in the community to lift the standards of teaching and leave a powerful positive legacy for future teachers to follow...

It's often said that 'culture eats strategy for breakfast', however working with teams from across the spectrum I've come to understand this quote differently. Yes, culture will eat mis-matched strategy for breakfast, but the right strategy in the right culture creates an unstoppable force for positive change.

## **Bringing It Together**

Building High Performance Teaching Teams is a core responsibility of middle leadership within the Education Sector, and the process of teaching team development can be fast-tracked by understanding the levels of HPT and aligning teaching team development strategy accordingly. Without aligning strategy to the current level of team performance the risk of mis-match is high and ‘culture will eat the mis-matched strategy for breakfast’. However, if the teaching team development strategy is aligned to the current level of team performance then the benefits of ‘right strategy/right culture’ will create an unstoppable force for positive change. Is your teaching team development strategy aligned to your current level of teaching team performance? Are you ready to Level Up?

# Chapter 4

## How Long? The Journey Up To Level 5

*“The longest journey you will make in your life  
is from your head to your heart.”*

– Sioux Saying

*“Surely we’ve made more progress than that...? I know we have all made massive improvements in how we work together as a leadership team and in how we lead our faculties and departments... Things feel so different now I would have thought we’d moved from Level 2 up to Level 4 at least... yet we all seem to agree that at best we’re now performing solidly at Level 3... If it took so long to get from Level 2 to Level 3, will it take just as long to get to from Level 3 to Level 4...?”*

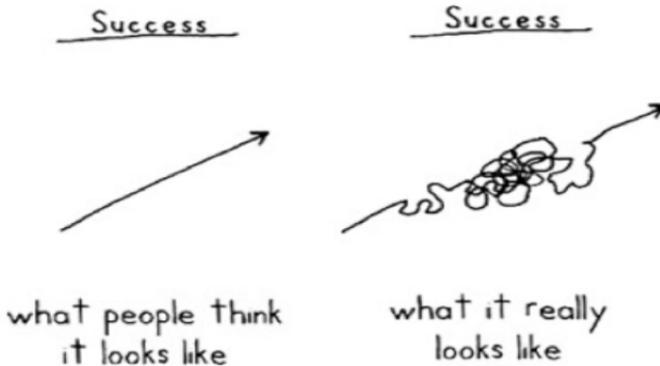
After 12 months of hard work completing the HPT program, Jefferson State School’s leadership team had just finished the post-program re-assessment of their team’s performance levels. The results were in and all 16 members of the leadership team rated the team at HPT Level 3, a step up from Level 2 when they began the program 12 months ago. I was really proud of the team and thought this was a great result considering the size of the team, the constant operational challenges they faced, the growing pains of strained relationships as feedback intensified and commitment and accountability to achieving the school vision increased.

However, several members of the leadership team felt dismayed about what they thought was ‘very slow’ progress – but they were mistaken in their self-criticism as their progress was much faster than they thought. As I explained the Level Up timeline and highlighted why the journey between some

levels takes much longer than others there was a noticeable shift in attitude from frustration to satisfaction (and rightly so!) about their achievements over the last 12 months and increased optimism and confidence about the faster journey they were now undertaking from Level 3 to Level 4!

### **Levelling Up: Timelines for HPT Transformation**

*“Growth Isn’t Always Linear:  
Two Steps Forward, One Step Back”*  
– Lori Deschene



When we first began working with teams using the 5 Levels of HPT we inadvertently gave people the impression that, because improving team performance was arguably a level-by-level or step-by-step approach, the ‘steps’ must be of a similar size and duration. But, like all change processes, the move up to higher levels of team performance is non-linear – a kind of ‘two steps forwards, one step back’ process with some stages happening quite quickly but others taking much longer. Looking back now, our failure to clarify the timeframes for change between the Levels meant teams were wasting time and energy thinking they should be progressing faster when

## Level Up!

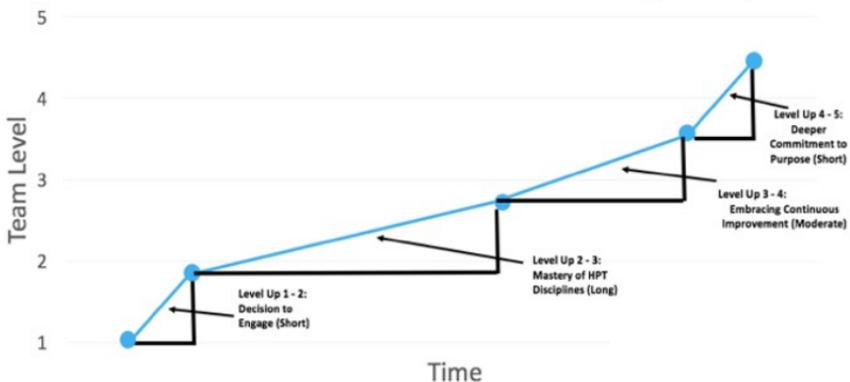
in actual fact they were already on track - a distraction which inadvertently slowed down their progress instead of speeding it up.

### The Journey to Level 5: The Timelines for Change

*“People say we were an overnight success.  
It took us a year to be an overnight success.”*  
– James Daly

Change is difficult. Change involves both commitment and learning. These twin factors, depending on where you are on the team transformation timeline, exist in different proportions. When the main focus is on commitment, the journey is shorter – a build up to the ‘tipping point’ and then breakthrough to the other side. When the main focus is on learning, the journey is longer – the struggle of the ‘learning pit’ as ‘slowly but surely’ new skills become more familiar along the journey to mastery. The HPT Team Transformation Timeline Table on Page 49 shows the journey between each level of High Performance Teams in terms of both the challenges they face and the proportional amount of time it takes to Level Up.

#### HPT Team Transformation Timeline: Step x Step



**From Level 1 Up To Level 2: The Decision To Engage...**

<b>HPT Level</b>	<b>Value* (Focus)</b>	<b>Confidence (Driver)</b>	<b>Challenge (Approach)</b>
<b>Level 2 Functional</b>	<b>1x (Constructive)</b>	<b>50% (Acceptance)</b>	<b>Systems (Manage)</b>
<b>Level 1 Dysfunctional</b>	<b>-2x (Destructive)</b>	<b>0% (Distrust)</b>	<b>Structures (Manage)</b>

For a team to get from Level 1 (Dysfunctional) to Level 2 (Functional) team members need to commit to working together, ‘ceasefire’ on previous avoidant or conflictual patterns, and engage consistently in basic team communication and performance activities such as meetings and collaborative projects. The timeline for change is quite short as teams facing such intense dysfunction are unable to continue working together for very long before people become unwell with work-related stress problems and/or resign and leave the team to work elsewhere.

**From Level 2 Up To Level 3: The Mastery of Disciplines...**

<b>HPT Level</b>	<b>Value* (Focus)</b>	<b>Confidence (Driver)</b>	<b>Challenge (Approach)</b>
<b>Level 3 HPT</b>	<b>2x (Collaborative)</b>	<b>75% (Understanding)</b>	<b>Improving (&amp; Mentor)</b>
<b>Level 2 Functional</b>	<b>1x (Constructive)</b>	<b>50% (Acceptance)</b>	<b>Systems (Manage)</b>

The journey from Level 2 (Functional) to Level 3 (High Performance) is the ‘the longest journey’ as it is about learning and behaviour change – moving from ‘conscious incompetence’ to ‘conscious competence’ and ultimately ‘unconscious competence’. In this stage teams are mastering

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the disciplines of HPT and actively using meeting protocols, data walls and prioritising their time together for team building and to give each other honest and constructively critical feedback to improve.

Shifting from conscious incompetence to unconscious competence and the ‘learning’ that accompanies any major new adult learning and behaviour change is an arduous (but very worthwhile) task reflected in the comments of Jefferson SS’s leadership team at the beginning of this chapter.

### **From Level 3 Up To Level 4: Embracing Continuous Improvement...**

<b>HPT Level</b>	<b>Value* (Focus)</b>	<b>Confidence (Driver)</b>	<b>Challenge (Approach)</b>
<b>Level 4 Adv HPT</b>	<b>5x (Strategic)</b>	<b>90% (Growth)</b>	<b>Stretching (&amp; Coach)</b>
<b>Level 3 HPT</b>	<b>2x (Collaborative)</b>	<b>75% (Understanding)</b>	<b>Improving (&amp; Mentor)</b>

Once a team has fully mastered the disciplines of HPT they began to reap the rewards of having great team structures and systems and a deeper trust in each other. Teams are now ‘unconsciously competent’ with the disciplines of HPT and are able to be fully focused on their core work the whole time.

By having both strong team systems and relationships the conversations shift towards ‘continuous improvement’ as they benefit from up-to-date information on their data wall and are actively seeking feedback to improve both as individuals and as a team. Continuously improving teams spend most of their time in the ‘Learning Pit’ and becoming ‘comfortable with being uncomfortable’ – an adjustment process that takes some time to occur (but not as long as the journey from Level 2 to

Level 3). Teams must learn to ‘pace’ the rate of self-challenge so as not to become ‘overwhelmed’ as well as hold each other to account on both ‘improvement’ and ‘wellbeing’ if they are to operate sustainably as a Level 4 Team.

### From Level 4 to Level 5: Deeper Commitment to Purpose...

HPT Level	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Challenge (Approach)
<b>Level 5 Elite HPT</b>	<b>10x (Leverage)</b>	<b>100% (Legacy)</b>	<b>Super-Stretch (&amp; Coach)</b>
<b>Level 4 Adv HPT</b>	<b>5x (Strategic)</b>	<b>90% (Growth)</b>	<b>Stretching (&amp; Coach)</b>

The move from Level 4 to Level 5, which doubles the value of team productivity and outputs, is an unexpectedly short journey for many teams. A by-product of team members already working incredibly effectively together and achieving amazing results is an increasing sense of awareness about both (1) what the maximum level of productivity and performance on any given issue could actually be (and what would need to change to achieve this), and (2) an accurate sense of where they may be able to help the wider organisation and/or industry as they scan the environment and become positively uneasy about the lower state of performance in teams around them.

These insights create a gradually building pressure leading to a tipping point where they commit to their purpose at a deeper level and start collaborating at much wider levels and set super-stretch goals to have a legacy impact on their organisation or industry. The out-workings of this deeper commitment quickly lead to extraordinary jumps in the value of their efforts and an almost selfless state of engagement as they become committed to ‘whatever it takes’ levels of frank and fearless feedback to share insights and encourage each other to stretch the limits of

## Level Up!

their 'personal best' and reach out and make their organisation and their wider industry/community a better place.

### **Bringing It Together**

Becoming a High Performance Team requires a transformation journey passing through a number of stages. Each stage presents unique personal growth challenges to the team in terms of both commitment and learning. These twin factors of commitment and learning, depending on where you are on the team transformation timeline, exist in different proportions. When the main focus is on commitment, the journey is shorter – a build up to the 'tipping point' and then breakthrough to the other side. When the main focus is on learning the journey is longer – the struggle of 'the learning pit' as slowly but surely new skills become more familiar along the journey to mastery.

Teams need to know which Level of HPT they are currently performing in (take the Level Up Survey in Chapter 6 of this book to find out your team's Level) if they are to understand the likely timeframes and types of challenge they face on the journey up to Level 5. By understanding the timeframes and challenges through each Level of the HPT Journey, teams can prevent unnecessary frustration about the speed of change and instead 'pace' themselves and celebrate the milestones they achieve as they progress towards becoming the Highest Performance Team!

# Chapter 5

## Building A Road Map For Success

*“If you can imagine it, you can achieve it.  
If you can dream it, you can become it.”*

– William Arthur

### **The Team Transformation Gap...**

One of the justifiable criticisms of a lot of team development training programs is the lack of connection between the facilitated ‘training’ sessions (usually in an offsite location with uninterrupted time for reflection and growth) and the un-facilitated ‘real world’ of day-to-day work routines (a jungle of shifting pressures and trigger points for stress and conflict). Many great team development retreats have ended with much enthusiasm for positive change and collaboration which evaporates within days of returning to the office.

#### **Why?**

Is it because team members were making false claims of renewed commitment – simply faking it to please the facilitator or their peers?... Not usually. Is it because the challenges they returned to after the program were so overwhelming they extinguished the flame of transformation that burned so bright at the retreat?... Not often. Is it because team members have amnesia or other cognitive impairments which override documented agreements and plans AND block their ability to remember and/or implement change?... No!

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Why then does so much team transformation succeed in the ‘training’ stages but subsequently fail in the ‘real-world’? Why do people who are sincere, bright and capable, upon return to operating within normal working conditions, fail to transfer team development gains they learned in ‘training’ into the ‘real world’ of their workplace?

The disconnect between ‘training’ and ‘real world’ team development is what we call ‘The Team Transformation Gap’. To close the transformation gap that many teams experience between ‘training sessions’ and ‘real world application’ we need to develop strategies that combine some powerful insights from sports psychology and learning theory.

### **Sports Psychology: Visualisation & Mental Priming**

*“Whether you think you can, or you think  
you can’t – you’re right.”*

– Henry Ford

Visualisation and mental priming have been widely used in sports psychology with great success. Neuroscience shows us how mental priming functions in the brain – a technical explanation for the thousand-year-old concept of ‘the self-fulfilling prophecy’. Leaders who have trained in neuro-leadership adapt the methods sports coaches use to enhance their performance.

For example, in the weeks prior to a big presentation or difficult meeting, leaders can use mental imagery to deal with worry and performance anxiety. Whenever panicky feelings arise, they can imagine that while they are speaking to the audience they are feeling really confident and relaxed. They can visualise

looking at the audience, taking a deep breath, and smiling. The more they practice this visualisation and priming process the more likely an approximate positive experience will occur in real life.

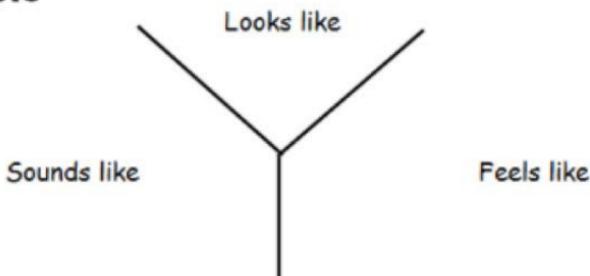
## **Learning Theory: Y Charts, Examples & Non-Examples**

*“When teaching and learning are visible there is a greater likelihood of students reaching higher levels of achievement.”*

– John Hattie

The goal of moving team transformation out of ‘training’ and into the ‘real world’ from an educational perspective is about enhancing long-term retention and transfer of learning. To do this, we need to design team development activities based on principles from learning theory which (1) incorporate ‘practice retrieval’ (learners generate responses repeatedly over time with varied applications so that “memory trace” grows and is more likely to occur across different contexts); (2) vary the conditions under which learning takes place (create “multiple retrieval cues” for learning key concepts and by using different types of problems and solutions mixed in the same session); and (3) learning and representing in multiple formats (information represented in both visuospatial and auditory formats has higher recall than information that is stored in only one format).

**Topic**



## Level Up!

Y-chart discussions are great ways to get people thinking in-depth about concepts and strategies, because they move from the concrete to the abstract. Y Chart discussions ask you to describe any given topic from three perspectives: (1) Looks like... (2) Sounds like... and (3) Feels like... Y Chart discussions are important tools for enhancing long-term retention and transfer of learning as they create practice retrieval effects, provide varied conditions for learning and represent learning in multiple formats (auditory, visual, cognitive).

Providing ‘Examples’ and ‘Non-Examples’ to establish the boundaries of how to apply concepts and strategies are two other really important educational concepts to consider for enhancing long-term retention and transfer of learning. This is particularly important for helping teams differentiate various levels of higher team performance necessary to enable fast-tracking of the Levelling Up process.

### **High Performance Teams: Y Chart ‘Level Up’ Team Conversations**

The success principles of visualisation and mental priming, as well as Y charts and engaging with both Examples and Non-Examples, provide the underpinnings of one of the most important core activities in the High Performance Teams Program – The Y Chart Level Up Team Conversation.

The Y Chart Level Up Team Conversation is a structured deep dive conversation using the HPT Level Up Scales (see diagram on Page 57) to: (1) establish your current level of performance as a team AND (2) create a mental primer to engage in higher performance team behaviours (and avoid accidentally engaging in lower performance behaviours).



HPT Level	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Challenge (Approach)
Level 5 Elite HPT	10x (Leverage)	100% (Legacy)	Super-Stretch (& Coach)
Level 4 Adv HPT	5x (Strategic)	90% (Growth)	Stretching (& Coach)
Level 3 HPT	2x (Collaborative)	75% (Understanding)	Improving (& Mentor)
Level 2 Functional	1x (Constructive)	50% (Acceptance)	Systems (Manage)
Level 1 Dysfunctional	-2x (Destructive)	0% (Distrust)	Structures (Manage)

\*Value = Total direct and indirect productivity benefit/cost

There are three phases to the Y Chart Level Up Team Conversation (see Template on Page 58):

1. Using the general Level x Level descriptors around team Engagement and Achievement as a guide, complete a ‘What If...’ exercise where the team collectively discusses and identifies the full range of possible behaviours and attitudes they would display in each of the 5 levels using a Y-Chart format;
2. Once this is complete shift the team towards a ‘Level Up’ conversation about what would need to change for the team to progress through each Level; and
3. Conclude the discussion with the team actually diagnosing its current level of performance (i.e., where are we now?) and committing to some next steps to Level Up.



HPT Level	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Achievement Outcomes 	Engagement Outcomes 	Part 1: What If.... What if we were at this level...?	Part 2: Level Up.... What would we change to Level Up?
<b>Level 5</b> HPT Elite Teams	<b>10x</b> (Leverage)	<b>100%</b> (Legacy)	<b>Clarity of Vision</b> Long range with total clarity of team's vision & action  <b>Goals &amp; Targets</b> Set and exceed team's stretch goals & targets	<b>Trust &amp; Vulnerability</b> Very high trust with mission focused & fearless feedback  <b>Sharing &amp; Succession</b> Team, organisation & industry level sharing & succession	Looks Like...   Sounds Like...  Feels Like...	How would we maintain Level 5?
<b>Level 4</b> HPT Advanced Teams	<b>5x</b> (Strategic)	<b>90%</b> (Growth)	<b>Clarity of Vision</b> Medium range with total clarity of team's vision & action  <b>Goals &amp; Targets</b> Set and achieve team's stretch goals and targets	<b>Trust &amp; Vulnerability</b> High trust with growth focused & challenging feedback  <b>Sharing &amp; Succession</b> Team & organisation level sharing & succession	Looks Like...   Sounds Like...  Feels Like...	How would we get to Level 5?
<b>Level 3</b> High Performance Teams	<b>2x</b> (Collaborative)	<b>75%</b> (Understanding)	<b>Clarity of Vision</b> Short Range Team/Org - Total Ops Clarity  <b>Goals &amp; Targets</b> Set and achieve team's goals & targets	<b>Trust &amp; Vulnerability</b> Moderate trust with performance focused professional feedback  <b>Sharing &amp; Succession</b> Team level sharing & succession	Looks Like...   Sounds Like...  Feels Like...	How would we get to Level 4?
<b>Level 2</b> Functional Teams	<b>1x</b> (Constructive)	<b>50%</b> (Acceptance)	<b>Clarity of Vision</b> Short range with total clarity of team's vision & action  <b>Goals &amp; Targets</b> Set and partially achieve team's goals & targets	<b>Trust &amp; Vulnerability</b> Low trust with polite & superficial feedback  <b>Sharing &amp; Succession</b> Team level sharing but limited focus on succession	Looks Like...   Sounds Like...  Feels Like...	How would we get to Level 3?
<b>Level 1</b> Dysfunctional Teams	<b>-2x</b> (Destructive)	<b>0%</b> (Distrust)	<b>Clarity of Vision</b> No clarity of team's vision & action  <b>Goals &amp; Targets</b> Not set or achieve any team goals & targets (individual focus)	<b>Trust &amp; Vulnerability</b> No trust with avoidance of feedback  <b>Sharing &amp; Succession</b> No team level sharing or succession	Looks Like...   Sounds Like...  Feels Like...	How would we get to Level 2?

## **Case Study: Jefferson State School Leadership Team**

Like many regional schools, Jefferson SS has a stable longstanding workforce with a deep understanding of local community needs. Within this positive situation of stability and community focus there is a challenge to continue to adjust, adapt and evolve best practice teaching methods and stay up-to-date with the Australian Curriculum and evolving methods of assessment.

### **The Y Chart Team Conversation: Part 1 – “What If...”**

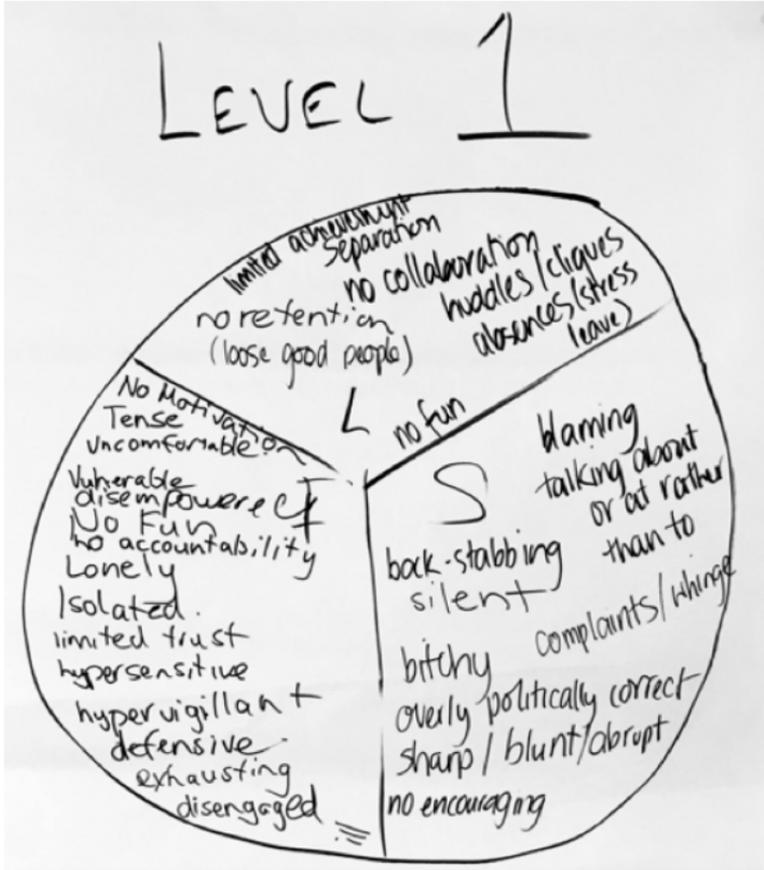
The “What If” discussions among the leadership team at Jefferson SS yielded some really interesting insights into the team... Starting with Level 1, the conversation was fast-paced with clearly defined examples and everyone contributing. However, as the levels increased up to Level 5 the dynamic of the conversation changed significantly... Despite being reminded at the start of the exercise that they would need to rely on their imagination and make up examples to fill in the gaps at various levels, team members appeared to rely mainly on previous first- and second-hand experiences in the lower levels before reaching out with their imagination more fully in the upper levels.

#### **Level 1: Dysfunctional Teams**

Discussing a “What If” scenario at Level 1: Dysfunctional Teams was quite straight forward – Looks like included *‘cliques, huddles, absenteeism and resignations’*. Sounds like included *‘backstabbing, blaming, bitchy yet polite and politically correct when face-to-face, and/or long silences in meetings.’* Feels like included *‘lonely, isolated, tense, exhausted etc.’* At Level 1 the conversation was fast-paced with clearly defined examples and everyone contributing

## Level Up!

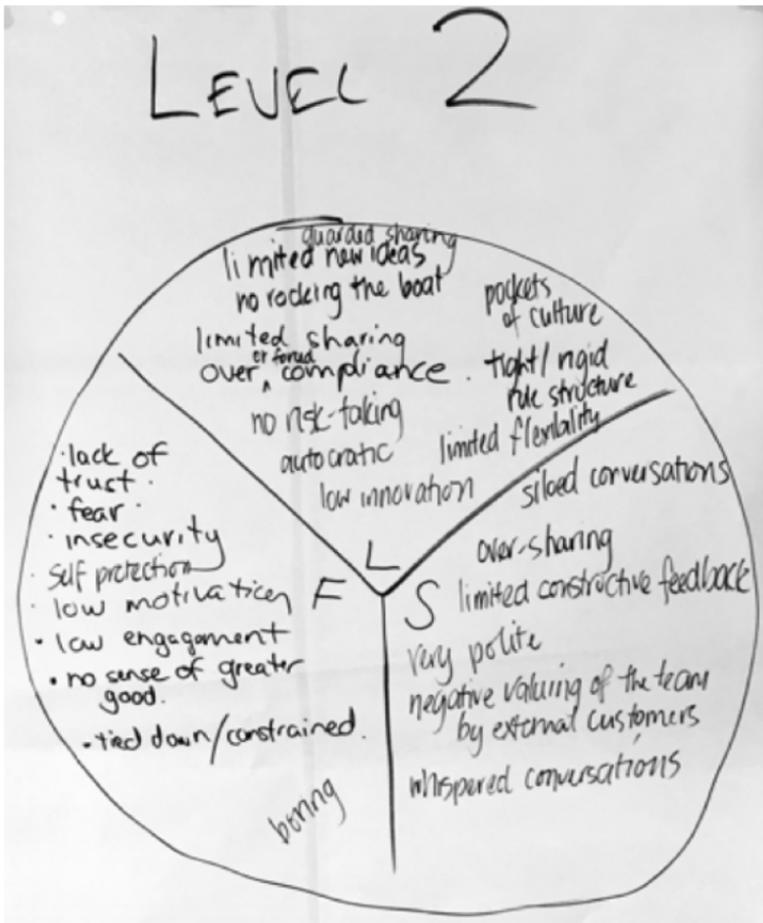
– we suspected this was because most of the leadership team had experienced such behaviours during the course of their lengthy careers and/or were dealing with aspects of this behaviour in one or more of the teams they had to manage themselves...



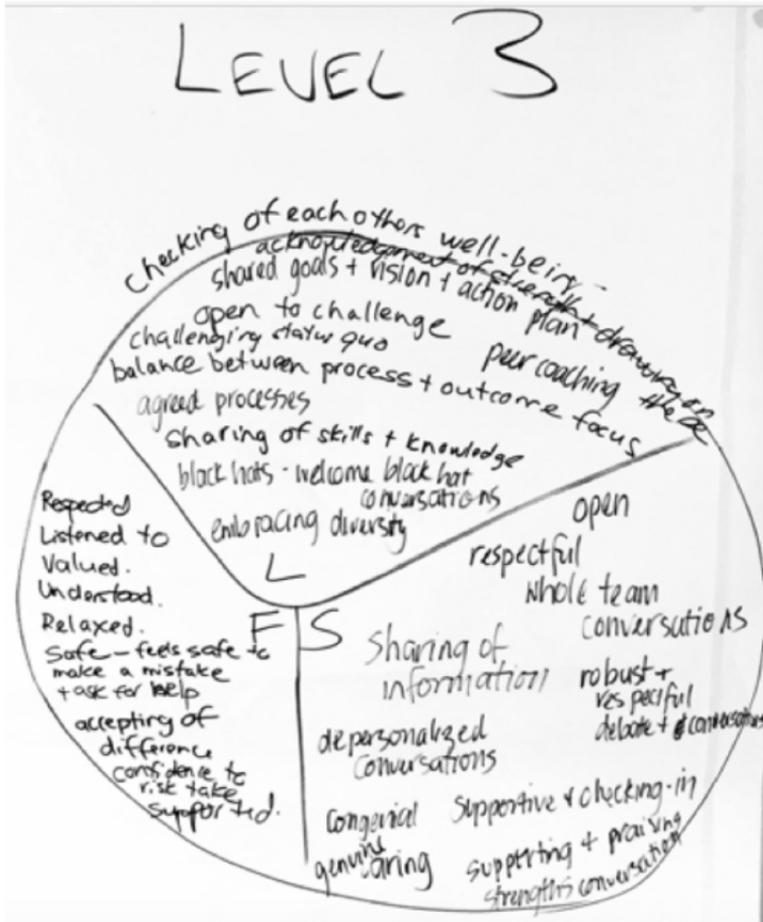
## Level 2: Functional Teams

At Level 2: Functional Teams, the “What If” conversation continued at rapid pace with everyone chipping in. Looks like included ‘no rocking the boat, no risk taking, limited new ideas,

and limited innovation'. Sounds like included 'side conversations, over sharing, very polite, and limited constructive feedback'. Feels like included 'lack of trust, fear, insecurity, and low motivation'. On several occasions, as team members called out their inputs, colleagues began to ask each other whether such examples were really Level 2 or belonged in Level 1 or Level 3 – this Example/Non-Example process began to deepen the team level clarity of the various levels of team performance and led to a lot more specific examples of behaviour from their own and other teams being put forward to justify examples...



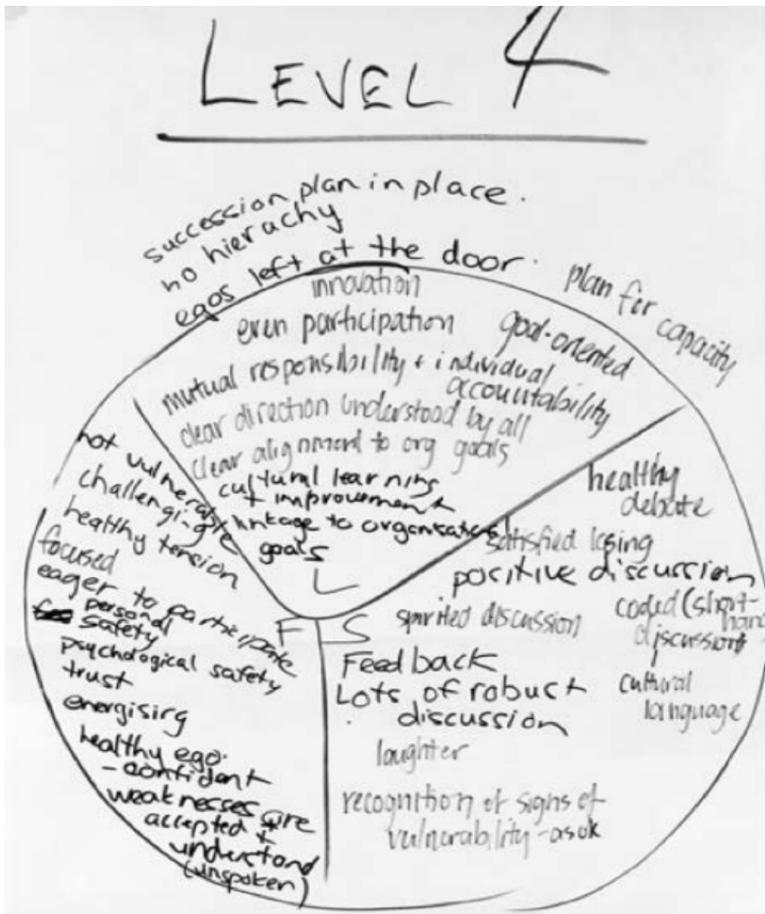
### Level 3: High Performance Teams (HPTs)



At Level 3: High Performance Teams, the dynamic shifted with several members of the team pausing for longer intervals between commenting – clearly deeper in thought about the task... Looks like included ‘agreed processes, peer coaching, shared goals and vision, action plans, and encouraging diversity’. Sounds like included ‘open, respectful, whole team conversations, and sharing of information.’ Feels like included ‘respected, safe, acceptance of difference, and valued’. An interesting tension emerged between team members talking about ‘support and safety’ and others talking

about 'challenging each other and robust conversations'. Whilst it was obvious to an outsider that these two factors co-exist quite well at Level 3 (and are both needed to be a High Performance Team) there was none-the-less a demonstrable 'ah ha' moment among several team members who appeared to be adjusting their mindset quite significantly in light of this discussion...

#### Level 4: Advanced HPTs

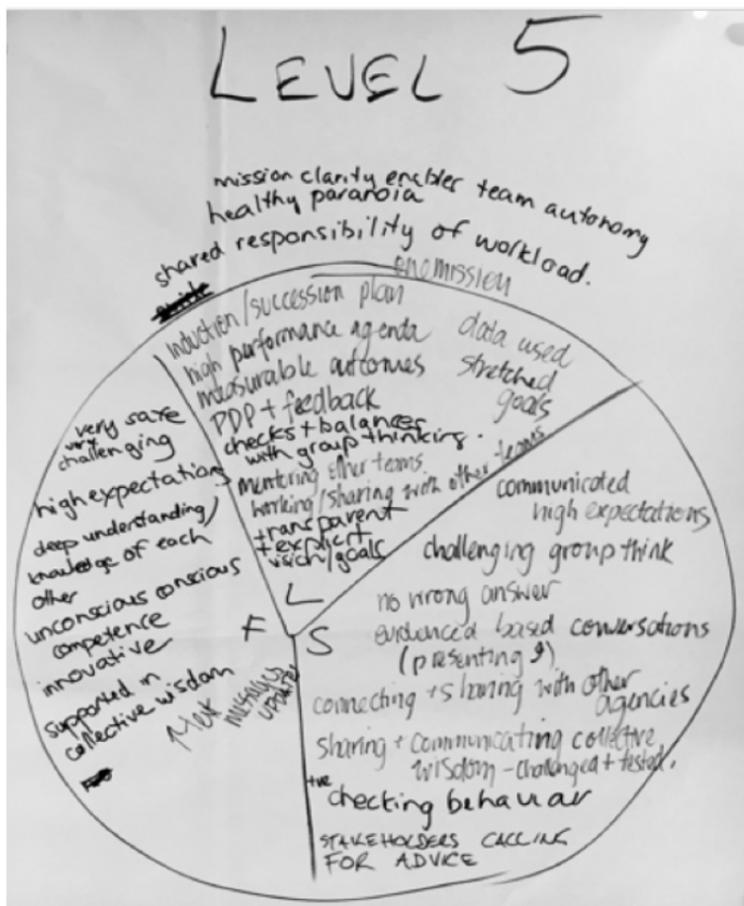


## Level Up!

At Level 4: Advanced HPT, the room was stilted. There were long gaps in the conversation as people struggled to draw on past experiences to identify possible answers to the Y Chart questions. At this point we again reminded the team to also imagine what this may be like based on other teams they had seen or heard about – even in fictitious movies, books and television shows. This seemed to re-start the conversation nicely and the subsequent outputs of Looks like included *‘innovation, succession plan in place, clear alignment to organisational goals, mutual responsibility and individual accountability.’* Sounds like included *‘healthy debate, lots of robust discussion, positive discussion, and feedback.’* Feels like included *‘healthy tension, eager to participate, psychologically safe, and focused.’* While we’ll be discussing it shortly, you don’t have to be a rocket scientist to know that this change in dynamics was to become important in the latter stages of the exercise when the team diagnosed its own level and the critical path to Level Up.

## Level 5: Elite HPTs

Finally, at Level 5, the movie conversations and “I once heard about a team that...” flowed on as people all chipped in ‘ideal world’ ideas that they felt aligned to the underpinning descriptors around clarity of vision, stretch goals, trust and succession. Outputs of Looks like included *‘shared responsibility of workload, use of data, high performance meeting agendas, and stretched goals.’* Sounds like included *‘no wrong answers, collective wisdom challenged and tested, and stakeholders calling for advice.’* Feels like included *‘very safe/very challenging, support in collective wisdom, high expectations, and deep understanding.’* There were very limited first person examples, but despite this, the positive energy and enthusiasm grew and the last phase of this discussion shifted naturally into ‘what we could do...’



### The Y Chart Team Conversation: Part 2 – “Level Up...”

The next part of the conversation at Jefferson SS revolved around the team discussing what would ‘need to change’ to get from one Level to the next.

### Moving From Level 1 to Level 2:

The changes needed from Level 1 to Level 2 were about accountability and performance management with team

## Level Up!

members needing to make ‘hard decisions’ to commit to the team or leave. At this level, leaders are heavily involved in directing the team until structures are established to support behaviour.

<b>Level 2 Functional</b>	<b>1x (Constructive)</b>	<b>50% (Acceptance)</b>	<b>Systems (Manage)</b>
<b>Level 1 Dysfunctional</b>	<b>-2x (Destructive)</b>	<b>0% (Distrust)</b>	<b>Structures (Manage)</b>

### Moving From Level 2 to Level 3:

Moving from Level 2 to Level 3 was primarily about teams mastering the disciplines of HPT and actively using meeting protocols, data walls and prioritising their time together to build team relationships and give each other honest and constructively critical feedback to improve. During this conversation, the comment was made by one person *“I reckon to move from Level 2 to Level 3 is the longest and hardest Level Up step across the 5 levels,”* which upon reflection, nicely matched the arduous task of shifting from conscious incompetence to conscious competence and the ‘learning it’ that accompanies any major new adult learning and behaviour change. At this level, leaders were still heavily involved in modelling behaviour and ensuring that systems were being implemented effectively.

<b>Level 3 HPT</b>	<b>2x (Collaborative)</b>	<b>75% (Understanding)</b>	<b>Improving (&amp; Mentor)</b>
<b>Level 2 Functional</b>	<b>1x (Constructive)</b>	<b>50% (Acceptance)</b>	<b>Systems (Manage)</b>

### Moving From Level 3 to Level 4:

Moving from Level 3 to Level 4 was about having data wall conversations on KPIs for innovation and investing in professional development. Here leaders moved into a mentoring role, providing examples of what had worked from their experience.

<b>Level 4 Adv HPT</b>	<b>5x (Strategic)</b>	<b>90% (Growth)</b>	<b>Stretching (&amp; Coach)</b>
<b>Level 3 HPT</b>	<b>2x (Collaborative)</b>	<b>75% (Understanding)</b>	<b>Improving (&amp; Mentor)</b>

### Moving From Level 4 to Level 5:

Finally, the move from Level 4 to Level 5 was about jointly setting stretch goals and ensuring that the team was resourced accordingly. Leaders were expected to move into more of a coaching role, modelling a growth mindset and encouraging team members to seek frank and fearless feedback.

<b>Level 5 Elite HPT</b>	<b>10x (Leverage)</b>	<b>100% (Legacy)</b>	<b>Super-Stretch (&amp; Coach)</b>
<b>Level 4 Adv HPT</b>	<b>5x (Strategic)</b>	<b>90% (Growth)</b>	<b>Stretching (&amp; Coach)</b>

### The Y Chart Team Conversation: Part 3 – “Where Are We Now (& What’s Next)?”

As you can no doubt tell, it didn’t take long for the team at Jefferson SS to self-diagnose at Level 2 – albeit with some elements of Level 3. When it came to ‘what’s next’ the team agreed that there was a need to double down and work harder on learning the disciplines behind the 4 KPIs of High Performance Teams (see Part 3 of this book for more information). Further, there was a renewed enthusiasm from

## Level Up!

all team members to complete the remaining sections of their team data wall as well as taking more seriously the need to ‘call each other on behaviour’ using agreed protocols, and improve the quality of their meeting protocols and chair and moderation. There was also increased enthusiasm for finalising their core purpose and better integrating this into their various communication processes with staff and community members. Another important aspect of the next steps was to integrate their data sets better and create simplified monthly dashboards to use both within the team and also to communicate with stakeholders.



HPT Level	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Challenge (Approach)
Level 5 Elite HPT	10x (Leverage)	100% (Legacy)	Super-Stretch (& Coach)
Level 4 Adv HPT	5x (Strategic)	90% (Growth)	Stretching (& Coach)
Level 3 HPT	2x (Collaborative)	75% (Understanding)	Improving (& Mentor)
Level 2 Functional	1x (Constructive)	50% (Acceptance)	Systems (Manage)
Level 1 Dysfunctional	-2x (Destructive)	0% (Distrust)	Structures (Manage)

## ‘Real World’ Follow Up: Bridging The Team Transformation Gap...

The Y Chart Team Conversation left everyone positively buzzing and eager to improve – but the real test was over the subsequent weeks and months where ‘training’ had to become ‘real world’. We had two further scheduled follow-ups with this team over 3 months. At the first follow-up there was a viable team data wall working and the final version of their monthly

dashboard was being piloted. Their team meeting protocols were exemplary and the moderator and chair were creating a great pace and positive tension in the meetings making them both productive and enjoyable.

At the second and final follow-up there had been some movement in the team as roles were re-aligned and two of the team opted to openly pursue different opportunities based on the clarity of purpose now apparent in the team and their need to 'best fit' in another environment. Whilst they hadn't left yet, they were none-the-less very positive and fully engaged in the larger team's journey and happier for the clarity they now had about the direction of the team and what they were looking for in their future work. The team's data wall, dashboard and meeting protocols were also now being shared with key stakeholders and used in a range of related meetings.

### **Bringing It Together**

Team Development Programs are essential for building higher performance teams as they create the necessary time and space to 'step out' of the daily grind and explore and embrace opportunities for growth and innovation. The most critical aspect of investing in team development occurs after the training program, back in the 'real world' work setting where so many good intentioned ideas simply fail to get executed effectively despite the commitment of hard working well-intentioned people.

One of the secrets to success in overcoming this barrier is to ensure that training activities incorporate specialised techniques from sports psychology (such as visualisation and priming) and learning theory (such as Y Chart Discussions and using Examples and Non-Examples).

## Level Up!

By applying these techniques, in the form of a structured team conversation, to the 5 Levels of High Performance Teams, we can deepen the level of engagement among team members to more effectively understand their current level of performance and ‘real world’ next steps they can take to fully embed the High Performance Teams Framework to Level Up – thus creating a more robust guarantee of successful transformation upon return to ‘real world’ workplace interactions.

How can you use the Y Chart Level Up Conversations to bridge the transformation gap from ‘training’ to ‘real world’ in your team development strategies? In Part 3 we’ll unpack the 4 KPIs of High Performance Teams to find out!

# Chapter 6

## Quickstart: What Is Your Team Level?

*“High Performance Teams are the ultimate competitive advantage in business as well as the foundation of all successful schools.”*

— Pete Stebbins

What Level is your team at right now? Would you like to know? I'm sure you've already started to guess based on the range of indicators we have discussed in the last couple of chapters! As we conclude Part 2 of the book we want to give you an opportunity to complete the Level Up Quick Start Team Assessment to confirm (or change) your thinking and prepare you for Part 3 where we deep dive into each of the 4 KPIs of High Performance Teams to develop strong foundations before Levelling Up!

### **The Origins of the Level Up Quick Start Team Assessment**

The need for a Quick Start Team Assessment became more urgent as the High Performance Teams Program expanded rapidly across an increasingly wide range of organisations – where the level of understanding or ‘buy-in’ was limited to a few ‘early adopter’ teams and leaders who faced a number of challenges getting their colleagues to understand the value of building High Performance Teams. Consider the comments made below by one such frustrated leader...

## Level Up!

*"I don't think you understand what I'm saying... I'm happy to make High Performance Teams a priority and even schedule a workshop for our team to have a Y Chart Conversation – but I can't just 'spring it on them' because they'll roll their eyes and tune out..."*

*....is there a quick diagnostic tool I could get them to do ahead of the workshop? Something that would give each of them (and also my boss who seems pretty sceptical right now) an understanding of the likely level of performance in our team and get them thinking about next steps?"*

### **Level Up Team Assessment Case Study: Susan, DP, Jefferson State High School**

Understanding the differences between teams of varying levels was one of the most powerful discoveries we've made to date within the High Performance Teams Project. With this new found knowledge, we've been able to create an assessment that allows teams to self-diagnose their current Level and highlight the next steps for them to Level Up - overall fast-tracking their success!

One of our early adopters was Susan, an ambitious yet frustrated Deputy Principal (DP) at Jefferson State High School. As DP of Middle School (supporting the HoDs of English, Maths, Science & HPE) Susan had been struggling with the fact that her leadership teams and faculty staff were putting in the hard work to improve team performance but just seemed to be spinning their wheels – they wanted to Level Up but just didn't know where to start. To help Susan, we invited her to complete the Level Up Quick-Start Team Assessment.

## Step 1: Complete The Quick-Start Team Assessment

In completing the Level Up Assessment, Step 1 for Susan was to consider her team's current status in relation to the items in the Level Up questionnaire. (see below)


**HPT Level Up**  
QUICK-START TEAM ASSESSMENT



# HPT Level Up Team Assessment

(Pen & Paper Version)

*Instructions: Circle the items below that best describe your team's current status*

### Focus of Team Achievement

**Q1. Clarity of Vision: Our team's current level of clarity is...**

	Points
a) Long range with total clarity of our team's vision & action	5
b) Medium range with total clarity of our team's vision & action	4
c) Short range with total clarity of our team's vision & action	3
d) Short range with partial clarity of our team's vision & action	2
e) No clarity of our team's vision & action	1

**Q2. Goals & Targets: Our team's approach is to...**

	Points
a) Set and exceed our team's stretch goals & targets	5
b) Set and achieve our team's stretch goals & targets	4
c) Set and achieve our team's goals & targets	3
d) Set and partially achieve our team's goals & targets	2
e) Not set or achieve any team goals & targets – we focus on individual goals only	1

### Drivers of Team Engagement

**Q3. Trust & Vulnerability: Our Team's current status is best described as...**

	Points
a) Very high trust with mission focused and fearless feedback	5
b) High trust with growth focused and challenging feedback	4
c) Moderate trust with performance focused professional feedback	3
d) Low trust with polite and superficial feedback	2
e) No trust with avoidance of feedback	1

**Q4. Knowledge Sharing & Succession Planning: Our team's current status is best described as...**

	Points
a) Team, organisation and industry level sharing and succession	5
b) Team and organisation level sharing and succession	4
c) Team level sharing and succession	3
d) Team level sharing but limited focus on succession	2
e) No team level sharing or succession	1

## Step 2: Calculate Your Level Up Scores

Step 2 for Susan was to calculate her team's Achievement and Engagement scores by averaging the points from question 1 and 2 ( $4+4/2=4$ ), and 3 and 4 ( $2+2/2=2$ ) respectively. As you can see it is becoming apparent that the Team Achievement Scores are much higher than the Team Engagement Scores. Finally, Susan calculated her team's overall HPT Level, by averaging Questions 1 to 4 ( $4+4+2+2/4=3$ ). (see below)

**HPT Level Up**  
QUICK-START TEAM ASSESSMENT

High Performance Teams  
Fit in AND Stand Out!

2 Factors

4 KPIs

Table 1

Table 2

Table 3

Table 4

**HPT Leadership**  
MANAGE, MENTOR & COACH

### Your Team's HPT Score, Level Up Profile & Team Strategy

**Step 1:** Complete the table below using scores from the previous page.  
**Step 2:** Circle or highlight the applicable HPT Level in each of the 4 Tables.  
**Step 3:** Complete the Team Strategy based on HPT level & local needs.

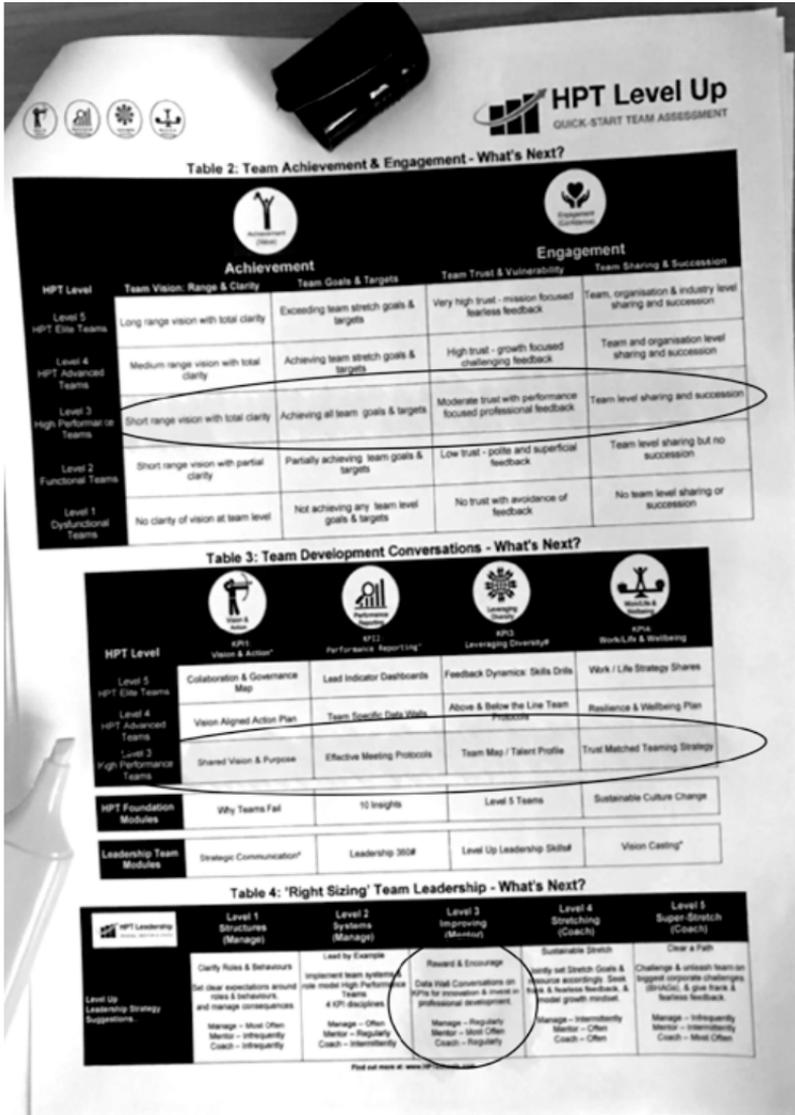
Achievement Score (Avg Q1,2)	4
Engagement Score (Avg Q3,4)	2
HPT Level (Avg Q1,2,3,4)	3

**Table 1: Your Team's HPT Level – What's Next?**

	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Challenge (Approach)
Level 5 HPT Elite Teams	10x (Leverage)	100% (Legacy)	Super-Stretch (A Coach)
Level 4 HPT Advanced Teams	5x (Strategic)	90% (Growth)	Stretching (A Coach)
Level 3 High Performance Teams	2x (Collaborative)	75% (Understanding)	Improving (A Mentor)
Level 2 Functional Teams	1x (Constructive)	50% (Acceptance)	Systems (Manage)
Level 1 Dysfunctional Teams	-2x (Destructive)	0% (Chaos)	Structures (Manage)

### Step 3: Highlight Your 'At Level' Ratings in Report Tables

Once Susan identified her team's overall HPT Level score (Level 3), she highlighted the sections relevant to that level in Tables 1 to 4 of the assessment. (see below)



## Level Up!

**Table 1** (see previous page) shows the Value, Confidence and Challenge ratings for Susan's current Team Level and allows her to see the next steps by looking at the Next Level above.

**Table 2** shows the 'at level' ratings for Achievement outputs (Clarity of Vision & Goals and Targets) and Engagement outputs (Trust & Vulnerability and Sharing & Succession) and enables Susan to identify the next Level Up outputs to aspire to.

**Table 3** shows the various HPT input strategies across the 4 KPIs matched to Team Level so Susan can see where the focus of team development needs to be to either consolidate at Level or begin developing at the next Level above. As you can see in Susan's case she needed to prioritise completing Level 3 team development around the Engagement Strategies of KPI 3 and 4 as these were relative weaknesses within the overall profile whilst moving up to Level 4 strategies on KPIs 1 and 2 were more appropriate for the team given the relative strength in Achievement overall.

**Table 4** highlighted the most useful leadership approach to match Team Level with Susan needing to mainly use mentoring strategies with an ongoing need for regular use of Managing and Coaching techniques – fading the use of Managing further as more Level 4 behaviour was evidenced in business as usual team behaviour.

### **Step 4: Complete Your Team Development Strategy**

Finally, to bring everything together, Susan used the information from the assessment and her own knowledge about the team to complete the Team Development Strategy on the final page. The big takeaways for Susan were (a) was that while her team were doing well on the Achievement side, they had a lot of work to do on Team Engagement; (b) as discussed above, Team Development

 <b>HPT Level Up</b> <small>QUICK-START TEAM ASSESSMENT</small>		<b>Team Development Strategy</b>			
<b>Team Level Summary</b>		<b>Team Challenges: Achievement</b>		<b>Team Challenges: Engagement</b>	
<b>Team Specific Leadership</b>		<b>Team Development Strategies</b>		<b>Team Specific Leadership</b>	
Level: <u>3</u> Value (Focus): <u>2x</u> Confidence (Driver): <u>75%</u> Challenge (Approach): <u>Improving</u>	What are the <b>ACHIEVEMENT</b> challenges in terms of (a) Clarity of Vision (b) Goals & Targets to Level Up? Your Comments... → New members up to speed. → Some high fliers who want to go faster than the team is ready for.	What are the <b>ENGAGEMENT</b> challenges in terms of (a) Trust & Vulnerability (b) Knowledge Sharing & Succession to Level Up? Your Comments... → Virtual Team (Dispersed Locations) → Time poor → Difficult to get to "non-work" issues.	What are the recommended <b>TEAM DEVELOPMENT</b> strategies to Level Up for: - PDI 1: Vision & Action? - PDI 2: Performance Reporting? - PDI 3: Leveraging Diversity? - PDI 4: WorkLife & Wellbeing? Your Comments... → Review of dev. with involving new team members. → Meeting protocols even in "virtual meetings" → Electronic Dashboard. → Clarity on role to get to have F2F contact / Talent map to team profile updates. → Ice breakers (level 1) to One word courtesy in meetings.	What is the team specific leadership <b>APPROACH</b> (ie. manage, mentor, coach) required now and to Level Up? Your Comments... → <b>Mentor</b> Share stories from similar past situations. → Channel "high fliers" to the people in other leadership roles in the team. → Guide new team members.	

## Level Up!

Strategies needed to be ‘at level’ for Engagement but ‘next level’ for Achievement; (c) Susan needed to adopt an ‘all rounder’ leadership approach using Managing, Mentoring and Coaching strategies – albeit prioritising Mentoring with a view to increase Coaching and decreasing Managing as more Level 4 team behaviour was apparent.

### **Quick-Start: What Is Your Team Level?**

What Level is your team at right now? Would you like to know? I’m sure you’ve already started to guess based on the range of indicators we have discussed already! Now we want to give you an opportunity to complete the Level Up Quick-Start Team Assessment to confirm (or change) your thinking and prepare you for the articles that follow where we deep dive into each of the 4 KPIs of High Performance Teams to develop strong foundations to Level Up!

### **Let’s Do It Now!**

Try the Level Up Quick-Start Assessment on the pages that follow or complete the Level Up Assessment online at [www.hptschools.com](http://www.hptschools.com) and click on the yellow Level Up Team Assessment button. Once you’ve completed the assessment read the articles that follow to make sure your team has solid foundations across all 4 of the KPIs so that they can Level Up!



# HPT Level Up Team Assessment

(Pen & Paper Version)

Instructions: Circle the items below that best describe your team's current status

## Focus of Team Achievement

Q1. Clarity of Vision: Our team's current level of clarity is...		Points
a)	Long range with total clarity of our team's vision & action	5
b)	Medium range with total clarity of our team's vision & action	4
c)	Short range with total clarity of our team's vision & action	3
d)	Short range with partial clarity of our team's vision & action	2
e)	No clarity of our team's vision & action	1

Q2. Goals & Targets: Our team's approach is to...		Points
a)	Set and exceed our team's stretch goals & targets	5
b)	Set and achieve our team's stretch goals & targets	4
c)	Set and achieve our team's goals & targets	3
d)	Set and partially achieve our team's goals & targets	2
e)	Not set or achieve any team goals & targets – we focus on individual goals only	1

## Drivers of Team Engagement

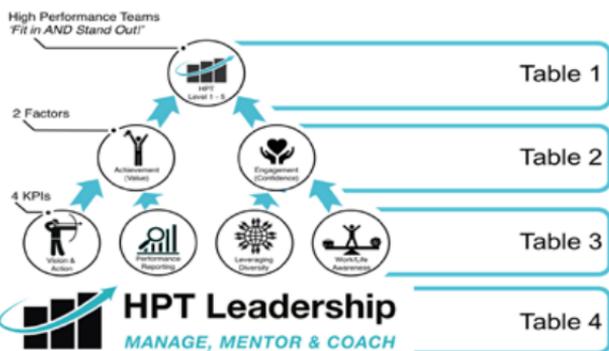
Q3. Trust & Vulnerability: Our Team's current status is best described as...		Points
a)	Very high trust with mission focused and fearless feedback	5
b)	High trust with growth focused and challenging feedback	4
c)	Moderate trust with performance focused professional feedback	3
d)	Low trust with polite and superficial feedback	2
e)	No trust with avoidance of feedback	1

Q4. Knowledge Sharing & Succession Planning: Our team's current status is best described as...		Points
a)	Team, organisation and industry level sharing and succession	5
b)	Team and organisation level sharing and succession	4
c)	Team level sharing and succession	3
d)	Team level sharing but limited focus on succession	2
e)	No team level sharing or succession	1

# HPT Level Up

QUICK-START TEAM ASSESSMENT



## Your Team's HPT Score, Level Up Profile & Team Strategy

- Step 1:** Complete the table below using scores from the previous page.  
**Step 2:** Circle or highlight the applicable HPT Level in each of the 4 Tables.  
**Step 3:** Complete the Team Strategy based on HPT level & local needs.

<b>Achievement Score (Avg Q1,2)</b>	
<b>Engagement Score (Avg Q3,4)</b>	
<b>HPT Level (Avg Q1,2,3,4)</b>	

**Table 1: Your Team's HPT Level – What's Next?**

	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Challenge (Approach)
Level 5 HPT Elite Teams	10x (Leverage)	100% (Legacy)	Super-Stretch (& Coach)
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Level 3 High Performance Teams	2x (Collaborative)	75% (Understanding)	Improving (& Mentor)
Level 2 Functional Teams	1x (Constructive)	50% (Acceptance)	Systems (Manage)
Level 1 Dysfunctional Teams	-2x (Destructive)	0% (Distrust)	Structures (Manage)

# Quickstart: What Is Your Team Level?



**Table 2: Team Achievement & Engagement - What's Next?**

HPT Level	Achievement		Engagement	
	Team Vision: Range & Clarity	Team Goals & Targets	Team Trust & Vulnerability	Team Sharing & Succession
Level 5 HPT Elite Teams	Long range vision with total clarity	Exceeding team stretch goals & targets	Very high trust - mission focused fearless feedback	Team, organisation & industry level sharing and succession
Level 4 HPT Advanced Teams	Medium range vision with total clarity	Achieving team stretch goals & targets	High trust - growth focused challenging feedback	Team and organisation level sharing and succession
Level 3 High Performance Teams	Short range vision with total clarity	Achieving all team goals & targets	Moderate trust with performance focused professional feedback	Team level sharing and succession
Level 2 Functional Teams	Short range vision with partial clarity	Partially achieving team goals & targets	Low trust - polite and superficial feedback	Team level sharing but no succession
Level 1 Dysfunctional Teams	No clarity of vision at team level	Not achieving any team level goals & targets	No trust with avoidance of feedback	No team level sharing or succession

**Table 3: HPT Team Development Strategies - What's Next?**

HPT Level	KPI1: Vision & Action*	KPI2: Performance Reporting*	KPI3: Leveraging Diversity#	KPI4: Work/Life & Wellbeing
Level 5 HPT Elite Teams	Collaboration & Governance Map	Lead Indicator Dashboards	Feedback Dynamics: Skills Drills	Work / Life Strategy Shares
Level 4 HPT Advanced Teams	Vision Aligned Strategic & Operational Plans	Team Specific Data Walls	Above & Below the Line Team Protocols	Resilience & Wellbeing Plan
Level 3 High Performance Teams	'Buy In' Team Purpose, Vision, Goals & Actions	Effective Meeting Protocols	Team Profile & Talent Map	Trust Matched Teaming & Pulse Conversations
<b>HPT Foundation Modules</b>	Why Teams Fail	10 Insights	Level 5 Teams	Sustainable Culture Change

**Table 4: 'Right Sizing' Team Leadership - What's Next?**

HPT Leadership	Level 1 Structures (Manage)	Level 2 Systems (Manage)	Level 3 Improving (Mentor)	Level 4 Stretching (Coach)	Level 5 Super-Stretch (Coach)
Level Up Leadership Strategy Suggestions...	Clarify Roles & Behaviours	Lead by Example	Reward & Encourage	Sustainable Stretch	Clear a Path
	Set clear expectations around roles & behaviours, and manage consequences.	Implement team systems & role model High Performance Teams 4 KPI disciplines.	Data Wall Conversations on KPIs for innovation & invest in professional development.	Jointly set Stretch Goals & resource accordingly. Seek frank & fearless feedback, & model growth mindset.	Challenge & unleash team on biggest corporate challenges (BHAGs), & give frank & fearless feedback.
	Manage – Most Often Mentor – Infrequently Coach – Infrequently	Manage – Often Mentor – Regularly Coach – Intermittently	Manage – Regularly Mentor – Most Often Coach – Regularly	Manage – Intermittently Mentor – Often Coach – Often	Manage – Infrequently Mentor – Intermittently Coach – Most Often

Find out more at: [www.HPTschools.com](http://www.HPTschools.com)

# Team Development Strategy



**Team Level Summary**



**Team Challenges: Achievement**



**Team Challenges: Engagement**



**Team Development Strategies**



**Team Specific Leadership**



Level:	What are the <b>ACHIEVEMENT</b> challenges in terms of (a) Clarity of Vision (b) Goals & Targets to Level Up??	What are the <b>ENGAGEMENT</b> challenges in terms of (a) Trust & Vulnerability (b) Knowledge Sharing & Succession to Level Up?	What are the recommended <b>TEAM DEVELOPMENT</b> strategies to Level Up for:	What is the team specific leadership <b>APPROACH</b> (ie, manage, mentor, coach) required now and to Level Up?
Value (Focus):	Your Comments...	Your Comments...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KPI 1: Vision &amp; action?</li> <li>KPI 2: Performance Reporting?</li> <li>KPI 3: Leveraging Diversity?</li> <li>KPI 4: Work/Life &amp; Wellbeing?</li> </ul> Your Comments...	Your Comments...
Confidence (Driver):				
Challenge (Approach):				

# Part 2:

## Search & Discovery: The Highest Performance Teams

### 1 Page Action Plan

Topic	Key Learnings	Takeaway Messages	Actions/Next Steps
How High? The Search for the Highest Performance Teams			
How Long? The Journey Up To Level 5			
Bridging The Transformation Gap: A Road Map for Success			
What's Your Level? The Level Up Quick Start Team Assessment			



# Part 3.

## Levelling Up The 4 KPIs...

*“Teams must create a  
‘culture of consistency’ in which everyone knows  
(and has the capability) to achieve the acceptable  
work performance standards.”*

– Trevor Pilgram

# Chapter 7

## Levelling Up KPI 1: Vision & Action

*“Vision without action is just a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.”*

– Joel Barker

HPT Level	KPI 1 Vision & Action	KPI 2 Performance Reporting	KPI 3 Leveraging Diversity	KPI 4 Work/Life & Wellbeing
Level 5	Collaboration & Governance Map	Lead Indicator Dashboards	Communication Mastery - Skills Drills	Work/ Life Strategy Shares
Level 4	Vision Aligned Strategic & Operational Plans	Team Specific Data Walls	Above & Below Line Team Protocols	Resilience & Wellbeing Plans
Level 3	'Buy-In' To Purpose, Vision, Goals & Actions	Effective Meeting Protocols	Team Profile & Talent Map	Trust Match Teaming & Pulse Conversations

**You Are Here!**

### In a Nutshell

*Vision Inspired Action is an absolute necessity for every High Performance Team. However, for this to be successful, we need to make sure the following foundational rules are applied:*

- 1. Establish a clear vision (short, medium and long range) based on a genuine understanding of the core purpose of the team and wider organisation which limits (1) the risk of cynicism from superficial motherhood statements, and (2) maximises genuine buy-in from all staff;*
- 2. Normalise core purpose and vision into (1) day-to-day work routines and communication protocols, (2) reporting columns of performance measurement systems, and (3) headings or specifiers within broader organisational charts and strategic plans; and*

3. *Map the delivery of vision and action across the organisation (and with wider stakeholder groups) to ensure roles and responsibilities and deliverables of various teams and working parties are clear. This prevents scope creep caused by lack of clarity about the deliverables (which define the lifespan of the team or working party), and burnout caused by competing demands and/or unclear accountability.*

*As such, in this Chapter we will cover the key elements of KPI 1 including core purpose and vision casting; aligning operational and strategic plans; and leadership structures for school improvement.*

### **Inspiration: Torn Between Two Loves...**

My coaching client was in turmoil. As an Executive Director in a large regional health and hospital service he was facing increasing pressure on all sides. His boss requiring him to travel more to have ‘face time’ with staff across all the different clinics. His wife recently diagnosed with chronic health problems limiting her ability to care for their young children and requiring him to be home more often...

*“If you do what you love,  
you’ll never work a day in your life.” – Marc Anthony*

As we worked through the available options I asked the obvious question: *‘So if, in the end, you are forced to make a choice between your career and your family what would you choose?’* Typically most responses are the same – *‘I would put my family first...’* but this time the answer was different... *‘Gee that’s a tough one and I hope I never really have to choose. You see there’s no doubt I love my wife and family very much but I also really love my job. I work for a really visionary and inspiring boss, I am part of a great leadership team who are working together to achieve extraordinary goals and I get a lot of satisfaction out of working with my direct reports who are just as inspired and motivated to help the community as I am...’*

## Level Up!

My client seemed genuinely torn between two loves - the love for his wife and family which I knew to be deep and genuine - and the love for his work which I had underestimated in terms of the satisfaction and happiness it had brought to his life. After he said this I began to reflect on my own career and silently wished that my job could be even more satisfying than it was...

### **Counterpoint: Groundhog Day**

*“Work would be terribly boring if one did not play the game all out passionately” – Simone De Beauvoir*

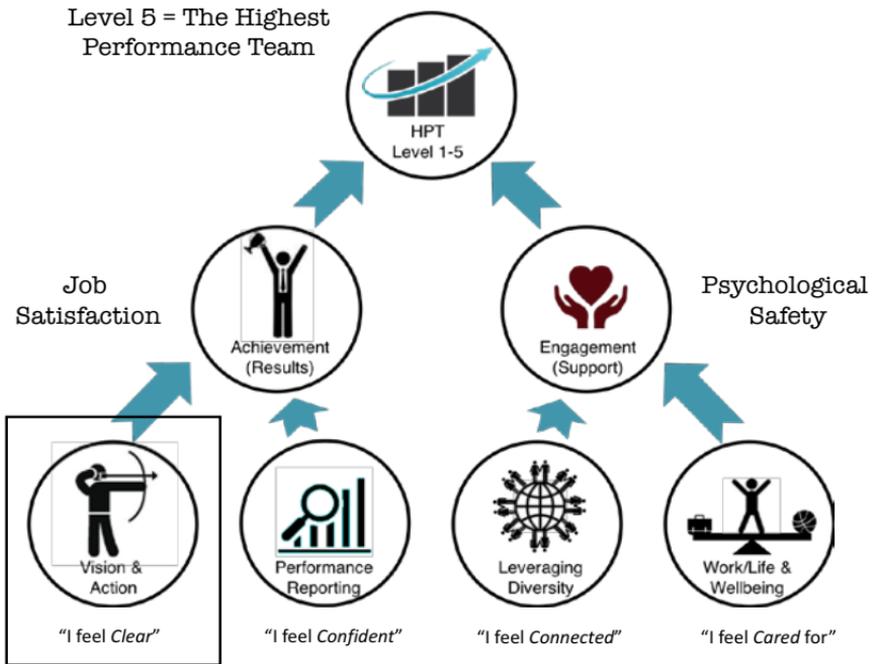
What do you think of when I say *‘It’s Groundhog Day’*? Most people that I know think about being stuck in a boring and purposeless job. The term ‘Groundhog Day’ has been synonymous with boring and seemingly purposeless work since the 1993 film of the same name about a man who finds himself caught in a time loop, repeating the same boring day over and over again.

High Performance Teams never suffer from feeling like it’s Groundhog Day – even when their work is repetitious and tedious they still manage to smile and give it all they have got! In contrast Low Performance Teams almost never escape the feeling of Groundhog Day feeling frustrated, disengaged and under-appreciated no matter how interesting and varied their work is.

Therefore, the big question is: *When it comes to being stuck in Groundhog Day or ‘loving your job so much that you never work a day in your life’, what is the ‘secret sauce’ that separates High and Low Performance Teams?*

The answer is “Vision Inspired Action” or what we refer to in HPT as ‘KPI 1: Vision & Action’. High Performance Teams have 3 big advantages over Low Performance Teams because they are (1) Genuinely invested in the organisation

and have strong ‘buy-in’ to the role of their team in making a contribution, (2) Have a team specific adaption of the organisation’s vision and mission for both the short- and long-term which enables them to set meaningful goals and stretch goals, and (3) Turn their goals and stretch goals into locally driven action plans to make things happen!



High Performance Teams achieve these three critical advantages, not by attending expensive strategic planning retreats, nor by engaging in high intensity team building and trust falls, nor by participating in employee engagement and values exploration focus groups. High Performance Teams simply complete three very specific targeted exercises which yield important insights that become part of their ‘business-as-usual’ ways of working on the journey up to even higher performance. Let’s unpack these three exercise now so your team can do them too!

## **Vision & Action: Getting Started With Your Team...**

To illustrate the power of Vision Inspired Action within High Performance organisations I'd like to relay a story I have heard about a man who took a trip with his family to Disneyland. As many parents before him have done, the weary man sat down for a coffee in a food court while his kids lined up to ride the "It's A Small World" ride for the fourth time that day. As the man was sitting, a Disneyland staff member was working nearby. As they made eye contact the man started up a friendly conversation by asking "So, what do you do here?" Without missing a beat or even a hint of sarcasm, the Disney staff member replied "Sir, I make people happy!" and continued to cheerfully clean the tables and chairs surrounding the man in the food court. As the man took a sip of his coffee and surveyed his spotless surroundings, he smiled to himself as he was indeed very happy. The first time I heard this story I thought that it was unbelievable - so did my friend who initially told the story to me as it had been told to him. So, when my friend later went to Disneyland himself, he asked the same question to a random staff member and incredibly got the same reply – this was not a one off!

## **What's your Team's Reason for Being? Connecting with Your Core Purpose...**

Simply by virtue of its very existence, every organisation already has a core purpose – a reason for being which, if understood by all staff in its most honest and simple form, could create the foundations to build a powerful vision of future success. However, without such clarity about the true core purpose of an organisation, any subsequent vision statements are at risk of

becoming meaningless ‘motherhood’ statements inadvertently decreasing instead of increasing inspiration and motivation among staff.

Our favourite method to establish a clear, no BS understanding of the team’s core purpose is to have the team answer the three questions of the ‘hedgehog’ concept first discovered by management guru Jim Collins in his research on Good versus Great Companies. We’ve been playing with the Hedgehog concept with teams in Education and Health for many years and have refined and scaffolded the process further (see worksheet below).

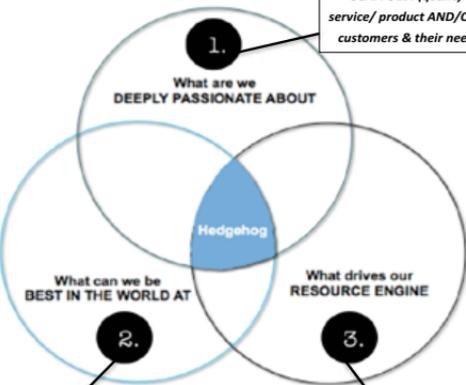


**HIGH PERFORMANCE  
TEAMS**

## The Hedgehog

Understanding Core Purpose





**1.** SCAFFOLD: (quality of service/ product AND/OR the customers & their needs?)

**2.** SCAFFOLD: (local context of skills we have AND/OR the types of problems we solve)

**3.** SCAFFOLD: (demand triggers for our service (pain/pleasure) & ability to supply customer valued product)

**1.** Response: \_\_\_\_\_

**2.** Response: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.** Response: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Hedgehog: Our Core Purpose\***

Consolidating 1 + 2 + 3 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*This is our team level definition of the org. motto

Question 1 asks: “*What are we deeply passionate about?*” – In answering this question, we encourage teams to think about the extent to which they are passionate about either (1) the quality of what they do – services and products they provide and/or (2) the needs they fulfill for the customers they serve.

## Level Up!

In the case of Disneyland, the founder Walt Disney was deeply passionate about creating ‘happy’ experiences for people – especially children and families and he infused this passion into everyone he hired and everything he did.

Question 2 asks: “*What can we be the best in the world at?*” – As a stand-alone question this can sometimes be difficult for teams to answer, so we focus them on the application of their products or skills to their local/specific context. In the case of Disneyland, the amusement park was the specific context in which they could apply their product and skills at a world’s best (i.e., ‘happiest’) standard. Without narrowing the ‘context’ it is easy to fall into the ‘motherhood’ trap on this question and claim to want to be the world’s best ‘generally speaking’ which causes obvious problems down the track when developing detailed strategy (i.e., if we are to be the ‘world’s best’ are we investing in better amusement parks or investing in happier people?).

Question 3 asks: “*What drives our resource engine?*” – Sometimes teams can find this question a bit ambiguous so we prompt further thinking and clarity by asking the confronting obsolescence question – “what would need to change in the world where there would be no more need for our organisation?” we then drill down into why we exist and the resources that sustain us - such as the ‘pain’ people experience that the service relieves in the most convenient and affordable ways, or the ‘pleasure’ and benefits that people derive from the goods or services.

Staying with the Disneyland example, if people (specifically children and families) were 100% happy all the time then there would be no need for Disneyland – thus one of the drivers of the resource engine of Disneyland is the fact that people aspire to greater happiness experiences with their family and friends. At its core, Disneyland removes the pain of ‘sub-optimal’ happiness and provides the ‘pleasure’ of ‘optimal’ happiness. To do this they need (1) the most fun and entertaining rides and services, (2) consistently polite, helpful, and happy staff,

(3) a clean, safe and enjoyable environment, and (4) entry prices people can afford and are willing to pay.

### **The Hedgehog: Consolidating The 3 Building Blocks of Core Purpose**

Once the answers of the three building blocks of purpose are clear we can see the overlapping elements that lead us to our ultimate core purpose. When we consider the elements discussed in the Disneyland case study the common thread (AKA golden thread) is clearly related to ‘making people happy’: 1. *Passion* - for creating happy experiences; 2. *Expertise* - in creating ‘happy’ experiences via amusement parks; and 3. *A Resource Engine* - powered by people willing to pay money to spend time in a fun, entertaining, safe and clean amusement park which would make them feel ‘happier’.

It comes as no surprise then that staff at Disneyland see the ‘core purpose’ of their work, regardless of whether they are a cleaner, ride technician, street actor, or cashier as first and foremost ‘to make people happy’ which aligns completely with the wider vision of the Disney corporation!

### **Vision Casting, Goals & Stretch Goals: Short & Long Term**

*In order To Be The Change You Wish To See You Must First  
See The Change You Wish To Be....*

### **Vision Casting: Setting Your Future Direction...**

In 1961 US President John F Kennedy sent his country boldly into the space race when he declared, “Before the end of this decade we will have put a man on the moon”. Then just 6 months prior to the end of the decade Neil Armstrong walked upon the surface of the moon! Perhaps the coolest example of

## Level Up!

the power of setting an audacious long-term vision (and also focusing the core purpose of an organisation). But, let's face it, not all long-term visions become a reality – many people make outrageous statements predicting amazing results in the future which rarely, if ever, come to fruition. The difference between those teams that succeed and those that fail is not just in understanding core purpose and long-term vision but also casting vision through various time horizons - short-, medium-, and longer-term. Having clarity over these time horizons is the missing link because once clarity is obtained, plans can be made to turn vision into reality – to move from Vision to Action.

One of our favourite ways of tackling the challenge of vision casting across multiple timeframes is to take your 'core purpose' and then imagine what the future state would Look like, Feel like and Sound like in the short and long-term if everyone was 100% committed 100% of the time. At the completion of each interval of vision casting teams then write up a summary statement of what the vision will look like by the time point (i.e., today, 1 and 5 years into the future) and also identify the key goals and stretch goals required to fulfill the vision (see example worksheet on Page 99). By looking into the future at various intervals, teams start to open their minds to a whole new world of possibilities and also begin to differentiate 'ideal states' they are striving for along the timeline towards achieving the long-term vision. Without breaking down long-term vision into short and medium horizons people can either 'sprint' too far too soon and burnout or 'give up' before starting, and become increasingly cynical and resistant to change over the longer-term.



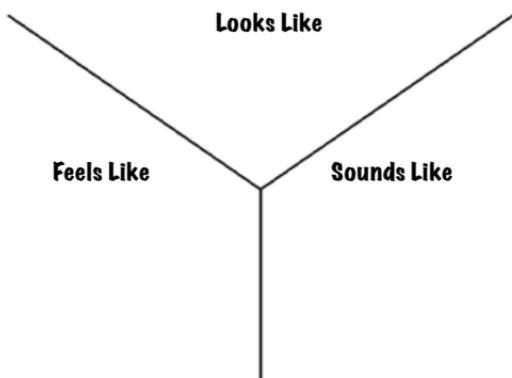
# Vision Casting Worksheet

**Step 1:**

Our Core Purpose Is \_\_\_\_\_

Range of Vision Casting Worksheet Is \_\_\_\_\_ (specify year date)

**Step 2:** Describe what would we look like, sound like and feel like by \_\_\_\_\_ (year) if everyone was 100% committed to our core purpose 100% of the time.....



**Step 3:** Based On The Vision Our Top Priorities For (year) \_\_\_\_\_ Are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**Step 4:** We Will Address Our Vision Driven Priorities For (year) \_\_\_\_\_ If We:

1. Key Goals and 10x\* Stretch Goals (*specify...*)

Goals (SMART)	Accompanying 10x* Stretch Goal

- (1) \*How could we leverage this to benefit to a much wider audience (who)?  
 (2) \*How could we do it faster/easier and/or with less inputs/ resources?

## Action Planning For Success: The Devil's In The Details

*Failing to plan is planning to fail'*  
– Winston Churchill

It may seem basic, but creating a clear action plan by breaking down grand visions into the 5 W's (and the 1 H) of Who, What, When, Why and How can be the difference between real success and abject failure. Remember failing to plan is planning to fail.

### A Best Practice Approach to Team Action Plans

After many years of research working with multiple high performance teams across a range of industries, we believe there is a best practice template that will suit most teams requiring very little, if any customisation and overcome the common pitfalls of having insufficient levels of detail, being unrealistic and not being easily updated and accessible. As you can see in the diagram, the HPT Action Plan (see example below) uses a series of well known elements to capture the essentials of what is needed for a strategy to be effectively developed, implemented and followed-up.



## Action Plan



Issue (Problem to Solve - What?)	Key Goals & Stretch Goals (What?)	Execution Strategy (How)	Link to Broader Strategy (Why)	Accountability (Who) & Reporting (When)

The first heading in our best practice Action Plan is 'Issue' – specifically describing 'What' the issue or problem is that you wish to address. In order for any strategy to be worth the time

and energy of team members it is critical to ensure it is a ‘high value’ issue to begin with, as well as being a clearly defined problem to be solved. For example in a hospital corporate services team, the issue of needing to ‘increase patient recovery rates’ would not be directly in scope, and therefore a lower value issue, given the corporate services team has no ability to directly control patient recovery. Similarly, an issue that is not clearly defined – such as ‘improve patient care’ – needs further refinement to identify what the key issue or problem actually is. For example, if we were to ask a clinical team to define this issue further using the question “What is the problem that needs to be solved?” we may find that the issue is to “ensure care planning conversations between medical staff occur with the patient present” rather than simply ‘improve patient care’.

By defining the issue clearly and describing it as a problem to be solved the second element of our Action Plan comes easily into focus – the key strategies and forward actions needed to solve the problem, which is the second part of ‘What’. Staying with the patient care example, it becomes quite straightforward to start to generate actions to improve care such as ‘training in handover meeting protocols, empathy and micro-skills for patient communication, provision of handover notes and planning tools in each patient room, etc.’

Once we have a clear understanding of the problem we are trying to solve and the key actions we wish to take, we then move to the third element which is the “How” – the detailed execution strategy needed for success. Without this third element our Action Plan may lack the necessary detail to enable all team members to participate in the various steps needed for success or we may not properly plan for the overlapping or competing aspects of the strategy that need to be managed nor identify gaps in the execution process. We then recommend re-connecting the proposed action to the wider strategic plan (‘Why’) to ensure both operational and strategic alignment. This is essential to prevent mistakes of strategy where a short-term opportunity may end up de-railing the wider strategy (AKA ‘the tail wagging the dog’).

## Level Up!

Finally we use the elements of ‘Who’ and ‘When’. For example, ‘Who’ is accountable within the team and ‘When’ are the critical completion dates. It is important that within the performance reporting cycle any milestones and completion dates are noted to ensure team members are clear on the individual roles within the strategy and critical timelines, milestones and report back dates and outputs are clearly understood to limit the risk of misunderstandings or performance problems.

### **KPI1 Foundations: Vision Inspires Action.**

No one wants to live in ‘Groundhog Day’ at work – feeling bored and frustrated. Rather most people would love to love their job (almost) as much as their family and friends – fulfilling the often said quotes of *‘love what you do and you will never work a day in your life’*.

The ‘secret sauce’ that separates High Performance Teams (who love what they do and never work a day in their lives) Low Performance Teams (who are stuck in Groundhog Day) is ‘Vision Inspired Action’. High Performance Teams have 3 big advantages over Low Performance Teams because they are (1) Genuinely invested in the organisation and have strong ‘buy-in’ to the role of their team in making a contribution, (2) Have a team specific adaption of the organisation’s vision and mission for both the short- and long-term which enables them to set meaningful goals and stretch goals, and (3) Turn their goals and stretch goals into locally driven action plans to make things happen!

Is your team fully engaged with Vision Inspired Action? Have you got all three critical elements of success working in your team – (1) Genuine buy-in to core purpose, (2) Clear team focused vision and goals, and (3) Locally driven action plans to make things happen? What are your next steps to take this further and become a Higher Performance Team?

### Case Study: Palm Valley State High School

Palm Valley State High is a Band 10 secondary school in Regional Queensland with 900 students. In the early stages of the High Performance Teams Program, Palm Valley worked hard on vision and action by aligning its core purpose with (1) operational (i.e., meeting agendas) and strategic activity (i.e., school improvement plans); (2) performance measurement systems (i.e., leadership team dashboard); and (3) communication tools and documentation (i.e., email signature block and letterheads).

Through using the Hedgehog activity, the Palm Valley leadership team described their core purpose as “Valley Pride” (see diagram below). They described having a *passion* for helping students lead successful lives (encompassing family, relationships, education and work), deep *expertise* and continuous learning in vocational and life skills training relevant to local community needs, and an awareness and engagement with key drivers of their local *resource engine* such as local economic factors, school reputation and staff motivation. Thus, they have the underpinning factors established that will need to be regularly measured and managed if they are to achieve their annual goals. When all elements of the school’s Hedgehog are taken together the school’s core purpose is unmistakable – *Valley Pride: Prepare students to lead successful lives in work, family and relationships.*

This core purpose was then socialised and reinforced at Palm Valley in every form of internal and external communication (e.g., the Annual Improvement Plan, Leadership Team Dashboard, Meeting Agendas, Signature block). Whilst the exemplars below represent only a small selection of documents linked to the school’s core purpose they provide a strong example of communicating to staff, students and the community what the schools stands for, making it almost impossible ‘not to know’ the true core purpose of Palm Valley State High.

**Palm Valley SHS Annual Improvement Plan 2016**  
School Vision: Growth and Leadership – Students are Healthy, Engaged and Confident

**Palm Valley SHS Leadership Dashboard**

**Palm Valley SHS**  
Valley Pride  
"Prepare students to lead successful lives in work, family and relationships."

Team Meeting (30 mins)  
Organisation/Team Meeting  
Location:  
Date & Time:

Chair:  
Moderator:  
Notes/Minutes:  
Attendees:  
Apologies:

Item 1	Welcome	Chair	2 mins
Inclusion 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisation Mission &amp; Values Share;</li> <li>Specific Team Role &amp; Accountability;</li> <li>Meeting Purpose &amp; Outcomes;</li> <li>Moderator Cards and Ground Rules</li> </ul>		

**John Smith**  
Principal, Palm Valley S.H.S.

**Valley Pride: Leading successful lives in work, family and relationships.**

## Vision and Action: Teams of Teams

*"You can't influence the world by trying to be like it."*

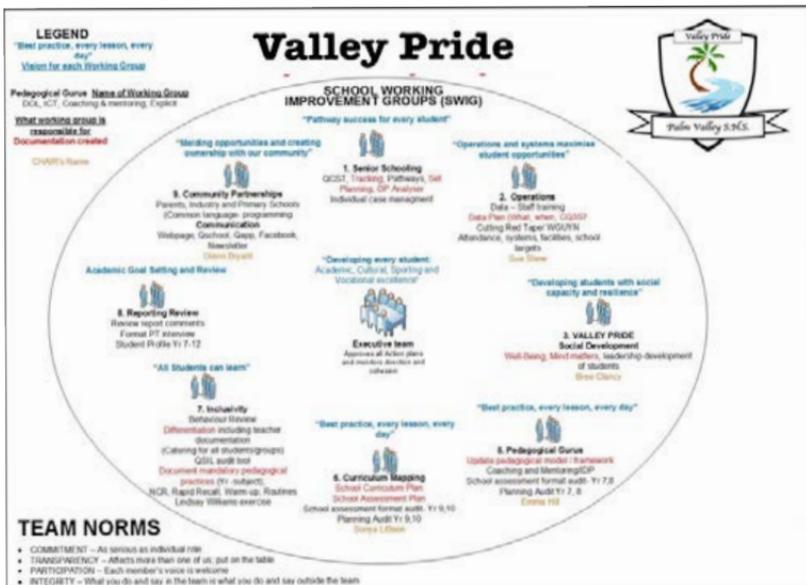
– Anonymous

Once individual teams are fully aligned around their vision and everyday actions are explicitly linked to core purpose, energy is freed up to be more outward looking into the wider organisation and stakeholder groups. This is the key challenge for teams to ultimately reach Level 5 (the highest level that High Performance Teams can aspire to). By scanning the wider environment, team members can identify and 'map' teams and working parties across the organisation and identify where there is a 'fit' or 'overlap' where they can share their expertise in order to maximise the benefits to the wider organisation and industry. The risk in doing this is to become 'overloaded' by too many responsibilities, competing demands and priorities (an all too common flashpoint for teachers, administrators and parents trying to work together to successfully run very busy schools). They mitigate this risk by not only 'mapping' the common interests of related teams and working parties but also 'mapping' the accountability structures to ensure

they can prioritise activity – never sacrificing their core team commitments and responsibilities.

Staying with our Palm Valley State High example let's take a look at how they mapped the various working parties made up of staff and community volunteers that were needed to fulfill their core purpose of Valley Pride.

From the structure on Page 95, it appears that Palm Valley State High have clearly got it right. But, let's face it, leadership in schools can at times be extremely complicated and demanding. School leaders must routinely juggle five different management responsibilities (including staff performance, student engagement, parent engagement, facilities and asset management, and school improvement initiatives linked to annual operational plans) whilst also dealing with the unexpected daily challenges of the business-as-usual school environment.

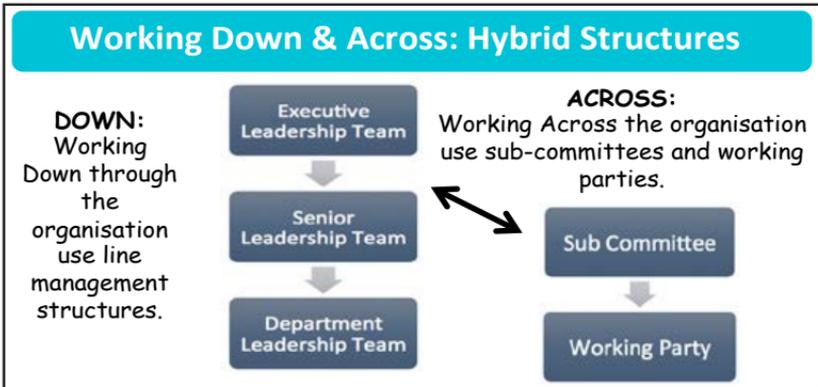


## Level Up!

Given the myriad of management responsibilities facing school leaders, it is completely understandable that some of the more long-term and complex strategic management functions such as school improvement initiatives are deferred or postponed. However, as demonstrated at Palm Valley, this need not be the case if we clarify and simplify the process of developing effective frameworks for governance and collaboration for school improvement initiatives, and so weave this very important aspect of school performance into the roles, responsibilities, structures and communication cycles of a business-as-usual environment.

### **Leadership Structures for School Improvement: Do's & Don'ts of The Hybrid Model**

It may come as no surprise that most schools use a combination of management structures (layers of leadership teams) and governance structures (use of committees and working parties) when implementing school improvement strategies.



To bring this to life let's look at the concepts of governance and collaboration in schools, the 3 big mistakes that school leaders can make, and how Palm Valley got it right!

**1. Mistake: Schoolwide collaboration strategies are incorrectly assigned to specific departments.**

This occurs when school leaders delegate a whole-of-school improvement strategy which required inter-departmental co-operation onto one departmental group. This creates a power imbalance and confusion about line management and accountability as they assert their schoolwide agenda over peer management teams. This mistake occurs because either (1) we do not fully understand the scale and impact of the improvement strategy and thus wrongly minimise its importance to be an ‘add-on’ to an existing team or (2) we do not have the calibre of High Performance leadership teams needed to distribute the burden evenly and thus relied on more competent and naturally action orientated management teams.

**How Palm Valley Got It Right:** Having up-to-date roles and responsibilities and accurate organisational charts to prevent risks of error during issues identification, as well as making sure the leadership team was engaged and active in the setting of priorities for whole school improvement was critical. Palm Valley always displays their organisational chart and strategic plan so that it is visible on their High Performance Teams Data Wall when meeting as a leadership team to set operational plans and discuss how to implement schoolwide improvement strategies.

**2. Mistake: School leaders assign responsibility for improvement strategies to collaborative working groups when in fact the accountability for these strategies already exist in line management structures.**

This mistake occurs because of either (1) ignorance about the organisational chart or (2) an assumption of greater engagement through assigning groups to be

‘co-responsible’ with the staff and leaders designated on the organisational chart (which backfires horribly when the staff responsible in the organisational chart are held hostage to committees or accused of not being team players by the group members when they try to deliver on their role). This is a common risk for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) when the performance development accountability process is unclear and there is risk of conflict between the PLC members and the line manager when a teacher is being managed for under performance.

**How Palm Valley Got It Right:** Palm Valley didn’t confuse awareness and support with action – working parties were all about action, whereas awareness and support could come through effective use of organisational data walls, meeting updates, peer coaching and explicit linkages between Professional Development Plans (PDPs) and PLC’s.

**3. Mistake: Committees and working parties, whilst working on appropriate issues, are not integrated effectively into the reporting and accountability cycle of management structures.**

This mistake occurs when school leaders correctly develop collaborative groups or ‘working parties’ using the governance model but fail to develop clear structures, goals and reporting mechanisms. This causes confusion and conflict between senior leaders within the school and committee/working party members when there is a mismatch of expectations about timeframes, deliverables and reporting requirements. Senior leaders face external pressures in delivering on key goals and objectives whilst group members may struggle with juggling their own full-time roles and responsibilities within the school as

well as their committee responsibilities. Such pressure and conflict need not occur if the committee or working party is correctly established in the first instance.

**How Palm Valley Got It Right:** Governance of collaborative groups such as committees or working parties was defined through 3 success factors: (1) a clearly defined purpose and action plan; (2) clear meeting protocols; and (3) regular reporting mechanisms.

Once school structures are aligned with core purpose and clarified in the right way, true collaboration can begin across the school, and the path is cleared for Level 5 High Performance Teams to push the school into new uncharted territory.

### **Bringing It Together**

Vision Inspired Action is an absolute necessity for every High Performance Team. However, for this to be successful, we need to make sure the following rules are applied: (1) Establishing vision based on a genuine understanding of the core purpose of the team and wider organisation to limit the risk of superficial motherhood statements and maximise the likelihood of genuine buy-in from staff; (2) The normalisation of vision and core purpose into both day-to-day work routines and communication protocols as well as broader organisational charts and strategic plans; and (3) The mapping of the delivery of vision and action across the organisation ensuring roles and responsibilities of various teams and working parties are clear, and preventing poor decision making and/or burnout caused by competing demands and unclear accountability. While some team visions may seem sky high, if the simple steps outlined within this chapter are followed to create Vision Inspired Action, any team can put (wo)men on the moon!

# Chapter 8

## Levelling Up KPI2: Performance Reporting

*“A bad system will beat a good person every time.”*  
– W Edwards Deming

*“A good system not only beats a bad person but also frees people up to give rock-star service to others (because people do business with people not systems).”*  
– Steve Watkins Barlow

HPT Level	KPI 1 Vision & Action	KPI 2 Performance Reporting	KPI 3 Leveraging Diversity	KPI 4 Work/Life & Wellbeing
Level 5	Collaboration & Governance Map	Lead Indicator Dashboards	Communication Mastery - Skills Drills	Work/ Life Strategy Shares
Level 4	Vision Aligned Strategic & Operational Plans	Team Specific Data Walls	Above & Below Line Team Protocols	Resilience & Wellbeing Plans
Level 3	'Buy-In' To Purpose, Vision, Goals & Actions	Effective Meeting Protocols	Team Profile & Talent Map	Trust Match Teaming & Pulse Conversations

**You Are Here!**

### In a Nutshell

*KPI 2 is about using information effectively to achieve goals and targets that maximise team performance. The foundations of performance reporting in High Performance Teams are established through the implementation of effective meeting protocols that enable qualitative and quantitative data to be shared and analysed to maximise performance and minimise risk.*

*As team's Level Up they increase the amount of strategic discussion in meetings (and decrease the time spent on information updates) because they effectively use data walls to stay up-to-date with performance information and have stand up discussions in front of*

*the data walls to look for positive trends and warning signs on key indicators. This also enables them to set ever more ambitious goals and targets as they become more confident about what is 'possible' in the upper end of team performance.*

*At Level 5, High performance Teams have benefited from extraordinarily productive strategy discussions at team meetings, and due to a deep understanding of their data walls, have insights to determine the key lead indicators that predict emerging successes or failures that are then tracked on a dashboard. This is updated in real-time where possible and always available to the team to enable 10x decision making both in meetings and between meetings to maximise the likelihood of achievement of stretch and super stretch goals!*

*As such, KPI 2: Performance Reporting has 3 core elements: (1) HPT Team Meeting protocols; (2) HPT Data Walls; and (3) Dashboards of Lead Indicator data to enhance performance. Each of these will be discussed in the following section.*

I'd like you to do some mental calculations about the effectiveness of your team meetings. Think about a recent meeting you've been to. How long did the meeting take, 30 minutes, 1 hour, half a day? Were you satisfied that the time in the meeting was used well? Of the total time spent meeting, what percentage of that time could you honestly say resulted in outcomes that clearly and genuinely boosted team achievement or engagement? Which parts of the meeting could have been removed altogether without negatively impacting team performance? What's the combined salary of all of the people who attended the meeting? What were the other costs associated in taking these people offline (e.g., costs of schedule coverage, or the temporary suspension of frontline services)?

If you thought about the questions above honestly, like most people, you're probably picking your jaw off the ground right now after being blown away by the mind bogglingly bad return on investment (R.O.I.) of holding most meetings. Meetings aren't the only example, but they are probably work in pairs

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examples of how poorly information is shared and analysed within most teams and organisations. When dealing with business-critical information, low performance teams fritter time away due to ineffective or non-existent processes. They spend meeting time giving laborious updates that could have otherwise been sent through email. Outside of meetings, if they even do keep track of any key metrics, these are often dispersed over multiple versions of excel spreadsheets (with no one quite knowing which one is the latest copy!). On the other hand, High Performance Teams are across all important business-critical data and make the most of every minute in meetings through tight protocols. Outside of meeting times, dashboards are displayed in prominent locations to allow every team member to see at a glance how the team is performing against their team goals in near real time – High Performance Teams always have the right information at the right time, which helps them to make the right decisions.

### **Making Team Meetings Matter**

*“The hard truth is, bad meetings almost always lead to bad decisions, which is the best recipe for mediocrity.”*

– Patrick Lencioni

### **Team Meeting Anatomy: 4 Parts Context, 1 Part Process**

Of all the different organisations we have worked with over the years schools are by far the most meeting centric - with a range of different meetings held across and down the organisation. Having worked with over to 200 schools on meeting strategy, we have begun to see patterns in the key elements of effective team meetings. We have used these patterns to create a recipe for High Performance Team Meetings. The recipe consists of

4 parts context, 1 part process. Let's look at the four context factors first:

**1. Purpose and Membership** The key question to ask before setting any meeting is: Is your meeting strategy based on (1) a whole-of-organisation scope or (2) team-specific/ project specific scope? Answering this question will help to define topics on the agenda as well as who should be in the room. Having clarity of purpose and only essential members present at the outset assists in overcoming the common meeting risks of role ambiguity, competing agendas and scope creep.

**2. Reporting Structures and Responsibilities** Once purpose and membership are defined the key question becomes: Are reporting structures and responsibilities aligned to governance or management functions? Most team meetings are part of management functions however working parties and project groups may sit more within a governance function. Thus clarifying these core structural reporting issues allows us to manage common risks of boundary crossing and diffusion of responsibility.

**3. Up-To-Date Lead Indicators and Targets** To ensure that meetings are productive the key question is: Do all staff know the group level lead indicators of success, as well as their individual targets AND is all the reporting data up-to-date and distributed? Having clarity on key metrics helps to avoid the key risks of collecting data for data's sake with no link back to strategy, and ensures that the level of complexity of discussion is appropriate to the data presented.

**4. Appropriate Activity Cycles** When we think about schools specifically, one of the unique challenges they face are that there are many different types of meetings that are usually quite

## Level Up!

necessary. There are specific meetings needed for teaching and non-teaching staff and also meetings needed for leadership teams and project teams working on various aspects of school improvement and curriculum. Given this complexity the key question is: How does your school context influence the meeting cycle in terms of frequency and length?

### **The 60 Minute Window...**

From our experience, schools adopt a wide range of different approaches. However, 60-minutes is often deemed the ideal length for a team meeting in terms of both attention, concentration and energy levels of participants as well as (in some cases) industrially mandated times allowed for such interactions. Ensuring that meeting cycles fit to local school context will eliminate the common risks associated with over/under meeting, staff availability, schedule clashes, and mandated work hours.

### **The HPT Team Meeting: An Hour of Power!**

Moving onto the nuts and bolts of what happens inside the meeting once the context is considered, the team meeting template on Page 54 covers off on the process of a High Performance Team Meeting. Specifically, ground rules, key roles and responsibilities, and agenda items that provide a mixture of briefings, updates, discussions on hot issues and opportunities. As you can see we pack a lot of interaction and engagement in 60 minutes! Let's unpack each of the agenda items from a 60-minute HPT Meeting.

## Team Meeting Exemplar: 60min Agenda



**(Organisation) Team Meeting (60min)**  
**(Mission)**  
**Location:**  
**Date & Time:**

**Chair:**  
**Moderator:**  
**Notes/ Minutes:**  
**Attendees:**  
**Apologies:**

Item 1 <i>Inclusion 1</i>	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation Mission &amp; Values Share;</li> <li>• Specific Team Role &amp; Accountability;</li> <li>• Meeting Team Purpose &amp; Outcomes;</li> <li>• Moderator Cards &amp; Ground Rules</li> </ul>	Chair	2 mins
Item 2 <i>Support 1</i>	Warm-Up One word barometer; Ice-breaker and/or Success & Challenge	All	3 mins
Item 3 <i>Proactive 1</i>	Team Member Updates Week/s Prior & Week/s Ahead Exception Reporting (2 mins max per team member) <i>Live Notes:</i>	All	8 mins
Item 4 <i>Proactive 2</i>	Hot Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair &amp; Share Top 2-3 Issues – Write on whiteboard and vegas vote (5 ticks per person) (3 mins) &amp; top 2 topics selected</li> <li>• 1 min – elaborate / 1 min – clarify / 3 mins – discuss / 1 min takeaways</li> </ul> <i>Live Notes:</i>	All	15 mins
Item 5 <i>Strategic 1</i>	Senior Leaders Briefing and Q&A <i>Live Notes:</i>	Senior Leader	10 mins
Item 6 <i>Strategic 2</i>	Deep Dive Presentation & Strategy Discussion* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present issue &amp; question for discussion (use template) (7 min)</li> <li>• Discussion / brainstorm (use whiteboard) (7 min)</li> <li>• Presenter comment on takeaway value of discussion (1 min)</li> </ul> (*alternate with Action Plan Review & Update item as needed) <i>Live Notes:</i>	Presenter	15 mins
Item 7 <i>Support 2</i>	Team Pulse: Culture & Communication Update (Feedback) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing Update – Team Pulse Survey data review &amp; note of forward actions to promote wellbeing</li> <li>• Culture Update – round table discussion of notable personal news and events among team and stakeholders</li> </ul> <i>Live Notes:</i>	All	5 mins
Item 8 <i>Accountable</i>	Close (Barometer, Takeaway Actions, Moderator Feedback & Next Mtg Roles) Moderator Feedback: Next Meeting Date/Time: Chair: Deep Dive Topic & Presenter:	Chair & Moderator	2 mins

**Ground Rules (Red Card/ Yellow Card)**

- 1. Openness & Trust** - Right to 'off record' speech with 'on the record' documented as formal feedback.
- 2. Balanced Debate** - Respecting both sides of the argument and allowing diversity of views.
- 3. Competency over Role** - Respecting the 'value' of the person's opinion regardless of their 'status'.
- 4. Issues over Personalities** - Staying 'issues' focused and not letting personalities overpower the agenda.
- 5. Accountable Actions & Clear Outcomes** - Being constructive in feedback and offering a solution focused
- 6. No Devices** – Exception Moderator & Chair for Time Keeping & Live Notes/ Minute Taker

## **Item 1. & Item 2: Welcome & Warm Up**

The organisation's Mission & Values, Meeting Purpose, Moderator, Ground Rules & Warm-Up are critical aspects of a meeting, however they needn't take a long time to cover. In a mere 5-minutes you can: (1) confirm the school and team-specific mission and values; (2) appoint a meeting moderator and confirm agendas and outcomes; (3) do a one-word barometer to gauge readiness and mood; and (4) complete a quick icebreaker to get to know team members better.

### **Team Dynamics – The Role of The Moderator**

We advocate setting ground rules and behaviours for meetings around: (1) openness and trust; (2) balanced debate; (3) competency over role; (4) issues over personalities; (5) accountable actions; and (6) devices. Setting these ground rules up front ensures that everyone is focused, and that it is expected that 'bad behaviour' will be called out. You can also see the roles in staff meetings. These roles rotate between meetings in order to upskill all staff and allow all team members to take ownership of the success of their meetings.

The role of meeting Chair should be familiar as it is common in most meetings. The Chair has the final say on matters of contention and keeps the group focused on content and outcomes. The meeting Moderator however is a key role not always understood or used effectively in team meetings. The moderator supports the chair (AKA Robin and Batman) by monitoring the dynamics, managing time, and using red/yellow cards to keep dynamics and time healthy. They also evaluate the meeting at the end, providing feedback to the group and recording this within their minutes to aid accountability and continuous improvement. It is especially important to rotate the moderator amongst team members to share the responsibility for team dynamics and to ensure everyone is engaged and committed to healthy dynamics, as well as reduce the risk of group think disasters.

## **Item 3. Team Member Updates**

Once the warm-up process is completed we move straight into individual updates from each team member. These updates are in the form of 'exception reporting' whereby only new or changed information that the team is not already aware of is reported by each individual using a 'round the room' format.

Information from updates may drive subsequent hot issues discussions as well individual follow-up conversations after the meeting has concluded.

#### Item 4. Hot Issues

Hot Issues is an important agenda item that ensures a consensus driven approach to selecting and addressing the hot topics staff wish to discuss. In order to make efficient use of time and to focus on issues truly relevant to the wider team (as opposed to those issues raised by staff with the loudest voices) get staff to complete a quick pair and share, then write two or three hot issues (per pair) on the whiteboard. Then allow each person to place 5 x ticks on the whiteboard to vote for the topics they wish to focus on – democracy at its finest.



To complete the process select the issue that garnered the most votes, allow the individual who raised the issue to give a brief outline (1 minute), the group to ask brief questions to clarify understanding of the issue (1 minute), discuss the issue in a solutions focused way (5 minutes), and finally, allow the individual who initially raised the issue to address the group with their summary of the discussion and key takeaways (1 minute) – repeat for as many issues as the meeting time allows.

## **Item 5. Senior Leaders Briefing and Q&A**

Putting the Senior Leaders Briefing after Hot Issues enables a flexible approach to the subsequent briefing to address any outstanding hot issues as well as preventing any risk of bias caused by opening the meeting with this item and also avoids repetition of issues if they have already been covered within Hot Issues or other preceding sections.

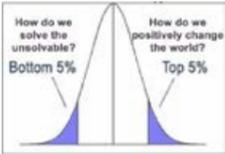
## **Item 6. Deep Dive Presentation/Strategy Discussion**

Deep Dive Strategy Discussions are vital to keep the big picture strategy in focus which is just as important as discussing the hot issues of the day. Keeping organisational strategy firmly on the agenda allows staff to “see the forest from the trees,” and work towards longer-term improvement. However, unlike ‘Hot Issues’ which are spontaneous, ‘Deep Dives’ need to be planned for as they should focus on the organisation’s most important strategic issues or the “5% questions” – “how do we solve the unsolvable?” OR “how do we do the impossible and change the world?”

The first job of preparing a Deep Dive is to devise a probing question that is worthy of the group’s time and consideration. Too often questions that are raised within meetings are too vague/general or of low strategic importance. These questions don’t meet the standard of question required to conduct a deep dive and are better asked in other forums.

Preparing a Deep Dive is challenging. Because of this we recommend using a template such as the one shown in the example on Page 58 and working in pairs so that the ‘presenter’ can be coached by their partner to fast-track and quality assure the process. Through preparing a probing question, outlining what is known about the issue, and what has already been tried

## Deep Dive Preparation Worksheet EXAMPLE

<b>The Issue in Focus:</b>	Example: Decreasing the inconsistency between QCS & School Based Assessment Data <i>Non-example: improving student achievement in school</i>	
<b>The 5% Strategic Question:</b> 	Example: How do we as the school leadership team improve consistency so we can guarantee that every year 12 student who gets an 'A' in our school also gets an 'A' in an independent QCS assessments? <i>Non-example: How do we increase the number of student getting high OP score at the end of year 12?</i>	
<b>Link to Wider Purpose/ Scope</b>	SLT responsible for 'every student succeeding' and providing a quality teaching and learning environment	
<b>The Data &amp; Analysis That Supports the Backstory (Left Brain)</b>	<b>The Backstory of Issue &amp; Key Impacts/ Emotions (Right Brain)</b>	
Last year 15% of students in year 12 got A's in school's assessments but only 5% got A's in independent QCS assessments resulting in lower opportunities for tertiary studies.	Students and parents and frustrated and confused when they are getting A's in school and then lower marks in external assessments and missing out on uni placements despite achieving the highest standards in our school - this also diminishes our reputation as a school in supporting high achievers.	

<b>Possible Solutions/ Answers to Strategic Question</b>	<b>Related Risks to Each Possible Solutions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the funding for student training on QCS tasks</li> <li>• Begin preparation and readiness activities for QCS in earlier years of high school</li> <li>• Increase training of teachers on QCS assessment tasks</li> <li>• Benchmark scale of problem and sharing ideas with other schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited funds and other priorities affected</li> <li>• Already full timetable and curriculum - disrupt other important processes</li> <li>• Other schools may be worse off than us - no new ideas - wasted time &amp; effort</li> </ul>

**Restate the Strategic Question:** How do we as the SLT improve consistency so we can guarantee that every year 12 student who gets an 'A' in our school also gets an 'A' in an independent QCS assessment?

## Level Up!

to resolve it, a Deep Dive focuses the group to move beyond the obvious and greatly improves the relevance to team purpose and scope, the team's comprehension of the issue and specific needs, the quality of ideas and solutions shared among the team, and the extent to which next steps and new pathways are now evident for the presenter.

With proper preparation, the presentation of even the most complex issues can usually be done within the 7-minute allocation (with pre-reading also appropriate for this item) and the subsequent 7-minute brainstorming session (noting key points on a whiteboard as discussion progresses) and can create powerful insights and solutions that can be quite astounding. A great Deep Dive gets the team buzzing with excitement about new possibilities to solve previously impossible problems or change the world in new and better ways!

### **Item 7. Team Pulse & Communication**

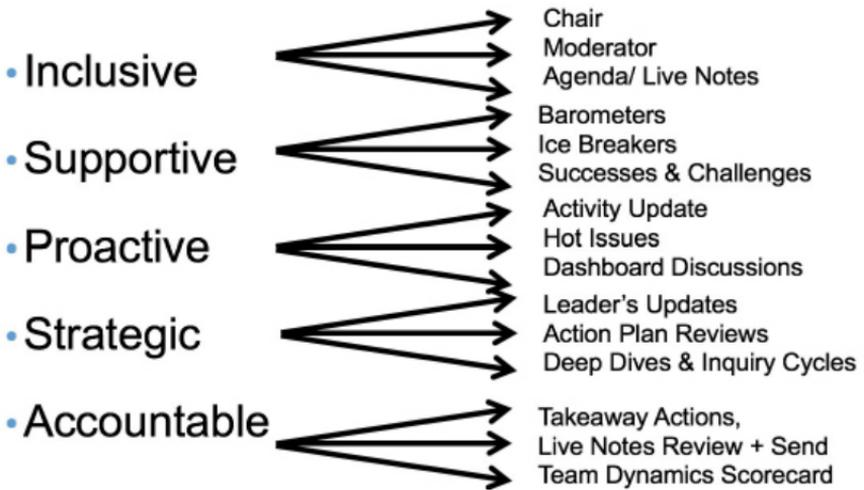
As part of promoting wellbeing and support, each team meeting has a brief agenda item towards the conclusion of the meeting to discuss: (1) wellbeing and support based on the results of the HPT Pulse Survey to develop forward strategies to maintain or improve wellbeing at work(see worksheet below) and (2) any notable personal news and events that may be sources of celebration or matters of concern where team members can provide any additional support (We'll explain this more in the chapter on KPI4 - See Page158).

### **Item 8. Wrapping Up with Purpose**

Ending the meeting with all staff sharing their barometer and takeaways enables clarity across the team about (1) how effective the meeting has been as well as (2) highlighting any issues or themes that may require further follow- up or clarification. The meeting is finalised by noting the moderator feedback, appointment of key roles and the deep dive topic and presenter scheduled for the next meeting.

## KPI2 Foundations: Team Meetings & Your Next Steps...

Like it or not Team Meetings are important and if done well create a unique opportunity for us to create a powerful and unreplaceable group intelligence to solve problems, innovate and improve. The HPT Team Meeting recipe we showcased in this chapter is our current ‘best practice’ template after working with over 200 schools on their vmeeting strategies. While the HPT Team Meeting recipe might be a little different to how your meetings currently run, there is a fantastic method in the madness of this approach! Every element of the High Performance Team Meeting Agenda is designed to encourage the positive outcomes of Inclusivity, Support, Proactivity, Strategic Thinking and Accountability.



Take a moment now to think about how you approach team meetings. Do you use some of the roles, items and meeting strategies outlined above? What could you do this week to improve your team meeting experience?

Remember that in the future world of work High Performance Team Meetings will be one of our only competitive advantages over artificial intelligence. Thus we all need to make sure that every team meeting is a High Performance Meeting!

## Performance Reporting – Level Up

### **Team Data Walls – The Road Signs that Keep Team Culture on Track**

As information sharing in team meetings increases, High Performance Teams look for ways to spend less time ‘sharing updates’ and more time problem solving ‘Hot Issues’, proactively addressing longer-term ‘strategic issues’ through Deep Dives, and setting bigger goals and targets that stretch them well beyond the expectations of their senior managers. As teams Level Up, the solution is not about emailing ever more documentation and pre-reading to already maxed out, time poor and very busy people, but rather to introduce a Team Data Wall which captures the ‘team level’ essential ‘need to knows’ to maximise both team achievement and engagement both day-to-day and over the longer-term.

Data walls are famous in airports, on Wall Street and Stock Exchanges around the world. They are also critical to the success of many corporations and fast-moving project and sales teams. In an education context, data walls are a proven strategy to engage students more deeply in learning and development. Yet, this crucial tool is often missing in many school staff rooms causing some elusive and difficult to grasp barriers to improving school performance.

Diligent school leaders and administrators regularly collect large amounts of data on a range of staff and student issues, but do not then take the time to present the data back to staff in a regular, consistent and simple format that encourages self-accountability. Consider the following quote from a typical school leader:

*“I’m so frustrated! My staff are a good bunch of people but they just don’t seem to get it when it comes to accountability to deliver on our school improvement agenda. They seemed to genuinely understand and engage at the start of the year during our planning day but since then I feel like I’m the only one pursuing what we all agreed to do together!”*

The school mentioned in this example is a very good school with well-intentioned leaders and hardworking staff. However, the data they collect about their annual strategic plan, student learning outcomes, staff wellbeing and support, parental feedback, budgets and safety are only displayed and discussed at infrequent planning meetings (with some verbal updates haphazardly given at various different meetings among staff).

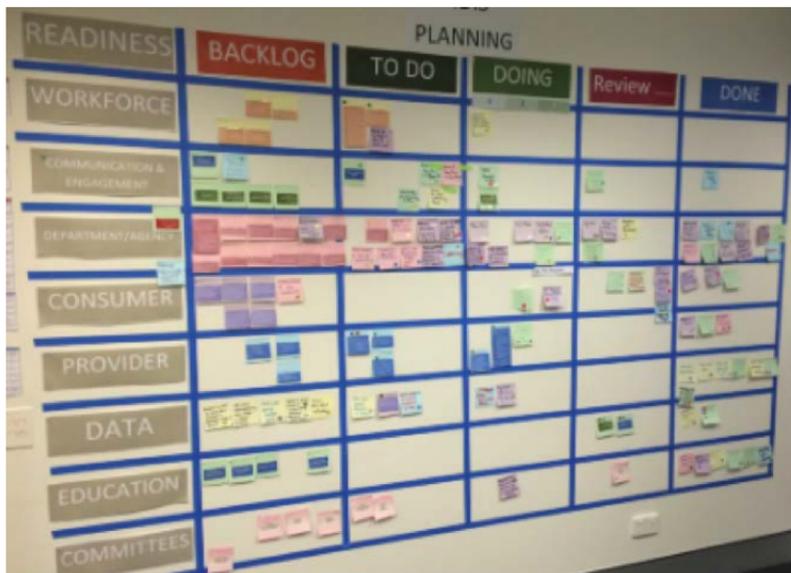
Whilst this school has successfully embedded most other success factors from the High Performance Teams Framework (i.e., a clear vision statement, healthy communication protocols among staff, and an open and supportive culture valuing work/life balance and individual differences) its execution of strategy problems were entirely related to KPI 2 – Performance Reporting, particularly the lack of regular accessibility and engagement among all staff with relevant school data.

### **Data Walls 101: What They Are and When to Use Them**

Data walls are a simply designed bulletin board displayed in a place that is easily accessible to all staff. A well-designed data wall should provide an objective, relevant, accurate snapshot of the school’s efforts to align with its key goals, allowing any member of staff to see how the school is performing at a glance. For example, in relation to teaching and learning goals, data walls should be a focal point for faculty/cohort discussion on student improvement as they provide a vital (and often missing) link to how the school’s data drives pedagogical practice (e.g., this month’s focus is on reading because we know that our year 2 student cohort are underperforming across the board in this area).

## Specialised Data Walls: Project Management

Data walls aren't only useful for tracking overall school progress, they can also be used as project management tools for specialised projects and by school working parties. The use of data walls in these situations is highly valuable as it allows for those outside of projects and working parties to easily stay abreast of progress.

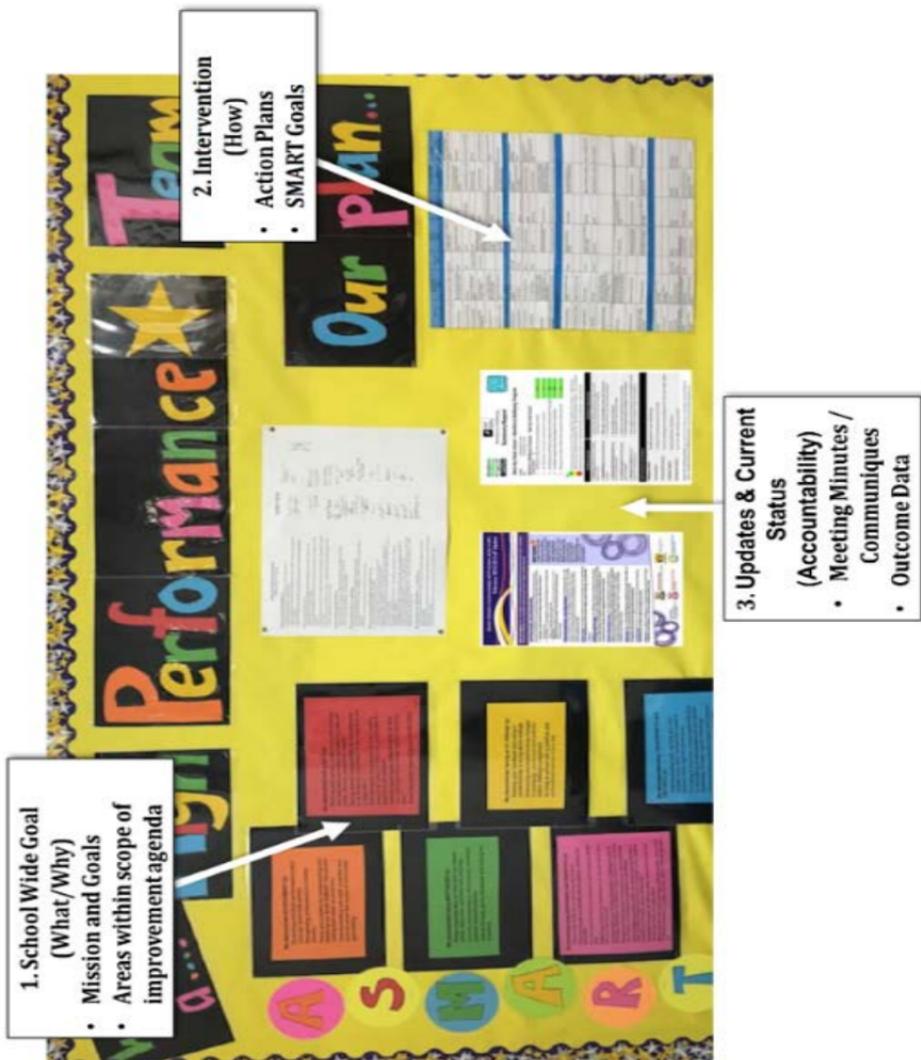


### Case Study: Jefferson State School

Jefferson State School have used their data wall to drive accountability around their desire to improve staff culture and wellbeing through embedding the High Performance Teams Framework (see Page 125 for their example data wall). Points of note include:

1. A clear school vision supported by well-defined goals;
2. A detailed action plan; and

- Clearly presented outcome data/communicates highlighting progress-to-date as well as areas in need of further improvement.



## Level Up!

Jefferson SS display their data wall in their main staff room where leadership and staff meetings are conducted, ensuring that clear objective data is always at the centre of performance conversations.

### **Quick Start – Data Walls in Schools: The HPT Way**

Data walls can be as simple or as complicated as a team likes, however based on our work with around 200 schools and reviewing best practice research we believe there is a core template that can be used to support school leadership teams in developing a best practice approach to data walls. The documents on the data wall have been presented to correspond with team Achievement and team Engagement setting the minimum standard of the HPT data wall (see the HPT Team Data Wall Key Documents template on Page 127).

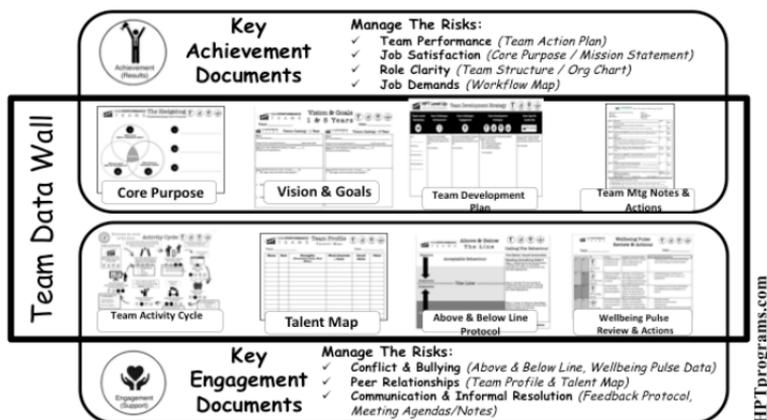
The key Achievement documents we recommend include:

- **Core Purpose:** Team Hedgehog (see Chapter 7).
- **Schoolwide Vision & Mission (short-, medium-, long-term):** The school's vision and mission should be clearly outlined followed by critical goals that are currently a priority focus. Short simple dot points are recommended. This helps all staff to see the direction that the school is taking and why, as well as the need and relevance of the data collected.
- **Team Development Plans:** In this part of the data wall the action plans, strategies and interventions should be listed. This helps all staff to see how their role contributes to overall school achievement.
- **Team Meeting Agendas / Meeting Communiqués/ Notes and Actions:** This includes the latest (or

upcoming) team meeting agenda, as well as updates from team meetings that are relevant across the wider school including forward actions.

The key Engagement documents we recommend include:

- **Team Activity Cycle:** This is a representation of how the team interacts and communicates with each other (e.g., meetings, feedback conversations, PD sessions etc.).
- **Team Talent Map:** A record of team members' communication preferences, individual skills, and work-related goals.
- **Team Above and Below the Line Behaviours & Feedback Protocols:** Behaviours that the team agree that they would like to see more of and behaviours that the team agree that they would like to see less of. This also includes a feedback protocol that the team agrees to follow to 'call' team behaviour.
- **HPT Pulse Survey Data:** This includes the latest data on team functioning from the HPT Pulse Survey.



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Additional **optional documents** may also include other organisational reports and data relevant to the team's local context.

## **Dashboards – Your Team's Performance Speedometer**

*“A performance dashboard is a practical tool to improve management effectiveness and efficiency, not just a pretty retrospective picture in an annual report.”*

— Pearl Zhu

With ‘rock star’ experience team meetings and team data walls carrying the weight of information updates essential for maximising team performance, it is simply a matter of time before the team conversation increasingly focuses on emerging issues team members are encountering and control measures they must take to manage the forthcoming challenges effectively.

Level 5 High Performance Teams look for trends and patterns in identified emerging issues to discover ‘lead indicators’ – data that can be gathered and organised to enable the team to adapt and adjust their resources and strategies to maximise team performance despite the challenges they face. High Performance Teams create ‘dashboards’ that regularly track all lead indicator data and display this on data walls and dashboards, and discuss these in team meetings to ‘stay ahead’ of the challenges and leverage previously unseen opportunities to exceed even their own ambitious stretch goals and targets. If a data wall is like a road sign letting the team know that they are on track, a dashboard is like a team's performance speedometer, providing (near) real-time performance feedback.

## Dealing with Massive Amounts of Data...

School leaders have access to massive amounts of data – which is a good thing – right? Well the answer is both yes and no. Yes, when it comes to being able to measure an amazing amount of school specific variables and giving students and parents highly detailed and specific feedback. No, when it comes to building simple and effective leadership dashboards – sometimes too much data can be overwhelming and we end up either focusing on the wrong data or simply avoiding data all together.

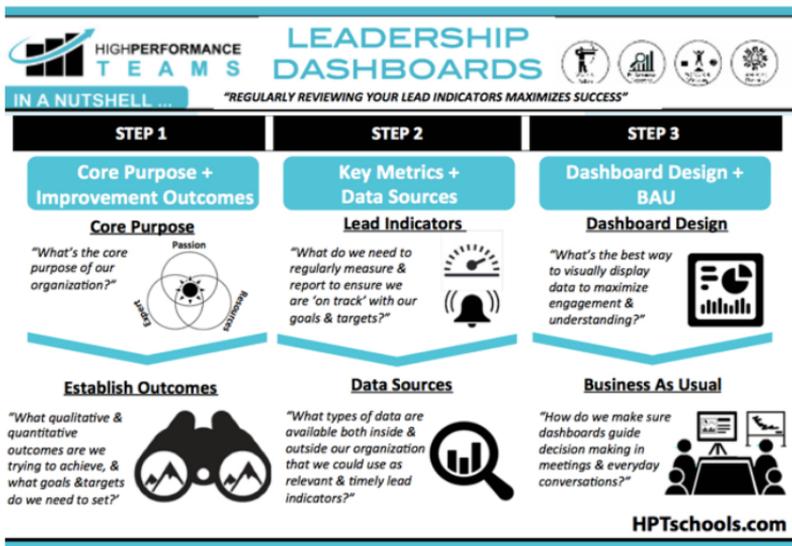
## Building Your School Leadership Team Dashboards

To build an effective school leadership team Dashboard we need to follow three simple steps:

- **Step 1 – Identify Core Purpose & Improvement Outcomes:** Firstly, reconnect with both your vision and purpose as a school in the local community and your system level KPIs. Any issue you are going to subsequently invest significant time and resources in needs to be clearly linked to your underlying core purpose. You also need to establish the outcomes you're seeking at the conclusion of the reporting cycle (typically 12-month periods). Once this is clear you can then set clear goals to achieve and targets you wish to reach.
- **Step 2 – Key Metrics & Data Sources:** Identify the key issues you need to monitor in the next cycle of the school plan and identify what type of (lead indicator) data you would ideally like to have and how often you will need to see it to maximise the likelihood of achieving community and system goals. You also need to audit all the data you currently have to cherry pick the most locally relevant lead indicators that will form the basis of your monthly school leadership dashboard.

## Level Up!

- **Step 3 – Dashboard Design & Business As Usual (BAU):** Finally, you need to design the “visuals” of the dashboard so it is simple and easy to access, understand and act upon. When it comes to business as usual there are three important contact points all relevant staff should regularly have with dashboards: (1) Relevant dashboard data should be displayed on all staff data walls and openly discussed during staff and faculty meetings; (2) Dashboard data should be the subject of ‘Deep Dive’ discussions at school leadership team meetings; and (3) Relevant dashboard data should be regularly sent directly to all relevant staff as part of the normal cycle of communication.



## Dashboards In Depth: Palm Valley State High School Case Study

Our case study school from the previous chapter, Palm Valley State High School, is now in the early stages of using their

data to help drive engagement in Staff Meetings, Faculty Meetings and Leadership Meetings and the monthly Dashboards are becoming a key document on all staff data walls and a fixed agenda item at all meetings. Dashboards are also emailed out to all relevant layers of the school to maximise engagement in (near) real-time performance reporting and improvement activity. Let's take a closer look at the dashboard behind this powerful strategy. We all know that what we focus on grows, so it is only natural with a focus on 'Valley Pride' that staff at Palm Valley State High chose the following elements as the fundamentals of their team dashboard:

- **Staff Engagement & Participation Data:** System level data is available on a range of relevant statistics. However, local level data needed to be developed and refined to map Staff Extra Curricular Participation Supervision to ensure that everyone was contributing equally.
- **Student Achievement & Participation Data:** System level data is available on a range of relevant metrics. However, local level data needed to be developed and refined to map Student Extra Curricular Participation which if not well managed can inadvertently limit a student's academic achievement due to off-site activity interrupting contact time with classroom lessons.
- **Student Wellbeing Data:** Whilst some system data was available on student and family needs, Palm Valley SHS also drew upon mental health and wellbeing prevalence data for teenagers and children to help establish a forecast caseload based on applicable state and national averages and a support program tailored towards the most prevalent diagnostic categories.

## Level Up!

- Relevant Family & Economic Trend Data:** Also noted in the school dashboard Table below, you can see that Palm Valley High School is in a regional centre with a heavy reliance on Coal Mines and Sugar Cane for economic prosperity. Thus, tracking the demand and price of these two commodities proved essential in forecasting local economic growth or decline (and subsequent financial hardship and risks of family breakdown and related mental illness).
- Team Activity Data:** Given the importance of building a school with High Performance Teams, the leadership team needed to develop some simple and effective performance measures on team activity. At the most basic level ensuring team/faculty meetings were being run effectively and all relevant information and updates were posted on staff data walls was seen as the first set of priorities to regularly monitor – thus a simple check-in measurement was added to the monthly dashboard.

		Palm Valley SHS Leadership Dashboard																	
Month	Staff					Students					Community				Team Activity				
	W/F Ratio	Staff/Comm (%)	Staff/Co (%)	Coaching (%)	Staff Participation	Attendance	Participation	Engagement	Staff/Co	Staff/Health	Parent/By Speed	Staff/Co	Staff/Co	Staff/Co	Staff/Co	Staff/Co	Staff/Co	Staff/Co	Staff/Co
Jan																			
Feb																			
Mar																			
April																			
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Jun																			
July																			
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## **Dashboards in Schools: The Final Word**

Almost all schools these days are ‘data driven’ and heavily promote the use of data in improving educational outcomes. However, they often rely on lag indicators which can be demoralising for both administrators and staff. When data is used as Lead Indicators and displayed in simple and effective Dashboards, improving school performance becomes an energising and exciting journey for both administrators and staff!

## **Bringing It Together**

As we’ve seen throughout this Chapter, KPI 2 is about using information effectively to achieve goals and targets which maximise team performance. This begins with the implementation of effective meeting protocols that enables qualitative and quantitative data to be shared and analysed to maximise performance and minimise risk. As team’s Level Up they increase the amount of strategic discussion in meetings (and decrease the time spent on information updates) because they effectively use data walls to stay up-to-date with performance information and have stand up discussions in front of the data walls to look for positive trends and warning signs on key indicators. At Level 5, High Performance Teams have benefited from extraordinarily productive strategy discussions at team meetings and due to a deep understanding of their data walls have insights to determine the key lead indicators that predict emerging successes or failures that are then tracked on a dashboard – updated in (near) real-time enabling 10x decision making both in meetings and between meetings!

## Level Up!

Where is your school up to in its High Performance journey? Do you use effective meeting protocols and processes? Are up-to-date data walls prominently displayed throughout the school? Do your staff know the school's key lead indicators? What are your next steps?...

# Chapter 9

## Levelling Up KPI3: Leverage Diversity

*“People don’t care how much you know until they first know how much you care.”*

– Eleanor Roosevelt

HPT Level	KPI 1 Vision & Action	KPI 2 Performance Reporting	KPI 3 Leveraging Diversity	KPI 4 Work/Life & Wellbeing
Level 5	Collaboration & Governance Map	Lead Indicator Dashboards	Communication Mastery - Skills Drills	Work/ Life Strategy Shares
Level 4	Vision Aligned Strategic & Operational Plans	Team Specific Data Walls	Above & Below Line Team Protocols	Resilience & Wellbeing Plans
Level 3	‘Buy-In’ To Purpose, Vision, Goals & Actions	Effective Meeting Protocols	Team Profile & Talent Map	Trust Match Teaming & Pulse Conversations

You Are Here!

### In a Nutshell

*It’s a fact of life that everybody’s different – no two lives can ever be lived the same, and because of this we will always have diversity within the workplace which can either become a blessing or a curse. Thus, as a leader you need to be able to (1) customise your communication to best match the needs and communication style of others, and (2) be able to get to know every team member and equally enable them to get to know you. These twin challenges sum up the challenge of leveraging diversity (KPI 3).*

*Leveraging Diversity in a Level 3 High Performance Team begins with establishing a basic understanding of the personality types, work interests and career goals of each member of the team and mapping these onto a team profile document that can become a ready reference on the data wall to remind people of key individual differences at times when personality clashes may be occurring as well as be a handy primer for further “getting to know you” conversations strengthening*

## Level Up!

*working relationships and deepening trust. Consequently, this also increases the intensity and depth of feedback we give each other.*

*Level 4 Advanced High Performance Teams know that (1) self-awareness drops as pressure increases and (2) that almost all human beings avoid difficult conversations – even more so when they are tired and stressed. Because of this understanding they mitigate the risks of conflict through developing an Above and Below the line chart that addresses team and personality specific triggers of aggravation and conflict as well as develop an insurance policy in the form of a protocol for ‘calling each other on behaviour’ to make clear the steps for resolving issues when normal conversations fail.*

*Capitalising on the high trust and deep awareness team members have for each other, Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams regularly engage in behavioural skills drills to master their interpersonal effectiveness on key workplace communication skills such as defusing conflict, giving performance feedback, rehearsing presentations, public speaking and preparing for important client/stakeholder meetings. At the Elite level, members of High Performance Teams are ‘frank and fearless’ in giving feedback that is 110% focused on the team’s mission and purpose. The net result of all of these actions is that High Performance Teams continually build higher and higher levels of trust (through getting to know each other better), and grow clearer and clearer around obvious succession plans within the team (based on a better understanding of individual members’ skills, abilities and preferences, as well as continuous competence building based on effective feedback processes).*

*In this chapter we will cover the core elements of KPI 3: Leveraging Diversity: (1) Team Profiling and Talent Maps; (2) Above and below the line and feedback protocols; and (3) Feedback skills drills.*

### **Leveraging Diversity: When The Curse Becomes A Blessing**

One of my guilty pleasures is to sit down and watch a good Romantic Comedy – the plot lines are all the same but I love them nonetheless. Usually the two main characters meet and get off on the wrong foot. Moving into Act 2, miscommunications are compounded which leads to a war between the characters, and great hilarity. By Act 3 the plot twists and the miscommunications are revealed and resolved

to the point where the characters sheepishly admit that there was fault on both sides and by the close of the movie the characters are closer than ever.

To me, it seems as though life imitates art, but only up to a point. In most workplaces and teams, miscommunications abound. However, unlike romantic comedies, the main players in the workplace usually go to war without the hilarity, and the plot twist that offers swift resolution rarely if ever comes. In fact, prolonged workplace conflict is one of the most stressful life events, resulting in great cost to staff and organisations in the form of poor health (both mental and physical), lack of productivity, and expensive interventions (stress claims). Yet, taking a helicopter view, it's clear to see that just like in rom coms, generally the characters on all sides of workplace conflict are good people, with conflicts beginning due to seemingly minor misunderstandings that could have easily been avoided. All High Performance Teams are acutely aware of the serious issues that can develop because of failing to understand each other. Because of this they invest time and energy in helping individual team members to get to know each other to ensure that team diversity becomes a blessing rather than a curse.

### **Personalities & Team Profiling: Keeping It Real...**

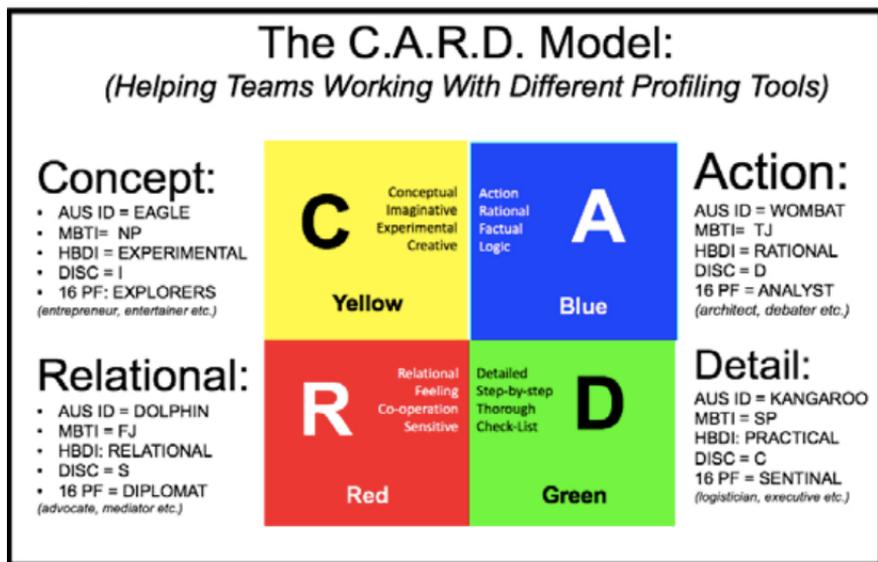
*“The essence of synergy is to value differences - to respect them, to build on strengths, to compensate for weaknesses.”*

– Stephen Covey

At the foundational level, Leveraging Diversity in a High Performance Team begins with establishing a basic understanding of the personalities, communication style, work interests and career goals of each member of the team and mapping these onto a Talent Map document that can become a ready reference on the Data Wall to remind people of key individual differences at times when personality clashes may be occurring.

## Level Up!

One of the best ways for team members to understand each other better is to do a team profiling activity with the group. There are a range of excellent free and paid team profiling tools that can be used as the basis for better understanding the different personalities in the team. However, each profiling tool is typically packed with a range of extra features to guide career development, recruitment and selection, and leadership skills. Whilst these features are fantastic for their specific purposes, when it comes to ‘leveraging diversity’ in teams we find that sometimes these additional features and benefits can get some team members distracted from the main point so it is important to keep the process as simple and team focused as possible.



In order to keep it simple and real, we typically consolidate and simplify all the various theories down into 4 important workplace personality types reflected in the acronym C.A.R.D and link them to basic colours. This simplification process (whilst clearly only being an approximation of each theory) enables staff to have a common language to use in integrating their understanding of individual differences as a team when they may have previously completed different profile tools and avoids the ‘which tool is best’ argument – leaving that for the researchers and scientists.

The simple acronym C.A.R.D. stands for Concept, Action, Relational and Detail which, from our experience over the years, tends to be the most useful descriptors when helping teams understand individual differences and personality clashes. ‘C’ stands for Concept – the ‘Why’ people who perform at their best when they understand the vision and purpose behind the tasks they do. ‘A’ stands for Action – the ‘What’ people who perform at their best when they have immediately attainable ‘next step’ goals with the tasks they have to do. ‘R’ stands for Relational – the ‘Who’ people who perform at their best when they feel validated and connected with others in completing their tasks. ‘D’ stands for Detail – the ‘How’ people who perform at their best when they understand the steps, processes and quality indicators associated with completing their tasks. It is important to note (and make sure all team members understand) that when teams are under pressure, clashes are most common between the Concept and Detail types who have opposing biases and between the Relational and Action people who also have opposing biases.

To get started on team profiling simply select the personality profiling tool that will best suit your team’s preferences, budget and time constraints. Have team members complete their individual profile and align their results to the C.A.R.D. model. Then, physically break the group into their different primary personality types and facilitate three specific conversations: (1) The possible secondary type they also identify with (as most people can strongly identify with two personality types) followed by (2) A much longer conversation about (a) the significant benefits that each type brings to the team and the possible negative impacts that may also occur and (b) the potential clashes that could occur between the types, and then (3) The proactive ways and specific protocols the team could use to resolve personality clashes instead of avoiding and back-stabbing (passive aggressive) OR becoming openly hostile (aggressive).

Regarding the first of these three conversations (1. The possible secondary personality type people may identify with), the most

## Level Up!

common types of secondary pairings are up and down (i.e., C and R or A and D) or horizontal (C and A or D and R) with a much rarer likelihood of diagonal pairings (C and D or A and R) given the polar opposites in characteristics. It is also possible for people to identify with three or even all four types quite strongly however for the purpose of understanding the team getting the top two will be most useful.

The second conversation has two separate discussions within it (a) the significant benefits that each type brings to the team and the possible negative impacts that may also occur and (b) the potential clashes that could occur between the types. Complete Step (a) as a stepwise discussion with the 'Bad News/Good News' (challenges and strengths) feedback driven by team members from the other perspectives first before allowing team members from the nominated type to round out the discussion (white boarding the headline strengths and challenges for each type can help keep track of the discussion). NOTE: It is important to keep these conversations humorous as well as reinforce confidentiality and safety as sometimes a lot of elephants in the room can be unearthed!

Once all 4 types have been analysed, step (b) can be completed as a whole group discussion using the contrasting strengths and challenges to draw out real-life examples of previous tension points within team and operational circumstances which create the most risk of personality clashes. Again, it is crucial to make sure confidentiality and psychological safety is strong among group members as this can be a time of great insight and motivation to strengthen and harmonise previously difficult and strained working relationships.

The last of the three conversations (3) the proactive ways and specific protocols the team could use to resolve personality clashes instead of avoiding and back-stabbing (passive aggressive) OR becoming openly hostile (aggressive), is a gateway into the next Level Up activity (Above & Below The Line Team Protocols). Depending on the energy levels of the group you either get some general discussion and verbal



A team Talent Map can also be one of the best ‘short cuts’ for helping new staff to ‘get to know’ their new team mates. At a team-wide level, the only result possible from understanding ourselves and others better is the strengthening of trust across the team.

### **Case Study: Personality Types at Jefferson State School**

*Conducting a team profile was eye opening for the leadership team of Jefferson State School. Once the team got their individual profile back the discussion began. Joan, the Principal, was identified as being a ‘big picture thinker’ (Concept), and the team wholeheartedly acknowledged that they appreciated her creative ‘out of the box’ thinking and uncanny ability to see the future needs of the school before anyone else. However, on the down side, it was noted that sometimes Joan became overly excited by change to the point where it seemed like some changes the school was embarking on were too rushed and/or too risky.*

*In contrast John, the school’s Business Manager was identified as being very ‘thorough and procedural’ (Detail). Again, the team was quick to acknowledge the value that John’s attention to detail had brought to the school (particularly during the recent school review), however some staff identified that John’s behaviour can sometimes come across as ‘micro-managing’.*

*Lisa, the school’s Deputy Principal in charge of behaviour management was identified as being ‘realistic and logical’ (Action), and while many staff appreciated Lisa’s blunt ‘straight shooting’ talk, some staff noted that she can sometimes come across as lacking care, rude and offensive. Finally, James, the lead teacher for the school’s Music program was identified as a ‘people person’ (Relational). While everyone agreed that James’s sociability and outgoing nature made the school a friendlier place overall, some staff commented that*

*James sometimes comes across as being overly intrusive.*

*On reflection, the leadership team agreed with all comments put forward and appreciated the better understanding of the strengths that they brought to the team, as well as how they may have been unintentionally sending the wrong signals at times. Following the activity, the team revisited their 'Above and Below the Line' behaviours (team agreed behavioural norms) and expanded these based on their new insights. Now previous points of contention are easily navigated and the team has reached a new level of trust and respect for each other's differences.*

## **Team Profiles in Action: A Note of Caution**

As you can see from the Case Study, activities that allow team members to better understand each other's personalities can unlock powerful learnings, thereby ensuring that future misunderstandings are 'cut off at the pass'. Having said that, there are a few key points that all staff should understand in relation to team profiling:

- **Types Don't Excuse Behaviour:** Just because someone has been identified as a certain profile type, it doesn't give them permission to act in the extreme, and then excuse their behaviour by hiding behind their type ("oh it's ok I'm so blunt with everyone, after all I am 100% Action!"). Quite the opposite, better understanding of your own personality type comes with the responsibility to moderate the extremes of your behaviour.
- **Acceptance of Difference** is a Two-Way Street: Just as we wish others to accept our personality type, so do we need to accept theirs.
- **Types Don't Box Us In:** Just because someone has been identified as a certain type doesn't mean that they should be typecast (e.g., given work only highly related to that type). Everyone is capable, and must demonstrate competence

in all types, regardless of preference.

## **KPI3 Foundations: Team Profiling To Leverage Diversity**

Whilst Stephen Covey was absolutely right when he said that *'the essence of synergy is to value differences - to respect them, to build on strengths, to compensate for weaknesses'*, we would take this one step further in saying that 'leveraging diversity creates the synergy needed to fast-track the journey to higher team performance.'

In bringing it all together and taking your team to the next level, we want to leave you with three simple questions: (1) Does everyone in your team understand the personality mix in your team?... (2) Have you discussed the strengths and potential areas for clashes that exist amongst your team?... and (3) What are your next steps to ensure the diversity within your team becomes a blessing and not a curse?

### **Leveraging Diversity – Level Up**

#### **Making 'Difficult' Feedback Conversations Look Easy**

With a genuine understanding of each team member's profile, interest and goals, a High Performance Team has a much greater chance of developing harmonious working relationships and minimising accidental tension created through personality clashes and misaligned expectations. However, even in a Level 3 High Performance Team there's still plenty of room for problems of personal difference to emerge when the pressure is on. High Performance Teams are aware that (1) self-awareness drops as pressure increases, and (2) that almost all human beings avoid difficult conversations (even more so when we're tired and stressed). Because of this, High Performance Teams spend time developing a shared understanding of acceptable and unacceptable team behaviour, as well as processes and protocols for 'calling' behaviour that

fails to meet team standards. Sadly, too many teams fail to take these simple yet sanity saving steps...

### **Case Study: A Difficult Conversation Disaster at Banksia Bay State High School**

*Sam is a nice guy but at times, even he admits he can be a little bit abrupt and forgetful. He has recently moved into the team and has a critical role in coordinating Banksia Bay State High's invoices. Kate is a really experienced Business Manager with many years of experience at the school. Kate is unhappy – well actually really angry the invoices have been messed up and she has a number of angry parents on the phone as a result. Kate believes Sam has failed to update the invoices correctly and has failed to call the parents, as per protocol, once the mistake had been identified.*

*Kate complains to her Principal wanting something done. Her Principal reminds her that she cannot lodge a formal complaint until she has first 'tried to resolve the issue at a local level' and sends Kate back to Sam to have a 'difficult conversation' as per school policy. Kate meets with Sam and angrily vents her frustrations whilst ensuring her criticisms are objective and factual. Sam is shocked by the feedback, gets upset, swears at Kate, and walks out. He later submits a medical certificate for work-related stress and lodges a grievance accusing Kate of bullying. Kate is also upset and takes several days sick leave before returning to work. Sam's bullying claim is investigated and both parties are found to have acted inappropriately. Sam's Worker's Compensation claim is investigated and approved on the basis that Kate's feedback was not reasonable as there was no protocol for informal feedback resolution and that Sam was not afforded the opportunity to effectively prepare for the meeting. The Principal is now in trouble with the Human Resources Department and the Workplace Health and Safety Manager; however, he insists he was only following policy guidelines ('attempt to resolve issues at the local level prior to lodging a formal complaint') by telling Kate to talk to Sam in the first instance... What a mess!!!*

What an expensive, time wasting, personally distressing and leadership team destroying mess! Yet everyone in this very real (yet obviously de-identified) scenario felt like they were the victim in the situation. After all, the manager was simply making sure Kate followed the policy and procedures

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set by the HR department. Kate was simply following the direction from her Principal and Sam was simply defending himself against unexpected criticism. I have been called into organisations to resolve conflicts based on this sort of scenario far too many times in my career and it almost always boils down to the 'gap' between expectations of appropriate team behaviour and policies and procedures for investigating complaints between staff.

The truth is that workplace conflict is generally never black and white, rather it is many shades of grey. Teams rarely fail because of one-off rude or aggressive outbursts or minor annoying behaviours. From our extensive experience, teams fail gradually because under pressure individuals tighten up around their own personality characteristics and unconsciously escalate the level of personality clash with other team members, which when left unchecked, results in sudden and apparently over-the-top unexpected clashes that have really been gradually building up over a lengthy period. This is easily prevented if we take the time to understand acceptable and unacceptable behaviour based on our communication preferences and how we may accidentally press each other's buttons. By mapping these team specific and relevant trigger points, and having a clear agreement around calling each other on this behaviour, we conflict-proof the team, enabling greater levels of harmony and safer resolution of issues preventing deeper dysfunction.

### **Appropriate Team Behaviour, Making the Implicit Explicit: Above & Below the Line**

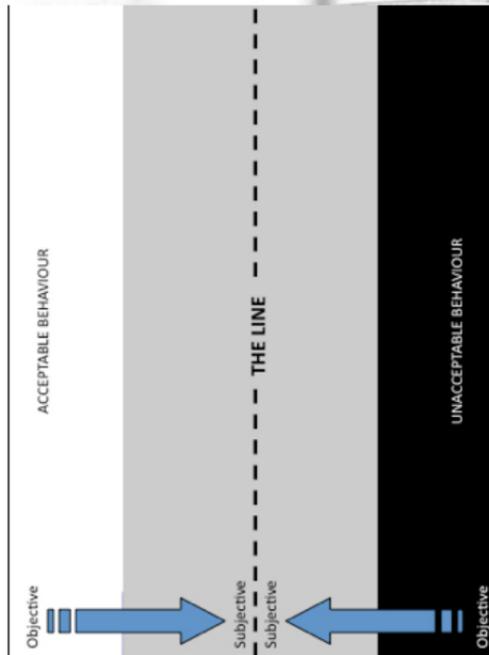
Most organisations have a 'Code of Conduct' that outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the organisation. These codes typically refer to concepts like 'Honesty',

‘Respect’ and ‘Equality’ in how employees are to treat each other. Whilst this is a good start, it does not delve into the detail needed among team members to disentangle the differences between differing personality and communication styles versus genuine inappropriate behaviour – which becomes the crux of the issue when people feel upset or anxious whilst trying to ‘resolve issues at the local level.’ Some people may take offence if voices are raised during a discussion whereas others may not... Some people may object to the occasional swear word whilst others do not... Some people may object to being given feedback in real time whilst others will object to lengthy delays between when issues occurred and when they are finally raised in feedback... What to do?

Clearly, we can’t just assume we have some underlying agreement of what is reasonable or unreasonable when it comes to dealing with difficulties among team members. In order to risk proof this aspect of team behaviour High Performance Teams complete an ‘Above and Below the Line’ exercise with the team where team members are asked to describe real examples of positive and negative behaviours that help or hinder team dynamics and performance and place them on the chart (see diagram on Page 148).

# Above & Below The Line:

# Keeping It Real!



Oakley State School—Cleaner Expectations



## Superficial vs Deep Conversations

The ‘Above and Below the Line’ exercise can be misused and misunderstood when staff provide superficial statements about right and wrong behaviours and do not get to the deeper and more subtle and infuriating behaviours adults engage in to seriously upset and annoy each other. In such cases, teams can adopt a superficial approach to the exercise to avoid identifying and addressing real issues and provide a list of simple and superficial examples (i.e., ‘being rude’, ‘hitting others’, ‘gossiping’ etc.).

For example, superficial responses for below the line might be “to not hit, or swear at each other” yet the real issues are ‘ignoring’ and ‘avoiding’ behaviours and ‘information withholding’. In response to above the line they might say “being professional and polite” without digging deeper into what this really means within their local workplace (i.e., attending meetings on time and not playing with phones and laptops; being fully ‘present’ in meetings; sharing of yourself as well as asking others about their lives to get to know people better; and making scheduled team morning teas a priority rather than booking appointments over them). When focusing in on the documented ‘Below the Line’ examples it is important to assess whether or not they reflect the genuine, specific and at times subtle behaviours that aggravate and upset the team. For greatest effect, you need to (1) ensure the behaviour is described in a specific and visual way based on previous occurrences and (2) have the team be able to rate the impact of the behaviour on a scale of 1 (no distress) to 10 (extremely distressing) and only focus on behaviours that have at least a rating of 4 or 5.

## **‘Calling the Behaviours’: Informal Feedback Protocols**

Another even bigger problem for most workplaces beyond the lip-service paid to ‘Above and Below the Line’ is how to “call people” on bad behaviour and the specifics of how to do this right. Most HR Policies will tell you how to lodge a formal complaint but will also tell you that you must try and resolve issues at the local level first. Typically, they offer no specific protocol to resolve issues at a local level and this lack of protocol is where all the damage occurs.

Some people ‘call others on their behaviour’ publicly during team meetings with ensuing embarrassment and open conflict a further risk. Others casually bring up problems wedged in between routine conversations with no time to adequately understand the issues or genuinely address concerns. Yet others request formal meetings to raise their ‘serious concerns’ and scare everyone away... In each case they are all examples of ‘informal attempts to resolve issues at a local level’ – yet all of them can potentially end in disaster – with claims, counter claims and work-related stress ensuing.

Developing an agreed protocol for addressing ‘Below the Line’ behaviours – providing informal feedback between team members to resolve issues at the local level – is a critical part of risk-proofing a team in the area of difficult conversations. As we have shown in the Banksia Bay SHS case study, there is a big ‘gap’ between policy and procedures for complaints and normal day-to-day team communication. It is in this ‘gap’ that attempts to resolve issues at the local level can go horribly wrong.

## Escalation Traps: Protocols for Informal Feedback

To develop a 'protocol' for addressing 'Below the Line' behaviour we need to get the team to talk through the specific steps they would ALL agree to work with in 'calling each other on behaviour' when normal communication was too hard (see example below). Firstly, what would we call this communication so both parties were clear about the need to be in a calm and receptive space when having such a discussion? Teams need to agree on how they are to raise these types of issues in the first place.

For example, one team I worked with agreed to call this type of conversation a 'Glade Conversation' (to clear the air) and therefore ask each other if they can have a 'Glade Conversation' prior to raising concerns to ensure co-workers were in a calm and organised state to have such a conversation.

This leads to the next important aspect of the protocol, which is timeliness. If the other team member was busy or otherwise



### Calling Behaviour Protocol - When All Else Fails



#### STEP 1: Preparing for the Conversation

*Notifying the other party of the 'type' of conversation requested and setting an appropriate time to talk.*

##### OUR TEAM APPROACH IS:

- Organise a "Glade Conversation" request and allow for extra time (double the scheduled time).
- Meeting to occur within 2 business days of request

#### STEP 2: Having the Conversation

*Establishing clear ground rules to prevent conflict, allow breaks if needed and promote healthy outcomes.*

##### OUR TEAM APPROACH IS:

- Face to face solution focused discussion
- Red and Yellow Cards to tap out or 'Reconvene' statement

#### STEP 3: Failure to Resolve Next Steps

*The agreed process to escalate issues and involve third parties if the matter is unable to be resolved.*

##### OUR TEAM APPROACH IS:

- Reconvene with a third party by mutual agreement or notify intention to formalise

AGREEMENT BY ALL TEAM MEMBERS ON DDMMYY

## Level Up!

not ready, then they are able to defer the conversation to a later time the same day or the following day when they would be more attentive and reflective (note the limited timeframe between when asked and when both parties agree to actually have a discussion).

Once the conversation actually occurs it follows the simple rules of the team's 'Above the Line' behaviours which typically relate to being objective and constructive with feedback, providing clear examples of preferred outcomes, avoiding blame and being responsible, listening effectively and respecting differing perspectives.

Where this general flow of informal feedback does not resolve issues then either party can at least show 'reasonableness' in their attempts to provide each other feedback and issues can then be documented and formalised accordingly – referencing their use of the agreed informal feedback protocol in the first instance.

### **The Pressure Test: Would It Really Help?**

Informal feedback protocols agreed among team members are really useful. In our case study, had the 'attempt to resolve issues' been done correctly (i.e., according to a previously agreed protocol among all team members including Kate and Sam), then Kate would have had to first alert Sam to the type of conversation she wanted to have – Sam could then organise a time when he was not distracted and available to listen – Kate would have then stuck to the protocol and provided a more constructive critique and a preferred outcome – Sam could have postponed the discussion or politely declined further discussion and formalised issues rather than walk out. In this circumstance, no grievances would have been upheld and no work-related stress claim could be proven due to unreasonable management action as 'management action', in this instance, would have been reasonable.

Even more likely, the problem would have never occurred in the first place if they had done 'Above and Below the Line'

training and developed their informal feedback protocol, as the common understandings among the team would have increased both the trust and willingness to give and receive feedback in the first place. Finally, had the team had these safety nets in place, it is likely that the level of trust would have grown because each team member would have known that even if inadvertent misunderstandings or disagreements did occur, each member of the team would be committed to solving/de-escalating the issue in a professional manner.

### **Your Team's Informal Feedback Protocol...**

Now think about your team – how do they resolve difficulties among team members? Do you have a clear agreement with each other about what are the important ‘Above and Below the Line’ behaviours that enhance or diminish your team’s dynamics and performance? Do you have a clear protocol agreed to by all team members for ‘calling each other’ on below the line behaviours and giving informal feedback? If so, is it documented and openly endorsed by the team and periodically reviewed at team meetings? Take some time out in your next team meeting to discuss your team’s ‘Above and Below the Line’ expectations and protocols for informal feedback so you can minimise the risk of HR disasters and maximise the likelihood of effective feedback and high performance in your team!

### **Frank and Fearless Feedback: The Trademark of Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams**

*“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”*

– George Bernard Shaw

Capitalising on the high trust and deep awareness team members have for each other, teams moving into Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams regularly engage in behavioural skills drills to master their interpersonal effectiveness on key workplace communication skills such as defusing conflict and giving performance feedback. At the Elite level, teams are

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‘frank and fearless’ in giving feedback which is 110% focused on the team’s mission and purpose. The difference between a true (Elite) High Performance Team and the rest is that High Performance Teams practice the right things, engage in intentional practice, and get used to doing the hard things even when they don’t want to.

### **Practicing the Right Things: The Death of the Feedback Sandwich**

*“Don’t become a wandering generality.*

*Be a meaningful specific.”*

– Zig Ziegler

If you’ve ever learned about feedback you’ve probably heard of the feedback sandwich. The process goes something like this – start with saying something nice, then provide some critical feedback, then finish on a high note so that the other person doesn’t feel bad – the only problem is that it doesn’t work. The ‘Feedback Sandwich’ sends a confusing mix of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ messages that reduces the positive power of feedback. This is because our working memory is limited to the start and end of longer conversations. We forget the ‘middle section’ which is often where the most important feedback is given (the ‘meat’ of the sandwich). So, if this is the wrong way to give feedback what do High Performance Teams do differently? High Performance Teams focus on:

- **Respect** – emotional validation and permission seeking before critique;
- **Clarity** – simple and clear discussion of problems and solutions; and
- **Empathy** – encouragement and support to change.

Put another way, when giving feedback High Performance Teams engage the practice shared across many cultures and seen on sporting fields everywhere (including boxing, sumo wrestling, martial arts, soccer, football, cricket, hockey, netball... to name but a few). That process is BOW – CHALLENGE – BOW. Unlike the feedback sandwich, the three layers of interaction within Bow-Challenge-Bow only focus on one topic – the feedback task at hand!

## Bow-Challenge-Bow Feedback

<b>Bow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show respect</li> <li>• Ask permission to engage</li> <li>• Postpone if not ready</li> </ul>
<b>Challenge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage on issue clearly &amp; succinctly</li> <li>• Encourage self-reflection &amp; problem solving</li> <li>• Keep outcome focussed &amp; avoid blame</li> </ul>
<b>Bow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank the other person - Empathy</li> <li>• Personalise value of conversation to self</li> <li>• Confirm outcomes &amp; avoid re-prosecuting issues</li> </ul>

On Page 156 there are some bonus tips on how High Performance Teaching Teams make feedback conversations look easy.

### Feedback Skills Drills: The Power of Intentional Practice

Why do athletes train so hard?... Because when the pressure is on in the big games their muscle memories spring into action – doing the right thing, in the right way, at the right time has become second nature. This is also one of the primary reasons that High Performance Teams obsess about engaging in feedback practise. High Performance Teams know that the more they practice role plays and feedback planning scenarios the easier that ‘difficult’ conversations become. High Performance Teams also know that practice and skills drills deepens team trust because in practice there is an opportunity for them to take risks and use alternative approaches to enhance their communication effectiveness. This process begins with the team having a shared understanding of effective feedback and ways to diffuse inherent feedback stress and is maximised through extended meetings that allocate time for behavioural skills drills based on work done at foundational training workshops.

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Quick Tips</p>	<p><b>Successful Peer Feedback &amp; Classroom Observations:</b></p> <p>By Tania Leach, DET, DDSW</p> <p><i>"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."</i></p> <p>George Bernard Shaw</p>
<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>Be Clear &amp; Name It</b> When giving feedback be explicit, too often only the feedback giver recognises the conversation as a feedback conversation. Intentionally naming the conversation ensures that both the feedback giver and receiver are able to give the conversation the appropriate attention. Begin with simple phrases such as <i>"I'd like to give you some feedback..."</i> to ensure success!</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Use A School-wide Feedback Framework</b> Unfortunately many teachers have had negative past experiences with feedback. Clearly articulating and using a school-wide feedback framework helps to reduce fears around feedback as everyone knows what to expect at every stage of the process – build your feedback culture through making the implicit explicit.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Adjust Feedback Style To Match Context</b> There is a great difference in how and where supportive (confidence building), developmental (growth focused), and performance management (corrective) feedback styles should be used.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Clarify Roles</b> Decide and note up front whether the parties in the feedback conversation will be engaged in a two-way equal-voice conversation (Reflective feedback approach), whether the person providing the feedback should lead (Pedagogical approach), or whether the feedback giver should act as a sounding board and questioner (Coaching approach).</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Get Narrow, Deep &amp; Stay Objective</b> In pre-planned feedback situations such as classroom observations decide what the focus of the feedback will and won't be, and ensure to focus on observable behaviour (e.g., Number of times a teacher used students' names when referring to them). Once the feedback focus (or "look for") has been named save issues outside of this for a separate conversation.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Practice</b> The more we practice both giving and receiving feedback the more we get out of the process. A great way to get comfortable with receiving feedback is to record yourself (either through voice recorder, or on video) and then provide self-feedback on the recording. Another fantastic tool is rehearsing the use of feedback sentence stems (e.g., <i>"I noticed when you did X, Y happened"</i>, <i>"How do you think X, would have gone if you tried Y?"</i>).</p>

## Bringing It Together

In all teams, diversity can either be a blessing or a curse. The main diversity challenges for team members is to (1) customise communication to best match the needs and communication preferences of each other, and (2) get to know every team member and equally, enable them to get to know you. High Performance Teams ably overcome these challenges by: establishing a basic understanding of the profile, work interests and career goals of each member of the team and map these onto a team profile document; developing an 'Above and

### Levelling Up KPI 3: Leveraging Diversity

Below the Line' chart that addresses team and personality specific triggers of aggravation and conflict; develop an insurance policy in the form of a protocol for 'calling each other on behaviour'; and develop team members' skills in giving 'frank and fearless' feedback through skills drills and role play. These measures allow High Performance Teams to develop the deepest levels of trust, and fully leverage the skills and talents of all team members.

# Chapter 10

## Levelling Up KPI 4: Work/Life & Wellbeing

*“Most of us spend too much time on what is urgent and not enough time on what is important.”*

– Stephen Covey

HPT Level	KPI 1 Vision & Action	KPI 2 Performance Reporting	KPI 3 Leveraging Diversity	KPI 4 Work/Life & Wellbeing
Level 5	Collaboration & Governance Map	Lead Indicator Dashboards	Communication Mastery - Skills Drills	Work/ Life Strategy Shares
Level 4	Vision Aligned Strategic & Operational Plans	Team Specific Data Walls	Above & Below Line Team Protocols	Resilience & Wellbeing Plans
Level 3	‘Buy-In’ To Purpose, Vision, Goals & Actions	Effective Meeting Protocols	Team Profile & Talent Map	Trust Match Teaming & Pulse Conversations

You Are Here!

### In a Nutshell

*KPI 4: Work/Life & Wellbeing is about building higher levels of trust and understanding to maximise team performance through (1) understanding the overall health of the team and (2) getting to know people in the wider work/life context at a level that matches the team’s trust and vulnerability tolerances.*

*When a teaming strategy is matched to trust levels, vulnerability and support increases quickly. Level 4 Advanced High Performance Teams are more confident in sharing their work/life and wellbeing challenges in order to proactively support each other and maximise team performance - particularly during times of individual difficulty due to (inevitable) work/life challenges we all face. The benefits of openly engaging in wellbeing conversations are profound, not only influencing overall team performance but also influencing job satisfaction and fostering a sense of ‘belonging’.*

*Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams take KPI 4 to the logical next step – looking forwards into the future and understanding each team member’s work/life strategy and goals. This provides a powerful basis for sharing and succession planning – knowing who in the team is looking to progress, change careers, retire or consolidate in their current role enables proactive planning for the future and a chance to look out for opportunities that match each team member’s needs and wants, as well as starting to train successors and cross-skilling staff ahead of wanted promotions and departures – truly maximising team performance over the long-term!*

*This Chapter will focus on the core elements of KPI 4 Work/Life & Wellbeing including implementing teaming strategies matched to the trust levels of the team, resilience and wellbeing plans and work/life strategy shares.*

### **Trust Matched Teaming & Team Pulse Conversations**

Most of us spend more time at work than we do with our significant others. But how much do we really know about the people we work with? It’s not necessarily simply about taking the time to get to know people you have not known for very long (which is always a great idea!). Often it’s the people we have worked with the longest, whom we think we know quite well, where the unexpected ‘gaps’ in our understanding occur due to assumptions we make about each other which remain un-checked due to our over-familiarity. In the same way a married couple can end up divorced due to ‘growing apart’ (despite continuously living together) many teams can end up in unexpected conflict and tension when they don’t persist with ongoing communication to maintain an updated awareness of people’s work/life circumstances and their wellbeing.

## Level Up!

Getting to know people at work, in particular building work/life awareness, is perhaps one of the most important parts of building and maintaining trust in High Performance Teams. Understanding the work/life situation, communication preferences, interests, goals and aspirations of your colleagues is vital to promote both high Team Engagement and high Team Achievement. Genuinely understanding others promotes high Team Engagement by demonstrating that you value their individual differences. It also provides the necessary context for you to tailor your communication approach to meet their needs in relation to their work/life challenges and goals. This also enables you to better support them should difficulties occur.

Genuinely understanding others also promotes high Team Achievement because a key by-product of getting to know people is increasing their sense of belonging within the team. This feeling leads to increased emotional investment and motivation that helps team members to contribute their best performance at work. A further benefit of getting to genuinely know and understand people is that it reduces the false (often negative) assumptions that we are all prone to making.

### **Getting to Know People: A Journey Not a Destination**

*Small talk is never small...*

Getting to know people can be challenging at times – be it related to personal values and privacy, the limited contact of virtual teams, or project teams working under extreme pressure

and deadlines with little time for anything else. However, if we don't make getting to know and understand others a priority, we can end up with all sorts of short- and longer-term career disasters. Consider the following examples...

### **Scene 1: Wanting to Lend a Helping Hand**

*"Where is Sharon? I haven't seen her around the office recently..."*

"Don't you know? Didn't they tell you? Sharon's husband was admitted to hospital over a month ago and she's looking after their kids full-time and also by his bedside hoping he'll recover – but it doesn't look good..."

*"What? Really? Why didn't she tell me? I wish I could have been there for her. She was always so private I didn't even know she was married and had kids. Is anyone sending her flowers or a card from all of us—I feel awful I haven't been able to help - I wish I had known and could have been more supportive..."*

### **Scene 2: Jumping to Conclusions**

*"Did you see John, he was yawning throughout my entire presentation, I'm sure he hated the concept."*

"Actually no, John pulled me aside after your presentation and said he loved it and that the funding will be approved by the end of the week. I really admire how he is still managing to keep on top of things despite the lack of sleep. Since his wife gave birth to twins two weeks ago he's been running on 4 hours sleep a night."

*"Oh, that puts things in perspective, I'm so relieved that the yawning wasn't related to the presentation..."*

One of the keys to 'getting to know each other better' is having a strategy that is matched to current levels of trust so that everyone feels 'safe' to participate fully in getting to

## Level Up!

know each other within the normal work routines of a team. When we are talking about ‘teaming strategy’ we are referring to the ‘organised’ activities teams undertake to socialise together as part of a balanced approach to building working relationships. This does not necessarily need to involve special social events out of work hours but ALWAYS involves the use of ice-breakers, barometers and check-ins at the start of every formal and informal meeting that are ‘matched’ to the team’s current level of trust. By having a matched level of trust and disclosure ‘comfort’ levels increase making information sharing about important work-related tasks easier and enabling conversations about cross-training and succession to occur without threatening people’s job security or status within the team.

Also getting to know people is not just a one-off event during team establishment or when a new staff member arrives. Scheduling regular times for time-limited team building activities is essential – even for well-established teams as people’s lives often change more than we realise. Even the discipline of using simple icebreakers or conversation starters at every meeting can incrementally widen our awareness of our co-workers’ wider lives, increasing our ability to empathise and support each other.

## Individual Strategies for Getting to Know Others

OK, ‘individual strategies’ is a fancy way to describe ‘small talk’, the informal one-on-one conversations we routinely have with co-workers. As the saying goes ‘*small talk is never small*’ and there are some important ‘Do’s’ and ‘Don’ts’ to maximise the value of small talk in building a High Performance Team:

### Do’s

- Do make time for small talk but be honest about the time available and don’t be afraid to cut-off conversations

with an apology about having limited time but also re-convene on the same topic when you next get a chance.

- Do ask people questions but only when you mean it... “How are you?” is a wonderful question when sincerely asked, but a poison chalice when used as a dysfunctional form of greeting. If you are time poor or not that interested, then don’t ask people how they are but instead make a positive statement that doesn’t require conversation - “It’s great to see you!”
- Do share some short relevant personal information to increase trust before asking about the other’s life. The law of reciprocity (you disclose first then I’ll disclose) is a very important concept for effective leaders but this creates a vulnerability you need to be aware of and comfortable with first.

### **Don’ts**

- Don’t jump in too far, too deep or too fast regarding personal questions and disclosures. Remember people operate at different levels of depth and trust in workplaces with some people enjoying deep and meaningful conversations and others preferring to keep the conversation superficial, light and cheery.
- Further to the point above, don’t make people uncomfortable in conversations about personal issues. Delving into inappropriate territory may give rise to claims of bullying and harassment.
- Don’t gossip or repeat information to others that may be told in confidence. Don’t speak negatively of anyone especially other work colleagues and never share personal information shared by a co-worker with someone else without their express permission. Speak kindly and sensitively towards others and you will build a harmonious and happy team dynamic.

## **A Note on Shyness, Introversion and Private People**

When it comes to getting to know people who are very private, introverted or shy it can be a little difficult to get them to open up. Begin by simply keeping the conversation work focused and strengths focused (i.e., asking their opinion or advice on matters they are already expert at) and gradually shift the conversation towards work history, current family status, future holidays etc. Always lead with sharing an appropriate disclosure from your own life first and never expect too much. Group lunches, morning teas and social events are also a great space to get to know very shy co-workers who may initially feel intimidated by one-on-one conversations.

If you are a very private, shy or introverted person yourself then you are going to have to push out of your comfort zone if you want to be a part of a High Performance Team. Whilst we're not telling you that you need to disclose all of your dirty laundry and skeletons in the closet nor become a raving extrovert, we are telling you that you have to open up and disclose enough of your life to allow people to understand who you are, your personality, sense of humour and hobbies, interests and aspirations, as this is the minimum data set needed to enable others to understand you and build the trust needed for higher levels of team performance.

### **Team Building: Low Trust vs. High Trust Activities**

When it comes to getting to know others in a group setting there is an enormous range of activities you can choose from depending on the time available and level of trust currently within the team.

## Getting To Know Others – Team Building Quickstart

1. Low Trust (5-7min*)	2. Mod Trust (7-15min*)	3. High Trust (15-30min*)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice Breakers - Level 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>• Who Am I?</li> <li>• Photo Share</li> <li>• Dream Destinations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Additional to List 1)</li> <li>• Ice Breakers Level 3</li> <li>• Life Line (Career)</li> <li>• Team Profiling</li> <li>• Bucket Lists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Additional to 1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>• Life Line (Personal or Combined)</li> <li>• Letter to Younger/Older Self</li> <li>• Dreams &amp; Regrets</li> <li>• Life Strategy Map</li> </ul>

\* Team Size = 5-6 (Adjust Time Proportionally For Larger Teams)

The Table above shows you some very simple group based team building activities that can be done almost anywhere with minimal materials and minimal time input. We tend to stick with these in most of our work as consultants as most teams we work with are time poor and want to use the strategies without further training or facilitation once learned.

Category 1 - Icebreakers (Low Trust)	Category 2 - Icebreakers (Mod Trust)	Category 3 - Icebreakers (High Trust)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•As a child, my favorite game was.</li> <li>•My favorite movie of all time is.</li> <li>•Today, I have the most fun when.</li> <li>• I will eat anything put in front of me except.</li> <li>•I can explain my life as an animal &amp; that animal is.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•What could you stop doing now to improve your growth &amp; well-being.</li> <li>• If, by magic, you could change one thing in your life, what would it be?</li> <li>• What keeps you up at night –business, personal or family related?</li> <li>•My most prized possession is &amp; why.</li> <li>• If I could throw caution to the wind and really take a risk, I would.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The most important decision in my life was/is</li> <li>•If I suddenly found out that I had 24 hours to live, I would spend them</li> <li>• What has been the most difficult period in your life?</li> <li>• What is your most treasured memory?</li> <li>• What would you like your legacy to be?</li> <li>• Describe your greatest success &amp; greatest failure.</li> </ul>

## Low Trust Team Activities

“Ice Breakers – Low Trust” (AKA Warm-Ups or Conversation Starters) are a brilliant, fast and easy way to get to know other team members better without making people feel

## Level Up!

uncomfortable by delving too deep into each other's lives. As you can see in the Table above icebreaker questions can range from simple superficial items (Category 1) to more in-depth items (Category 3).

“Who am I?” (AKA Celebrity Heads) is another great getting to know you activity where people can have a bit of fun as well as solve the riddle of the name of the mystery person placed on their head using only ‘yes’ and ‘no’ questions.

“Photo Shares” of proudest moments, holiday moments, family snaps etc. are also a popular fast activity that can be done with low-trust teams, as are conversations about dream holidays which can also lead to a photo/picture wall with each person putting an image up of their dream destination.

### **Moderate Trust Team Activities**

- “Learning Pit” growth activities such as learning to juggle or completing abstract puzzles under time pressure (which can be both fun and frustrating) enable people to reflect on how they cope with challenge, and their tendencies to withdraw from the team or become critical of others when under pressure.
- “Team Profiling Activities” are a great way to extend the depth of understanding and awareness of the various individuals within the team. There are a multitude of personality profiles and instruments that teams can use which provide group reports and activities to further develop team awareness and capability.
- “Bucket Lists” are also great exercises to do in moderate trust teams where people are able to reveal more about their hopes and dreams for the future and the stretch goals they hope one day to achieve.

## High Trust Team Activities

- “The Letter to Older or Younger Self” is another great team activity for high trust teams either done as a written exercise and shared or done verbally as an interview in a hot seat. Getting people to speak to their younger or older selves can reveal some powerful insights into their values and behaviours.
- “Tombstone/Eulogy” is a very powerful exercise where people write and then read aloud their own Eulogy – the speech they would ‘like’ to have read at their funeral followed by sharing some ‘changes’ they need to make to align their life closer to their ideal legacy.

### Team Health: Taking Your Pulse...

*“An apple a day keeps the doctor away...”*

*– English Proverb*

In health, prevention is always easier than cure. The reason that we should go to regular 6-monthly GP check-ups is to monitor how our health is tracking. Those who adhere to this schedule will most often be healthier than their peers as they can take preventative measures to ensure that their health does not decline. Put another way, people who don't prioritise regular check-ups are at greater risk of being surprised by a heart attack! Team health is like personal health, and High Performance Teams prioritise theirs.

How do you know how healthy your team is? One of the most effective team-wide strategies that we have seen for engaging teams in ‘check-ups’ around overall team health and wellbeing is the implementation of a weekly Pulse Survey. The HPT Pulse Survey is a short (10 second) confidential

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survey (see Below) that is emailed to staff in order to prompt self-reflection on their own level of workplace wellbeing. If you don't use an email pulse survey system you can create a simple pen and paper version that can be completed anonymously prior to commencing the Team Pulse Discussion.

*Rate the items below based on your initial 'gut' reaction.*

### 1. Job Satisfaction

Sense of achievement and enjoyment at work



### 2. Performance Feedback

Regularly giving and receiving feedback with co-workers



### 3. Co-worker Support

How well the team is getting along together



### 4. Work/Life & Wellbeing

Your level of work/life pressure and personal wellbeing



Once completed, the individual results are collated to create a group average data for each item. This combined team data is then used as part of a team pulse discussion to work towards solutions that benefit the overall wellbeing of the team. Importantly, High Performance Teams know that the data itself is neither good nor bad – it's just data. They are most interested in the conversation that occurs as a result of sharing the data and the actions that follow to either maintain high wellbeing or boost low wellbeing. This process allows the entire group to take responsibility for wellbeing, rather than just expecting team leaders to 'fix it'. Regularly checking in on team health through pulse surveys also normalises a culture of caring for each other, and significantly deepens team trust because all of the highs and lows are out in the open.

# Team Pulse Review & Actions



Team: Palm Valley SHS SLT

Date: DDMMYY

KPI	Pulse Question	Current	Previous	Example Improvement Strategies	Discussion Notes & Actions
KPI 1: Vision & Action	Job Satisfaction (sense of achievement and enjoyment at work)	74%		Regular review of core purpose, 1 & 5 year vision, and values. Re-aligning team and individual strategies and action plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept confusion maybe – result dragging down because of work overload???</li> <li>• Clear roles and goals for each job</li> <li>• Role clarity – shared purpose and understanding</li> </ul>
KPI 2: Performance Reporting	Performance Feedback (regularly giving and receiving feedback with co-workers)	52%		Clear KPIs in role descriptions and team charters, use of data walls to chart progress and individual and group meeting protocols focusing on accountability and improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples and non-examples of feedback we can use as a benchmarks to guide team development</li> <li>• <b>Staff KPI awareness</b></li> <li>• 2 stars and a wish</li> <li>• Acknowledging others specific praise and feedback on work</li> <li>• <b>Prioritize line meetings</b></li> <li>• HoD Calendar</li> </ul>
KPI 3: Leveraging Diversity	Co-worker Support (how well the team is getting along together)	70%		Regular team profiling to understand risks of personality clashes, clear above and below line behaviour charts and protocols for difficult conversations among peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Re-start weekly HoD coffee -the workers'</b></li> <li>• <b>Team building right now is good</b></li> <li>• <b>More structured buddy system among SLT</b></li> </ul>
KPI 4: Work/Life & Wellbeing	Work/Life & Wellbeing (level of satisfaction with work/life and personal wellbeing)	60%		Regular short team building activities, use of ice breakers in meetings, training and awareness among team on work/life strategy and resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better distribution of extra tasks across team – share load better – openly disclose needs/ challenges...(ice breaker – the thing I need most help with this week is...)</li> <li>• <b>Building Trust</b> – when to focus on wellbeing and mandatory ice breakers</li> <li>• <b>Differing family comtrnts/ work cycles</b></li> <li>• <b>Proactively asking for help to tap into goodwill- GO FIRST</b></li> </ul>

## **Team Pulse Discussions: The Right Way**

High Performance Teams that have used the pulse strategy to great effect have followed a simple 5-step recipe:

1. Make sure that each team member has a copy of the team's HPT Pulse Report.
2. Appoint a Chair, Moderator, and a Scribe.
3. Allow the Chair to guide a discussion on the data noting:
  - What does the data tell us?
  - What are the trends we see?
  - What can we do to maintain positive trends, or reverse negative trends?
  - What specific actions do we all agree that we will take together as a result of this data?
4. Encourage the scribe to note the main points of discussion and outcomes that the team have committed to.
5. At the end of the allocated time thank the group for the discussion and reiterate the action items.

## **KPI4 Foundations: Work/Life & Wellbeing**

Low performance teams leave team building and getting to know each other to luck or chance. High Performance Teams realise that luck won't last forever – instead they create structures and systems like weekly pulse surveys and always use one word barometers and conversation starters during formal meetings to ensure that team members get to know each other (and their needs) in a safe and time efficient way. What's more, every team-based strategy matches the team's trust and vulnerability tolerances. How about your team? What are your next steps to maximise work/life awareness and wellbeing in your team?.

**REVIEW:** Where is your team at currently in terms of trust to build work/life awareness? Is the level of trust and appropriate disclosure low, moderate or high in your team? Are you up-to-date with each other's work/life challenges and needs or has time slipped by since you last thought about the needs of your team? What activities could you use within your team to boost the level of trust, appropriate disclosure and work/life awareness?

## **Work/Life & Wellbeing – Level Up**

*“Be kind for everyone is fighting a battle”*

– Plato

### **Understanding Stress and Building a Plan to Bounce Back**

With a teaming strategy ‘matched’ to trust, Level 3 High Performance Teams quickly get to know each other at deeper levels enabling trust and empathy to grow to a higher level. At the same time, insights into the fluctuating levels of wellbeing each person endures through daily life hassles and minor sicknesses as well as bigger life challenges and illnesses becomes clearer to all team members.

Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams know how important wellbeing is to keep ‘on the agenda’ in looking out for each other and managing these individual fluctuations whilst still achieving very high performance at the group level. They utilise their professional development at regular intervals to engage in skills development that proactively enhances their resilience, and they develop wellbeing plans that are periodically shared between team members to help provide both accountability and support in optimising each person's wellbeing at work. Correspondingly such a level of knowledge, combined with

## Level Up!

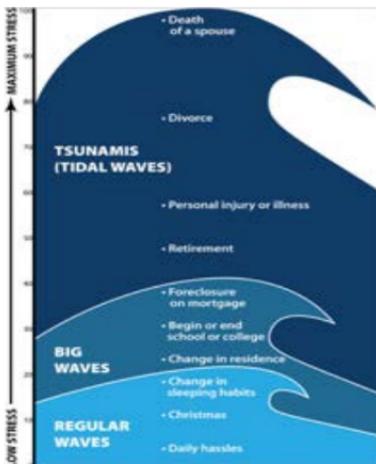
talent profile data, enables a deeper understanding of their capability in terms of ‘career progression’ and readiness for further challenges and opportunities or ‘career stability’ and a desire to stay ‘at-level’ and willingly train and support other team member’s progression.

### “How Are You?” Never Works! The Power of ‘One-word Barometers’

Members of Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams DON’T ask generic open-ended questions such as “How are you?” because they know that they are too hard to answer simply and honestly. They also know that most of the time people think you do not really want to know, and as result say “Fine” in reply – leaving no room for follow-up questions and support.

Instead, members of Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams DO ask specific, easy to answer, closed questions such as “What’s your one-word barometer?” or “On a scale of 1-10 what’s your number at the moment?” They then follow-up with open-ended questions and support.

### Beyond ‘One-word Barometers’: Stressful Life Events – What’s Your Score?



Members of Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams are aware that some stressful life events carry a much higher risk of illness than others. For example, the breakdown of a long-term marriage is bigger than frustrations from being stuck in traffic – accordingly these events require a different level of team support. A great



## WELLBEING MASTER PLAN

Name: DR. PETEDate: 2/18Current Wave: FRUSTRATED WITH CO-WORKERS
 I don't want to Wave  I'm Wave
Stress Symptoms/ Wipeout Risks: TENSE, ANGRY & WITHDRAWN

Stress Test Risk score		
My score:	<u>279</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Low risk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate risk	<input type="checkbox"/> High risk

MINDSETS - ACTION PLAN			
Area	Unhealthy	Healthy	Relevant to Wave?
Worry / Acceptance	Worrying about possible misfortune to self/ others	Being present - making the most of each day	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demand / Encourage	Forcing people to do what you want	Suggesting people do what you want	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Blame / Responsibility	Blaming others for your own reactions	Taking responsibility for your own reactions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Preventing a Wipeout:	<u>BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MY OWN ANGER &amp; STOP BLAMING. STOP DEMANDING &amp; ENCOURAGE FIRST THEN FOLLOW THROUGH WITH CONSEQUENCES.</u>		

EMOTIONS - ACTION PLAN			
Area	Unhealthy	Healthy	Relevant to Wave?
Coping Strategies	Drinking, additions, avoidance or obsession	Healthy distraction, social support, focusing on positives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Problem Solving	Impulsive action, not evaluating all possible options & solutions	Considering all the options and carefully applying solutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relaxation & Mindfulness	Rushing, distractions, not fully relaxing or being present	Scheduling time, preventing distraction, full relaxation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Preventing a Wipeout:	<u>STOP AVOIDING OFFICE + MEETINGS. BE PRESENT + MINDFUL. GET A COACH TO TALK TO RATHER THAN WANTING TO SPOUSE.</u>		

LIFESTYLE - ACTION PLAN			
Area	Unhealthy	Healthy	Relevant to Wave?
Sleep	Too little sleep, lack of routine, cat naps, use of alcohol/ poor diet	Healthy pattern & routine, enough hours & good diet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diet	Unhealthy pyramid - too many fats & sugars - not enough fruit & veg	Healthy pyramid - more fruit & less fats and sugars	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Exercise	Binge - all or nothing approach - no routine, risk of injury & illness	Regular activity, gradual build up & goals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Preventing a Wipeout:	<u>FIX POOR DIET FIRST. FOODS SKIPPING MEALS. EXERCISE - 10,000 STEP EVERY DAY. RATHER THEN ONE MASSIVE SESSION PER WEEK.</u>		

PURPOSE - ACTION PLAN			
Area	Unhealthy	Healthy	Relevant to Wave?
Living My Values/Legacy	Uncertain values and incompatible circumstances	Clarity of values and aligned work/ life roles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Challenging Life Goals	Lack of clarity/ unrealistic life goals - too easy/ too hard	Clear life goals and realistic approach to achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Small Acts of Kindness	Unrealistic expectations placing pressure on self/others	Flexible relaxed approach to offer acts of kindness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Preventing a Wipeout:	<u>ACCEPT THAT BEING TRUE TO VALUES MEANS MAKING CHANGES EVEN WITH LOSS OF \$, CHANGE ROLE SO CAN BE MORE FULL-FILLED EACH DAY.</u>		

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team exercise that many Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams undertake is to complete the stressful life events questionnaire, and then share their current risk scores amongst the team to build empathy and insight about fellow team members life situations.

### **The Four Elements of Wellbeing: Your Strengths & Vulnerabilities**

Beyond understanding risks, members of High Performance Teams generate specific strategies to help them buffer against life stressors. This is easily achieved through completing a Wellbeing Master Plan where specific strategies are devised for each of the four key elements of wellbeing – mindsets, emotions, lifestyle and purpose.

**ACTIVITY:** Take a moment to review the Four Elements of Wellbeing in the Wellbeing Master Plan on Page 173. When it comes to the Four Elements of Wellbeing – which are your strengths and where are you most vulnerable? For example, are you generally very good at having a positive mindset even when stressed, but more vulnerable to getting physically stressed and caught in poor lifestyle traps of unhealthy sleeping patterns, poor diet and skipping exercise? Think of a current stressor that you have and complete the Wellbeing Master Plan. What's one step that you can take over the next week to improve your wellbeing?

### **Elite Level High Performance Teams**

With such a deep understanding of each person in both their work/life context and their wellbeing and resilience needs, it is only natural for Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams to have very strong working relationships and a mutual interest in helping each other maximise their work/life and career success. For this to occur, team member's need to be able to have an awareness of their own work/life strategy and career

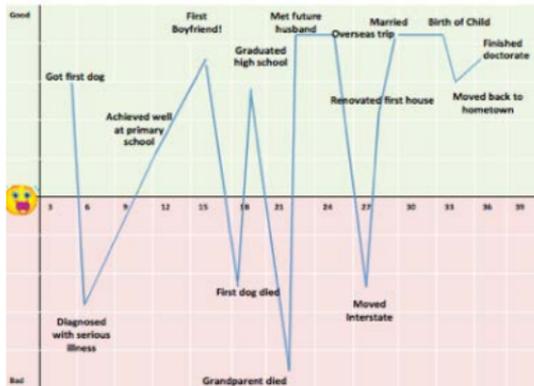
aspirations as well as be able to effectively share this with their peers. Such insights are often difficult to develop in isolation and Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams periodically use professional development opportunities to engage in work/life strategy sessions – having focused individual time to reflect on their work/life goals as well as come together to share their journeys and future aspirations. This further strengthens working relationships and deepens the insights needed for effective sharing and succession planning in both the team and wider organisation.

### Lifeline: Looking Back

A recommended precursor for Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams to complete before participating together in a life strategy exercise is to engage in one of the

most powerful and revealing team building activities I have ever done – the “Lifeline” exercise combining both personal and work histories. The activity requires extreme trust, and it is truly a magical experience for the team listening to each other present their lifelines and sharing some of the transformational moments that have shaped their lives. I have done this exercise with co-facilitators I have known for many years many many times and there is always something different – some other aspect of their life story that surfaces each time they present.

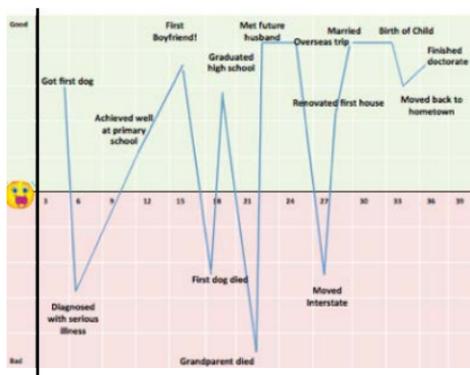
### Lifeline



## Future In Focus: The Other Side of the Lifeline...

Once team members have taken the time to look back at their life journey so far, they are in the ideal position to look into the future – to the other side of Lifeline – Life Strategy.

### Lifeline



### Life Strategy



**BIRTH**

**NOW**

**FUTURE**

## Sharing Your Goals with the Team: Increasing Mutual Support, Feedback and Opportunity...

A Life Strategy session starts with asking participants to think about the big picture and their final desired Legacy. Participants are then asked to bring their legacy closer and clearer into sight by working through their Dreams, Goals, and eventual concrete Plans. The ultimate goal of completing a life strategy on a personal level is for individuals to develop goals and plans that will allow them to become the person that they want to be in the domains of Work, Play, Relationships, Family and Friends. The ultimate goal of completing a Life Strategy in a group setting is to allow team members to share their biggest, and most personal goals – encouraging an even deeper level of trust, as well as creating opportunities for team members to support each other's goals and create mentoring relationships

# The Endless Summer Life Strategy Plan

Area & Legacy		Life Dreams	Goals (S= Stretch)
1. <b>Play</b> He loved the outdoors and went on many great adventures!		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To travel the world, climb mountains and surf the oceans with family and friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several weeks in Europe with family (S)</li> <li>Climb Mt Kilimanjaro, Kingabalu and Mt Kosciuszko in one year (S)</li> <li>Complete Half Iron Man Triathlon (S)</li> <li>Weekend surf trips with family</li> </ul>
2. <b>Work</b> He was inspiring and challenged people to be their best!		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be a part of an enduring company that helps others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join a company with aligned values</li> <li>Help build and grow the business</li> <li>Be a partner or owner (S)</li> </ul>
3. <b>Relationship</b> He loved his partner passionately and completely!		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be in a wonderful loving relationship for the rest of my life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn from past and profile my strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>Begin dating again</li> <li>Practice good boundaries and communication</li> </ul>
4. <b>Friends &amp; Family</b> He was generous, supportive and available!		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be a super cool dad to my children and have great adventure buddies and close family ties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work routine that gives me time with children after school and weekends</li> <li>Build a network of 5-7 close friends with outdoor interests</li> <li>Weekly dinners with extended family</li> </ul>

Part II – Making It Happen!						
Life Quadrant	Specific Goals	Strategies	Resources	Timeline	Support Networks	Setback Plans
1. <b>Play</b>	Climb the 'K' Mountains across the World (S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fitness – start weekly training program;</li> <li>Research – best seasons to go and local guides;</li> <li>Recruit – friends to come along and share the experience;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Money – Total budget \$30K</li> <li>Time – Book leave from work;</li> <li>Check travel, Visa and health insurances;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 months:</li> <li>Kosciuszko in Feb;</li> <li>Mt Kilimanjaro in May; Kingabalu in Oct;</li> <li>Due dates for Visas, jetons;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friends to train and go on adventures;</li> <li>Professional Guides for mountains;</li> <li>Travel agent for booking &amp; permit;</li> <li>Members who know training and preparation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have travel insurance</li> <li>Medications for altitude sickness / acclimatize;</li> <li>Injuries – Avoid high risk sports prior;</li> <li>Money – have spare available if needed;</li> </ul>
2. <b>Work</b>	Becoming a Partner in the Company (S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend 95% of network meetings;</li> <li>Bring in 2 new jobs each month</li> <li>Complete KPIs;</li> <li>Get promoted to Senior Associate;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage Time;</li> <li>Manage Diary;</li> <li>Industry updates;</li> <li>Referrer details;</li> <li>KPI work plan;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess progress monthly;</li> <li>Complete KPIs within 6 months;</li> <li>Next promotion in 12 months;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to friends about how to succeed at work;</li> <li>Use mentors in the company to grow business;</li> <li>Professional coach to refine skills and business acumen;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delays in promotion – manage any setbacks by debriefing with mentors and professional coach;</li> <li>Setbacks in growing business – use supports as per the above;</li> </ul>
3. <b>Relationship</b>	Begin dating again	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek advice from 5 friends on dating;</li> <li>Sign up to a dating website;</li> <li>Go on 3 coffee dates;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time;</li> <li>Internet;</li> <li>\$50 for dates;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 weeks;</li> <li>1 week;</li> <li>1 month;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to friends about their experiences to help meet the right people;</li> <li>Life coach to review strengths and weaknesses and give feedback;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not meeting the right people – keep persevering and seek support from friends and adjust strategy and approach with life coach;</li> </ul>
4. <b>Family &amp; Friends</b>	Weekly dinners with extended family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to parents to organise a suitable weekday;</li> <li>Pre-book dates;</li> <li>Start weekly dinners;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time;</li> <li>Diary;</li> <li>Meal plan;</li> <li>\$50 for meal;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 week;</li> <li>1 week</li> <li>2 weeks;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friends and mentors to share recipe and tips for holding good dinner parties;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduling doesn't work and people can't make it regularly – broaden the list of people invited to include close family friends;</li> </ul>

## Level Up!

and lines of succession for those wanting to move up within the team. Knowing who in the team is looking to progress, change careers, retire or consolidate in their current role enables Level 5 Elite High Performance Teams to proactively plan for the future and look out for opportunities that match each team members' needs and wants, as well as start training successors and cross-skilling staff ahead of wanted promotions and departures – truly maximising team performance over the long-term!

**ACTIVITY:** Review the life strategy example provided on Page 177. Then complete your own life strategy. What elements of your life strategy would you be willing to share with your team? Is there anyone in your team who has similar life goals, and if so how could you help each other? Who are your successors within the team and how are you currently assisting them to grow?

## Bringing It Together

Low performance teams leave trust building and succession planning to luck. High Performance Teams realise that luck won't last forever – they create structures and systems like weekly pulse surveys, and always use one word barometers and conversation starters during formal meetings to ensure that team members get to know each other (and their needs) in a safe and time efficient way. What's more, every team-based strategy matches the team's trust and vulnerability tolerances. Advanced Level 4 High Performance Teams increase vulnerability, support and trust through engaging deeply in sharing around wellbeing. Elite Level 5 High Performance Teams ensure that they understand each other's work/life goals allowing for clear succession plans that match individual and team needs and goals.

# Part 3:

## Levelling Up the 4 KPIs...

### 1 Page Action Plan

Topic	Key Learnings	Takeaway Messages	Actions/Next Steps
Levelling Up KPI 1: Vision & Action			
Levelling Up KPI 2: Performance Reporting			
Levelling Up KPI 3: Leveraging Diversity			
Levelling Up KPI 4: Work/Life & Wellbeing			

## Part 4.

### Level Up Leadership: A Right-sized Approach....

*“Leadership is deliberate  
– you don’t accidentally have  
successful teams”*

– Frank Kearney

# Chapter 11

## Team Leadership 101: Psychological Safety & Job Satisfaction

*“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

*- Maya Angelou*

Building High Performance Teams is a big leadership challenge, but there is some good news! When you break the subject of team leadership down, leading High Performance Teams is essentially a simple two-part recipe in communication.

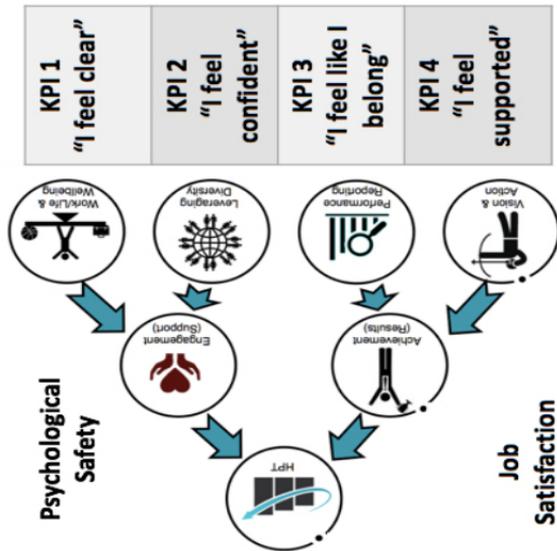
Part 1 is the “What” of communication – the topics of discussion – the learning and sharing that the leader helps to facilitate within the team through their own behaviour, and the structures and systems that they are responsible for implementing in order to support the team.

Part 2 is the “How” of communication – the methods the leader chooses (i.e., managing, mentoring or coaching) that best matches the team’s current needs, while simultaneously assisting them to level up to higher performance.

# HPT Leadership

MANAGE, MENTOR & COACH

## What to communicate...



## How to communicate...

Right-Sizing Your Leadership Approach According to Team Level

HPT Level	1 Dysfunctional	2 Functional	3 High Perf.	4 Advanced	5 Elite
<b>Managing</b> <i>Giving Instruction and Direction to Select the Solution</i>	Most Often	Often	Regularly	Intermittently	Infrequently
<b>Mentoring</b> <i>Providing Advice and Suggestions to Evaluate Solutions</i>	Infrequently	Regularly	Most Often	Often	Intermittently
<b>Coaching</b> <i>Asking Effective Questions to Enable Own Solutions</i>	Infrequently	Intermittently	Regularly	Often	Most Often

In this chapter, we'll focus on Part 1 of the HPT Leadership Recipe (the “what”) through sharing some ideas about how to develop a team culture that both (1) creates psychological safety, and (2) maximises job satisfaction – two key ingredients needed to fast-track the journey to high performance.

*“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

**Maya Angelou**



## 1. Psychological Safety – Maximising Team Engagement

In 2012, Google launched ‘Project Aristotle’, a research project designed to identify the foundational elements of High Performance Teams (see Chapter 1 for more detail). When the project wrapped up, ‘Psychological Safety’ was singled out as the most important element in predicting a team’s performance. It was found that leaders of High Performance Teams made sure that their teams had clear goals, and a culture of dependability. This led team members to feel psychologically safe, allowing them to provide honest



## Level Up!

feedback to each other, take informed risks, and explore innovations and improvements – all while managing inherent setbacks and failures in a way that accelerated learning yet avoided unnecessary conflict and blame.

As a leader, fostering a sense of psychological safety in a team is mainly about the strategies we use to deepen team level communication and sharing in two key areas: (1) Understanding and Leveraging Diversity, and (2) Sharing and Support of People's Work/Life and Wellbeing needs.



### **Leveraging Diversity**

*“How do we ensure that the diversity within our team promotes inclusion and becomes a strategic advantage?”*

As a leader, you need to model feedback seeking behaviour, focus on getting to know what motivates each individual team member and get team members to actively give and seek feedback. Consider the following reflective questions to assess your current leadership capability in building a culture of leveraging diversity:

- Do I regularly seek feedback from my team about how I can improve?
- Can I motivate and encourage my team using a range of different strategies?
- Do I use a flexible approach to encourage and motivate my team based on their individual needs?
- Do I provide all team members with performance feedback to grow and develop?
- Do I have difficult conversations about working relationships instead of gossiping or avoiding people?



## Work/Life & Wellbeing

*“How do we fast-track our understanding and ability to support each other’s work/life needs and wellbeing?”*

As a leader, you need to model appropriate disclosure by sharing your own work/life goals with the team, focus on understanding and supporting each individual’s work/life goals, and get team members to share their own and support their team mates’ work/life goals. Consider the following reflective questions to assess your current leadership capability in building a culture where work/life and wellbeing are a priority:

- Do I have a genuine interest in the health and wellbeing of all my team members?
- Do I share my own work/life goals with the team?
- Do I encourage the team to share their work/life goals with each other?
- Do I know the career goals of each individual member of my team?
- Do I support team members to achieve their career and personal goals?

## 2. Job Satisfaction – Maximising Team Achievement

Job Satisfaction is essentially about team members’ sense of achievement and enjoyment at work. Drivers of job satisfaction are team members’ perceptions of how their roles contribute to overall outcomes, as well as



## Level Up!

being able to see progress over time. Whilst job satisfaction is ultimately up to the individual's perception of their work and thus not directly in the control of a team leader per se, there are none-the-less two very important factors a leader can influence which will largely predict individual job satisfaction. These are (1) Linking Vision and Action, and (2) Building a 'Performance Reporting' Culture.



### **Vision and Action**

*"How does the team clearly connect their daily, weekly and monthly actions to the organisation's vision and values?"*

As a leader, you need to have regular discussions on team goals and targets, focus on how each team member's performance contributes

to the team's ultimate success and get team members to plan against the short, medium and long-term team vision. Consider the following reflective questions to assess your current leadership capability in building a culture of vision and action in your team:

- Do I have regular discussions with my team about our specific goals and targets?
- Do I inform my team about senior management's expectation of their performance in both the short- and long-term?
- Do I clearly explain the short- and long-term vision in relation to the current action plan my team is working on?
- Does each member of my team know how the tasks they perform contribute to the team achieving its goals and targets?
- Do members of my team regularly discuss their understanding of the vision and action plan for the team and organisation



## Performance Reporting

*“What types of team-specific data do we collect and report to drive both improvement and satisfaction within our team AND how regularly do we look at it?”*

As a leader, you need to regularly refer to data that drives team performance, focus on data that reflects team results (KPIs) and tracks team functioning, and get team members to openly question ‘what the data tells us’. Consider the following reflective questions to assess your current leadership capability in building a culture of performance reporting in your team:

- Do I have the knowledge and expertise to competently support my staff to achieve their goals and targets?
- Can my team rely on me to deliver on my promises and commitments?
- Do I support the performance of my team by sharing my relevant knowledge and experience?
- Do I regularly refer to data to drive team performance?
- Do I encourage my team to openly question me if they are unclear about information I have provided?
- 

## Bringing It All Together

While Leading High Performance Teams can get complicated at times, it’s important to remember that when you break it down it’s essentially a simple two-part recipe of communication. Part 1 is the “What” of communication – the topics of discussion - the learning and sharing that the leader helps to facilitate within the team through their own behaviour, and the structures and

## Level Up!

systems that they are responsible for to support the team. Part 2 is the “How” of communication – the methods the leader chooses (i.e., managing, mentoring or coaching) that best matches the team’s current needs, while simultaneously assisting them to level up to higher performance.

In this chapter, we’ve focused on Part 1 of the HPT Leadership Recipe: The ‘What’ of communication. To get this recipe right we need to create high levels of psychological safety and job satisfaction in our teams and we explored 4 BIG Questions and reflected on our individual leadership behaviours for each one:

- **Leveraging Diversity:** “How do we ensure that the diversity within our team promotes inclusion and becomes a strategic advantage?”
- **Work/Life & Wellbeing:** “How do we fast-track our understanding and ability to support each other’s work/life needs and wellbeing?”
- **Vision and Action:** “How does the team clearly connect their daily, weekly and monthly actions to the organisation’s vision and values?”
- **Performance Reporting:** “What types of team-specific data do we collect and report to drive both improvement and satisfaction within our team AND how regularly do we look at it?”

In discussing these 4 BIG Questions we shared some practical ideas about how you as a leader can develop a team culture which creates both psychological safety, and maximises job satisfaction – the two key ingredients needed to fast-track the journey to high performance.

Take some time now to reflect on how you lead High Performance Teams. Are you creating team culture that engenders psychological safety and maximises job satisfaction? As a leader, how do you answer the 4 BIG Questions in your work context?

# Chapter 12

## Right-Sizing: The Secrets to Success

*Res ipsa loquitor*

– *Let The Evidence Speak...*

One of the biggest challenges we have faced in our research into High Performance Teams was overcoming the temptation to ignore some compelling evidence about the ‘how’ of leadership that did not fit with current popular theory on the subject...

We used to ascribe to the popular view that (1) the ‘how’ of effective leadership was mainly about building a leader’s ‘coaching’ capability to empower staff, and (2) in order to be more effective, leaders needed to identify and change their so-called ‘bad habits’ of spending too much time in ‘manager’ mode and not enough time in ‘leader’ mode.

BUT after taking a good hard look at the many, many case studies of team transformation we have accumulated over the years it became apparent to us that there was a serious flaw in these assumptions about effective leadership. Whilst these leadership development assumptions are true among leaders working with the highest performing teams (a rare level of team performance and thus a relatively small number of teams) they are untrue in the vast majority of cases, and as a result cause far more harm than good among leaders working with teams at the beginning and middle stages of the High Performance Teams transformation (the most common levels of team performance and largest number of teams).

## Leadership Activity: The 3 Roles of Manager, Mentor, & Coach

*“Leading high performance teams is about right sizing your approach as manager, mentor and coach.”*

– Pete Stebbins

Whilst there are an array of leadership theories and models, when it comes down to observing leaders in action, there are three approaches that leaders use to get results from their teams: Manage, Mentor and Coach. As you can see from the Table below (and no doubt from your personal experience), these three basic leadership approaches are not too difficult for most leaders to master. What is far more important is ‘matching’ the leadership approach to the current level of team performance in order to stabilise the team and support them to ascend to their next phase of team growth. Providing coaching to teams that clearly need significant guidance and/or direction will likely prove fruitless and frustrating for all involved as team members look to their leader for answers, but are only met with Socratic questions. Conversely, providing precise instruction and direction (Managing) can be stifling for a team that is performing to a high standard and looking to be challenged to stretch and grow.

HPT Level	1 Dysfunctional	2 Functional	3 High Perf.	4 Advanced	5 Elite
<b>Managing</b> <i>Giving your team clear instruction and directing them to a solution.</i>	Most Often	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Seldom
<b>Mentoring</b> <i>Providing your team with helpful advice to co-construct a solution.</i>	Seldom	Sometimes	Most Often	Often	Occasionally
<b>Coaching</b> <i>Asking your team effective questions to enable them to generate their own solution.</i>	Seldom	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Most Often

## Level Up!

Overall, if we look at leadership in this more nuanced light, the predominant wisdom that coaching is a ‘one size fits all’ panacea for team development doesn’t hold water. It is clear however, that Managing, Mentoring and Coaching are all valid leadership approaches, and that the “best” approach is dependent on the team’s needs.

### **Your Comfort Zone: The Elephant in the Room...**

*“Leadership is about getting comfortable being uncomfortable.” – Anonymous*

As a leader, you might be skilled at all three of the key leadership skills, but I’ll bet that there’s one that you prefer the most. We’ve observed that the ‘average’ leader (if there is such a thing!) enjoys ‘Mentoring’ the most where they can share their wisdom freely without the need to double down on the detail, role modelling and accountability of effective ‘Management’ and without the frustration of listening seemingly endlessly to their staff’s struggles to help problem solve their own issues as a result of effective ‘Coaching’ questions... Hmm I wonder to what extent leaders may unconsciously influence teams through their own biases and preferences around their leadership style? (a.k.a. the cart before the horse...). Could part of the reason that teams fail to Level Up be because leaders are leading from their own comfort zones, and not the comfort zones of their team?

### **Transformation: Leadership & The High Performance Teams Journey**

As discussed in Chapter 3, it is apparent that where a team lies on its development journey can be classified according to both the VALUE they produce (a combination of direct and indirect

productivity benefits) through achieving their targets and goals over the short- and long-term, and the CONFIDENCE they have as a team to share information with each other and provide frank and fearless feedback to achieve their goals. They can also be classified by the main team CHALLENGE they face to Level Up.

Unpacking ‘VALUE’ and ‘CONFIDENCE’ into the High Performance Team Domains of ACHIEVEMENT and ENGAGEMENT allows us to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations and behaviours that teams display through the various layers of performance. You can see in the expanded Table below how teams at various levels behave in terms of VALUE, as expressed in the FOCUS of their team’s ACHIEVEMENT through their level of CLARITY OF VISION and GOALS & TARGETS. A similar analysis can be done with team CONFIDENCE, as expressed in the DRIVERS of their team’s ENGAGEMENT through their level of VULNERABILITY & TRUST and knowledge SHARING & SUCCESSION planning.

HPT Level	Value* (Focus)	Confidence (Driver)	Challenge (Approach)
Level 5 Elite HPT	10x (Leverage)	100% (Legacy)	Super-Stretch (& Coach)
Level 4 Adv HPT	5x (Strategic)	90% (Growth)	Stretching (& Coach)
Level 3 HPT	2x (Collaborative)	75% (Understanding)	Improving (& Mentor)
Level 2 Functional	1x (Constructive)	50% (Acceptance)	Systems (Manage)
Level 1 Dysfunctional	-2x (Destructive)	0% (Distrust)	Structures (Manage)

## Level Up!

Turning our attention to the far right of the Table on Page 193 we see the CHALLENGE that teams face at each level in order to Level Up. Starting at the bottom of the Table with Level 1 and 2 teams it is clear that the predominant leadership approach that will assist these teams to respectively establish STRUCTURES and SYSTEMS is MANAGING. Moving up to Level 3 Teams it is clear that while some elements of MANAGING will still be necessary, overcoming the challenge of IMPROVING will be aided most through a shift to MENTORING. Finally looking at Level 4 and 5 teams, while some elements of both MANAGING and MENTORING may be in play, a shift in approach to COACHING will be necessary in order for them to succeed with their STRETCH and SUPER STRETCH goals and challenges.

Taking it one step further, when we examine the leadership approaches of Managing, Mentoring and Coaching in light of the High Performance Teams Level Up framework we can see the types of activities that successful leaders will be engaged in to get the most out of their teams at each level (see Table below).

Level Challenge (Approach)	Level 1 Foundations (Manage)	Level 2 Systems (Manage)	Level 3 Improving (Mentor)	Level 4 Stretching (Coach)	Level 5 Super-Stretch (Coach)
Level Up Leadership Strategy Suggestions...	<b>Clarify Roles &amp; Behaviors</b> Highest Contact, Directive: Set clear expectations around roles and behaviors & manage consequences	<b>Lead By Example</b> Higher Contact, Instructive: Implement team systems and role model High Performance Teams 4 KPI disciplines	<b>Reward &amp; Encourage</b> Moderate Contact, Advising: Data Wall Conversations on KPIs for Innovation & invest in professional development	<b>Sustainable Stretch</b> Lower Contact, Questioning: Jointly Set Stretch Goals & resource accordingly. Seek frank and fearless feedback & model growth mindset	<b>Clear A Path</b> Lowest Contact, Reflective: Challenge & Unleash team on biggest corporate challenges (BHAGs) and give frank and fearless feedback

*\*BHAG: Big Hairy Audacious Goals*

## **Right Sizing Your Leadership: Willing vs Able?**

*“To a man with a hammer, everything looks like a nail.”*  
– Mark Twain

Stating the obvious, there are two basic causes of leadership error when it comes to building High Performance Teams: (1) Many leaders retrofit their team’s level of performance to suit their preferred leadership style (thus staying in the leader’s comfort zone), and (2) Leaders are ‘conditioned’ into applying particular approaches to teams that are incompatible with their needs (management is roundly sneered at when compared to coaching in the bulk of the business leadership literature). But how does this play out in the real world?

## **In Defence of Management: Uncovering the Leadership Lie**

We were recently working with a large group of senior Education Leaders at a Deputy Principals Conference, where the topic of the day was how to most effectively lead teaching teams for improved performance.

As people were arriving to the workshop, two of the participants were engaged in the perennial philosophical discussion of Leadership vs. Management, and which approach was right for their teaching team’s context. As I knew that this would come up later in our workshop I joined them, and learned that they had both recently attended an intensive coaching workshop. As I listened to the conversation it became apparent that while they had personally benefited from the coaching workshop, now that they were back at their school trying to apply what they had learned, they were frustrated that they weren’t getting the results that they thought they should be. Naturally, in their frustration, they began to question their own level of coaching

## Level Up!

skill and competence and began to blame themselves for the lack of improvement in their teaching teams. Knowing what was coming later in our session I told them that I empathised with their frustrations, but suggested they stop beating themselves up about their level of coaching skills as there may be an alternate explanation to the cause of their frustrations and indeed an alternate solution!

*“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.”*

– Albert Einstein

During the workshop we had each participant think about their team and rate their team’s current HPT Level, which in turn predicted the mix of leadership skills needed for growth. When we did a quick scan of the room once everyone had got their results back, 90% of leaders put up their hand to indicate that their teams were currently operating at a Level 2 (Functional) which required strong ‘management’ support as the primary leadership approach.

An interesting reflection in the discussion that followed was that the vast majority of the leadership development the Deputy Principal’s had undertaken was related to ‘coaching skills’. Perhaps the over-emphasis on ‘coaching skills’ (which was contraindicated when the teaching teams they were leading were operating at Level 2 and required strong ‘management’ support and an increasing flow of ‘mentoring’ input) was accidentally derailing the improvement process as well as confusing the situation for the leaders themselves. For these leaders to persist with a ‘coaching’ approach to Level 2 teams would likely lead to considerable stress and frustration among team members who needed a strong ‘management’ and ‘mentoring’ approach to Level Up before the benefits of

‘coaching’ could be received once they were functioning at Levels 4 and 5.

At the next break, I had coffee with the same two participants who had been discussing their coaching conundrum prior to the session. They were now both firmly in agreement that to best support their team a more intentional Management and Mentoring focus was needed. They were also no longer feeling guilty about their coaching efforts falling slightly flat. One of the participants was particularly euphoric reflecting that: “For as long as I can remember I’ve been told what it is to be a good leader, and that Managers are not Leaders. After today I’ve totally changed my thinking. I’m not going to buy into the leadership lie anymore, leadership isn’t just one thing or another, it’s a spectrum.”

### **Variety is the Spice of Life: Leadership Approaches for Dealing with Diversity within Teams**

Working with people is working with variety, and it would be remiss of us at this point not to acknowledge that our leadership ‘matching’ behaviour could conceivably be different at a team level vs individual level. No doubt throughout your leadership life you’ve come across teams that contain outlier members, who individually are capable of working at a much higher level of performance than their peers (or vice versa). Where we have variety such as this within our teams we need to remember that we have two distinct jobs as a leader: (1) We need to provide the team as a whole with the leadership approach (Manage, Mentor, Coach) most suitable to their development, and (2) We need to provide outlier team members with the leadership approach (Manage, Mentor, Coach) most suitable to their development on an individual level that fits within the broader team development agenda.

## **The Level Up Leadership Conversation...**

*“What’s the leadership conversation you should be having with yourself, but are avoiding?”*

– Pete Stebbins

As we’ve learned so far in this chapter, being an effective team leader is about (1) having the ability to Manage, Mentor, or Coach where appropriate, and (2) being mindful of which key leadership approach we favour, and adjusting to meet our team’s needs despite this, so as to avoid becoming a leadership “one trick pony”. To gain a deeper understanding of your personal leadership ability and leadership approach preferences you can complete the HPT Leadership Self-Assessment in Chapter 15 of this book.

## **Bringing It Together**

Ensuring that our children lead a better future than we left them is THE greatest moral and economic challenge of our time – there’s a lot riding on school performance and High Performance Teaching Teams are at the centre of realising this lofty ambition.

Building High Performance Teaching Teams is a core responsibility of the legion of dedicated middle leadership within the Education Sector who spend countless hours and resources trying to get the best from their teams to meet and exceed student needs. When leaders ‘match’ their leadership approach to the current level of team performance, wonderful things happen – teams begin to stabilise and ascend to the next phase of team growth. If leaders fail to ‘match’ their leadership approach to the current level of team performance both the team and the leader spin their wheels and grow increasingly frustrated doing the ‘supposed right leadership behaviours.’

Stop for a moment and consider... Do you know your team's current HPT Level?... Have you right sized your leadership approach to 'match' what the team needs to Level Up, or are you staying in your comfort zone? What would it take for you to Level Up?...

# Chapter 13

## Executive Juggling: Levelling Up Multiple Teams

*“Accomplishing the maximum impact on student learning depends on teams of teachers working together.”*

– John Hattie

All High Performance teaching teams thrive on feedback. Yet, building a culture where feedback – healthy, professional, growth-focused feedback – is continuously shared among team members, is not necessarily a straight forward task. As teams develop and mature, leadership strategies must change to adapt to the ‘next level’ challenges the team is facing. Thus, building a feedback culture in a large organisation with multiple teams at various levels – such as a busy High School – could arguably be one of the most difficult challenges a leader could face.

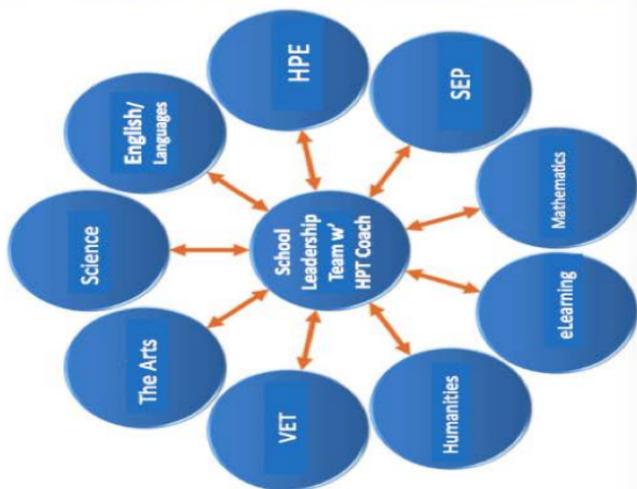
Judi Newman is one such leader who has stepped up and successfully faced the challenges of customising her leadership approach to match the varying levels of teams within large and complex High Schools. Whilst now working as a leadership coach for Principals, Judi has 20+ years of experience working as a middle leader and senior leader in Education and a detailed understanding of how best to conduct team development and transformation initiatives such as building a culture of feedback in large and complex schools.

### **Leading Multiple Teams: ‘Right Sizing’ Your Leadership Approach**

Through the course of her career, Judi has worked as a Principal of different size schools, with differing team

## HPT: Organisational Transformation – Team x Team Approach

HPT Team Development Strategies: School Wide Roll Up Report					
Faculty	Team Level Summary (1-5)	Team Challenges: Achievement	Team Challenges: Engagement	HPT Team Development Strategies (4 KPIs)	Leadership Combination (i.e. Manager, Mentor, Coach)
The Arts	Level 3	Common goals for a diverse faculty, build capacity across all curriculum areas (greater options), Succession planning	Personality clashes - above and below the line	Vision in Action (Hedgehog), Action Plan, Team Profile / Talent Map	Manager - Regularly, Mentor - Most Often - Coach - Regularly
English & Languages	Level 3	Succession planning, release responsibility for curriculum leadership, production of new syllabus documents	Staff engagement is 50% (inc. AIBD); collaboration (curriculum review) & representation (practice)	HPT Action Plan, Meeting agendas to support PO & Talent Map	Manager - Regularly, Mentor - Most Often - Coach - Regularly
HPE	Level 2	Clarity of vision - longer term, setting relevant goals and targets, knowledge sharing and succession planning, common goals (lettering), curriculum planning	Inexperienced teaching team (ongoing), workload, electronic communication versus in person	Performance based feedback, Vision in action action plan, Talent Map / Team Purpose team profile	Manager - Often, Mentor - Regularly - Coach - Intermittently
Humanities	Level 4	Common Goals: Sorting Data around programs and worksheets, verification	Set clear expectations around roles and behaviour, getting staff to interact and participate in meetings	Clear outcomes, faculty positions appraisals, curriculum	Manager - Intermittently, Mentor - Often - Coach - Often
Mathematics	Level 2	Shared vision and update team action plan	Loss of staff for retirement/leave has resulted in loss of expertise and changing dynamics in team structure, negativity, Trust,	Lead by example, implement team protocols, Meeting protocols	Manager - Often, Mentor - Regularly - Coach - Intermittently
Science	Level 2	(1) Sharing of info/resources (2) Curriculum changes in 19-22	Team building, warm ups and wellbeing check-ins	(1) Allocation of staff to plan one strategy each faculty meeting, continuous team building (2) Effective meeting protocols, team profile/ talent map, goals, 1 team specific data walk, team matched to trust, (3) Goal setting, clear vision	Manager - Often, Mentor - Regularly - Coach - Intermittently
eLearning	Level 3	Vision and purchase, succession / capacity goals (long-term)	Clear feedback for growth and development	Hedgehog Conversation, Dashboard & Talent Map	Manager - Regularly, Mentor - Most Often - Coach - Regularly
VET - Technology	Level 2	Meeting Protocols, Shared Vision	Trust, full accountability in place for each team member	Lead by Example, implement team systems and protocols, 4 KPIs disciplines, Shared Vision & Purpose, Effective Meeting Protocols, 3D	Manager - Often, Mentor - Regularly - Coach - Intermittently
SEP	Level 2	30 Insights, Effective Meeting Protocols, Aged Teaching teams, Succession Planning from mainstream teaching team	New teaching team / teacher roles, staff turnover, communication	Renewed/Encourage: Autonomy of curriculum; leadership	Manager - Often, Mentor - Regularly - Coach - Intermittently



## Level Up!

structures and challenges. In larger schools where there are multiple teaching teams spread across year levels or faculties (as well as non-teaching teams focused on administration and facilities management), there are usually a wide range of team performance levels which require the leader to use a different mix of skills to ‘match’ the needs of the team (see diagram on Page 201).

### Right Sizing Leadership Across The Levels To Build A Feedback Culture

As we’ve explored already, the three types of leadership skills needed to help teams ‘Level Up’ to higher performance are managing, coaching and mentoring. However the correct combination of these 3 skills varies depending upon the team’s level of performance across the 5 levels of HPT.

When building a culture of feedback with teams, Judi suggests the following combination of leadership skills across Level 1 to 5 for a differentiated approach:

#### HPT Level 1 – Dysfunctional Teams

HPT Level	Team Characteristics: Observation & Feedback	Leadership Strategy To Level Up	Approach as Manager:	Approach as Mentor:	Approach as Coach:
<b>Level 1</b> Dysfunctional Teams	<b>Look For:</b> Avoidant & Cynical  Don't participate in feedback & discourage others.	<b>Clarify Roles &amp; Behaviours</b>  Set clear expectations around roles and behaviours & manage consequences	<b>Most Often</b>  Line manage weekly. Set clear individual expectations & instructions around role, accountabilities & timelines. Identify strengths and gaps - provide mandatory PD for gaps. Reinforce priority work – direct instruction.	<b>Infrequently</b>  One part challenge, five parts support. Mentor topic informed by relevant performance data. Meetings have a focus on exemplars and modelling.	<b>Infrequently</b>  Coaching usually not appropriate as main focus is on managing towards compliance with policy and procedures.

- **Manage (Most Often):** In Level 1 teams, ‘managing’ is at its highest frequency. Line management occurs weekly, with clear individual expectations and instructions around role, accountabilities and timelines being set.

Direct instruction is provided and reinforcement of priority work and tasks. It is also important to identify the strengths and areas to develop at both an individual and team level and provide mandatory professional development for any gaps.

- **Mentor (Infrequently):** Mentoring is used only occasionally in Level 1 teams with the mantra of “One part challenge, five parts support.” Mentoring topics are informed by relevant performance data and meetings focus on exemplars and modelling.
- **Coach (Infrequently):** The use of coaching with Level 1 teams is generally not supported, as the main focus is on managing the team towards compliance with policy and procedures.

### HPT Level 2 – Functional Teams

HPT Level	Team Characteristics: Observation & Feedback	Leadership Strategy To Level Up	Approach as Manager:	Approach as Mentor:	Approach as Coach:
<b>Level 2</b> Functional Teams	<p><b>Look For: Cooperative &amp; Compliant</b></p> <p>Individual level variability - inconsistent use of framework, passive participation &amp; minimal input.</p>	<p><b>Lead By Example</b></p> <p>Implement team systems and role model High Performance Teams disciplines.</p>	<p><b>Often</b></p> <p>Line manage fortnightly. Set clear team level accountabilities &amp; timelines. Use programmatic approach to PD. Give more instruction and direction to assist development.</p>	<p><b>Regularly</b></p> <p>Two parts challenge, to five parts support. Mentoring topic selected by mentor. Provide peer buddy (similar role and a little more experience). Motivate and inspire. Mentor assists connection with other teams.</p>	<p><b>Intermittently</b></p> <p>Coaching only for individual positive outliers - focus on clarity of purpose and individual development.</p>

- **Manage (Often):** In Level 2 teams, ‘managing’ is used with high frequency. Line management occurs fortnightly with clear team level accountabilities and timelines set. Instruction and direction is provided to assist in development with a programmatic approach to the provision of professional development.
- **Mentor (Regularly):** Mentoring is used more regularly in Level 2 teams with the focus increasing to “Two parts

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challenge, five parts support.” Mentors aim to motivate and inspire the team and assist them to connect with other teams. Mentoring topics are selected by the mentor and team members are provided with a peer “buddy” who has a similar role with a little more experience.

- **Coach (Intermittently):** In Level 2 teams there is intermittent use of coaching for individual positive outliers. Here coaching is used to provide clarity of purpose and individual growth and development.

### HPT Level 3 – High Performance Teams

HPT Level	Team Characteristics: Observation & Feedback	Leadership Strategy To Level Up	Approach as Manager:	Approach as Mentor:	Approach as Coach:
<b>Level 3</b> High Performance Teams	<b>Look For: Open &amp; Interested to Learn</b>  Consistent use of frameworks. Strong participation & reciprocal feedback – individual & team level	<b>Reward &amp; Encourage</b>  Data Wall. Conversations on KPIs for Innovation. Invest in professional development	<b>Regularly</b>  Line manage fortnightly. Support by providing appropriate resources selected by both leader and team. Motivate to seek own PD. Set up structures for ways of working.	<b>Most Often</b>  Three parts challenge, to five parts support. Mentoring topics guided by mentor and team. Provide peer mentor. Mentor assists connection and collaboration with whole staff network.	<b>Regularly</b>  Coaching appropriate. Limited insights and experience to draw on so coaching may require more structure and boundaries (known knowns). Focus on the technical areas. Gentle challenge of interpersonal areas.

- **Manage (Regularly):** In Level 3 teams, ‘managing’ is used with moderate frequency. Line management continues to occur fortnightly with structures set up for ways of working. Support is also utilised by providing appropriate resources that are selected by both the leader and the team. The leader also motivates team members to seek their own professional development.
- **Mentor (Most Often):** Mentoring is used most often in Level 3 teams with the focus now moving to “Three parts challenge, five parts support.” Mentoring topics are guided by both the mentor and the team with peer mentoring also provided. The mentor also assists the team to connect and collaborate with the whole staff network.

- Coach (Regularly):** Coaching is appropriate in Level 3 teams, however team members may have limited insight and experience to draw on so coaching may require more structure and boundaries (known knowns) than in higher level teams. Coaching has a technical focus with some gentle challenging around interpersonal areas.

### HPT Level 4 – Advanced Level High Performance Teams

HPT Level	Team Characteristics: Observation & Feedback	Leadership Strategy To Level Up	Approach as Manager:	Approach as Mentor:	Approach as Coach:
Level 4 HPT Advanced Teams	<b>Look For: Continuous Improvement</b>  Skilled use of feedback framework, full team level participation. Reciprocal feedback, follow-up support and engagement with peer experts.	<b>Sustainable Stretch</b>  Jointly set stretch goals & resource accordingly. Seek frank and fearless feedback & model growth mindset.	<b>Intermittently</b>  Line manage monthly. Accountability reports each month to show evidence of progress and use of pooled expertise to solve issues.	<b>Often</b>  Four parts challenge, to five parts support. Mentoring guided by team needs and requests. Provide senior mentor. Use as a peer buddy to another team. Mentor assists connection to local level links with other schools.	<b>Often</b>  Moderate insight so coach may need to prompt more (known unknowns). Focus on interpersonal areas and mindset. Coaching topics shaped by team and school priorities. Use of 360 degree assessment tools.

- Manage (Intermittently):** In Level 4 teams, ‘managing’ is used with lower frequency. Line management occurs monthly with accountability reports provided each month by the team to show evidence of progress. In solving issues, Level 4 teams use their pooled expertise.
- Mentor (Often):** Mentoring is often used in Level 4 teams with the focus moving to “Four parts challenge, five parts supporting.” Mentoring topics are guided by the team’s needs and requests. A senior mentor is provided that can be used as a peer buddy to other teams. The mentor also assists with the connection of local level links with other schools and networks.
- Coach (Often):** Coaching is used with higher frequency in Level 4 teams. Team members will generally display moderate levels of insight, however the coach may still

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need to use prompts (known unknowns). The focus shifts to interpersonal areas and mindsets with coaching topics shared by team and school priorities. The use of 360 degree assessment tools may also be used in Level 4 teams.

### HPT Level 5 – Elite Level High Performance Teams

HPT Level	Team Characteristics: Observation & Feedback	Leadership Strategy To Level Up	Approach as Manager:	Approach as Mentor:	Approach as Coach:
Level 5 HPT Elite Teams	<b>Look For: Pursuit of Excellence</b>  As per below plus additional deep dives, role plays, multiple mentors & cross-team/whole of school shares & training in coaching framework and feedback skills.	<b>Clear A Path</b>  Challenge & unleash team on biggest organisational challenges (BHAGs) and give frank and fearless feedback.	<b>Infrequently</b> Accountability reports each month. Line manage once per term. Ask what resources & PD they need.  Freedom in ways of working. Invest in opportunities & make them topic expert for school wide training.	<b>Intermittently</b> Five parts challenge, to five parts support. Mentoring topics guided by team needs and requests.  Provide a senior mentor for narrow focus. Use team as a senior mentor for other teams. Assist in connecting & collaboration with external networks.	<b>Most Often</b> Coaching topics driven by team. Team has high insight for deep reflection so coach says very little (unknown unknowns). Team innovates - invite team to coach another team. Provide coaching while they are coaching (coach the coach) 360 tool & self-assessment of results.

- **Manage (Infrequently):** In Level 5 teams, ‘managing’ is used least often. Line management occurs once per term with accountability reports provided by team members monthly. Level 5 teams have freedom in their ways of working and become the topic expert for schoolwide training. There is a high investment in providing them with opportunities and they are asked what resources and professional development they require.
- **Mentor (Intermittently):** Mentoring is intermittently used in Level 5 teams with equal parts challenge and support – “Five parts challenge, five parts support.” Mentoring topics are guided by the team’s needs and requests. A senior mentor is provided for topics with a narrow focus with the team used as a senior mentor for other teams. The mentor also assists in connecting and collaboration with external networks.

- **Coach (Most Often):** Coaching is used with the highest degree of frequency in Level 5 teams. Team members have high insight for deep reflection so the coaching topics are driven by the team and the coach says very little (unknown knowns). The team innovates and is invited to coach another team. The role of the coach is to also provide the team with coaching while they are coaching other teams (coach-the-coach). The use of 360 degree assessment tools are also used with self-assessment of the results.

### **Adjusting Your 'Right Sized' Approach As Each Team Levels Up**

Once you have 'right sized' your leadership approach to match the team's level of performance it is important to know when to 'adjust' the mix of Manager, Mentor and Coach skills you use as the team 'Levels Up' to higher performance. For example, if you begin leading a team who is operating at Level 2, it will be appropriate to mainly use a management approach (e.g, identifying a clear common purpose, clarity of vision and the setting up of 'givens'). As the team develops mutual trust and respect for each other's potential, you will want to invest in their leadership by gradually increasing the use of mentoring skills to model the HPT Level 3 Team Skills such as the use of effective meeting protocols, sharing expertise around strategic planning, establishing data walls for accountability, mapping governance and management systems to maximise collaboration.

As the team approaches Level 4, stretching the team performance by also increasing the intensity and use of coaching will maximise their growth as a High Performance Team. At this stage the team will be self-regulating their own

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leadership and team development resulting in the team leader rarely reverting to management approaches. There will be rich debate inside the room and strong unity outside the room – a sign of a solid team. The team leader might pose a question like “How can I help your thinking on that?” or “What possible assumptions could be holding the team back here?” Note that the questions have no content (no advice).

Teams that I have seen operate at Level 5 are coaching other teams within the organisation and repeating the cycle of Manage, Mentor and Coach. If this is successful everyone in the organisation feels and acts like a leader and everyone in the team feels and acts like a team player. This is a gradual release of responsibility by the CEO / Principal as he or she shares their leadership and fully empowers the organisation at every level.

### **When To Adjust Your Approach: Timing Is Critical**

As a team journey's up to higher levels of performance, the leader has to make a range of adjustments to their approach – and timing is critical. Knowing what to 'look for' as lead indicators of improved team performance is vital in beginning to transition your approach – decreasing the intensity of your management approach and increasing the use of mentoring and coaching approaches.

Take a look in each of the “Look For” boxes in the HPT Level Up Table on Page 197 to see the indicators signifying the need to adjust your leadership approach. Getting the timing right creates a powerful catalyst to boost teams to higher performance levels.

## Executive Juggling: Levelling Up Multiple Teams

HPT Level	Team Characteristics: Observation & Feedback	Leadership Strategy To Level Up	Approach as Manager:	Approach as Mentor:	Approach as Coach:
Level 4 HPT Advance Teams	<p><b>Look For: Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p>Skilled use of feedback framework, full team level participation. Reciprocal feedback, follow-up support and engagement with peer experts.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Stretch</b></p> <p>Jointly set stretch goals &amp; resource accordingly. Seek frank and fearless feedback &amp; model growth mindset.</p>	<p><b>Lower Frequency</b></p> <p>Line management monthly. Accountability reports each month to show evidence of progress and use of pooled expertise to solve issues.</p>	<p><b>Moderate Frequency</b></p> <p>Four parts challenge, to five parts support. Mentoring guided by team needs and requests. Provide senior mentor. Use as a peer buddy to another team. Mentor assists connection to local level links with other schools.</p>	<p><b>Higher Frequency</b></p> <p>Moderate insight so coach may need to prompt more (known unknowns). Focus on interpersonal areas and mindset. Coaching topics shaped by team and school priorities. Use of 360 degree assessment tools.</p>

Missing these important ‘Look For’ indicators and getting it wrong creates a ‘glass ceiling’ – inadvertently blocking team growth and if not addressed over the longer-term will foster a sense of ‘learned helplessness’ as the team habituates to a leader unable (or unwilling) to empower their team to work at the highest levels. For example, if a leader continues to only manage a team, the team will wait for approval and permissions for even the smallest initiative, resulting in a lack of ownership by the team. This eventually leads to disengagement and disempowerment of the team members. If a leader stops at the mentoring approach, the team will become dependent on the advice of the leader. However, if a leader uses a combined approach – adjusting correctly as the team Levels Up, they will go beyond mentorship towards coaching, and the team will be empowered to use their own initiative and energy to drive the improvement agenda and be accountable for their own results.

### Passages: On-Boarding New Team Members To Match Level

It is also important to point out how critical the ‘on-boarding’ process is for new team members – especially in teams working at higher levels of performance. For example, if you have a Level 4 or 5 team and new members join, you as the leader will need to provide a very strong induction/‘on-boarding’

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process into the team's 'agreed ways of working' and provide short-term individualised 'managing' and 'mentoring' to quickly bring them up to speed so the full team can continue performing at the highest levels. Failure to properly 'on-board' new team members can drag the team backwards to lower levels of performance – this is far too common and the team leader is directly responsible for preventing this from happening.

## **Bringing It Together**

Building a culture of feedback throughout an organisation such as a large school is one of the 'holy grails' of all school leaders. However, a 'one size fits all' leadership approach across the organisation will not work as teams function at different levels of performance and have different needs. Thus, your approach to transformation must be differentiated to 'match' each team's level and needs. By developing a differentiated leadership approach to match each team's level and needs AND observing the 'Look Fors' showing you when you need to adjust your approach you can fast-track transformation and in doing so maximise the performance of each and every team!

# Chapter 14

## Quality: The Elephant in The Room

*“The manner of your speaking is just as important as the matter, as more people have ears to be tickled than understandings to judge”*

– Lord Chesterfield

*“My concern isn’t their sole reliance on managing – indeed their team is so dysfunctional that to do anything else such as mentoring and coaching would be pointless in the current crisis... my concern is the quality of their managing – the way they speak to the team is very confrontational and quite disempowering...”*

As soon as these words left my mouth I immediately knew we had, in our endeavours to shine light onto the ‘right sizing’ argument, accidentally by-passed an even bigger (and more obvious) issue in the discussion on effective leadership. The old saying to ‘assume’ makes an ‘ass’ out of ‘u’ and ‘me’ was now a horrible self-fulfilling prophecy as I quickly back-tracked to address some important differentiators between healthy and unhealthy leadership communication.

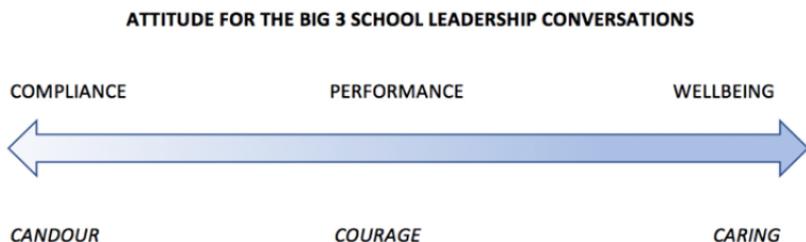
Whilst we now know how important it is to ‘right size’ your leadership approach to match the needs of a team in order to help them Level Up, there is none-the-less an elephant in the room that we need to address. The elephant in the room’s name is “Quality” – namely the quality of your approach as Manager, Mentor or Coach. As you can see in the quotation above, without understanding the issue of quality we can easily make the mistake of assuming that the antidote to a disempowering management approach is mentoring or coaching when in actual fact the approach may be right in the circumstance but rather the quality may be wrong.

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We all know that ‘bad management’ causes team dysfunction but could that also be true for ‘bad mentoring’ and ‘bad coaching’? How can we tell the difference between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ uses of leadership skills? How can we get started on HPT Leadership, not only right sizing our approach, but also making sure the quality of our approach meets the criteria of ‘good’ and is exempt from the criteria of ‘bad’? To answer these questions, I sat down with Nick Burnett, former Principal and thought leader on ‘change conversations,’ to find out.

### **Attitude and The Big 3 Conversations: Compliance, Performance & Wellbeing**

After 17 years working as a Principal and school leadership consultant Nick has identified the 3 big leadership conversations and the corresponding conversational attitude that all school leaders must master to be effective. Nick believes that a leader’s attitude is a crucial indicator of quality as it sets the tone and invariably predicts the impact and the subsequent effectiveness of the conversation.



At the bottom of the Attitude Towards Leading Conversations diagram above are the words CANDOUR – COURAGE – CARING. All of these aspects may be needed at any position along the continuum but I think they represent the core

elements of an effective leadership conversational approach. Caring to check-in with colleagues at a more general level as to how they are travelling; to the courage to having the full range of performance conversations; to the candour to have the compliance conversations in a way that adds value to the relationship. Having an attitude appropriate to the intent of the conversation is crucial. If the leader adopts a conversational tone more to the left of the continuum than is needed by the team, a corresponding decline in both quality and effectiveness is inevitable, leading to a negative impact on performance of the team overall.

## Quality Approaches to Managing, Mentoring and Coaching

### Managing: Effective Instruction vs Micro-Managing

In HPT Leadership, 'Managing' is defined as *'giving instruction and directing people to a solution'*. As you can easily imagine anyone can 'tell someone else what to do' BUT there is a big difference between ineffective (AKA micro-managing) and effective (AKA effective instruction) managing behaviours.



You can see in the Table on Page 214 the Quality Indicators or 'Look Fors' that distinguish high quality managing conversations (which clearly show the use of effective instructional techniques (Example)) from low quality managing conversations (which look more like dysfunctional micro-management (Non-Example)).

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### A Quality Approach to Managing: Effective Instruction vs Micro-Managing

Definition	Quality Indicators	Example (AKA Effective Instruction)	Non-Example (AKA Micro-Managing)
<b>Giving instruction and directing them to the solution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Permission to engage &amp; respectful/empathic tone</li> <li>2. Clear and concise statement of issue</li> <li>3. Clear and concise instruction &amp; direction</li> <li>4. Brief back – check for a consistent shared understanding</li> <li>5. Closure – respectful and empathic</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>John, I need to update you on next steps on 'task' – is now ok?... I've realised that we may need to change the way we are doing this...</i></li> <li>2. <i>There were four steps to the task and I think we need to change step 2...</i></li> <li>3. <i>We currently do X in step 2 and get Y outcome, but we need Y2 outcome. Let's try doing X2 instead next week and see if that gets Y2 outcome &amp; review at end of the week...</i></li> <li>4. <i>Let's make sure we're both on the same page going forwards – can you please give me a brief back on next steps... (open question)</i></li> <li>5. <i>Thanks so much – I appreciate your flexibility and responsiveness on this...</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>John, stop what you're doing now because you're doing it all wrong...</i></li> <li>2. <i>I needed you to do the task the way I told you so we'd get Y2 outcome but this isn't happening so we need to fix it!</i></li> <li>3. <i>Go back and check what you're doing and work out where you're wrong and fix it asap so we get Y2 outcomes from here on...</i></li> <li>4. <i>Do you understand what I'm asking? OR Are you OK to give it go? (closed question)</i></li> <li>5. <i>Let's hope you get it right next time...</i></li> </ol>

Leaders need to have a lot of 'Managing' conversations with Level 1 and Level 2 teams. In schools these conversations are often focused around performance and compliance. These could take the form of ensuring that agreed timeframes around planning and reporting were adhered to by the team, to having regular check-ins with some teams to model appropriate meeting norms, and to assist them in setting appropriate targets and learning intentions. In short, there is a fair degree of 'hand-holding' and modelling needed to be done in a respectful way. An example of this for Nick was around dealing with some resistance as to a move from personal pedagogical practices to an agreed whole school pedagogical practice, and also around the implementation of regular lesson observations.

During Nick's Principalship tenure, when working with lower performance teaching teams he would also regularly need to have managing conversations about staff having too low expectations of student achievement, which if using a quality approach would be very helpful in assisting teams to Level Up.

## Mentoring: Wise Old Owl vs F.I.G.J.A.M.

In HPT Leadership, ‘Mentoring’ is defined as *‘Providing the team with advice to co-construct a solution’*. As you can easily imagine anyone can ‘dole out advice’ BUT there is a big difference between ineffective (AKA

Quality Mentoring...



F.I.G.J.A.M. - F#\*k I'm Good Just Ask Me!) and effective (AKA Wise Old Owl) mentoring behaviours. You can see in the Table below the quality Indicators or ‘Look Fors’ that distinguish high quality Wise Old Owl style mentoring conversations (Example) from low quality F.I.G.J.A.M. style mentoring conversations (Non-Example).

**A Quality Approach to Mentoring: Wise Old Owl vs F.I.G.J.A.M.**

Definition	Quality Indicators	Example (AKA Wise Old Owl)	Non-Example (AKA F.I.G.J.A.M.)
<i>Providing them with advice to co-construct a solution</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As per Managing</li> <li>2. Clear and concise overview of query</li> <li>3. Advice sharing and collaborative discussion regarding next steps...</li> <li>4. &amp; 5 As per managing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>As per Managing</i></li> <li>2. <i>Lately I have been concerned about X. I'm not sure if we've got it right yet...</i></li> <li>3. <i>(3a) Based on my past experiences with X I have found... and would suggest ... what do you think...? (3b) I have checked out how others do X and found... I would suggest ... what do you think...? (3c) I spoke with an expert on X who suggested we try... which made sense to me... what do you think...?</i></li> <li>4. &amp; 5 <i>As per Managing</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>As per Managing</i></li> <li>2. <i>It is my expert opinion that X is not working out very well...</i></li> <li>3. <i>My advice to you is... (no context or qualification to advice) ... do you agree or disagree? (closed question)</i></li> <li>4. &amp; 5 <i>As per Managing</i></li> </ol>

Leaders need to primarily focus on ‘Mentoring’ conversations with Level 3 and Level 4 teams. In schools these conversations are often focused around student improvement, curriculum and assessment.

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These conversations might take the form of challenging current practices that are doing well at the moment but there is either room for improvement or there are changes on the horizon. This could be around the implementation of key initiatives in pedagogy or positive behaviour for learning. An example of this is the implementation of a structured teaching approach drawing on best practice from around the world in meeting student needs.

When working with high performance teaching teams Nick would regularly need to have mentoring conversations about topics where teaching teams thought they were doing a really good job but needed a ‘nudge’ to get to the next level.

### **Coaching: Curious Listener vs Chief Interrogator**

In HPT Leadership, ‘Coaching’ is defined as *‘Asking questions to help the team generate their own solution.’* Anyone can ‘ask questions’ BUT there is a big difference between ineffective and effective coaching questions. You

can see in the Table on Page 217 the quality Indicators or ‘Look Fors’ that distinguish high quality ‘curious listening’ coaching conversations (Example) from low quality ‘interrogation’ coaching conversations (Non-Example).



Leaders need to strategically use ‘Coaching’ conversations as a key driver of their communication with Level 4 and Level 5 teams. In schools these conversations are often focused around implementing individualised learning approaches

**A Quality Approach to Coaching: Curious Listener vs Chief Interrogator**

Definition	Quality Indicators	Example <i>(AKA Curious Listener)</i>	Non-Example <i>(AKA Chief Interrogator)</i>
<b>Asking questions to help them generate their own solution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As per Managing</li> <li>2. Clear and concise overview of concern</li> <li>3. Coaching Questions and discussion regarding next steps...</li> <li>4. &amp; 5 As per Managing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>As per Managing</i></li> <li>2. <i>I've been thinking about X and wondering what the next steps might be...</i></li> <li>3. <i>How do you think X is going...? What do you think we could do to improve...? What has worked well in the past for you...? What have you seen others do...? What would be some next steps we could take...?</i></li> <li>4. &amp; 5 <i>As per Managing</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>As per Managing</i></li> <li>2. <i>Why isn't X working properly?</i></li> <li>3. <i>Do you agree X isn't working? Who's to blame for X? How long has this been going on? Who will be responsible for fixing it?</i></li> <li>4. &amp; 5 <i>As per Managing</i></li> </ol>

or encouraging appropriate innovation in their teaching and learning.

An example of this is when there is a suggested change to current support practices for students with learning difficulties where the current model may be more one of withdrawing than supporting in the classroom. A High Performance teaching team responds well to coaching conversations with the appropriate level of support and challenge provided by a leader.

When working with the highest performance teaching teams Nick would have coaching conversations about what the team might do next to take their teaching to an even higher level and how they might work together to achieve this.

## Bringing It Together

As I now know, getting started with HPT Leadership is not just about 'right sizing' your approach to Manager, Mentor and Coach to help teams Level Up BUT also about making sure the 'quality' of your right sized approach is optimal. As you can see in the Table on Page 218 it is the combination of 'right sizing' and 'quality' that brings about success in helping teams Level Up.

## Level Up!

Low Quality Approach At Wrong Level	Disaster
Low Quality Approach At Right Level	Resistance
High Quality Approach At Wrong Level	Confusion
High Quality Approach At Right Level	Success

As Nick highlights, school leadership – in particular the challenges of managing multiple teaching teams and different performance levels – can be a very difficult task. In some of the most busy and demanding times it is completely understandable how well-intentioned school leaders can fall into the all too common traps of poor quality or wrong sized leadership approaches, which have a negative impact. However, with perseverance and practice, school leaders will quickly increase both the quality and accuracy of their approach to match team needs.

By getting the combination of right sizing effectively and using a high quality approach to your leadership skills, you will fast-track the team's growth on the journey to the highest levels of performance!

# Chapter 15

## Quickstart: Right Sizing Your Leadership

*“Leading High Performance Teams is about using right-sized AND high quality approaches to enable teams to Level Up!”*

– Pete Stebbins

When it comes to leading High Performance Teams, how do you know you’ve got it right? Obviously, it can’t be simply based on the team being ‘happy’ with your leadership. After all, ‘happy’ does not necessarily equal ‘healthy’ and the leader’s role is to help teams Level Up to become a higher performance team, which inevitably creates a degree of healthy tension. Just like the mild stretching of a rubber band – tight enough to feel the challenge and strain but not so tight that challenge becomes overwhelming nor the strain becomes stress.

How can you increase your self-confidence in your ability to ‘right size’ your leadership to match your team’s needs without constantly relying on their fluctuating opinions of you as a leader? How can ensure you are applying not only the correct ratios of Manager, Mentor and Coaching behaviours to each team according to their Level but also be able to explicitly demonstrate a ‘high quality’ approach to the ‘real world’ challenges each team is facing? How can you do this quickly and easily without necessarily having to engage in more formalised leadership assessment and development activities? (Which, by the way, we strongly recommend!).

As we have shown throughout this book we firmly believe in sharing what we have learned so that anyone can benefit – not just participants in High Performance Leadership and

## Level Up!

Team Programs. Because of this it became morally important for us to design and give away 'The Level Up Leadership Assessment Tool' so that anyone (and indeed everyone) in leadership can 'right size' their leadership approach to building High Performance Teams. Given you have just read about the importance of using a 'right sized approach' with the mix of leadership skills (Manager, Mentor and Coach) matching the team's HPT level AND ensuring that each skill is applied in a 'high quality' manner, it is an ideal time for you to spend a couple of minutes completing the Level Up Leadership Assessment Tool.

### **Let's Do It Now!**

Pages 222-225 provides a guide and pre-filled example of the Level Up Leadership Assessment Tool (you can also complete it online at [HPTschools.com](http://HPTschools.com)) followed by a blank copy that you can complete to identify your own skill and job satisfaction when engaging in the three key leadership disciplines (Manage, Mentor and Coach), and whether your current approach is matched to what your team needs to Level Up!

### **HPT Leadership Assessment**

- **Step 1:** The assessment firstly asks you to reflect on your own level of skill, and job satisfaction when engaged in the three key disciplines of leadership (Management, Mentoring, and Coaching). Read the items on Page 223 and circle the most appropriate responses.
- **Step 2:** Once you've completed the assessment, turn to page 224. Insert your scores from the assessment into Table 1 and calculate your overall leadership capability scores for Managing, Mentoring and Coaching.

- **Step 3:** In Table 2, highlight or circle the Team Level(s) that use ‘most often’ or ‘often’ your highest leadership capability score.

### ‘Right Sizing’ HPT Leadership Worksheet

- **Step 1:** Use the first Table on the ‘Right Sizing’ HPT Leadership Worksheet on Page 225 to identify and record your team’s HPT level.
- **Step 2:** Identify if your ‘Leadership capability’ (identified through completing the assessment) is a 100% perfect match, or requires some adjustment to suit your team’s level.
- **Step 3:** Select the ‘Recommended Use of Approach’ for each of the key leadership skills that lines up with your team’s level, then list relevant team development issues and the leadership behaviours needed to help stabilise the team at level, and then Level Up!

**ACTIVITY:** Complete the HPT Leadership Assessment Tool that follows and formulate a leadership plan to help your team Level Up!

## Example: Completed HPT Leadership Assessment (Also available at [www.hptschools.com](http://www.hptschools.com))



**HPT Leadership**  
MANAGE, MENTOR & COACH

### HPT Leadership Assessment

Page 8 Power Vision Page 1

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Circle the item below in the first column of your answers. Only your best answer should be marked.

**Question 1:** How many years of staff in your school have been promoted?

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

**Question 2:** How many years of staff in your school have been promoted in your district?

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

**Question 3:** How many years of staff in your school have been promoted in your district?

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

**Question 4:** How many years of staff in your school have been promoted in your district?

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

**Question 5:** How many years of staff in your school have been promoted in your district?

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8



**HPT Leadership**  
MANAGE, MENTOR & COACH

### Table 1. Your HPT Leadership Dependency Score

**INSTRUCTIONS:** 1. Circle your best answer for each of the four questions. 2. Add the scores for each of the four questions to get your total score.

Question	1	2	3	4
1	4	2	4	3
2	3	4	4	3
3	3	4	4	3
4	3	4	4	3

**Total Score: 30**

**Table 2. HPT Team Levels: Your Leadership Counting Zone**

Category	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Coaching	1	1	1	1
Mentoring	1	1	1	1
Managing	1	1	1	1



**HPT Leadership**  
MANAGE, MENTOR & COACH

### Right Sizing: HPT Leadership Worksheet

Page 1

**Step 1. Add Your Team Levels (1-5)** 3

Category	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Coaching	1	1	1	1
Mentoring	1	1	1	1
Managing	1	1	1	1

**Step 2. Review Your HPT Leadership Inventory in My Team Profile Worksheet**

**Step 3. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 4. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 5. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 6. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 7. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 8. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 9. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 10. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 11. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 12. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 13. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 14. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 15. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 16. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 17. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 18. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 19. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 20. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 21. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 22. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 23. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 24. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 25. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 26. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 27. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 28. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 29. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**

**Step 30. My Right Sized Leadership Approach: Team Profile Exercise**



# HPT Leadership

MANAGE, MENTOR & COACH

## HPT Leadership Assessment

- Pen & Paper Version- Page 1

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Circle the items below as they best relate to you.

**Managing:** *Giving your team clear instruction and directing them to a solution*

SKILL: Rate your level of skill in giving your team clear instruction (managing)	Points
a) Very High Ability	5
b) High Ability	4
c) Moderate Ability	3
d) Low Ability	2
e) Very Low Ability	1

WILL: Rate your level of job satisfaction when giving your team clear instruction (managing)	Points
a) Very High Satisfaction	5
b) High Satisfaction	4
c) Moderate Satisfaction	3
d) Low Satisfaction	2
e) Very Low Satisfaction	1

**Mentoring:** *Providing your team with helpful advice to co-construct a solution*

SKILL: Rate your level of skill in providing helpful advice to your team (mentoring)	Points
a) Very High Ability	5
b) High Ability	4
c) Moderate Ability	3
d) Low Ability	2
e) Very Low Ability	1

WILL: Rate your level of job satisfaction in providing helpful advice to your team (mentoring)	Points
a) Very High Satisfaction	5
b) High Satisfaction	4
c) Moderate Satisfaction	3
d) Low Satisfaction	2
e) Very Low Satisfaction	1

**Coaching:** *Asking your team effective questions to enable them to generate their own solution*

SKILL: Rate your level of skill in asking your team effective questions (coaching)	Points
a) Very High Ability	5
b) High Ability	4
c) Moderate Ability	3
d) Low Ability	2
e) Very Low Ability	1

WILL: Rate your level of job satisfaction in asking your team effective questions (coaching)	Points
a) Very High Satisfaction	5
b) High Satisfaction	4
c) Moderate Satisfaction	3
d) Low Satisfaction	2
e) Very Low Satisfaction	1



# HPT Leadership

## MANAGE, MENTOR & COACH

- Page 2 -

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Insert your scores from the assessment in Table and calculate your Capability Scores.
2. In Table 2, highlight/ circle the Team Level/s that use 'most often' or 'often' your highest capability score.

Table 1. Your HPT Leadership Capability Scores

	Managing	Mentoring	Coaching
	<i>Giving your team clear instruction and directing them to a solution</i>	<i>Providing your team with helpful advice to co-construct a solution</i>	<i>Asking your team effective questions to enable them to generate their own solution</i>
Ability (Skill)			
Satisfaction (Will)			
Capability*			

\*Your Capability = the Average of your Skill and Will. Your strongest Capability is highlighted

Table 2. HPT Team Levels: Your Leadership Comfort Zone

Leadership Approach	HPT Level				
	Level 1 Dysfunctional	Level 2 Functional	Level 3 High Perf.	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Elite
Managing	Most Often	Often	Regularly	Intermittently	Infrequently
Mentoring	Infrequently	Regularly	Most Often	Often	Intermittently
Coaching	Infrequently	Intermittently	Regularly	Often	Most Often
Overall Strategy	<b>Behaviours</b> Set clear expectations around roles & behaviours & manage consequences.	<b>Lead by Example</b> Implement team systems & role model High Performance Teams 4 KPI disciplines.	<b>Reward &amp; Encourage</b> Data Wall Conversations on KPIs for innovation & invest in professional development.	<b>Sustainable Stretch</b> Jointly set Stretch Goals & resource accordingly. Seek frank & fearless feedback & model growth mindset.	<b>Clear a Path</b> Challenge & unleash team on biggest corporate challenges (BHAGs) & give frank & fearless feedback



## 'Right Sizing' HPT Leadership Worksheet

- Page 3 -

Step 1: Rate Your Team Level (1 - 5) \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Team Characteristics</u>	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Focus	Destructive	Constructive	Collaborative	Strategic	Leverage
Drivers	Distrust	Acceptance	Understanding	Growth	Legacy
Challenge	Structures	Systems	Improving	Stretching	Super-Stretch
<u>Approach Type</u>					
> Manage	Most Often	Often	Regularly	Intermittently	Infrequently
> Mentor	Infrequently	Regularly	Most often	Often	Intermittently
> Coach	Infrequently	Intermittently	Regularly	Often	Most Often

Step 2. Perfect Match? My Leadership Capability vs. My Team Profile

(select)

100% Perfect Match!

Some Adjustment Needed...

Step 3. My 'Right Sized' Leadership Approach: Team Specific Examples

Leadership Approach	Recommended Use of Approach	Approach Specific Team Leadership Examples...
<b>Manage</b> (Giving your team clear instruction and directing them to a solution)	<input type="checkbox"/> Infrequently <input type="checkbox"/> Intermittently <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Most Often	<i>Team Specific Issues (list) &amp; My Management Approach (describe) ...</i>
<b>Mentor</b> (Providing your team with helpful advice to co-construct a solution)	<input type="checkbox"/> Infrequently <input type="checkbox"/> Intermittently <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Most Often	<i>Team Specific Issues (list) &amp; My Mentoring Approach (describe) ...</i>
<b>Coach</b> (Asking your team effective questions to enable them to generate their own solution)	<input type="checkbox"/> Infrequently <input type="checkbox"/> Intermittently <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Most Often	<i>Team Specific Issues (list) &amp; My Coaching Approach (describe) ...</i>

# Part 4:

## Level Up Leadership:

### A Right-sized Approach

#### **1 Page Action Plan**

Topic	Key Learnings	Takeaway Messages	Actions/Next Steps
Team Leadership 101: Psychological Safety & Job Satisfaction			
Right-Sizing: The Secrets to Success			
Executive Juggling: Levelling Up Multiple Team			
Quality: The Elephant in The Room			
Right Sizing Your Leadership: The Level Up Leadership Assessment			

# Afterword

## High Performance Teams Into The Future

*“In the long history of humankind those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.”*

- Charles Darwin

The main purpose of writing ‘Level Up: Building The Highest Performance Teams’ was to share the most important lessons we have learned about maximising team performance in a practical way that all teams and leaders could easily understand and immediately apply into their own organisational context. In concluding this book, I wanted to share with you a final thought about the role of High Performance Teams in the future world of work.

Building the Highest Performance Teams is within the reach of anyone willing to put in the effort and apply themselves to mastering the 4 KPIs of High Performance Teams. All Teams can Level Up to reach Level 5 by pursuing two over-arching team development strategies: (1) increasing the range and clarity of their vision and goals as well as (2) deepening the quality of their feedback and sharing knowledge to promote sustainable succession.

However, as simple as it may be to understand these two over-arching team development strategies, the application of these strategies, firstly in relation to (1) ‘increasing the range and clarity of vision and goals’, is increasingly complicated by the rapidly changing world that surrounds us. The world of work is changing much faster than most people realise, and the range

## Level Up!

for which teams can usefully envision their future operating state is decreasing in parallel to the speed in which advances in technology, automation and globalisation is increasing. Indeed, in the context of this next industrial revolution, the lowering of trade barriers, along with the daily advances made in technology, are leading to the death of the traditional '9-5' job and a world where soon 40% of all work roles will become redundant within the next decade.

*"We can only see a short distance ahead, but we can see plenty there that needs to be done."*

- Alan Turing

The famous quote attributed to Charles Darwin: *It is not the strongest of the species that survives, but rather those that are most adaptable to change.*" is an oracle of the future for High Performance Teams where their clarity of vision must be continuously adjusted as pace of change accelerates. This is why the focus of team vision is around a 1-5 year window rather than 5-10+ years, as well as why High Performance Teams revisit vision at regular intervals as opposed to a one-off set and forget strategy.

*"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."*

- Alvin Tofler

The rapidly changing world of work not only impacts (1) the range and clarity of vision but also (2) the quality of *'feedback and knowledge sharing'* as many teams need to unlearn and relearn in much faster cycles as new ways of working evolve. This creates a complex and demanding learning and feedback cycle and High Performance Teams have both high level communication skills, and an ability to pace the learning journey in order to prevent conflict and burnout.

It is for these reasons that the survival of organisations in the future almost entirely depends on High Performance Teams and the individual and collective efforts of team members and leaders who are all striving to maximise performance and build a positive and lasting legacy. The time is now for all of us to take the next steps to Level Up our own performance in the teams we belong to and in the organisations we lead!

# Bonus Chapter.

## Keeping All The Plates Spinning

*“Working ‘IN’ the team and ‘ON’ the team is the  
fast-track to success.”*

- Pete Stebbins

# Bonus Chapter

## Keeping All The Plates Spinning...

*Most entrepreneurs fail because you are working IN your business rather than ON your business.*

- Michael Gerber

*I struggle to keep it all organized because everything can become important and, when you have so many spinning plates, they sometimes can cancel each other out because you lose track of everything.*

- Drew Barrymore

Teams levelling up to higher performance in large organisations have a lot in common with entrepreneurs who run small start-up companies. Not just the obvious things such as clarity of vision, stretch goals and close working relationships but also another more difficult, and somewhat hidden challenge, namely the need to work simultaneously both ‘in’ the business AND ‘on’ the business; OR ‘in’ the team AND ‘on’ the team.

An entrepreneurs ability to work both in and on a business effectively is the single most important determinant of their long-term success – and needless to say this is not easy. In fact, the majority of start-up businesses fail (75%) within the first few years due to this very problem. The failure or delay of teams Levelling Up is a similar story. Many teams struggle with simply getting through the daily hassles experienced in the team leaving no spare time or energy to work on the team and stretch and grow their capability.

## Level Up!

Levelling Up to become a Higher Performance Team requires you to keep many plates spinning all at once and under the pressure of everyday life it is all too common for a plate to fall and break.... unless we create a safety net to prevent such accidents occurring. How do we find a way to simplify the complex and challenging journey of “working on the team whilst being in the team” – in effect, how do we find an easier way to keep all the plates spinning?

One of the best answers I have seen and used over many years revolves around: (1) completing a regular HPT Update Tool that has pre-determined sections to complete, covering the full range of responsibilities both for the team and the wider organisation; and (2) engaging in a regular communication cycle to share relevant parts of the Update Tool with the team and with other leaders to give and receive direction and feedback in maximising individual, team and organisational performance. Let’s unpack this further now:

### **1. The HPT Update Tool**

Update Tools in business and industry have been around for a very long time. Simple templated checklist style forms that cover a range of relevant topics and applicable rating scales provide a ‘dashboard’ view of your various responsibilities, goals and forward actions. By completing ALL sections of the update tool you can be confident you have examined the full range of topics and areas of responsibility relevant to your role. Thus, you can not only be more self-confident in your knowledge of the current status of all relevant issues, but also identify areas requiring further follow-up and feedback in the subsequent communication and feedback cycle.



"Working 'IN' the team and 'ON' the team is the fast-track to success"  
Pete Stebbins

# HPT Monthly Update Tool

## Key Relationships

Who will we make time for in the next 30 Days? (Staff, Students, Parents etc.)

Who	Sched	Comp
PBV TEAM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STUDENT = END LEADERS = YR. ACT.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Action Plan Update (12-month plan)

On Track	Off Track	Action
READING	PBV	
PLC/INQUIRY	ATTENDANCE	Managing curriculum changes
STEM	STAFFING	
P + C		staff wellbeing + workload
NAI/AN		Ineffective classroom observation
		student attendance (parents)

## Hot Issues

Issue	Action
Managing curriculum changes	
staff wellbeing + workload	
Ineffective classroom observation	
student attendance (parents)	

## Work/Life & Wellbeing

On Track	Off Track
Family time	Exercise
Hobbies	Healthy food
Yoga	Sleep
Screen time	
Relationship	

HPT Level	Work	Home	Childcare	Childcare	Childcare
Level 1 (Newly Qualified)	50% (Challenged)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)
Level 2 (Established)	50% (Challenged)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)
Level 3 (Expert)	50% (Challenged)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)	50% (Supported)



Date: 17 October  
Name: SUSAN SMITH  
Data Wall:  Up-to-date  Needs Updating

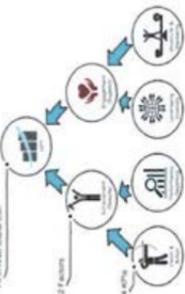
Stretch Goals In Focus

- 100% consistency with PBV
- 100% green data on wellbeing pulse

One Word Barometer: PULSED

Open: RUSHED! Close:

High Performance Teams  
P4 to AAO (Blossom Cup)



## HPT Team Development Check In (Level Up)

Describe the Issue

Impact on Team

Action to Take

HPT Leadership ("Right Thing" +30 Days)  
Upside: Who Downsides: Who

Team Successes	Team Challenges	Team Successes	Team Challenges	Team Achievement	Team Engagement
-30 days	+30 days	-30 days	+30 days	All comets using reading program + C sign-off	
-30 days	+30 days	-30 days	+30 days	School values Behaviour tickets + PBV non-compliance	
-30 days	+30 days	-30 days	+30 days	Workload, attendance + behaviour issues above + below line agreed to by staff	
-30 days	+30 days	-30 days	+30 days	Team profile staff sickness + ongoing workload	
-30 days	+30 days	-30 days	+30 days	End of year prep extra-curricular	
Key schedule delivered on AIP	Clarity of forward vision + values	Teacher stress, planning + conflict	Reduced face time with teaching staff	Confirm protocols on data wall	Alert staff to put up on data wall
Develop morning communication plan	Confirm protocols on data wall	Workload, attendance + behaviour issues above + below line agreed to by staff	Team profile staff sickness + ongoing workload	Personal thanks + recognising consider	Thank you / face to admin sharing time
Co-attend all PBV + year level meetings	NEW senior teacher at level 1	NEW senior teacher at level 1	NEW senior teacher at level 1	Co-construct a solution	Co-construct a solution
Managing your team with advice to co-construct a solution	Monitoring your team with advice to co-construct a solution	Coaching your team with questions to enable them to generate their own solution	Coaching your team with questions to enable them to generate their own solution	Grade 3 PLC doing well	Grade 3 PLC doing well
Managing your team with advice to co-construct a solution	Monitoring your team with advice to co-construct a solution	Coaching your team with questions to enable them to generate their own solution	Coaching your team with questions to enable them to generate their own solution	Grade 3 PLC doing well	Grade 3 PLC doing well
Managing your team with advice to co-construct a solution	Monitoring your team with advice to co-construct a solution	Coaching your team with questions to enable them to generate their own solution	Coaching your team with questions to enable them to generate their own solution	Grade 3 PLC doing well	Grade 3 PLC doing well

## Level Up!

The HPT Update Tool is completed on a monthly basis and covers the full range of issues that High Performance Teams need to examine, as well as addressing other relevant personal and organisational issues. As you can see in the example HPT Update Tool, there are a range of different topics covered that primarily focus on the 4 KPIs of team Achievement and Engagement as well as focusing on personal wellbeing and wider organisational issues and leadership strategy.

The examples in the completed form are based on a de-identified school principal. You can see how the Update Tool enables the principal of a very large and complex school to focus their attention on key strategic issues, recognise hot operational issues requiring a proactive response and celebrate recent successes as well as plan ahead for emerging challenges in the month ahead. With the HPT Update Tool completed on a regular basis, you can be self-assured you are maintaining a holistic focus despite the day-to-day crises and distractions and also track your progress from month-to-month as goals are achieved and successes are celebrated!

## 2. The Communication and Feedback Cycle

Completing the Update Tool and gaining personal satisfaction and an increased sense of focus is just the beginning. The next steps in the process are about using the Update Tool as a basis to communicate to your three main audiences:

1. **Your Team** – Sharing the relevant sections of the Update Tool and seeking input and feedback –



particularly around the 30-day check-in – is a great way to get the team to identify other successes and challenges and bring a unified performance focus to the team. The team may also have ideas around relevant hot issues.

- 2. Your Coach** – the Update Tool is the perfect primer for individual and group coaching sessions and all sections should be addressed in HPT focused coaching sessions – with extended time devoted to hot issues and leadership right-sizing goals as well as focus on any wellbeing needs that are ‘off track’.
- 3. Your Leader** – Effectively managing upwards is made so much easier when you’ve completed your update tool and can share your operational and strategic snapshot and forward leadership focus with your boss! They can then be both re-assured by your thorough understanding and provide additional input and direction to maximise both the efficiency and effectiveness of your leadership workload!

### **Bringing It All Together**

The High Performance Teams journey requires you to work in the team and on the team simultaneously. Akin to keeping many plates spinning all at once. Under the pressure of everyday life, it is all too common for a plate to fall and break.... unless we create a safety net to prevent such accidents occurring. One of the best ways to simplify the complex and challenging journey of “working in the team and on the team” is to regularly complete the HPT Update Tool and engage in an effective communication and feedback cycle with your team and other important stakeholders.

## Level Up!

Using the HPT Update Tool as a primer for communication and feedback cycles with teams (remembering that organisations and teams are continually evolving and changing) is a critical success factor in Levelling Up to higher team performance! Start now! Take some time to complete the HPT Update Tool yourself and use it as a basis for more strategic communication to fast-track the journey to higher performance!

# Next Steps:

Working with Dr Pete and High  
Performance Schools



Contact Pete's Office  
E: [admin@HPTschools.com](mailto:admin@HPTschools.com)  
Call: +61 408 107 586

Level Up!

**Dr Pete Stebbins, PhD is Australia's leading expert on High Performance Teams in Education.**

Pete is seriously passionate about helping teams develop higher levels of performance by “Fitting In” together through engaging at a deeper level AND “Standing Out” together by achieving extraordinary results! With a PhD thesis examining chronic stress and burnout, Pete is also deeply interested in wellbeing and resilience – helping leaders ‘right size’ their approach to promote sustainable High Performance Teams over the long-term.

Pete has more than 20 years experience working as a psychologist, initially in mental health hospitals, welfare services and clinical private practice before building a large corporate consulting practice specialising in employee wellbeing and organisational change. After exiting the business and relocating with his family for a sea change, Pete couldn't resist the opportunity to pursue further research on High Performance Teams undertaking a massive (and ongoing) transformation project in public sector education known as ‘High Performance Schools’.

Pete is an active and enthusiastic facilitator of development programs, keynote speaker, guest psychologist on Channel 7, executive coach and consultant. Pete is also a published researcher and author of a range of books on organisational transformation, resilience and leadership including the Australian best seller “iTeams: Why High Performance Teams ‘Fit In’ AND ‘Stand Out’ with over 5000 copies sold.

Pete is a dedicated family man and soul surfer with an adventurous streak who is passionate about life and living. He lives in an old converted milk depot on the southern Gold Coast and spends as much time as possible at the beach whilst juggling his tribe of 5 daughters and busy work schedule.



**3**  
Years

**938**  
Leaders

**179**  
Schools

**4554**  
Staff

## Building High Performance Teams in Education

Our Mission:

*Every Team in Every School is a High Performance Team!*

### Transform Your School with HPT!

Professional Development Workshops



Team Development Programs



Workplace Trainer Program

**Starter: Participate in PD Sessions & DIY Activities** Run one of the 10 HPT staff PD sessions in your school, watch our YouTube videos, or read one of the HPT books.

**Intermediate: HPT Team Development Programs.** 6-12 month team development programs combining workshops, coaching and action research to maximise team performance.

**Advanced: HPTcoach Workplace Trainer** is a 2-day certification level course for Team Leaders to be able to implement 6 key modules of the HPT program both within their teams and across the wider organisation.



#### HPT Level Up HPT Leadership Coaching:

Individual and group coaching is available for school leaders at every stage of the HPT journey.

Coaching fast-tracks school success by supporting school leaders in 'Right Sizing' their approach to enable each and every team to Level Up to higher performance!

**Find out more: [www.HPTschools.com](http://www.HPTschools.com)**