

# 10 Tips for Improving Teamwork in the Workplace



In any workplace, forming a strong team to work together to achieve a common vision, project or goal is a huge advantage.

**If you're a team leader, or manage a team, here are 10 ways you can improve teamwork in your workplace:**

1. **Act as a guide:** Every team needs a great leader who's willing to guide the team in working and making decisions collaboratively. The team leader must also be committed to reaching the team's goals and have strong communication skills to be able to share their passion and vision for success.
2. **Make every team member feel valued:** Success as a team can only come when each team member is aware of the importance of their role in the team's success. Involve all team members by sharing any available information relevant to the goal/project and any deadlines. Assign them with responsibility for specific goals/outcomes and reward all members of the team for achieving them.
3. **Set increasingly challenging team-based goals:** Each time the team reaches a goal, set a more challenging goal for them to achieve to encourage team members to stretch themselves and learn from and build on their previous successes. Recognise the team for meeting the challenge and openly discuss how their team effort led their achieving the goal.
4. **Incorporate team-based problem solving into staff meetings:** At each team meeting ask every team member to share a project or task they might feel stuck on, or challenged by, and request that other team members give feedback, provide some mentoring and share their ideas to help resolve the dilemma or impasse. Encourage team brainstorming of solutions.
5. **Facilitate conversation, idea-sharing and team brainstorming:** Where possible, set up work areas where team members can get together to easily share ideas, brainstorm or discuss progress on goals/projects. Open office environments don't always work, so this might mean allocating certain rooms, or even outdoor spaces in the workplace, where team members can work together.
6. **Encourage teamwork on projects:** Develop a protocol that requires team members to work together on projects. For example, before any important document or plan is finalised, ensure that more than one team member has been responsible for creating, reviewing and giving their feedback on it.
7. **Discuss team dynamics on a regular basis:** Encourage open communication in team meetings about the team dynamic - for example, talk specifically about what's working well and what could work better. Use this as an opportunity for team members to discuss how they can work more effectively as a team, but never to whinge or criticise one another in front of other team members. Also encourage conversations reflecting on what has enabled positive achievements as a team.
8. **Welcome comments, questions and suggestions from all team members:** Great ideas and improvements can come as a result of asking what might seem to be 'dumb' questions or looking at a situation from a completely different perspective. Be open to and encourage input from every team member. Be supportive of new ideas and, as a team, work through all ideas and weed out any that won't work.



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9. **Provide ongoing coaching, training and mentoring opportunities and support to team members:** Giving team members ongoing learning opportunities and building both individuals' skills and team skills encourages people to grow and stretch their capabilities. Assign mentors where possible to team members and encourage leaders and managers to develop coaching skills to use within their teams. Or, hire an external professional coach to work with the team leaders, managers, or individual team members, to further develop specific competencies.
10. **Recognise and reward good teamwork:** Look for ways to acknowledge and consistently reward good teamwork. Also be quick to discipline any team member who engages in gossiping about, bullying, or back-stabbing other team members. Let it be known that your organisation will not condone any negative interpersonal behaviour.

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