# Team Functioning Check

*Companion to "Where Your Team Actually Breaks"*

15 MINUTES, ALONE OR WITH THE TEAM

## HOW TO USE THIS SHEET

1. Think of your team on a normal week, not the best one and not the worst.
2. Read each statement and tick one box: 3 if it is true most of the time, 2 sometimes, 1 almost never. One tick per line.
3. When all fifteen are done, go to the end of the sheet: the statements add up into five layers. On the web page and in Acrobat the counts are made for you; on paper, the end of the sheet shows which lines to add.
4. Read what the counts mean and start with the lowest layer closest to trust.

| | HOW TRUE IS THIS OF MY TEAM? | 3 most of the time | 2 sometimes | 1 almost never |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | We admit mistakes to each other without dressing them up. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 2 | In meetings, we disagree openly about the things that matter. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 3 | We leave meetings knowing what was decided, and we act on it. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 4 | We tell a colleague directly when their work or behaviour is off track. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 5 | We judge a good month by what the team achieved, not by who shone. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 6 | We say out loud where we need help or still have things to learn. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 7 | Our meetings are lively and useful, not dull and not hostile. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 8 | Once a decision is made, people back it, including those who argued against it. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 9 | When someone lets the team down, it gets named, not quietly absorbed. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 10 | We give up some of our own resources or time when the team needs it. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 11 | We apologise quickly when one of us says or does something unfair. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 12 | The hardest topics get time in our meetings, not the safest ones. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 13 | Everyone knows what the others are working on and how it fits the whole. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 14 | Keeping a promise to a colleague matters as much as keeping one to the boss. | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 15 | We are quicker to credit each other than ourselves. | ○ | ○ | ○ |

## YOUR COUNT

For each layer, add the three numbers you ticked on its statements (listed below). Each layer scores between 3 and 9.

| TRUST | HEALTHY CONFLICT | COMMITMENT | ACCOUNTABILITY | RESULTS FOCUS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

## WHAT EACH LAYER COUNT MEANS

8 or 9: Not a problem. This layer holds. Protect it: it can erode quietly when the team changes or comes under pressure.

6 or 7: Worth watching. It works some of the time. Notice when it slips: under pressure, with a new member, around one particular topic.

3 to 5: Start here. This layer is holding the others back. If more than one layer is this low, start with the one closest to trust.

### THE FIVE LAYERS, FROM THE BASE UP

Trust: Statements 1, 6 and 11. People admit mistakes, ask for help and can be seen before they are sure. Everything else rests on this layer.

Healthy conflict: Statements 2, 7 and 12. The real issues get argued in the room, respectfully, rather than avoided or taken outside.

Commitment: Statements 3, 8 and 13. People leave meetings behind the decision, including the ones they argued against.

Accountability: Statements 4, 9 and 14. Team members call each other on what is off track, directly, not to you or behind backs.

Results focus: Statements 5, 10 and 15. Success is measured by what the team achieves together, not by who shines.

The layers stack: trust at the base, results at the top. A problem higher up often grows from a weak layer below it, so a team low on trust and high on results is running on borrowed time.

Pick one move at your weakest layer for your next meeting. Trust: name one of your own current struggles first. Conflict: put the issue everyone avoids on the agenda. Commitment: end with the decision and ask each person if they are behind it. Accountability: agree together on what off track looks like and who says so. Results: replace one vague goal with a visible measure.

OUR LOWEST LAYER

THE ONE MOVE I WILL TRY, AND WHEN