The Secrets of Outstanding Teams:
How Successful Teams Achieve Exceptional Results
By Nancy MacKay, Ph.D

Adapted from the book: The Talent Advantage: How to Attract and Retain the Best and the Brightest by coauthors Dr. Alan Weiss and Dr. Nancy MacKay, published by Wiley.

Outstanding teams deliver extraordinary results by attracting, retaining and developing top talent. Building an outstanding team is a vital leadership activity to enable you to accelerate business results.

The following 10 strategies reveal the secrets of how successful teams achieve exceptional results.

1. **Build team trust.** <u>Self-trust</u> involves: honesty; stop making assumptions; don't take things personally; and do the best you can. <u>Team trust</u> involves: straight talk; show respect; share information; apologize; give credit to others; deliver results; improve skills; face tough issues; clarify expectations; practice accountability; listen first; keep commitments; and extend trust. <u>Trust busters</u> involve: stonewall; defend; blame; sarcasm and mockery.

    Action Item: The only way to build trust is to spend time together as a team doing formal and informal activities to get to know each other personally and professionally.

2. **Create team candour.** Everyone has a valid point of view. However, most people are reluctant to share their point of view in a group for fear of being "bopped on the head".

    Action Item: Listen 80% of the time and acknowledge all points of view before making a decision. Praise candour publicly to foster and encourage more candour.

3. **Minimize ego-talk and maximize compassion.** <u>Ego-talk</u> involves: being judgmental; looking good; blame game; avoid/control freak; and right/wrong. <u>Compassion</u> involves getting off your "high-horse" and having a mind-set of everyone is doing the best they can.

    Action Item: Be an exemplar for minimizing ego-talk and maximizing compassion towards your board, customers, employees and all stakeholder groups.

4. **Master emotions.** Happiness and optimism are two vital emotions that motivate and inspire the people around you. Anger and frustration are negative emotions that kill trust and candour.

    Action Item: Spend 80% of your time in positive emotions by; becoming self-aware of your negative emotions; changing your physiology and reframing situations when you are in a negative emotional state. Do not interact with another human being when you are in a negative emotional state.

MacKay&Associates
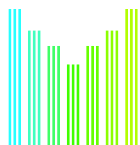
5. **Master decision-making effectiveness.** There are five <u>decision-making styles</u> available for your use in any given situation: autocratic; distance; consultative; collaborative and consensus.

   Action Item: Clarify who has the D? Consider time available, information available, developing people and commitment required in choosing which style to use.

6. **Master meeting effectiveness.** <u>Effective meetings</u> involve: achieving ideal outcomes; involving the right people; allowing people to influence and holding people accountable for results.

   Action Item: Follow up and hold people accountable for results without playing the blame game.

7. **Foster healthy conflict.** <u>Healthy conflict</u> involves achieving objectives using the best alternative and preserving relationship trust.

   Action Item: To resolve 90% of conflicts: Clarify who has the D? And, get agreement on objectives first before getting agreement on alternatives.

8. **Attract, retain and develop top talent.** <u>Top talent</u> involves: passion, competence and extraordinary results.

   Action Item: Feedback is a gift. If each person has the right skills, behaviours and experience, the team will achieve exceptional results.

9. **Break down silos.** <u>Six human motivators</u> involve: connection; variety; certainty; learning and growth; contribution; and significance.

   Action Item: Clarify expectations and roles related to results and behaviours. Use six human motivators to accelerate silo busting.

10. **Hold people accountable for results and behaviours.** <u>Accountability</u> is a motivating force to keep people moving forward.

    Action Item: Accountability is judgment-free. There is no blame game. Ask questions such as: What worked? What didn't work? How would you do it differently? What's next?