Team Ground Rules + Norms
Leading Hybrid Teams Tip Sheet

WHY THIS MATTERS

When everyone understands expectations about how team members interact and how work is accomplished, people can better contribute and do their best work. This frees the team to devote their energy to meaningful work and priorities. Assuming everyone understands the implicit rules can lead to harm, ineffectiveness, and poor decisions.

WHAT ARE THEY?

Ground rules are shared expectations for how individuals will behave and interact within the team. Norms are shared expectations for how a team functions. Identifying team ground rules and norms supports inclusion, invites diverse perspectives, supports psychological safety, and describes and creates the environment where people want to work.

ESTABLISHING GROUND RULES + TEAM NORMS

Begin your team’s brainstorming process by using these questions, and encourage your team to create their own:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ground Rules</th>
<th>Team Norms</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity + Respect</td>
<td>Meetings + Decision Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do we show respect and caring for each other, especially in challenging situations?</td>
<td>How will we approach meeting design execution, and the decision process? Who will be involved?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will we enable everyone to contribute their creativity and foster innovation?</td>
<td>How will we share information? What information will be shared and how often?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness + Communication</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will we share information and openly communicate?</td>
<td>How will we approach challenges when they arise?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will we provide information to help individuals and the team grow?</td>
<td>How will we ensure private/confidential matters are protected?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roles + Responsibilities</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible, accountable, consulted, informed (RACI)?</td>
<td>How will team members and successes be recognized and celebrated?</td>
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HOW TO DEVELOP GROUND RULES + TEAM NORMS

1. Set the Stage | When you develop ground rules and norms with your team, start with the ‘why’ to set the stage. Establish an understanding about how team ground rules and norms will support inclusion, positive team interaction, effectiveness, and wellbeing.

2. Involve Everyone and Ask for a Commitment | Develop the ground rules and norms together with your team to uncover what is important to everyone. A collaborative approach will ensure everyone has the opportunity to share their perspectives, and will increase a sense of personal ownership and accountability. As a team, select those everyone can agree to and ask for commitment from the team to implement. Document the rules and norms, share the document with everyone on the team, and revisit often (especially if team members change).

3. Hold Everyone Accountable | Together as a team, discuss everyone will be held accountable. We all forget things sometimes or occasionally act in uncharacteristic ways. Discuss respectful approaches to remind one another when someone has stepped outside the agreed ground rules and norms. Call people in by approaching the situation with curiosity rather than judgement. Take time to talk about how the norms and rules have positively affected the team’s effectiveness and demonstrate the teams’ values.
Managing a hybrid work environment does not mean learning a new skill set but it does mean being more intentional with the best management and leadership practices you are already using. Below are a few resources to sharpen your leadership competencies around team norms and ground rules.

**Articles/Websites**


**Videos**


Corentus, Inc. “Setting Team Norms that Stick.” 4.25 min

Academic Impressions. “Identify and Actualize Your Team Values to Increase Trust and Engagement.” 60 min.

HRHSE. “Elements of effective teams and creating team norms.” 28 min.

**Books**


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Human Resources, Health, Safety + Environment