

Leading for Peak Performance

OPTIMIZE YOUR TEAM

PARTICIPANT GUIDEBOOK



About ignite80

Over 80% of the world's employees are disengaged at work. At ignite80, our mission is to shrink that number by teaching leaders and their teams science-based strategies that foster happier, healthier, and more productive workplaces.

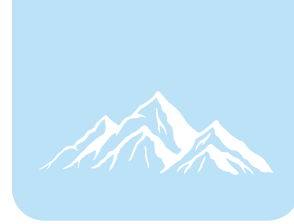


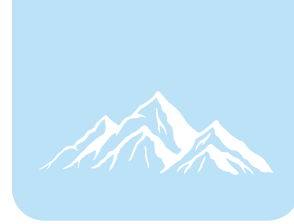
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Leading for Peak Performance



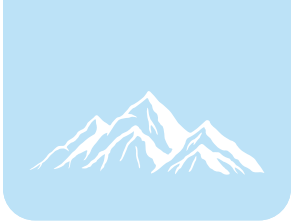
Optimize Your Team



► Skills for Developing and Leading High-Performing Teams

In this workshop, we will go deeper and explore additional strategies leaders can use to fuel their team's psychological needs for relatedness, autonomy and mastery.





Working together, we'll grow our toolkit by developing 6 additional skills for leading high-performing teams (2 skills for each of the three psychological needs).

These skills include:



1. Highlight shared goals

.....

Break down silos and cliques using shared objectives



2. Use relationship-building statements

.....

Master the 6 phrases that instantly defuse tension



Autonomy



3. Inspire high standards

Break down silos and cliques using shared objectives



4. Motivate to ownership

Inspire your team to take ownership with a few simple words



Mastery



5. Deliver growth-centered feedback

Inspire change without sounding critical



6. Habitualize learning

Turn learning into a daily habit (by making it fun, easy, and social)



SECTION ONE

Relatedness



Relatedness

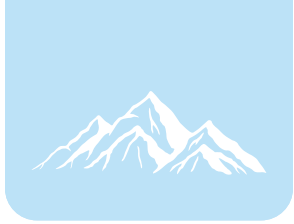


Mastery

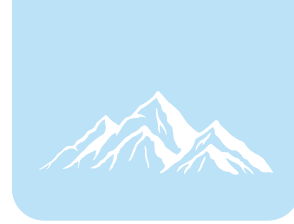
High-Performing
Teams



Autonomy



Entering an elevator with a few people, you rarely feel like you've joined a group. But the moment the elevator gets stuck between floors, you do! Why the change? Because now you have a shared goal of getting out!



SKILL FOUR

Highlight Shared Goals

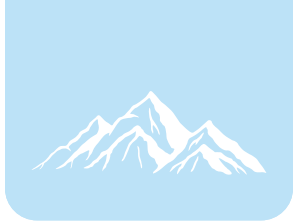
Break down silos and cliques using shared objectives.

▶ **LEARNING OBJECTIVE:**

Realize the value of shared goals that give colleagues a sense of common purpose, naturally setting the conditions for stronger workplace connections.

▶ **IMPLEMENTATION GOALS:**

Cast a unifying vision for projects or tasks across your team by leaning into storytelling and designing experiences that leverage collaboration.



▶ Is Your Team Motivated by Shared Interest or Group Success?

Shared interest is the opposite of self-interest, which is the pursuit of one's personal interest without regard for others. It's natural for people to seek to maximize self-interest, especially when they don't feel connected to their group.

But when everyone is out for themselves, group performance sinks. It's for this reason that part of being an effective leader involves motivating people to prioritize group success.

The Power of Shared Goals

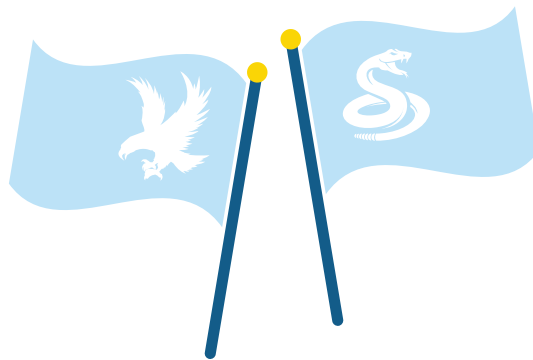
The scene was a remote campground, deep in the sunny woodlands of Oklahoma, where a group of 11-year-old boys were enjoying what they thought was a typical summer camp. What they didn't know was



that their “counselors” were actually researchers and that they were secretly running an experiment.

When the boys arrived, everything seemed normal enough. Their first few days were filled with quintessential camp activities—canoes, softball, swimming, hikes. After several days of bonding, they were invited to give their group a name, so they called themselves the Eagles.

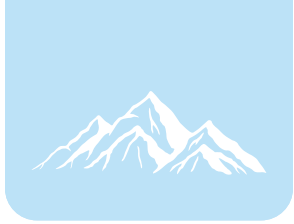
Everything was going well for the Eagles until they learned something their counselors hadn’t told them: they weren’t alone. Just a short walk from the Eagles’ cabin lived another group of campers who called themselves the Rattlers.



The “counselors” brought the two groups together for some friendly competition, and soon, friction emerged. Lots of it.

There was name calling, cabin raids, burning the other teams’ flags... soon, the boys refused to eat in the same room. When an all-out brawl threatened to erupt, the counselors were forced to step in and physically separate the groups.

But this was all according to the research team’s plan. They weren’t interested in what led to the conflict; **they wanted to know if it could be repaired** once it occurred.

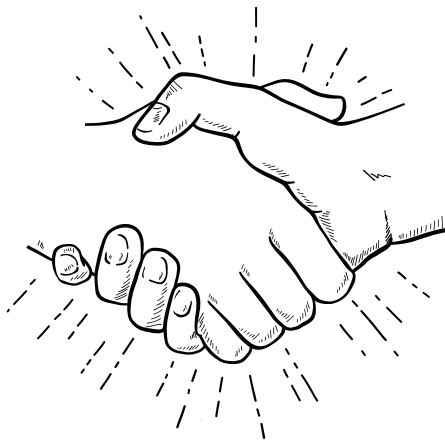


First, they tried bringing the boys together to relax and watch a movie. It didn't work. Then, they invited them to light fireworks together on the Fourth of July. Still, no luck. But the next approach ended up being a winner: introducing a *superordinate goal*. Since shared enjoyment wasn't working, it was time to try shared struggle.

One afternoon, while the boys were out playing, the counselors "sabotaged" the water supply; they turned off the water tank and placed two large boulders in front of it so the valve could not be accessed. When the boys realized none of the faucets worked, they quickly grew alarmed.

Counselors told the boys it was the work of vandals, and the only way the water could be restored was if the boys could somehow figure out a way to clear a path. The boys immediately got to work.

They talked with one another, shared suggestions, and helped one another execute ideas. Eventually (with a little help from the counselors) their efforts succeeded, and the water came through. The boys all cheered, and the collaboration had changed them. The counselors continued to provide challenges with superordinate goals, and by the time camp ended a few weeks later, there was no sign of the earlier hostilities.





In this experiment, the researchers brought the boys together by leveraging the concept of interdependence, or mutual reliance in the pursuit of joint goals.

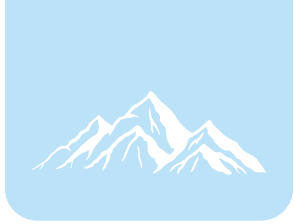
Multiple research studies have shown:

- ➔ Interdependence fosters closeness and higher performance
- ➔ Interdependence leads to the initiation and continued development of workplace friendships
- ➔ Groups with interdependent tasks have higher performance and lower group conflict
- ➔ Interdependence leads to greater creativity at work
- ➔ Interdependence makes work feel more meaningful

This experiment with the young campers demonstrates the way that shared goals that can only be achieved with the help of others—superordinate goals, as they are termed by researchers—can serve as a powerful tool for defusing tension in times of conflict.

su·per·or·di·nate goal /,sūpər'ōrd(ə)nət /gōl/ (noun): a goal that can be attained only if the members of two or more groups work together by pooling their skills, efforts, and resources

Just as important, superordinate goals can also be used to inoculate coworkers *before* disagreements erupt. When colleagues feel like they're working toward a common objective, a sense of shared purpose naturally softens the conditions for friendships.



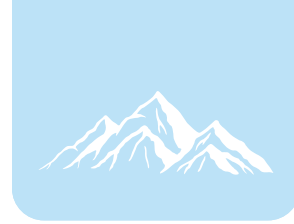
The challenge in many workplaces is that superordinate goals are often surprisingly difficult to identify. In a world in which every employee is a specialist, colleagues can sit next to one another for years and not know what their coworkers are doing. At many offices, an employee's contributions are only visible within their team.



How do you leverage superordinate goals under these conditions?



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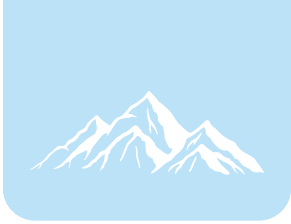


▶ Using Shared Goals to Build Culture and Identity

Research shows that when colleagues feel like they're working toward a common objective, a sense of common purpose naturally sets the conditions for stronger workplace connections.

As a leader, there is tremendous value in identifying and communicating shared goals and interests both within your team and across the organization. Doing so both makes collaboration more likely and sets the stage for the development of close connections.

One of the primary roles of a leader is to be the Storyteller-in-Chief, to cast a unifying vision for a team that highlights the goals they all share in common. Human beings naturally gravitate toward stories because they help us make sense of our experiences. As a leader, telling the right story empowers you to shape your team's interpretation of workplace events and allows you to appeal to their emotions in a way that inspires them to collaborate.



Three primary storytelling frames a leader can use to do this are:

- ➔ **Present:** Highlight the ways team members or departments are interdependent and can only succeed through working together.

Psychologists believe that while we are motivated to maximize our self-interest, we're also hardwired to collaborate and act selflessly in certain circumstances. Helping others is intrinsically rewarding and makes us feel good about ourselves. It also lends the work we do greater value by allowing us to see that our sacrifices have meaning.

- ➔ **Past:** Highlight what the team was able to achieve in the past by working together, building confidence that they can do even more.

In many cases, it's a company's *history* that represents its greatest untapped resource for growing employee pride. The reason is simple; The more team members know about their organization's past achievements, the more pride they can take in belonging to the group.

Political and religious leaders often weave historical events into major speeches, building a sense of connection to the past before laying out their vision for the future. It's an effective rhetorical technique. Invoking a group's history gives listeners the sense that they are a part of something bigger and makes membership feel more meaningful.



- ➔ **Future:** Highlight the team’s shared mission and purpose, emphasizing how they can only be achieved through working together.

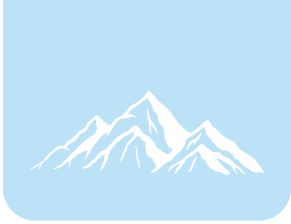
Leadership experts Jim Collins and Jerry Porras argue that successful organizations need more than a corporate mission; they also need a “big hairy audacious goal” to keep their teams energized. Religions, political parties, and sport teams have used this approach for generations, painting an emotionally compelling picture of a future that group members can achieve by working collaboratively. The more energized people are around the objectives of their group, the more pride they can take in being part of it.

Focusing on the future offers an added benefit: It makes people more willing to sacrifice in the present. This is one reason dieters are willing to forego the lure of delicious, albeit fattening, foods. By envisioning their future self in a bathing suit, they’re better able to summon the willpower to resist temptation in the present.

To paraphrase Friedrich Nietzsche, “He who has a why, can bear almost any how.”

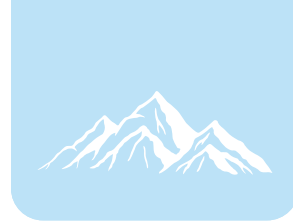
For example, imagine a marketing organization has set a goal of onboarding five new major clients in the current fiscal year. To unify the team toward this shared goal, the leader might frame their story as follows:

- ➔ **Present:** The best chance we have of reaching the goal of growing our client base by five new clients is by intentionally, openly, and frequently communicating across teams. The sales team can actively vet new leads by following up with people who respond to our internet marketing. The internet marketing team



can keep the sales team informed by letting them know what ads are running, when and to what audience. At the same time, internet marketing relies heavily on the graphics department and our content writers to provide copy and design for the ads. Writers will work collaboratively with designers to provide them with content that can be shaped into the graphic messaging. I just want to emphasize how critical it will be to work together to achieve this growth this year. We can't do this without each other.

- ➔ **Future:** Growing our client base by a solid five new clients this year will move us closer to our three-year goal of serving a total of twenty-five long-term clients. When we reach that number, we will be in a position to increase our profit-sharing percentage across the entire company. I know we've discussed this goal as a team and I just want to emphasize how critical it will be to work together to achieve this growth this year. We can't do this without each other.
- ➔ **Past:** This year, our goal is to grow our client base by a minimum of five new clients. Last year, we actually doubled that goal as a result of our teams working together to create a winning strategy. Give yourself a collective pat on the back! Our sales promo video went viral thanks to excellent writing and design, which not only earned us more interest from potential clients than we predicted, but also put our company on the Top Ten Marketing Agencies to Watch list for the current year. By closing ten new clients, we were able to offer a company-wide bonus that exceeded anything we've been able to offer to date. And it only happened because we worked together in these ways.... I just want to emphasize how critical it will be to work together to achieve our targeted growth for this year as well. We can't do this without each other.

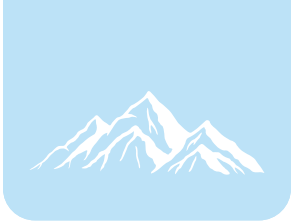


ACTIVITY

Practice highlighting task interdependence and superordinate goals with a current project so you can highlight it in the story you tell in your team communication. Draft your own “story” using the examples above as inspiration.

- ▶ *What project is your team or organization working on at present that requires multiple individuals or departments to work together? Describe it here.*

At your next team meeting, how can you lean into the three frames for storytelling (present, past, future) to motivate your team around this project? Use the prompts below to organize your thoughts.

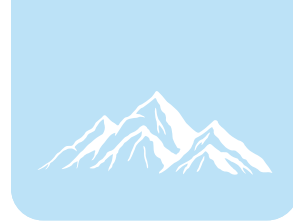


Present

- ▶ *Specifically, how does each individual or department rely on or help one another? What items are dependent on the work of others? Are there team members whose contributions might be easy to overlook that you should emphasize?*

Future

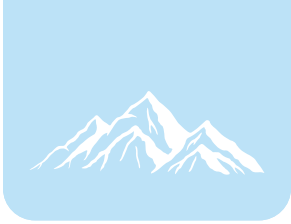
- ▶ *What does your team or organization stand to gain from a successful outcome of this project? How will this help you achieve your larger mission?*



Past

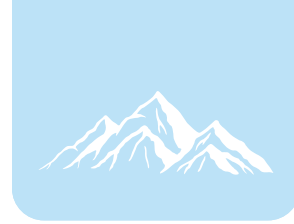
- ▶ *What is a comparable past success that was only achieved by the various team members or departments collaborating? What were some of the ways they made it happen? What were the benefits to the organization?*

Now think about which of the three storytelling frames you would most like to lean into as you discuss this project with the team as a whole, highlighting their interdependence and shared interest in the success of the project.



- ▶ *Would you lean into the present, past, future, or some mix of these to cast a unifying vision and tell a compelling story? Draft a version of what you might say below.*

In your small group, choose one person to share their project and planned storytelling. Other group members listen and offer feedback or suggestions, paying particular attention to the present, past, and future elements.



▶ Why Shared Goals Lead to Friendship

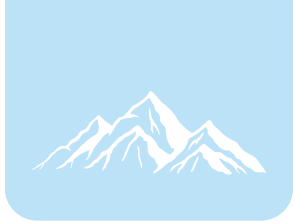
In our previous workshop, we learned a recipe for turning colleagues into friends: proximity, familiarity, similarity, and self-disclosure all play a role. The trick is to create the conditions that naturally foster these elements and integrate them into the work environment.

Shared activities catalyze workplace friendships in ways few interactions can. They foster *proximity* between employees who rarely meet, boost their *familiarity* with one another, highlight *similarity* of interests, and leverage informal, non-work environments to prompt *self-disclosure*.

By allowing colleagues to direct their attention to a common task, shared activities create opportunities for dialogue without the pressure of forced conversation. In this way, they're the antidote to a more traditional and often less successful approach to after-work socializing: *the cocktail party*.

What's wrong with cocktail parties? Nothing at all. Unless, of course, you're interested in fostering meaningful connections.

Cocktail parties tend to isolate people into groups of those they already know or trapping them in conversations that often feel strained

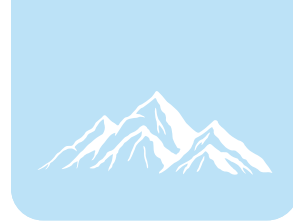


and rarely result in close bonds. Partly it's because there's nothing to do *but* talk.

For many people, taking the focus off the conversation and placing it squarely on an activity itself reduces self-consciousness and makes connections easier to grow. This can be especially true for the introverts of the group, who are often more comfortable bonding shoulder to shoulder with a colleague than face to face.

When shared activities include a physical component, such as running or dancing, they have the added feature of increasing physiological arousal. Research indicates that when we experience a rush of adrenaline in the company of others, we like them more and even find them more attractive. The more opportunities employees have for sharing in physical activities, like softball, volleyball, or even fishing, the easier it is for them to get along.

There's a reason why so many close business connections are forged out on the golf course. Ironically, it's what we do together outside the office that frequently offers the biggest boon to our relationships at work.



ACTIVITY

Leveraging Shared Goals Outside the Office

The power of shared goals isn't limited to the office. You can also use them to draw colleagues together through team-building or recreational activities. Collaborative activities like cooking classes or sports teams that empower colleagues to work shoulder-to-shoulder toward a common objective, making friendships all the more likely to develop.

Ultimately, a well-designed social activity should do more for a team than deliver a fun experience—it should present the conditions that break down silos, dismantle cliques, and shape the culture you want for your team.

Better yet, collaborative recreational activities can also be used to shape a team's identity.

Let's put this approach to use with your team.

- ▶ **Step 1:** *When you think of your ideal team operating at its best, what characteristics come to mind? In other words, what personality traits describe your ideal team? (List as many as you can think of.)*

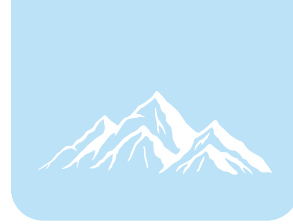
Examples: creative, resilient, courageous, etc.



- ▶ **Step 2:** *Of the adjectives listed above, choose the three characteristics that are most vital to your team’s long-term success*

- ▶ **Step 3:** *Choose one adjective from the previous list and brainstorm with your own group about a few potential activities that might help foster that quality on your team. Here are some examples:*

ADJECTIVE:	POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES:
▶ <i>persistent</i>	▶ <i>Escape room / Ropes course</i>
▶ <i>inquisitive</i>	▶ <i>Murder mystery night</i>
▶ <i>collaborative</i>	▶ <i>Cooking class</i>
▶ <i>bonded</i>	▶ <i>Kickball league</i>
▶ <i>creative</i>	▶ <i>Pumpkin carving contest; Painting class</i>
▶ <i>competitive</i>	▶ <i>Chili cookoff; Charity fun run</i>



Adjective 1: _____

Potential Group Activities:

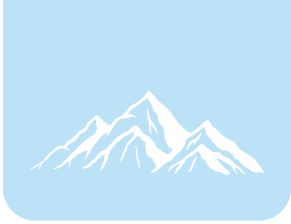
► **Step 4:** *Repeat the process for each adjective.*

Adjective 2: _____

Potential Group Activities:

Adjective 3: _____

Potential Group Activities:



- ▶ **Step 5:** *Choose the group activity you will implement first. What are your next steps to move toward implementing it with your team?*

Some workplaces take it one step further and create a committee that rotates employees on a regular basis, giving fresh voices an opportunity to chime in with new activities to make the workplace more enjoyable.

The idea of enlisting the help of employees on an ongoing basis has considerable value. New ideas are a lot easier to come by when every member of a company is invested in finding new ways of elevating the workplace experience.