

Building Culture and Teamwork in a New Era of Engagement

Key Takeaways

Whether you're an organization leader, manager or employee, everyone wants to work in a positive, productive environment. The key to workplace happiness primarily lies in the relationships we have with one another. When we get to know each other better, we work better together. People are eager to talk, so strike up a conversation!

The Barriers to Human Connection and Teamwork

As a society, we are less civil to each other than ever before. We've become more tribal – following the ideas of groups we belong to (like cable news channels and our social media circles) and ignoring everything else. Sadly, being offensive to others has become more acceptable. And on top of that, we're increasingly isolated, making us more "ME-centric." Research shows that we waste approximately three hours per week dealing with conflict. Add it all up and that's \$400 billion in wasted time nationwide! So, how do we do better?

How We Build Great Teams

From my award-winning book, *Connect! How to Quickly Collaborate for Success in Business and Life*, here are the most effective methods to help people work together and build great teams:

- Get to know someone quickly, or a new employee, by asking questions about their interests
- Share personal stories to create a connection
- Talk the same amount of time
- Assume positive Intent – no one is out to get you!
- Take action where you can, focusing on your world and the people around you
- For more conversation sparkers, download the Ice breakers PDF at barrymoline.com/resources

Set the Stage for Teamwork

- You can't force people to work together but you can help them get to know each other
- Icebreakers ALWAYS work to help people get involved

Be Positive

- People like to be around positive people
- Emotional contagion exists! A positive force can improve everyone's mood and a negative force can bring everyone down. You have a choice - Be the positive force!
- A positive attitude improves productivity and a negative attitude decreases productivity

Listen Actively

- Focus on your conversation partner
- Be curious. Say, "Hmmm . . . Interesting . . . Wow . . . Tell me more . . ."
- Ask follow-up questions
- Talk less than half the time
- Do not make it a competitive conversation, where you one-up the other person with your "better story"

Disagree Productively

- Focus on facts when possible
- Don't try to change someone's mind, but instead, ask their opinion
- Use the magical phrase, "Consider this." It opens people's minds to new ideas
- Try to agree on something the other person said
- If you have a hard time finding anything to agree on, you can say, "Hey, we might disagree, but we are both passionate about the topic!"
- Make understanding your goal, and try to learn something from the conversation

Understand Cultural Issues and Politics

- Be sensitive to cultural issues - people may feel uncomfortable sharing personal information. Instead, talk about current projects or lessons learned during a recent experience
- Be careful talking about politics . . . Keep an open mind or you can easily make an enemy if you disagree

Work Toward Happiness

- We achieve happiness through relationships
- If you want to be happier, engage more with people and learn about them
- People want to talk! Spark a conversation everywhere you can
- Give people the gift of a pleasant conversation

Activities to Build Great Teams

- Get to know someone quickly, or a new employee, by asking questions about their interests
- Great conversation openers: Where are you from? What was your journey to get here? Where did you go to school? What activities do you like? Tell me about your hobbies
- On the job: What are you working on now? What challenges are you facing on this project?
- If you're not sure if someone is retired: What's got your attention these days?
- More conversation sparkers: What are you streaming on TV? Have you listened to any interesting podcasts recently? What kind of music do you like? What was the best part of your weekend? Anything good happen in your world recently? Where did you go on your last vacation? How was your shelter-at-home experience?

"BARRY OFFERS BOTH THE INSPIRATION AND THE SKILLS TO SUCCEED."

Liz Joyner, Founder & CEO, The Village Square

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Longtime CEO and Expert on Leadership, Teamwork, and Strategy



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