

## HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS

A high-performance team can be defined as a group of people with specific roles and complementary talents and skills, aligned with and committed to a common purpose, who consistently show high levels of collaboration and innovation that produce superior results. The high-performance team is regarded as tight-knit, focused on their goal and have supportive processes that will enable any team member to surmount any barriers in achieving the team's goals.

Within the high-performance team, people are highly skilled and are able to interchange their roles. Also, leadership within the team is not vested in a single individual. Instead the leadership role is taken up by various team members, according to the need at that moment in time. High-performance teams have robust methods of resolving conflict efficiently, so that conflict does not become a roadblock to achieving the team's goals. There is a sense of clear focus and intense energy within a high-performance team. Collectively, the team has its own consciousness, indicating shared norms and values within the team. The team feels a strong sense of accountability for achieving their goals. Team members display high levels of mutual trust towards each other.

Different characteristics have been used to describe high-performance teams. Despite varying approaches to describing high-performance teams there is a set of common characteristics that are recognised to lead to success

- Participative leadership – using a democratic leadership style that involves and engages team members
- Effective decision-making – using a blend of rational and intuitive decision making methods, depending on that nature of the decision task
- Open and clear communication – ensuring that the team mutually constructs shared meaning, using effective communication methods and channels
- Valued diversity – valuing a diversity of experience and background in team, contributing to a diversity of viewpoints, leading to better decision making and solutions
- Mutual trust – trusting in other team members and trusting in the team as an entity
- Managing conflict – dealing with conflict openly and transparently and not allowing grudges to build up and destroy team morale
- Clear goals – goals that are developed using SMART criteria; also each goal must have personal meaning and resonance for each team member, building commitment and engagement
- Defined roles and responsibilities – each team member understands what they must do (and what they must not do) to demonstrate their commitment to the team and to support team success
- Coordinative relationship – the bonds between the team members allow them to seamlessly coordinate their work to achieve both efficiency and effectiveness
- Positive atmosphere – an overall team culture that is open, transparent, positive, future-focused and able to deliver success

Words taken from the definition of High Performing Teams on Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High-performance\\_teams](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High-performance_teams)

To find out how we work with a team of leaders to transform them into a high performing leadership team – please contact [Helen@hotchilliconsulting.com](mailto:Helen@hotchilliconsulting.com)



## Selected Testimonials from leadership teams

*"Helen helped my leadership team identify with their hopes, aspirations, fears and anxieties in a safe environment and in a constructive way that enabled real tangible and meaningful outcomes to surface. This has formed the basis for trusted relationships to develop and for the effectiveness of my team to improve as a result." Nick Lloyd, Global Head of Investment Technology, Schroders*

*"Helen played a major role in helping build our international IT leadership team and also coached individual team members in UK, Africa, Asia, Middle East and Latin America. She led a programme of work on the behavioural aspects of effective teams, including 'IT business partnering' which significantly enhanced the perception of the IT team amongst all senior stakeholders. She provided all her services on a 'lo-bono' basis and added enormous value to Save the Children." Andy Williams, Previous CIO Save the Children International, #1 in CIO 100 in 2016*

*"Having developed and established a talented and diverse leadership team we wanted to achieve the highest level of performance as a team. To do this we needed to explore our individual strengths, build strong working relationships and represent each other as a leadership team rather than a team of leaders. Helen brought the interventions and thought provoking exercises to have us improve our performance as a team". Christina Scott, Chief Technology Officer, News UK.*

*"Many thanks again for the excellent team session you carried out with us. We have definitely been more bonded subsequently, accelerating the time it would have otherwise taken to assimilate new team members and align goals. We have also been much better at collective decision making, in an important expansion phase of our business." Will West, Executive Chairman, Cell-Centric Ltd.*

*"There were three key initiatives that Helen owned and drove within Unilever IT- customer focus, talent pipeline and ultimately a design to change the nature of the relationship the broader business had with the IT organisation and with technology and it's associated services. Helen joined my global leadership team and created a portfolio of activities aligned to these imperatives - having worked in the hotel industry and in the sales & relationship organisation of IBM she was uniquely experienced to drive our activities. Among the programmes Helen initiated and drove were: Business partnering program, Hot Chilli mentoring program, a revitalized training and development program, Creation of a global communication organisation, an advanced thinking on social media engagement. In addition, Helen contributed to the overall leadership of the IT Division; mentored key individuals and provided for me a sounding board as a confidant and constantly challenged myself and my organisation in terms of customer service and internal team dynamics." Neil Cameron, Chief Information Officer, Unilever*

**Hot Chilli specializes in the transformation and development of high performing, dynamic and balanced leadership teams with a variety of talent, style and approach that makes a difference in organisations.**

Before establishing Hot Chilli, Helen was Vice President at Unilever, as part of the Global IT Leadership Team. She had responsibility for New Ways of Working – Changing the way we work, using IT as an enabler. She led the IT Academy in Developing IT Professionals to become "world class" Business Partners. In early 2000 Helen led a Global Culture Change Programme creating an ethos of Service Excellence and played an active role in development of Senior Women.

Prior to Unilever, Helen worked in IBM as an Account Manager. The first 6 years being in South Africa during the birth of the Rainbow Nation. This time shaped Helen's approach on Real Diversity in Leadership, strongly influenced by a meeting with Nelson Mandela.

For those who think they have a well performing team, do you know why? Would the manager of the team at the top of the league turn up on Monday morning and say "We are at the top, so we won't be training or putting in any practice this week"

*"The trick is to work on and with the individuals in the team, understanding their strengths, styles, values and what makes them tick, then to focus on the team as a whole. The relationships within the team are crucial to success, they are the matrix that bind the team together. The energy is paramount and the leadership skills essential."*

A programme of customized workshops, individual coaching and mentoring together with the role of a "Team Coach" starts to see brilliant dynamic leaders emerge as a high performing leadership team rather than a team of leaders. It maximizes the effect when putting new behaviours into practice as a team.