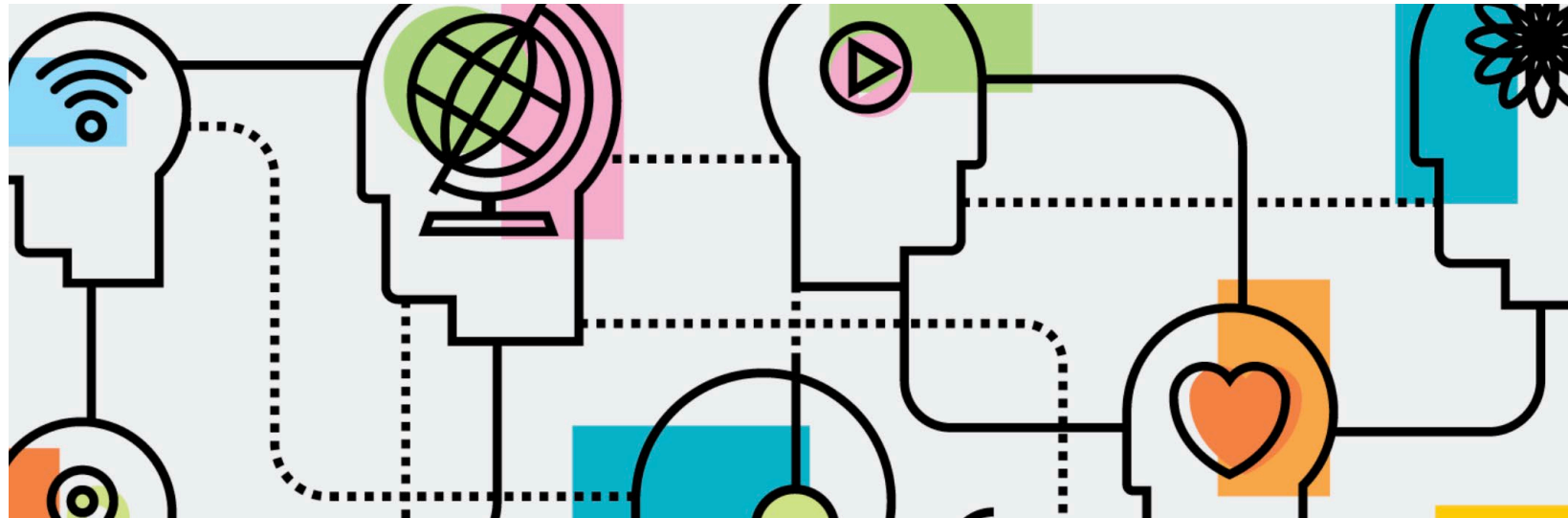


Critical Team Science Skills: Setting Expectations and Having Difficult Conversations

L. Michelle Bennett, PhD
*Sr. Vice President
Lead Team Science Consultant
Roger Schwarz & Associates*

November 17, 2023

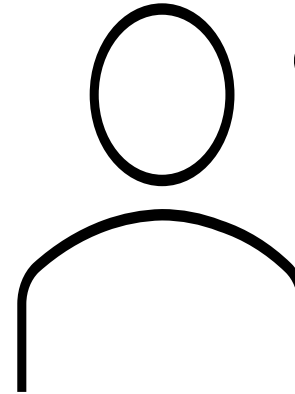
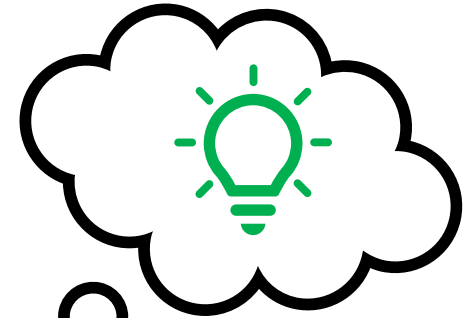
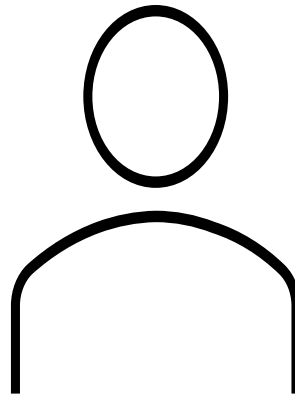
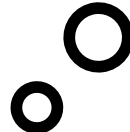
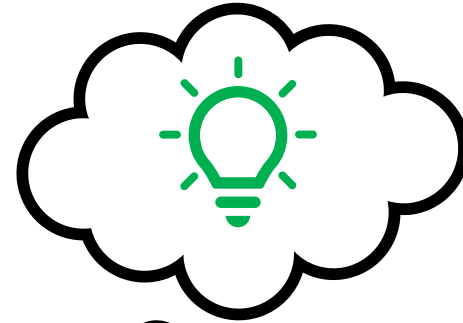
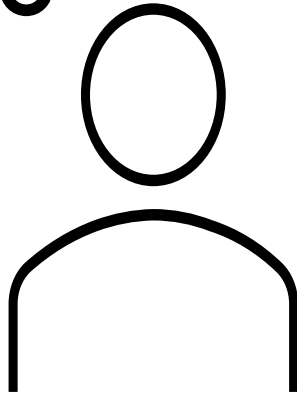
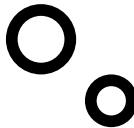
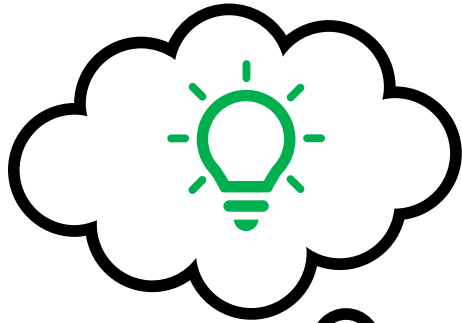


Team Science: What Works? What Doesn't?



Why?

The
Science



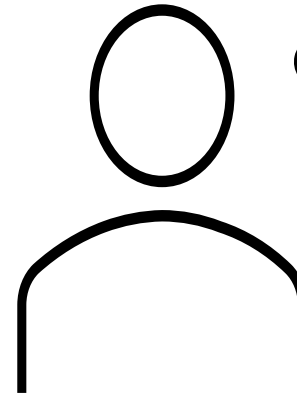
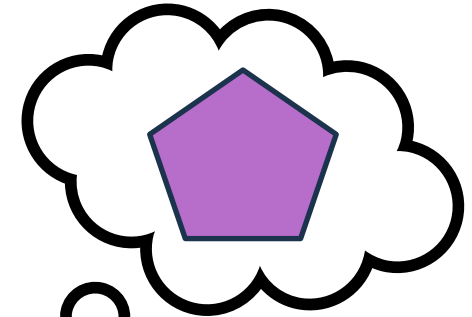
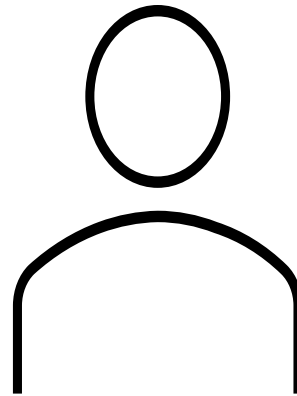
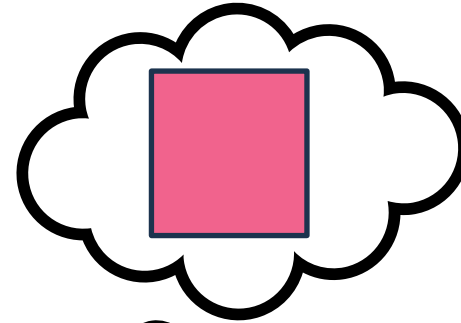
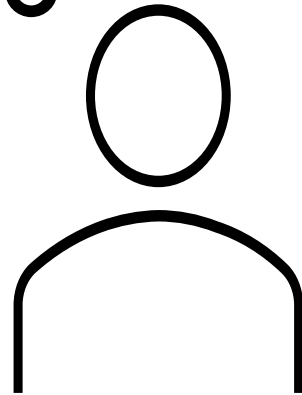
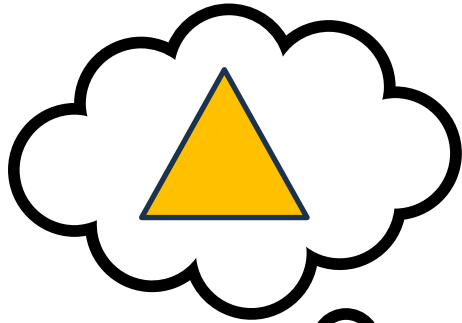
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How you think is how you lead.

What and How

The
Science

The Team
Relationship

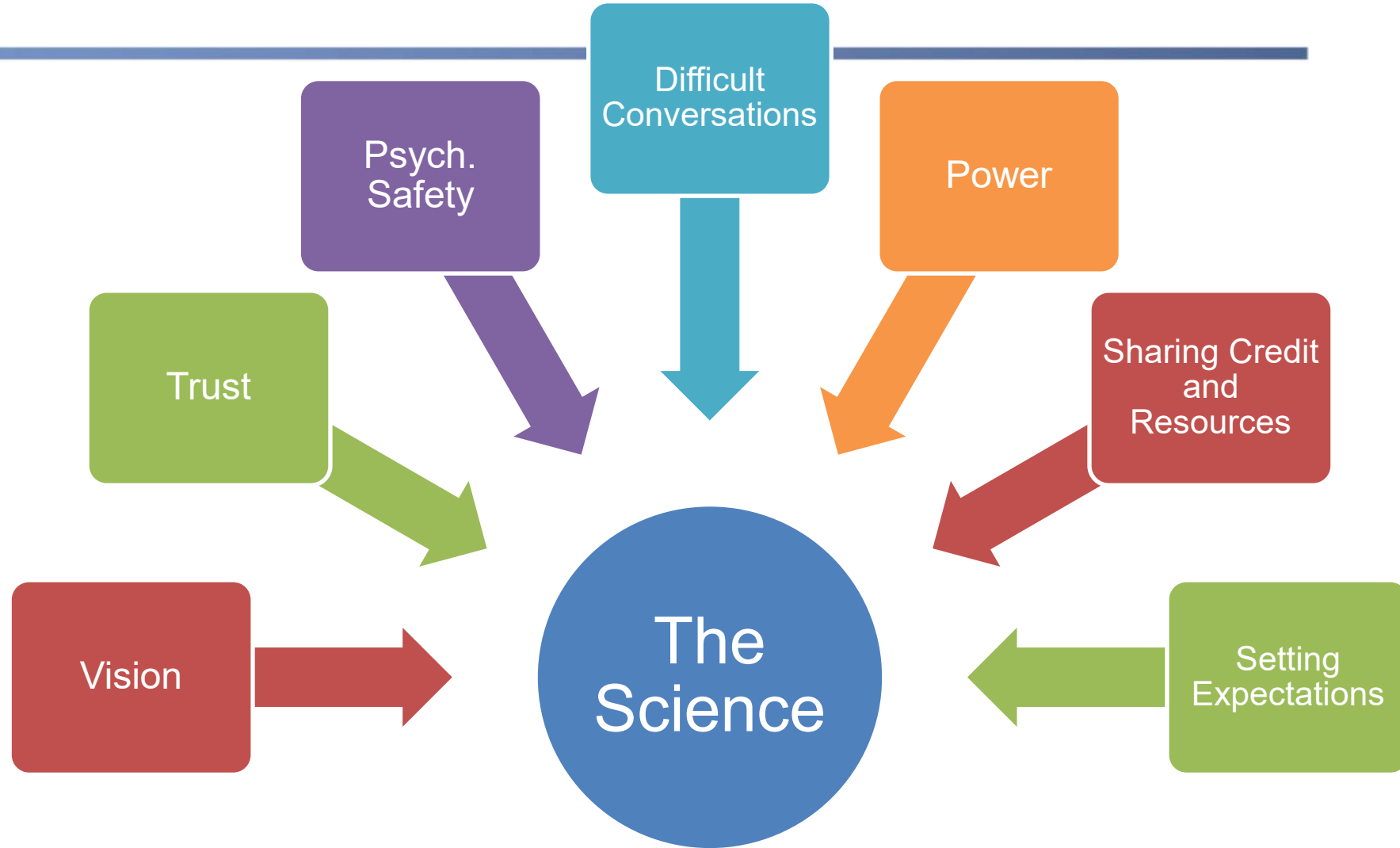


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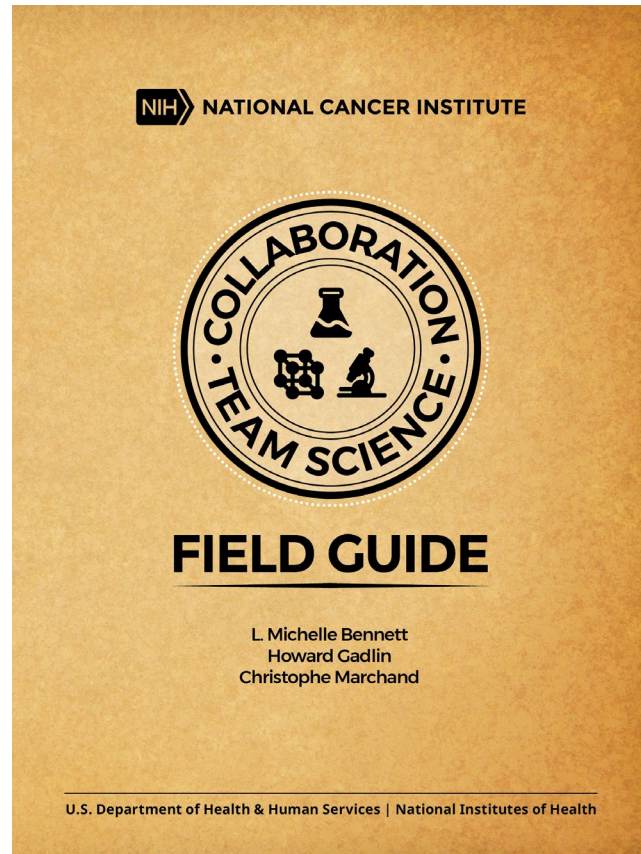
How you think is how you lead.

The science
brings teams
together...

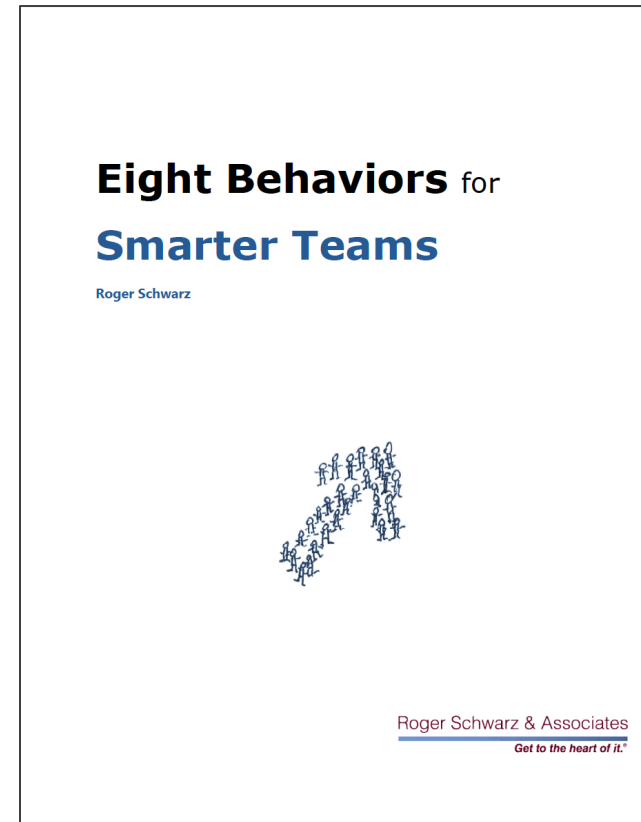
Good team
relations keep
them that way



What



How

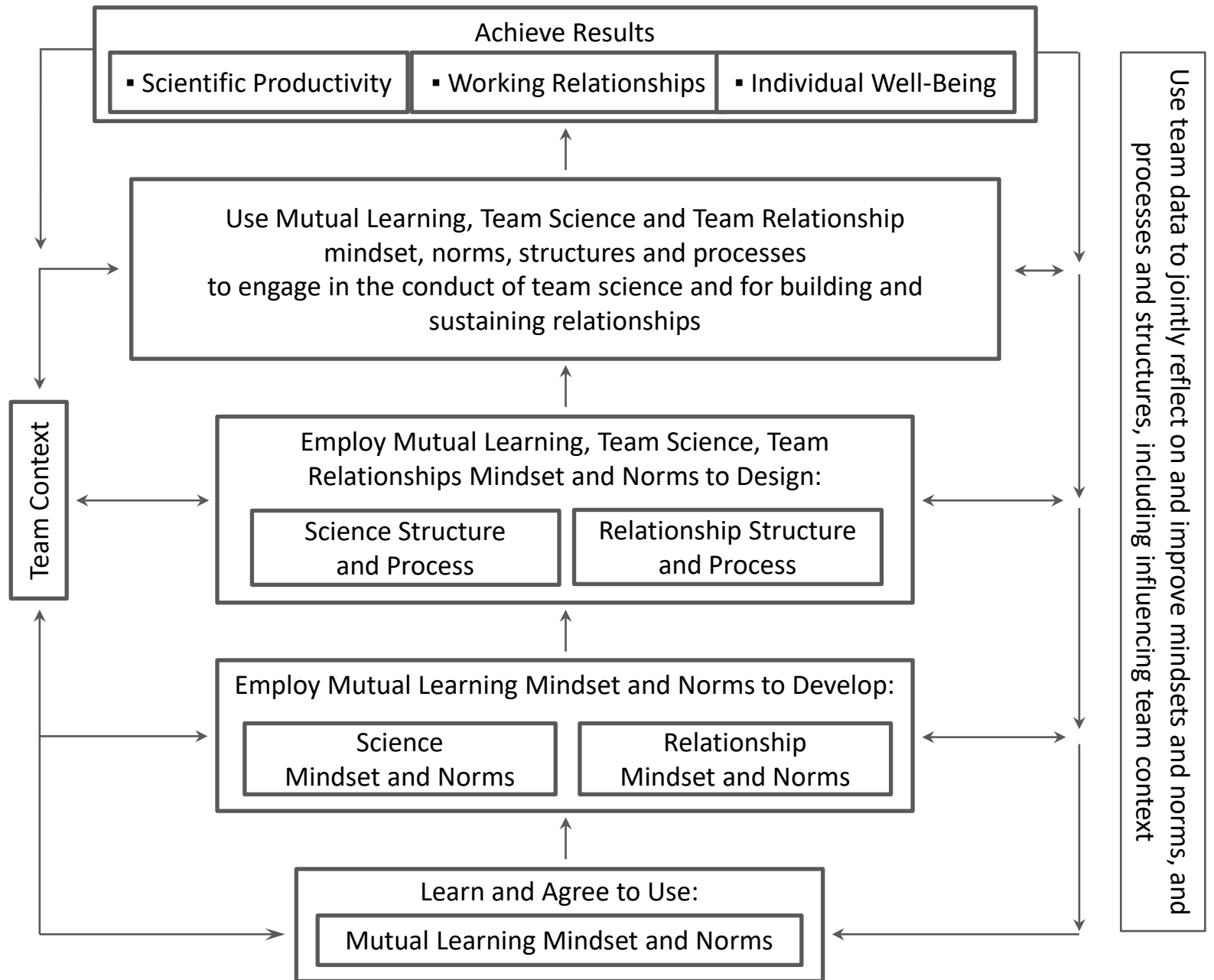


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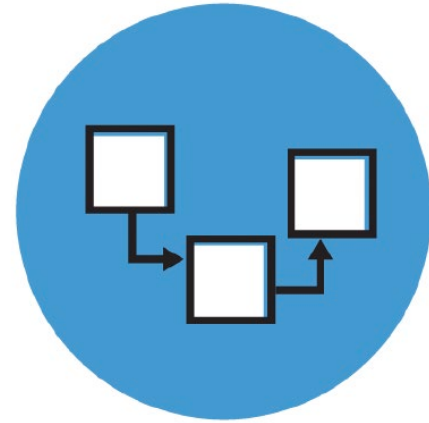
How you think is how you lead.

TEMS = Team Effectiveness Model for Science





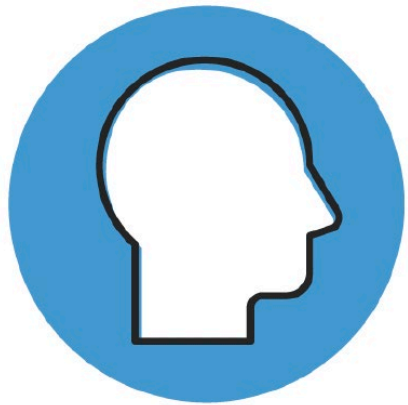
Building Science Teams on Purpose



Design

and how you design...

How You Think is How You Lead and Design



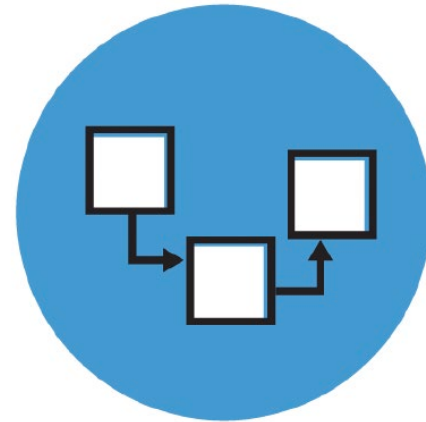
Mindset

Your values and assumptions...



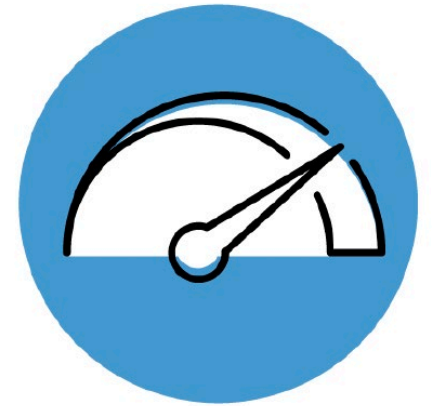
Behavior

guide your behavior...



Design

and how you design...



Results

which creates results.

When your team operates from a Mutual Learning mindset, you can agree on expectations and learn to overcome just about any challenge, disagreement, or tension that emerges



Team Science requires a collaborative team mindset. That mindset is called Mutual Learning.

Mutual Learning Approach

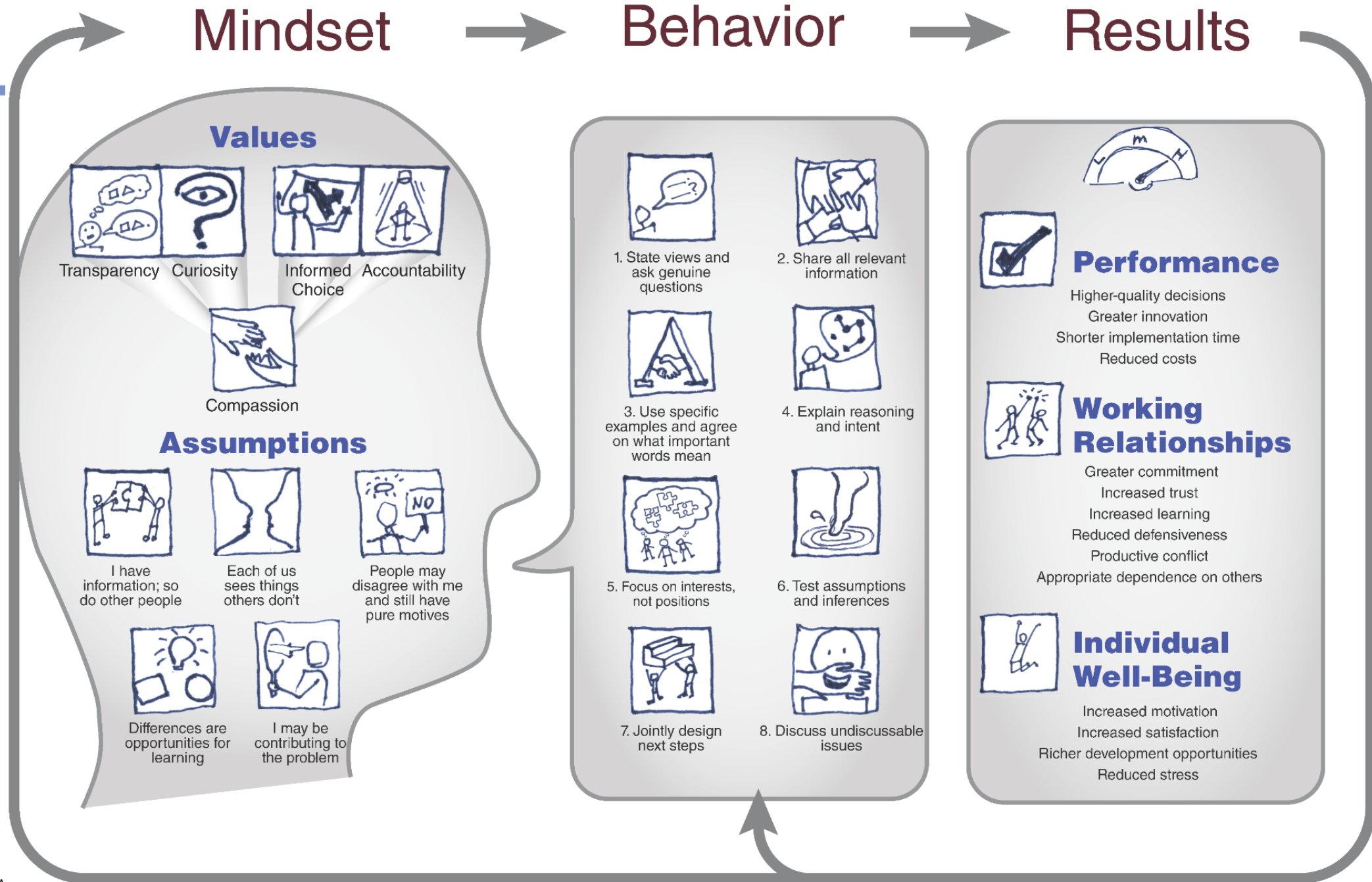
Values

- Transparency
- Curiosity
- Informed Choice
- Accountability
- Compassion

Assumptions

- I have information, so do other people
- Each of us sees things others don't
- People may disagree with me and still have pure motives
- Differences are opportunities for learning
- I may be contributing to the problem

Mutual Learning Approach



Unilateral Control Approach

Values

- Win, don't lose
- Be right
- Minimize expressions of negative feelings
- Act rational

Assumptions

- I understand the situation, those who disagree do not
- I'm right, those who disagree are wrong
- I have pure motives, those who disagree have impure motives
- My feelings and behavior are justified
- I'm not contributing to the problem

A Shared Mutual Learning Mindset Enables The Team To ...

- Talk openly about what they are thinking
- Invite each other to ask questions and share comments and concerns
- Share their reasoning safely and without judgement

- This approach helps minimize the risk of team members getting defensive when you interact because:
 - You are engaged in conversation (not telling)
 - You start with and share data
 - You are building trust and psychological safety

Left-Hand Column Case: Individual Level

- Description of the Situation:
- Goals – What Outcome You Wanted from the Conversation
- Strategy – How you Planned to Have the Conversation to Achieve Your Outcomes
- Difficulty – What Happened in the Conversation That You Were Dissatisfied With

Row	Notes	My Thoughts & Feelings	The Conversation	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				

Paula and Ted: A Case Study

Let's see how each of these elements can come into play during a conversation.

Transparency

Curiosity

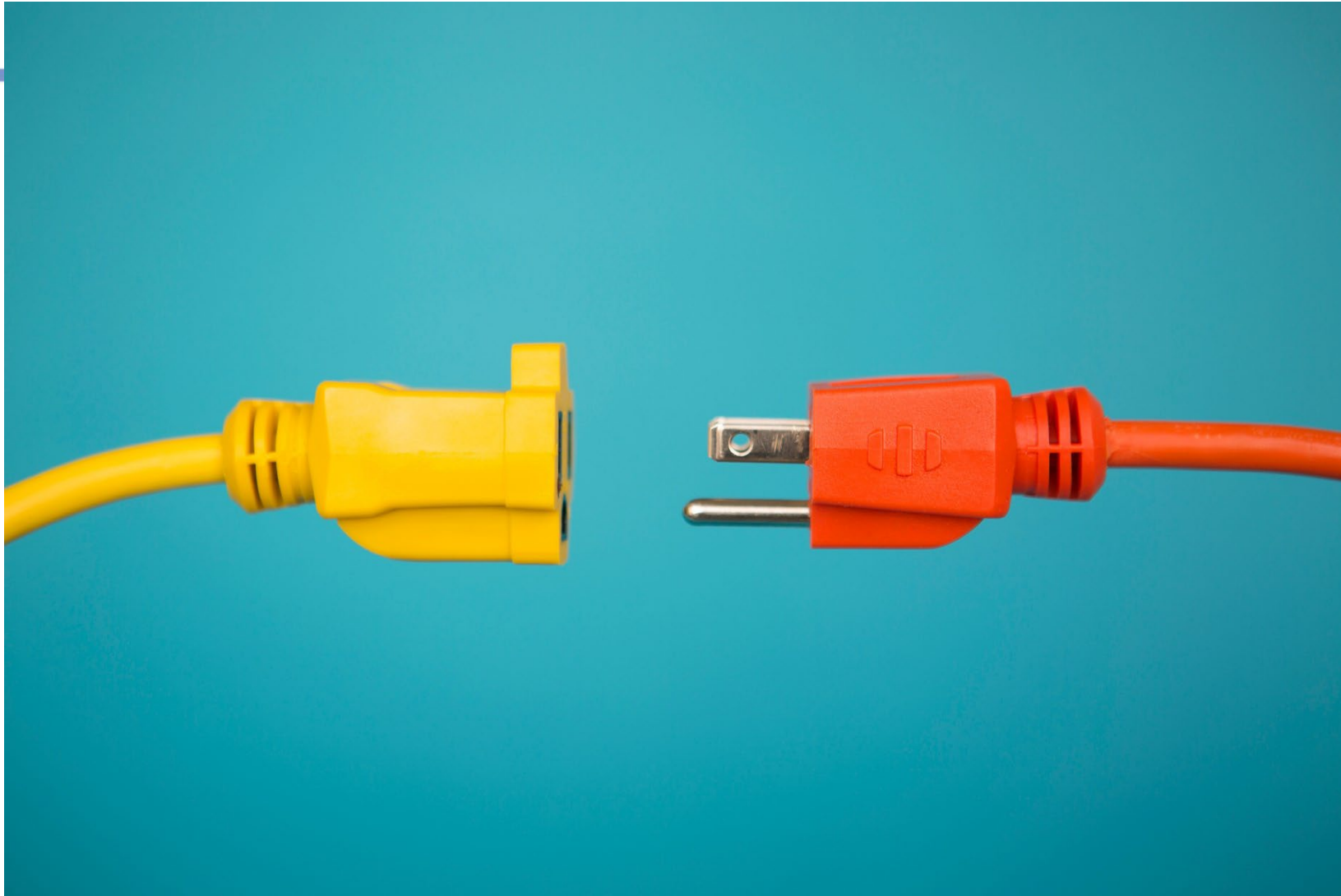
Compassion

Minimizing expressions of negative feelings

I understand the situation, those who disagree don't

#	notes	Paula's Thoughts & Feelings	The Conversation	notes
1.		I don't want him to get defensive, so let's see if he understands the situation. I thought the presentation was a disaster and so did three other people I spoke with.	Paula: How do you think your presentation went yesterday?	
2.		Do you really believe it went "OK", or are you just trying to put a good face on it? Nit-picky! There were three times you couldn't answer some basic cost questions and twice your number didn't even add up correctly!	Ted: I think it went OK, although there were some rough spots. Some of the directors can really get nit-picky.	
3.		I don't understand why you didn't emphasize why we wanted to do the project. The directors don't approve projects like this if they don't have all the key information - they need to make a decision.	Paula: We've got some really important reasons for doing it. Do you think they will OK the project now, or do we need to give them more answers?	
4.		I don't want to wait while this project dies on the vine. It's critical to the division's success. Besides, my reputation as a change leader is at stake here too. So is yours, but you obviously don't see it.	Ted: I think we're in OK shape. A couple of them came up to me after the meeting and said they appreciated the presentation. I think we should just wait and see.	
5.		I hope the directors don't think I'm responsible for your not having the answers to those questions. Why didn't you use the information I gave you? I've got to get you to understand what you have done.	Paula: Maybe, but I think we might want to give the director some more information.	

What is the relationship between
what Paula thinks and feels and
what she says?



Developing Teams on Purpose

*Don't Cross Your Fingers and
Hope that Everything Works Out*



At the core, building (or revitalizing) a team starts with how you want to show up as a team -- what kind of team culture (mindset) you want to create.

I suggest a collaborative one.

Transparency and Curiosity



- Transparency: Sharing all relevant information, including thoughts, feeling, and strategies with the appropriate people at the appropriate time
- Curiosity: Being *genuinely interested* in learning and understanding about others and their situations

Genuine and Non-Genuine Questions

Come from:

- Curiosity and a desire to learn
- Assuming others may see things you don't
- Compassion

Questions often:

- Begin with "what" or "how"
- Clearly state the reason and intent for the question
- Separate your point of view from the question

Come from:

- Desire to make a point
- The sense that you already have an answer
- The assumption you are right

Questions often:

- Begin with a contraction "wouldn't", "shouldn't", "isn't", "don't"
- Contains words or tone that can be interpreted as judgmental
- Embed your point of view into the question

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How you think is how you lead.

Debrief: Genuine, Nongenuine, or Can't Tell?

- | | G | NG | CT |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. "You don't see a problem with using the methodology I suggested, do you?" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. "I think we ought to start the research now, because we'll save on personnel costs. What do each of you think of that?" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. "I do understand we've got an HR issue here, but what possessed you to call Jane in HR?" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. "Would it be a good idea for someone to take notes on this?" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Debrief: Genuine, Nongenuine, or Can't Tell?

1. "You don't see a problem with using the methodology I suggested, do you?" Non-Genuine
2. "I think we ought to start the research now, because we'll save on personnel costs. What do each of you think of that?" Genuine
3. "I do understand we've got an HR issue here, but what possessed you to call Jane in HR?" Non-Genuine
4. "Would it be a good idea for someone to take notes on this?" Non-Genuine

Debrief



How can Paula have a different conversation with Ted?

1. Share what she is thinking and feeling
2. Be *genuinely* curious about what is going on for Ted
3. Learn what Ted is thinking and feeling
4. Listen carefully to Ted in way that would enable her to paraphrase what he said
5. “Open gifts”
6. Recognize that both she and Ted have relevant information
7. Propose an approach for the conversation and ask for Ted’s reaction and whether he has additional thoughts
8. Be and act compassionately

Combining Transparency and Curiosity

Reducing the Risk of Others Becoming Defensive

S = State your view.

E = Explain the reasoning that led to your view.

A = Ask a genuine question.

Combining Transparency and Curiosity

Reducing the Risk of Others Becoming Defensive

S. State your view.

- *Transparency – sharing what you are thinking or feeling*

E. Explain the reasoning that leads to your view.

- *Reduces the risk that the person you are talking to will make up a story to explain your view*

A. Ask a genuine question.

- *Invites the other person to be Transparent with you (dialogue)*
- *If they do not share their reasoning, ask them about it*

S – E – A: Rooted in Transparency and Curiosity

Reducing the Risk of Others Becoming Defensive

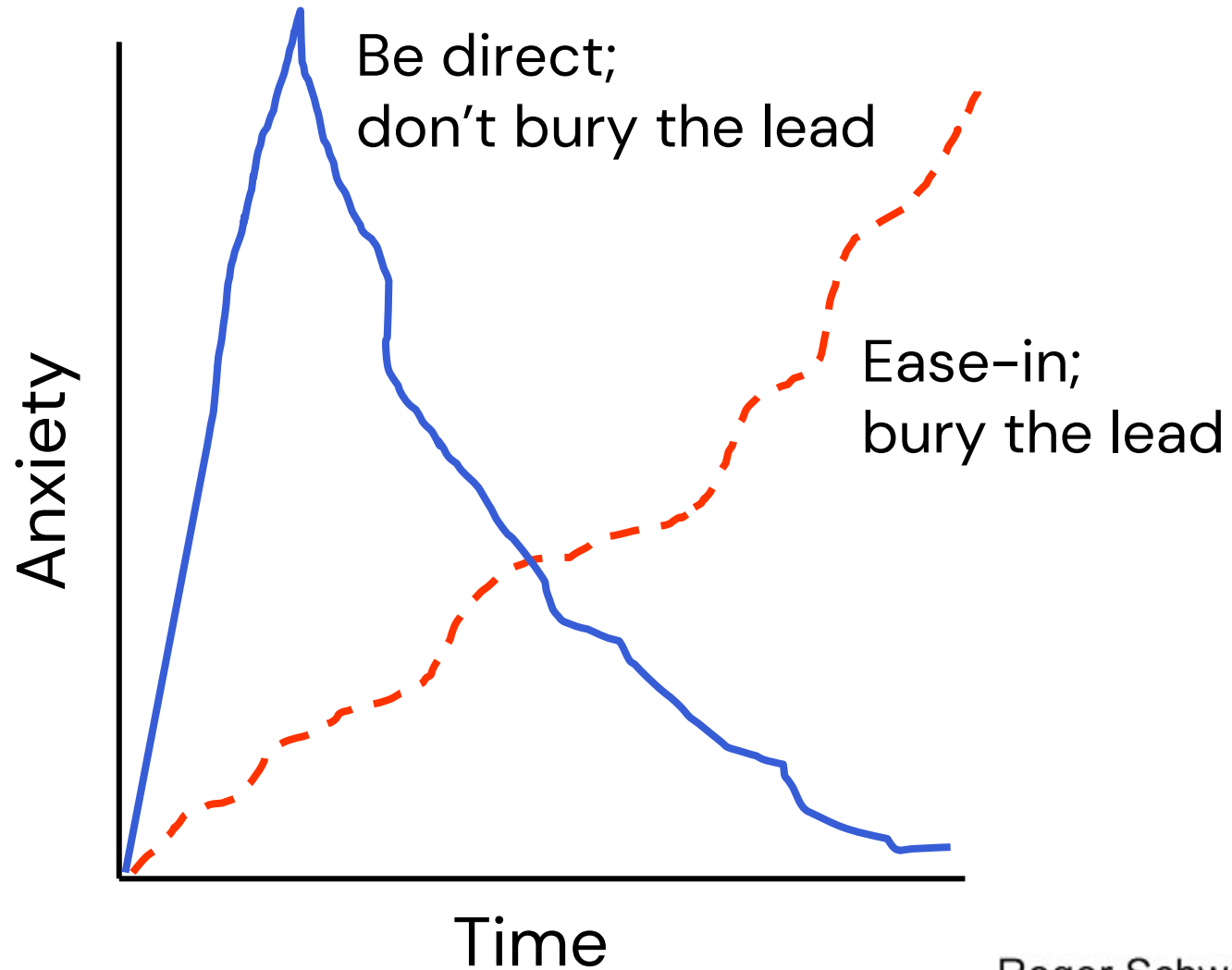
Let's redesign Paula's first line using SEA:

How do you think your presentation went yesterday?

How do you think your presentation went yesterday?

(S) I'd like to talk to you about your presentation yesterday. (E) I have some concerns about it and would like to talk them through. (A) Are you willing to do that?

Being Transparent and Compassionate: Early vs. Late



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Opening Gifts



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How you think is how you lead.

Opening “Gifts”

Increasing the Learning from Each Other

Ted: I think it went OK, although there were some rough spots. Some of the directors can really get nit-picky.

Paula Original: We’ve got some really important reasons for doing it. Do you think they will OK the project now, or do we need to give them more answers?

Let's redesign Paula's response to Ted using SEA:

(S) I think there was some information missing from your talk and if you agree, (E) I'd like for us to decide if we need to provide it. (S) Also, let's discuss those rough spots you mentioned, (E) since they might be related. (A) Did I miss anything?



Let's see Paula try again
with a Mutual Learning Mindset

#	notes	Paula's NEW Thoughts and Feelings	The Conversation	notes
1.		I don't think Ted's presentation went very well yesterday and I've got concerns. I'm thinking I should discuss these with him.	Paula: Hey, Ted. I'd like to talk to you about your presentation yesterday. I've got some concerns about it and would like to talk them through. Are you willing to do that?	
2.		Hmm, he seems to recognize that there were some rough spots. He also thought some directors were nit-picky. I wonder what that means because I did not notice that.	Ted: Sure, we can talk about it. I think there were some rough spots. Some of the directors can also get really nit-picky.	
3.		There seem to be a few things we should talk about including my concerns about the presentation and that I think there was some missing information. if so, what should we do? Also, we should talk about those rough spots he saw so we can figure out if they are the same ones I saw.	Paula: Great. I think there was some information missing from your talk and If you agree, I'd like for us to decide if we need to provide it to them. Also, let's discuss those rough spots you mentioned, since they might be related. Did I miss anything?	
4.		I wonder what led the directors who talked to you after the presentation to tell you they appreciated the presentation. I don't feel like I have enough information to not be concerned.	Ted: Well, a couple of them came up to me after the meeting and said they appreciated the presentation. Maybe there is nothing to be concerned about.	
5.		I don't want to make assumptions about what the directors saw, heard, or learned that might be appreciated. I think we should ask them. I think we've got a solid list of things to talk about. I'll check to see if he thinks I missed anything.	Paula: I think it might be a good idea for us to talk to them to learn what it was they appreciated. I think we can learn more that way. Would that work for you? Is there anything else we should put on our list to discuss?	

Debrief



SEA is the Foundation For...

- **Productive discussion across differences, so it enables....**
 - Giving feedback effectively
 - Having difficult conversations
 - Agreeing on expectations with each other
 - Building trust and psychological safety
 - Working collaboratively and designing next steps together
 - Developing a shared vision
 - Developing robust team processes and structures
 - And more....

Setting Expectations – A Design Element

Collaboration Agreement

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.6394789](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6394789)

Collaboration agreement developed by:
L. Michelle Bennett,
Michael O'Rourke,
and Edgar Cardenas

How: Use S-E-A

Example

- Collaboration Agreement Prompt: “How will important decisions be made for this team?”
 - Person 1: I think we should make them by consensus
 - Person 2: I think we should have a simple majority vote
 - *You want to learn more, what do you say?*
 - Person 3: (S) I heard P1 say that we should make them by consensus and P2 say we should go with a majority. (E) I’m not understanding well enough what is leading you both to say what you are saying which can better help me understand your reasoning. (A) Could you each share more about what you are thinking?

How You Can Do It: SEA

Example

- Person 1: "I think we should start every project by including a discussion about authorship."
- *You have concerns about this approach, what do you say?*
 - Person 2: I just heard you say that you think we should start every project by also discussing authorship. (S) I'm a little concerned about that approach, (E) because I have been involved in so many projects where authorship changed. (A) Can you say a bit more about what leads you to think that way?

How You Can Do It: SEA

- Example:
- *Your colleague, Ash, is late **again** with their part of the presentation. You all agreed to have your parts ready to combine today and are meeting right now to do it. What do you say to Ash?*
 - (S) Ash, last week we all agreed to have our parts of the presentation ready today so we can combine them. (A) Are you remembering that the same way?
 - (S) I'm thinking this presentation is not a high priority for you. (E) I'm saying that because you do not have your section ready today. (A) How are you thinking about it?

Using SEA in Your Communications: Conversations, emails, meetings, ...

Using S-E-A: What Feedback Do You Want To Give?

#	notes	YOUR Thoughts & Feelings	YOUR Conversation
1.			<p>Purpose (Transparency = State Your View = Articulate the issue that you want to raise with the other person)</p> <p>Explain Your Reasoning (What leads you to want to discuss it? <i>Without starting to discuss the topic yet.</i>)</p> <p>Ask a Genuine Question <i>that Refers back to your view:</i> (Curiosity = Ask whether the person is willing to talk about this. <i>If they work for you, ask if now is a good time.</i>)</p>

Debrief

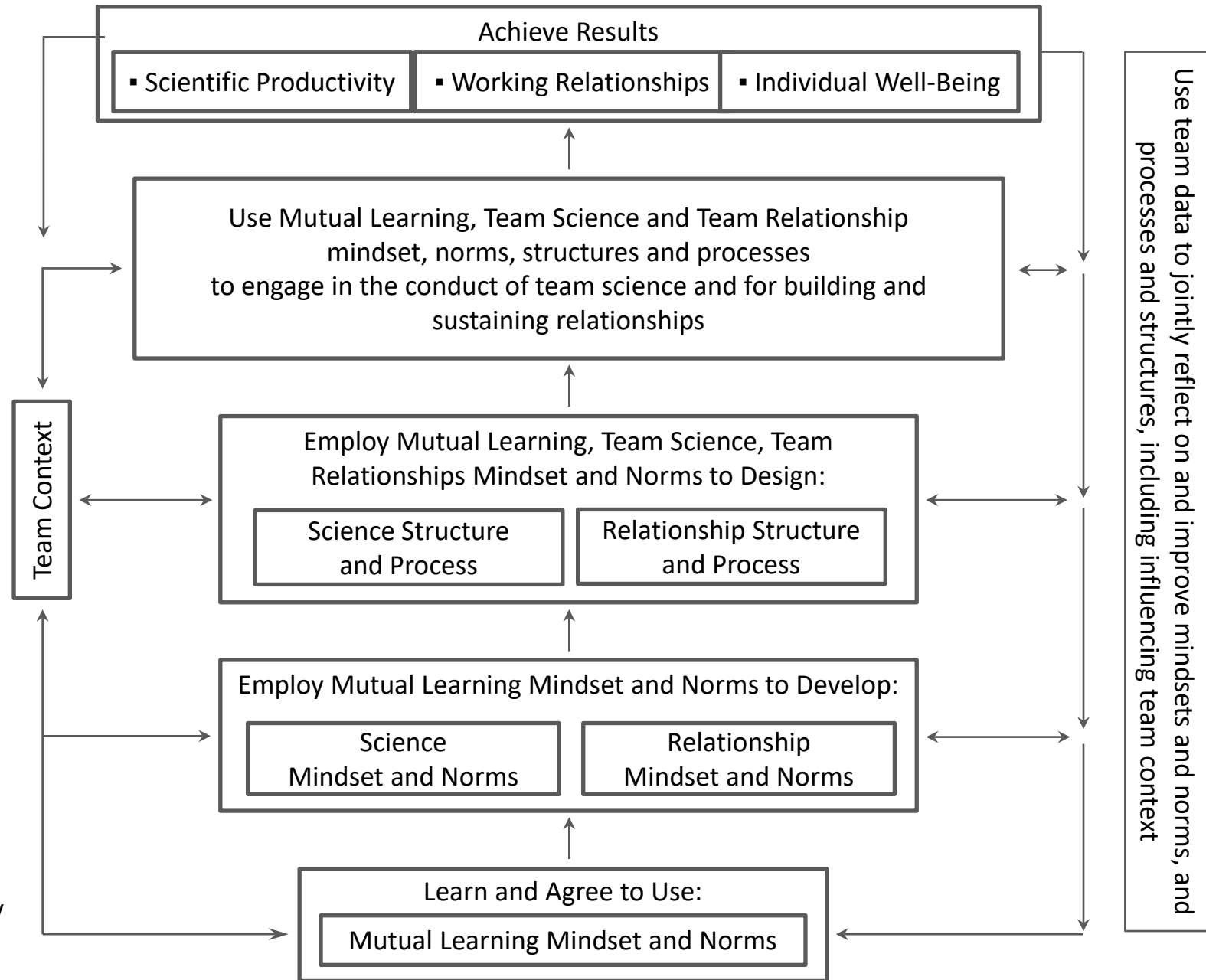


Creating an Effective Team

By developing a shared mindset, a set of normative behaviors, and processes and structures, teams can use their differences to learn with and from each other, creating effective teams with strong working relationships and well-being, accompanied by research productivity.

TEMS

Team Effectiveness Model for Science

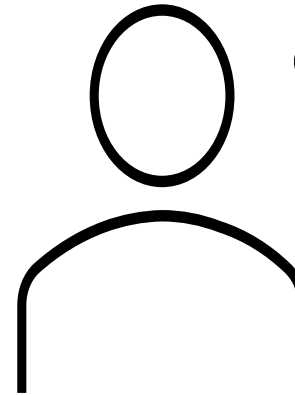
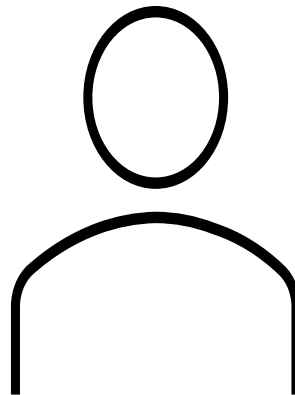
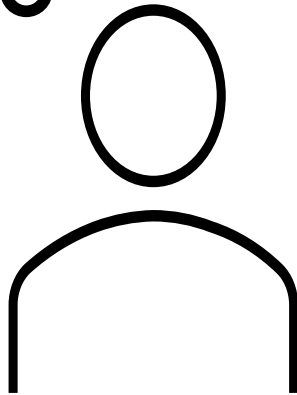
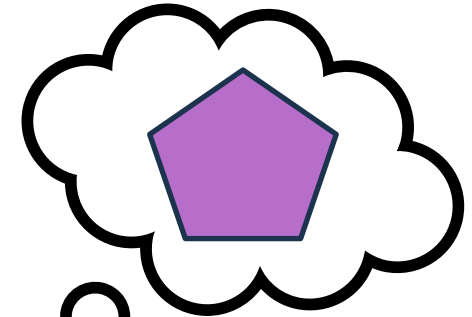
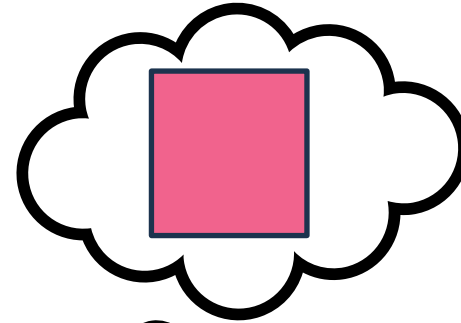
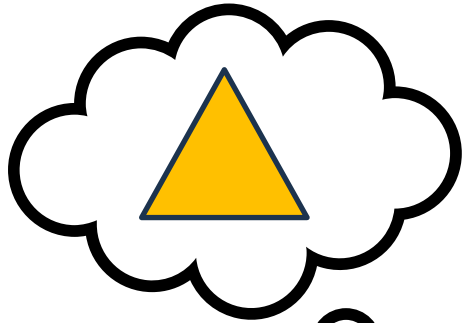


Schwarz and Bennett, 2021 JCTS
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34527296/>

Why – What – How

The Team
Relationship

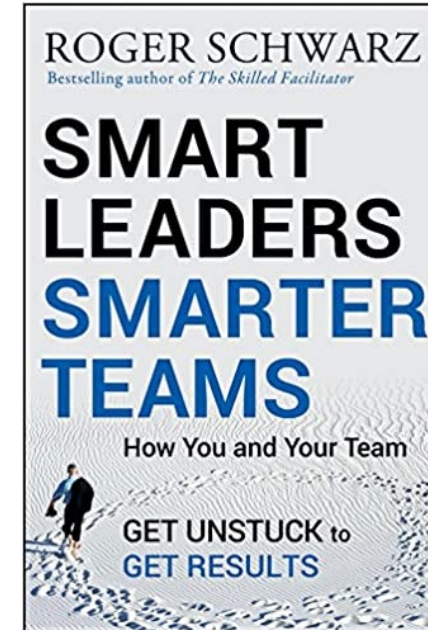
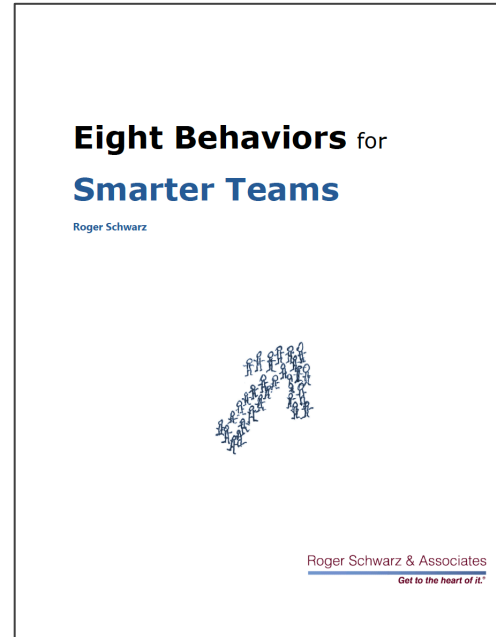
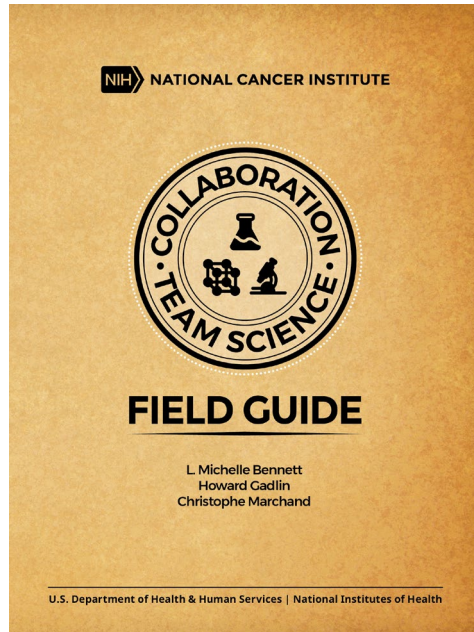
The
Science



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