

## Building High Trust Teams

*Trust lies at the heart of a functioning and cohesive team. Without it, teamwork is all but impossible*  
– Lencioni, 2002

What follows is a process you can use with your teams to determine the presence or absence of trust within your team and some action steps you can take to enhance trust. These tools can be used in an in-person or virtual environment.

From your perspective, think about the trust level you sense within your team:

- How strong is the trust between all team members?
- What actions are being done on the team to build trust?
- What behaviours may be impacting trust on the team?
- What would it be like if your team had a high sense of trust? What could be accomplished?

**Step 1:** *Individually, take the Team Assessment Questionnaire on the following page.*

The assessment uses the 'Five Dysfunctions of a Team' framework developed by Patrick Lencioni in 2002.

**Step 2:** *Reflect on the results of your assessment after scoring it.*

- What surprises you regarding the results of the assessment?
- Where might you see gaps in the levels of trust within your team?
- What steps need to be put in place in order to enhance trust on your team which will increase your team performance?
- What role can you play in creating trust within your team? What needs to change? What needs to stay the same?

**Step 3:** *Debrief your collective responses.*

Come together with your team and discuss the results of your team assessment questionnaire.

- In what areas is your team doing really well?
- What is enabling your team to flourish in these areas?
- What areas do you identify with that may need attention to increase the sense of trust in your team?
- What are the next steps necessary in order to create change around these items?

**Step 4:** *Revisit your teamwork agreement.*

If you do not have a teamwork agreement, download a blank teamwork agreement from the BCPSQC website. Set aside some time at your next team meeting to begin completing this agreement

- As a result of this team assessment, does any of the language need to be updated?
- What new ground rules need to be established if any?

# TEAM ASSESMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

## Scenario Development Sheet

Instructions: Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to your team. It is important to evaluate the statements honestly and without over-thinking your answers.

**3 - Usually**

**2 - Sometimes**

**1 - Rarely**

- \_\_\_ 1. Teams are passionate and unguarded in their discussion of issues.
- \_\_\_ 2. Team members call out one another's deficiencies or unproductive behaviors.
- \_\_\_ 3. Team members know what their peers are working on and how they contribute to the collective good of the team.
- \_\_\_ 4. Team members quickly and genuinely apologize to one another when they say or do something inappropriate or possibly damaging to the team.
- \_\_\_ 5. Team members willingly make sacrifices (such as budget, turf, head count) in their departments or areas of expertise for the good of the team.
- \_\_\_ 6. Team members openly admit their weaknesses and mistakes.
- \_\_\_ 7. Team meetings are compelling, not boring.
- \_\_\_ 8. Team members leave meetings confident that their peers are completely committed to the decisions that were agreed on, even if they were in initial disagreement.

- \_\_\_ 9. Morale is significantly affected by the failure to achieve team goals.
- \_\_\_ 10. During team meetings, the most important—and difficult—issues are put on the table to be resolved.
- \_\_\_ 11. Team members are deeply concerned about the prospect of letting down their peers.
- \_\_\_ 12. Team members know about one another's personal lives and are comfortable discussing them.
- \_\_\_ 13. Team members end discussions with clear and specific resolutions and action plans.
- \_\_\_ 14. Team members challenge one another about their plans and approaches.
- \_\_\_ 15. Team members are slow to seek credit for their own contributions, but quick to point out those of others.

(Lencioni, P. (2002). The five dysfunctions of a team. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.)



**BC PATIENT SAFETY  
& QUALITY COUNCIL**

Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.

# SCORING

Combine your scores for the preceding statements as indicated below:

Dysfunction 1: <b>Absence of Trust</b>	Dysfunction 2: <b>Fear of Conflict</b>	Dysfunction 3: <b>Lack of Commitment</b>	Dysfunction 4: <b>Avoidance of Accountability</b>	Dysfunction 5: <b>Inattention to Results</b>
Statement 4: _____	Statement 1: _____	Statement 3: _____	Statement 2: _____	Statement 5: _____
Statement 6: _____	Statement 7: _____	Statement 8: _____	Statement 11: _____	Statement 9: _____
Statement 12: _____	Statement 10: _____	Statement 13: _____	Statement 14: _____	Statement 15: _____
Total: _____	Total: _____	Total: _____	Total: _____	Total: _____

A score of 8 or 9 is a probable indication that the dysfunction is not a problem for your team.

A score of 6 or 7 indicates that the dysfunction could be a problem.

A score of 3 to 5 is probably an indication that the dysfunction needs to be addressed.

Regardless of your scores, it is important to keep in mind that every team needs constant work, because without it, even the best ones deviate toward dysfunction.



**BC PATIENT SAFETY  
& QUALITY COUNCIL**

Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.

## Members of a team with an absence of trust...

- Conceal their weaknesses and mistakes from one another.
- Hesitate to ask for help or provide constructive feedback.
- Hesitate to offer help outside their own areas of responsibility.
- Jump to conclusions about the intentions and aptitudes of others without attempting to clarify them.
- Fail to recognize and tap into one another's skills and experiences.
- Waster time and energy managing their behaviours for effect.
- Hold grudges.
- Dread meetings and find reasons to avoid spending time together.

## Members of a team with an absence of trust...

- Have boring meetings.
- Create environments where back-channel politics and personal attacks thrive.
- Ignore controversial topics that are critical to team success.
- Fail to tap into all the opinions and perspectives of team members.

## A team that fails to commit...

- Creates ambiguity among the team about direction and priorities.
- Watches windows of opportunity close due to excessive analysis and unnecessary delay.
- Breeds lack of confidence and fear of failure.
- Revisits discussions and decisions again and again.
- Encourages second-guessing among team members.

## A team that avoids accountability...

- Creates resentment among team members who have different standards of performance.
- Encourages mediocrity.
- Misses deadlines and key deliverables.

## A team that is not focused on results...

- Stagnates/fails to grow.
- Rarely defeats competitors.
- Loses achievement-oriented employees.
- Encourages team members to focus on their own careers and individual goals.

