

# HOW TO PREPARE A TEAM FOR TEAM COACHING

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**Team coaching is a two-way street. And while the coach may be experienced, well prepared and enthusiastic, if the team isn't ready to be coached then it could all come to nothing. An important step at the start of any team coaching engagement is therefore to ensure the team is ready to be coached.**

I use two frameworks to make this assessment.

The first is 'Six conditions for team effectiveness' from Wageman et al (2008). This is a useful model that outlines the six key factors found to differentiate top performing teams. It's split into two sets: 'essential conditions' and 'enabling conditions'.

There are three 'essential conditions':

- 1) Are they a real team with a clear, stable membership and members with interdependent goals?
- 2) Does the team have a compelling purpose that adds value to their organisation?
- 3) Is the team made up of the right people, skilled members able to work collaboratively?

There are also three 'enabling conditions':

- 1) A solid structure, are they the right size (5-8 is optimum) with clear roles and working agreements?
- 2) Is there a supporting organisational context i.e. good flow of information, rewards that support collaboration, suitable resources?
- 3) An expert coach – of course!

All this information can be gathered through interviews or surveys as preferred.

To these six points I add my own framework, one that is built around my chemistry with the leader of the team. Here I ask a series of questions to better understand how to approach the programme of coaching in order to be as effective as possible. These questions might include:

- What are the leader's beliefs about their role as a leader?
- How does the leader expect decisions to be made?
- What does someone need to do to earn their right to sit at the team table?
- What is the anticipated value of team coaching?

My aim is to ensure that not only are the team structurally ready to be coached but that the leader is ready to take the team on a journey of improvement. If both are in place, then my role as coach can be highly effective and the process much more enjoyable for everyone.



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