

Figure 2. Benchmarking your team effectiveness

20 CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH-PERFORMING TEAMS

The 20 characteristics in this diagnostic tool are based on characteristics of high-performing teams. Distribute this questionnaire among your team members and have them complete it anonymously. The characteristics are in the Likert scale format to be scored 1 to 7, where 1 means this characteristic is not present in your team and 7 means it is very evident.

Collect the instrument from your team members and for each of the characteristics, calculate the mean score and the range. This will demonstrate where your organization is excelling and where you can focus on continuous improvement to increase your team's performance. The lower the mean score and the wider the range, the more attention the characteristic requires from you as the leader.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXERCISE

Indicate your assessment of your team and the way it functions by circling the corresponding number on a scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high). Choose the number that you feel is most descriptive of your team.

1. MISSION, VISION, GOALS AND PRIORITIES

- (Low) Team members don't know the mission/vision/goals/priorities.
(High) Team members completely understand and agree with mission/vision/goals/priorities.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. VALUES AND STANDARDS

- (Low) We have very different values, and our standards are not clear.
(High) We all understand our values and standards, and strive constantly to live up to them.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. BRANDING

- (Low) We are not different from similar organizations; our reputation is not distinguishable.
(High) Our brand is clear. Patients come to us because we're the best.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. LEADERSHIP

- (Low) One person dominates, and leadership roles are not shared.
(High) There is full participation in leadership; leadership roles are shared by members.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

- (Low) Leaders do not practice self-management, self-control or empathy.
(High) Leaders practice self-management, self-control and empathy.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

- (Low) We do not know what is going on in other parts of the organization.
(High) We are informed about important issues within the organization.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. STRUCTURE

- (Low) Our organizational structure is neither efficient nor effective.
(High) Our organizational structure is efficient and effective.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. TRAINED, PROFESSIONAL TEAM

- (Low) Staff is not oriented nor trained in their jobs.
(High) Staff is oriented, well-trained and professional.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. PERFORMANCE

- (Low) We can't get projects finished; we don't follow through on commitments.
(High) We deliver on time and on budget, and follow through on commitments.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES

- (Low) Member resources are not recognized nor used.
(High) Member resources are fully recognized and used.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (Low) Team members are unclear in their roles, responsibilities and performance expectations.
(High) There is clarity in job roles and responsibilities of team members.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- (Low) Outstanding performance is neither recognized nor rewarded.
(High) Outstanding performance is always recognized and rewarded.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. TRUST AND CONFLICT

- (Low) There is little trust among members, and conflict is evident.
(High) There is a high degree of trust among members. Conflict is dealt with openly and worked through.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING

- (Low) We are guarded and cautious in team discussions, and we don't listen to each other.
(High) We are open and authentic in team discussions, and we listen and feel understood.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. DEGREE OF MUTUAL SUPPORT

- (Low) Team members don't know the mission, vision, goals and priorities.
(High) Team members completely understand and agree with mission, vision, goals and priorities.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. DIVERSITY

- (Low) Prejudice exists among team members, and differences are not appreciated or respected.
(High) Differences among team members are appreciated and respected.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING

- (Low) There is no consistent way that problems are solved or decisions are made.
(High) Team has well-established and agreed-upon approaches to problem-solving and decision-making.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. CONTROL AND PROCEDURES

- (Low) There is little control and a lack of procedures to guide team functioning.
(High) There are effective procedures; team members support these procedures and regulate themselves.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. INNOVATION, CHANGE AND CREATIVITY

- (Low) The team is rigid and does not experiment with how things are done.
(High) The team experiments with different ways of doing things and tries new ideas.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. CELEBRATION

- (Low) Successes are not acknowledged or celebrated.
(High) Team acknowledges and celebrates successes.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7