



THE 5 DISCIPLINES OF INCLUSIVE **TEAMS**

How the Collective Intelligence of Diverse Teams Enables Innovation and Breakthrough Business Results



KORN FERRY

BE **MORE** THAN

Editor's note:

While innovation continues to be the top priority for CEOs as they face accelerating disruption in every industry and in every aspect of how business is conducted¹, organizations have yet to fully crack the code on how to make that happen.

Further, while these CEOs are declaring that the key ingredient for greater innovation is collaboration across cross functional teams with a diverse set of skills, backgrounds, and expertise², here, too, companies are falling short of effective implementation, as more than half of employees say they're not collaborating well.³

Winning companies that achieve greater agility, speed, and innovation do so by pushing decision-making to the middle of their organizations⁴ where teams can adapt with significantly closer proximity to internal and external stakeholders and fewer organizational matrix barriers—all of which lead to faster and more productive cycles.

*In this paper, an interdisciplinary team of Korn Ferry researchers and practitioners share *The 5 Disciplines of Inclusive Teams* necessary to power their organizations to success.*

*The following paper is a summary excerpt from the forthcoming book to be released in the Spring of 2025. "*The 5 Disciplines of Inclusive Teams: Unlocking Collective Power to Achieve Breakthrough (The 5 Inclusive Disciplines Series)*" by Andrés Tapia and Michel Buffet, Berrett-Koehler Publishers.*

For seventeen days, no one knew if the miners were alive. Thirty-three men trapped seven hundred meters underground and five kilometers from the entrance of the San José copper-gold mine near the town of Copiapó in the Atacama Desert of Chile. But then, on August 22, 2010, a note was found taped to a drill bit that had been probing for signs of life as it was pulled back to the surface:

*“Estamos bien en el refugio los 33.”
 (“We are well in the shelter, the 33 of us.”)*

Next, one of history’s most complex and dangerous rescue operations went into high gear. Teams of scientists and engineers from NASA and a dozen global corporations from various Latin

American countries, South Africa, Australia, the United States, and Canada joined excavators from three separate drilling rig teams and specialists from nearly every ministry of the Chilean government to work around the clock to save them. Drills broke, equipment with too much weight threatened cave-ins, and there were mounting worries about keeping the miners alive as their health deteriorated.

Sixty-nine days later, the men were brought to the surface one at a time in a space-like capsule specifically built for the operation, with over five million people around the world watching via video stream.

It took a team. A diverse and inclusive team.

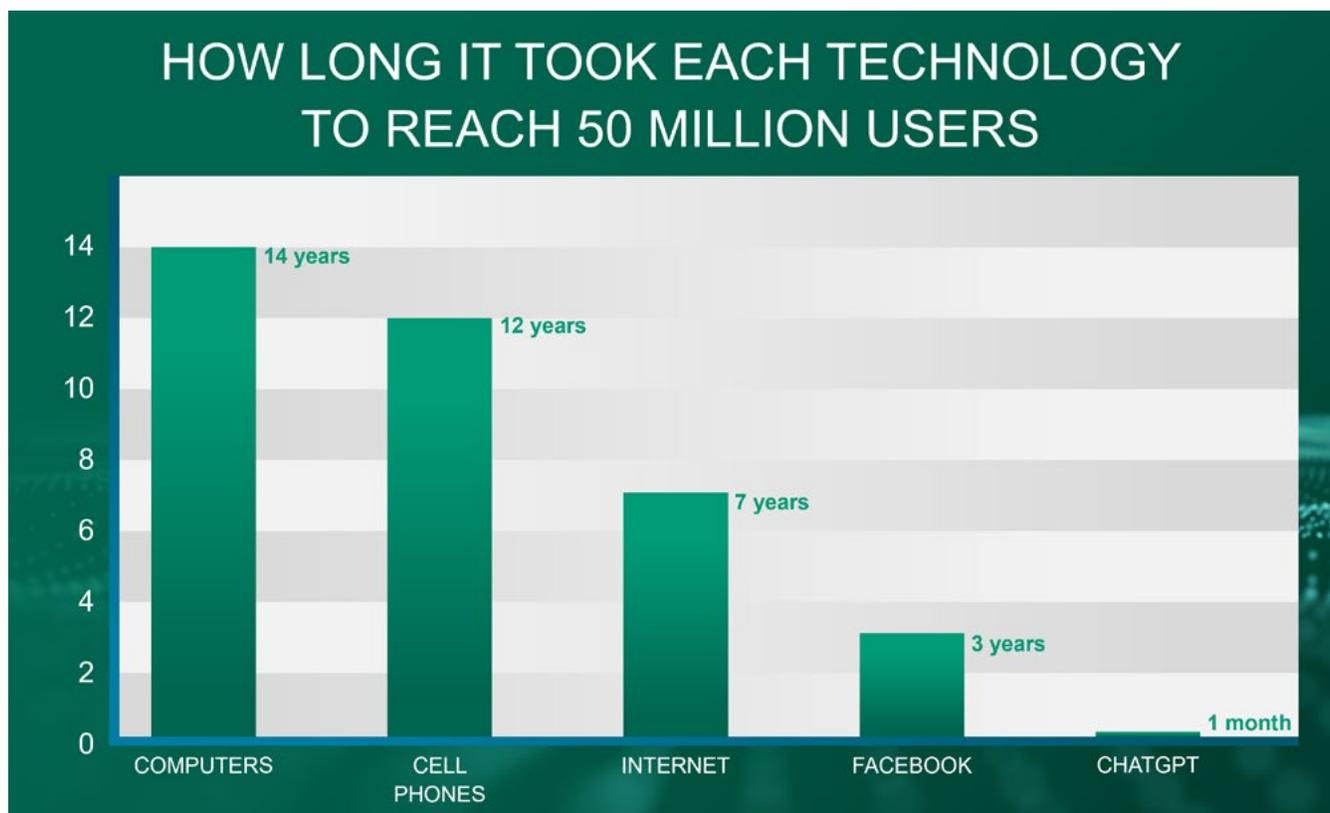


[Hugo Infante/Government of Chile/Wikimedia Commons](#)

Every minute of every day, millions of teams around the world go about getting things done—from the mundane to the heroic. And while teams have been part of the human experience since the beginning of civilization, today, they are one of the most vital structures within organizations to help them successfully ride the waves of vastly sped-up disruption.

We live in an age of moving at warp speed. Nearly every area of our lives and corner of

society works differently than it did yesterday. Just look at the speed of technological adoption in most of our lifetimes. For 50 million people to adopt computers, mobile phones, the Internet, and Facebook, it took 14, 12, 7, and 3 years respectively. And then, between November 2022 and January 2023—merely two months later—100 million were using ChatGPT⁵ (see graphic).



(Figure 1 - How Long It Took Each Technology to Reach 50 Million Users. Adapted by Korn Ferry from: www.visualcapitalist.com/how-long-does-it-take-to-hit-50-million-users)

At this speed of change, traditional ways of organizing enterprises are not delivering what the market needs. Rigid silos are getting in the way, and bureaucracy is choking the flow of collaboration and innovation. Moreover, in-person, face-to-face interaction is becoming less of a practical reality. With all these challenges, research shows that teams are losing more than 20 hours a week due to unclear communication and lack of collaboration. The old norms are obsolete, and new ones must be established.⁶

To respond to the minute-by-minute barrage of challenges, opportunities, and new knowledge, we need agility more than we need new standard operating procedures. For example, agile financial services organizations are two times more likely to attain top quartile financial results compared to those that have average organizational agility, according to a study based on Accenture's Organizational Agility Index.⁷ Additionally, 92% of C-suites say organizational agility is critical for the future.⁸





THE WAYS OF ORGANIZING ENTERPRISES ARE NOT WORKING ANY MORE



Silos are in the way; hierarchy is flatter

Face-to-face is less of a reality.

Teams are losing **20+** hours per month due to unclear collaboration and communication.



Agility, fluidity, spontaneity needed more than structures, processes, and in-person meetings

92% of C-suite executives say agility is critical for the future.

Agile organizations are twice as likely to attain top financial results.



Organizations consider Teams—not practices, lines of business, nor offices—the key organizing principle to get work done

Teams are **50%** more efficient at completing tasks than individuals.

(Figure 2- The organizational ways of organizing enterprises are not working anymore, Korn Ferry, 2023)

What is the key to this agility? It involves systems and processes that are easy to use by everyone. But who creates those? Teams.

Before going further, let's pause to define what a "team" is. A group of people working independently does *not* make a team—just as a bunch of components of a watch do not *make* a watch.

At its essence, a team is *a small group of people who are working toward a common purpose and performance goal with an agreed working approach and complementary skills, and who hold each other accountable.*

As the smallest organizational units within enterprises, teams—not practices, lines of business, or offices—are the organizing principle through which work gets done. In fact, teams are 50% more efficient at completing tasks than individuals.⁹

They are also the fulcrum on which organizations pivot to meet the challenges of the relentless pace of change. Teams are the ultimate morphing entity. They are autonomous and

adaptable. They can come together, break apart, and then reconfigure with members belonging to multiple teams at a time. They can be of various sizes, exist for any length, and accommodate any person, anywhere. Being an effective team requires mutual consultation, coordinated action, and shared decision making—that is, collaboration.

Collaboration is the vital currency of teams in an era during which collaboration is more important than ever. Salesforce reports that 86% of executives cite ineffective collaboration as a major contributor to business failures.¹⁰ The CEO of Barilla, Gianluca Di Tondo, declared early in his tenure (which started in 2023) that his priority was to push decisions down to the manager and team levels because it was essential for creating their sustainable future—a huge change for the hierarchical 140-year-old company.¹¹ And the CEO of YUM!, Brands, David Gibbs, has declared collaboration a critical priority and a key to innovation across the company's iconic restaurant brands—Pizza Hut, KFC, Taco Bell, and The Habit Burger.¹²

One CEO has already gone into hyperdrive in this direction. In March 2024, Bayer CEO Bill Anderson radically eliminated thousands of managerial roles and traditional business divisions. He unleashed his global staff of 100,000 to form 5,000 to 6,000 self-directed teams to increase employee initiatives, product ideas, and time-to-market speed in the next few years.¹³ In his anti-bureaucracy and pro-agile teams article published in *FORTUNE*, he stated:

“At Bayer, we have begun a massive effort to redesign every job and every process, with a radical focus on customers and products. Most importantly, we’re putting 95% of decision-making in the hands of the people actually doing the work. This means fewer managers and layers, and replacing hierarchical annual budgets with 90-day sprints by self-directed teams. ... This model, which we’ve coined Dynamic Shared Ownership ... [will mean that] rather than a lumbering corporation, Bayer will emerge as agile and bold as a startup—but one with operations in more than 100 countries. I’m convinced that this dramatic change will accelerate and unlock the value creation in each of our businesses.”¹⁴

Collaborative teams help each other find accurate information, so they can free up more time to work on useful solutions. (The average knowledge employee spends roughly 2.5 hours a day gathering information.¹⁵) In collaborative teams, employees learn from one another due to the multiple inputs from diverse points of view and experiences. This improves problem-solving capabilities and creative thinking, increasing the organization’s ability to adapt in a changing market environment. This, in turn, creates an engaged workforce where each person feels like a contributing member of a unified team.

Not only is it engaging, it’s also measurably more productive. A Stanford study found that those who work in a collaborative rather than individual setting are 50% more effective at completing tasks, boosting their intrinsic motivation, and helping them become more engaged with their work.¹⁶



THE NATURE OF TEAMS IS CHANGING

AND THIS CALLS FOR MORE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE TEAMS



TODAY'S MOST EFFECTIVE TEAMS ARE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE

Teams have become the way in which people navigate the intricate structures of Big Business or Big Government and get things done. As Anderson, Bayer's CEO, wrote: "There's another sinister force weighing on the company's strategic options. Bureaucracy has put Bayer in a stranglehold. Our internal rules for employees span 1,362 pages. We have excellent people, with expertise in a range of disciplines and exceptional commitment to our success. But they are trapped in 12 levels of hierarchy, which puts unnecessary distance between our teams, our customers, and our products. To succeed, we need an environment where people and their ideas can thrive—not be stymied by red tape."¹⁷

For this ambition to succeed, CEOs must consider the reality of the vast diversity that exists at the team level. Today's workforce is diverse in every imaginable way—race/ethnicity,

gender, physical ability, and sexual orientation, yes, but also in differentiated ways of being tied to our personalities (introvert vs. extrovert), thinking styles (neurodivergence), and unique life experiences. The bell curve of diversity in the workplace currently lies at the entry and mid-level jobs—the very place where teams are at their most numerous and active.

The full spectrum of diversity comes to life and delivers concrete and measurable outcomes in the context of teams. So, to discuss today's teams, we must discuss diverse teams. Beyond just a characteristic, how can diversity be an enabler of teams performing at their best? The key to leveraging that diversity is to nurture and shape inclusive teams.

Teams are where employees have the greatest chance to do their best work and be most productive. While the nature of teams is being disrupted, it's this very disruption that makes team environments the most conducive place for generating innovation.



INNOVATION IS A TEAM SPORT

In a world of disruption, 80% of global companies have declared innovation as one of their top three priorities.¹⁸ Innovation leads to new products and services and improved processes and structures. It leads to expanding into new markets, including more diverse ones. It fuels a sense of progress and accomplishment that plays a big part in driving engagement.

Contrary to popular culture notions that innovation primarily resides in exceptional individuals, research shows that innovation is a team sport. And diverse, inclusive teams create the conditions for greater innovation. While teams make better decisions than individuals 66% of the time, diverse teams make better decisions 87% of the time.¹⁹ However, maximizing the power of diversity to achieve breakthrough collaboration and innovation across global geographies has remained out of reach.

That's because it's not just the diversity of the teams that leads to greater innovation. It's their inclusiveness. Diversity alone is not enough. You can't just put a diverse team together and expect to see the documented benefits sprout organically. In fact, when not managed well, diverse teams can end up being more prone to conflict and less productive.²⁰ Left alone, they are likely to perform worse than more homogenous teams, since the greater the

number of differences in a team amounts to a greater potential for conflict.

To optimize that diversity and to, in fact, be able to navigate the greater complexity and enhanced possibility of friction inherent in diverse teams, teams must be inclusive. A BCG study analyzing over 1,700 companies worldwide found that inclusive teams were more innovative, producing 45% of a company's total revenue from innovation compared to only 26% from non-inclusive teams.²¹ Diverse *and* inclusive teams are the winning combination for innovation. In other words: top-team performance and innovation are the *so-what* of diversity and inclusion.

Teams are where the statistics leading to innovation and better business results come to life. They are where the energy for shaping the future is stored and ready to be activated. And it's diversity and inclusion that increase the octane of team innovation, business results, and activation.

The higher potential of diverse and inclusive teams is too great to leave to chance. It requires the deliberate activation of inclusion for the diversity within teams to thrive.

Hence, we set out to crack the code of how to unlock the collective power of diverse teams through inclusion.

Diverse *and* inclusive teams are the winning combination for innovation. In other words: top-team performance and innovation are the *so-what* of diversity and inclusion.

THE 5 DISCIPLINES OF INCLUSIVE TEAMS

There is so much research that supports the idea that more diverse teams drive greater performance and innovation.

At Korn Ferry, we set out to find the behaviors and practices of these high-performing, diverse, and inclusive teams were engaging in. Once identified, we explored ways to codify those practices and accelerate the process of leveraging team diversity through inclusion.

We want to highlight some intriguing insight from our neuroscience research on teams.

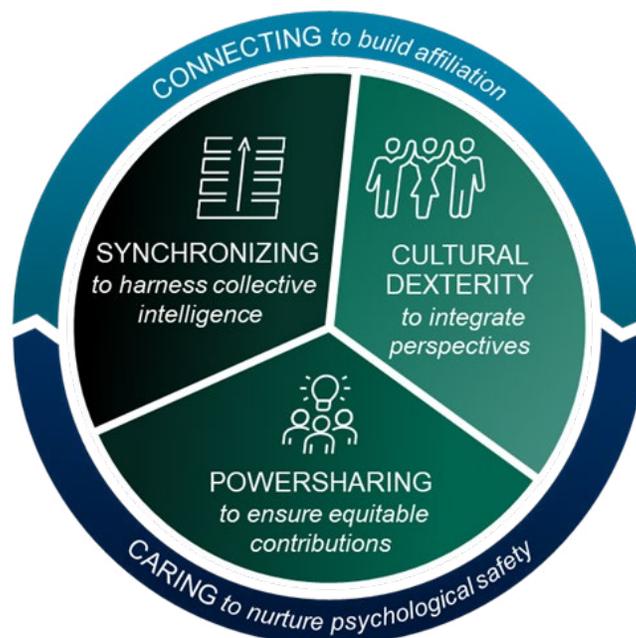
The new proof points coming out of neuroscience show that when people exhibit inclusive behaviors—like checking their unconscious biases, being curious, showing empathy, and trusting each other—it releases mood-enhancing hormones within a group.

For example, oxytocin—which accelerates social bonding—releases in inverse proportionality to the stress hormone cortisol. Yes, the one that causes anxiety, depression, fatigue, and irritability.

What does that mean? What was once a pejorative dismissal—that discriminatory treatment is “all in your head”—can now be affirmed as objectively true!

Which brings us to our findings: **The 5 Disciplines of Inclusive Teams.**

Our research on teams is a drilldown on what effective inclusive and diverse teams look like, how they operate, and how they optimize their performance. It confirms that more diverse and inclusive organizations are more innovative and are better able to achieve organizational results.



DISCIPLINE 1

CONNECTING to build affiliation

THE ABILITY TO DEEPLY UNDERSTAND AND VALUE THE CAPABILITIES, PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES, AND IDENTITY-FORMING BIOGRAPHY OF EACH TEAM MEMBER.

In our research, we discovered that team members most often operate with limited knowledge and understanding of others on their teams.

People are seen significantly too narrowly through the lens of their hierarchical title (e.g., “manager”), job title (e.g., “programmer,” “instructional designer,” and “engineer”), or functional or practice area (e.g., “logistics,” “marketing,” and “human resources”), which limits not only how they are seen but how much they are encouraged or allowed to bring forth a broader set of skills and perspectives that sit outside the organizational parameters placed around each person via the titles they are given.

The innovation consultant who is a degreed drummer, the AI designer who served in the Peace Corps, the safety coordinator who invents home gadgets, and the root cause analyst who got a master’s degree in linguistics are some

examples. Discovering these hidden talents does not happen automatically, and the classic “What do you do?” question—which contextually is usually asked and answered narrowly—is not enough to reveal the depths of what teammates have to offer the team’s ability to achieve its purpose.

Teams simply don’t intentionally spend enough time on having their members share collectively about their full set of skills, experiences, and preferences. For teams to access the full diverse potential to operate as an inclusive team, they must recognize the critical role that Connecting plays in activating information-sharing, consultation, coordinated action, and decision-making. Through Connecting, team members lay the foundations for all their collaborative work.

But without it, the deeper relational and transformational inclusive relationships in the next discipline of Caring cannot be built.





DISCIPLINE 2

CARING to nurture psychological safety

THE ABILITY OF TEAM MEMBERS TO DEMONSTRATE PERSONAL CONCERN FOR ONE ANOTHER, AS WELL AS FOR THE TEAM AS AN ENTITY.

Where Connecting requires curiosity about capabilities, Caring requires curiosity about well-being.

When team members not only know the personal side of their teammates, but also have the ability to empathize with how they have and are experiencing life—the connections made in the first discipline of Connecting will run deeper. When teams practice the discipline of Caring, all have a greater chance of experiencing their contentment and wellbeing as contingent on the contentment and wellbeing of others. Therefore, inclusive teams create the right conditions for their members to show situational awareness (“I recognize what is happening here and now”), different forms of empathy—*cognitive* empathy (“I understand what you feel”) and *emotional* empathy (“I feel what you feel”)— and advocacy (“I take action on your behalf and in your

interests”).

How to get to a more heartfelt state? While Connecting enables team members to be curious about what people do and know, Caring takes it a step further, enabling team members to show genuine emotional curiosity in who people are. Their personal biography, how they identify in terms of the characteristics, is what makes them them. For different team members, the most important basis of their identities may be their nationality, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, personality, faith, politics, and a combination of other life experiences factors.

This increased level of disclosure will open new forms of Caring and an invitation to find out more about people’s aspirations, motivations, and concerns.

DISCIPLINE 3

SYNCHRONIZING to harness collective intelligence

THE STATE OF BEING COORDINATED IN TIME AND PURPOSE, WHERE MULTIPLE ELEMENTS OR ENTITIES ALIGN COLLABORATIVELY AND HARMONIOUSLY THROUGH SYSTEMS, NETWORKS, AND DEVICES.

A peloton of three dozen cyclists pedaling in sync up and down rolling hills and sharp curves. Hawaiian outrigger canoers rowing in tandem. An emergency room with a vast array of specialists seamlessly keeping an accident victim alive. A soccer team on a roll. These teams find a way to communicate and coordinate their actions in pursuit of a common goal in ways that are so much greater than the sum of their parts where physical movements, heart rates, breathing rhythms, and emotions end up in alignment.

Call it chemistry, flow, intangibles, secret sauce. Neuroscientists call it synchrony. It's what taps and harnesses the collective intelligence of teams. Think of synchrony as the state of a team being synchronized or in harmony. This can manifest through coordinated behaviors or mental states of all members on a team. "High levels of team synchrony can improve the quality of performance, result in fewer mistakes,

and fast completion of the task," says The Korn Ferry Institute's Amelia Haynes. In baseball, statisticians estimate that synchrony accounts for up to 40% of unexplained variance in team performance.²²

While there can be something transcendent and organic about Synchronizing, we now know enough about neuroscience to know that inclusive teams can knowingly activate synchrony more rapidly and more deeply with interactions that tap into people's sense of identity with respect and dignity as they create safe spaces for all team members. They can also use techniques such as making eye contact, breathing exercises, and even music and percussion to accelerate the process. The norm in many Japanese and Chinese companies where they start the workday with everyone doing calisthenics together is one example of synchronizing through guided exercises.





DISCIPLINE 4

CULTURAL DEXTERITY to *integrate diverse perspectives*

THE ABILITY OF TEAM MEMBERS TO DISCERN AND CONSIDER THEIR OWN AND OTHERS' WORLDVIEWS, SOLVE PROBLEMS, MAKE DECISIONS, AND RESOLVE CONFLICTS IN WAYS THAT OPTIMIZE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES FOR BETTER, LONGER-LASTING, AND MORE CREATIVE SOLUTIONS.

Even before there was the string of terms of “diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging,” there has been the concept of “crosscultural competence” also referred to as “intercultural dexterity” to research and establish the constructive behaviors around managing differences effectively.

The original intercultural work, by researchers such as Fons Trompenaars and Geert Hofstede, covered national culture differences: how the French, the Japanese, the Peruvians, the Nigerians, etc. differed from one another even as they discovered commonalities. But over time, this work and that which is emerging primarily in the corporate world around diversity, began to intersect as vanguard practitioners applied the concept to all forms of differences, such as regional and racial/ethnic differences *within* countries.

Today, there’s a renewed interest growing in cultural dexterity as unconscious bias’ lack of answers for how to best manage differences once one becomes cognizant of them has left most adrift about what to do about these differences. Today’s inclusive teams are skilled at navigating all forms of differences by mastering the practices of being self-aware of what makes their teams a team (and, therefore, as peculiar and idiosyncratic to others as others are to them). They lean into discovering what makes their interpersonal dynamics as a team unique, and then they leverage those differences to develop whole new and innovative ways of rising as a team to meet the challenges of this most disruptive era.

DISCIPLINE 5

POWERSHARING to ensure equitable contributions

THE ABILITY TO UNLOCK THE POWER OF EACH TEAM MEMBER EQUITABLY TO YIELD THE BEST AND MOST CREATIVE RESULTS.

In the domain of diversity, equity, and inclusion, the concept of power is treated with some degree of suspicion and even avoidance as a topic to engage in. It's understandable, given that when groups of people who have been discriminated against, marginalized, and treated with unconscious bias hear the word *power*, many see ghost words appear alongside it, such as *abuse of power*, *power against*, *power over*, *power hungry*, or *power trip*. Power, then, is often seen as the antithesis of inclusion, especially in a team.

But inclusive teams have a more nuanced view of power. They understand that power is like energy. For all its inherent force, energy is neutral—but at the extremes it can either destroy or create. It all depends on how it's used by those who have it.

In inclusive teams, power does not reside in one individual. Rather power is shared across all team members. Power—to move things forward, to influence, to inform, to create—flows as a surge of electricity in the neural network of the team's collective intelligence in a way that ensures equitable contribution by all. *Who* has the power ebbs and flows among the team members based on the topic, task, or mood, given who has the contextually relevant expertise and knowledge that inherently gives them authority to contribute with power.

Powersharing means that there is equitable credit for the contributions. Too many people, especially those who have historically been and still are marginalized, remain anonymous contributors for work where the credit goes to the few and privileged.





The 5 Disciplines are a collection of inclusive team practices and behaviors that we hope become the default for all teams. Through the practice of the first two disciplines, Connecting and Caring, trust deepens, which nurtures an environment where team members can feel psychologically safe. In it, they feel comfortable taking more risks with one another, which is key to the practice of the other three disciplines: Synchronizing, Cultural Dexterity, and Powersharing. In our model, this is why

Connecting and Caring are represented as the outer circle. As teams consider embarking on a development journey, they should consider as a first step assessing their current standings on The 5 Disciplines. Complete the inventory on the following page to identify and prioritize the areas that need the most attention from your leaders. This approach will help create the right conditions for fostering inclusivity and enhancing team performance.

NOW APPLY IT!

Take 10 minutes to complete this inventory to help you uncover where the greatest opportunities lie for your team to be more inclusive. After you have checked all the boxes that accurately describe your team, which ones are left unchecked? These are the practices you can focus on.

CONNECTING

- We ask questions to better understand each other's perspectives.
- We are curious about the experiences that have shaped our respective approaches to work.
- We can share our honest opinions without fear of negative consequences.
- We feel connected to the team not just to some individuals on the team.

CARING

- We empathetically consider everyone's personal needs and circumstances.
- We support each other in expressing concerns or doubts.
- We foster a safe environment for taking risks or making mistakes.
- We empower each other to care for our fellow team members.

SYNCHRONIZING

- We use effective processes to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- We manage time effectively, both in and outside of meetings.
- We pay attention to each team member's different working styles and find ways to fold them into the flow and rhythm of the whole group.
- We track our performance and celebrate collective success.

CULTURAL DEXTERITY

- We show interest in each other's cultural backgrounds.
- We pause to consider cultural assumptions and biases that may limit the team's performance.
- We openly discuss the influence of personal identities on the team's work.
- We adapt to different contexts by leveraging the team's cultural diversity.

POWERSHARING

- Any team member can take the lead on driving team decisions.
- Everyone on the team contributes to the team's success.
- We all participate fully in team discussions.
- We respect everyone's time when we are together as a team.

INCLUSIVE TEAMS

PARADOXES TO WATCH OUT FOR

At every turn of the research and field work, we have come across paradoxes within each of the disciplines that are watch-outs since teams can overdo any one of them:

TOO MUCH CONNECTING CAN CREATE EXCLUSIONARY CLIQUES

There is a fine line between working toward a strongly connected team and over-connecting. When teams become too interconnected, individuals may unintentionally form exclusive cliques. These cliques often develop when a subset of team members share similar backgrounds, interests, or personalities, creating an insular environment that can alienate others within or outside the team. Within these tight-knit circles, communication may become exclusive with information flowing only among clique members, leading to a breakdown in transparency and trust within the broader team.

Navigation: *Organizations should encourage cross-functional collaboration, promote diversity in team composition, and provide opportunities for interdepartmental communication that can help break down silos and prevent the formation of cliques. By promoting openness, transparency, and a shared sense of purpose, organizations can ensure that teams remain connected without succumbing to the pitfalls of cliquish behavior.*

TOO MUCH CARING CAN LEAD TO LOW ACCOUNTABILITY

When team members overly prioritize maintaining harmony and avoiding conflict, they may shy away from holding individuals accountable, which can lead to team complacency around achieving results. Instead of addressing issues directly, they may opt to ignore or downplay problems to preserve harmony within the team.

Navigation: *Team members must ensure that Caring is expressed in ways that align with organizational objectives and values. The discipline of Caring doesn't necessarily require liking everyone or offering special treatment. At a work-team level, Caring is extended to others for utilitarian reasons, such as a shared commitment to the team's purpose and wanting all team members to feel valued and motivated to perform at their best.*

TOO MUCH SYNCHRONIZING CAN LEAD TO GROUP THINK

Under the pressure of leaders keen on unity and alignment, there can be an overemphasis on synchrony's common byproducts—standardization and coordination. If team members prioritize consensus over innovative thinking, quashing dissenting voices and inhibiting the exploration of diverse perspectives, then they are yielding to complacency and opening the door to exclusion of different voices. Therefore, teams can end up neglecting the potential benefits of adopting novel approaches.

Navigation: *Achieving a delicate balance between both synchrony and asynchrony and alignment and autonomy becomes paramount. One way to do this is through structural methods to avoid groupthink, such as building counterfactual thinking opportunities into meeting agendas.*

TOO MUCH CULTURAL DEXTERITY CAN LEAD TO ANYTHING GOES

When team members become too accepting of differences without working out group norms, teams can become quite ineffective. A belief that all cultural practices are equally valid may lead to a passivity to do the hard work of engaging on the actual differences for better understanding of assumptions that lead to paralysis, or worse, an inability to go beyond simply respecting differences to actually leveraging those differences for desperately needed innovative thinking.

Navigation: *The antidote to anything goes is for the team to establish clear performance expectations and have a mutual understanding of the team's accountabilities. Plus, the regular execution of the practices within each of The 5 Disciplines of Inclusive Teams goes a long way in managing the paradox of "there is more than one way to do, think, and talk" on the one hand, and "we've got to move forward together in synchronicity" on the other.*

TOO MUCH POWERSHARING CAN LEAD TO ANARCHY

Extensive Powersharing can result in detrimental effects within teams, such as prolonged deliberations, indecisiveness, and a notable breakdown in decision-making structures. As every choice undergoes exhaustive scrutiny and consensus-seeking, essential tasks may languish unresolved or face significant delays, and decision-making processes become chaotic and counterproductive.

Navigation: *Unguided Powersharing often occurs when there is a lack of clear mechanisms for allocating and regulating authority within a team. Who owns the decision? Therefore, teams must establish clear frameworks and processes for allocating, regulating, and exercising power. This may involve defining roles and responsibilities, establishing shared decision-making procedures and promoting transparency and accountability.*

HOW INCLUSIVE TEAM LEADERS *SUPPORT* INCLUSION WITHIN THEIR TEAMS

CHAMPION COLLABORATION

Effective team leaders ensure that every team member not only contributes but also has a substantive voice in the envisioning, developing, and decision-making processes.

DEVELOP TEAM TALENT

Team leaders must see themselves as individuals and team coaches rather than directive leaders. In inclusive teams, they coach and develop team members to tap into the diversity of everyone's experiences and perspectives to achieve results, and they reinforce a team mentality with team recognition and rewards. Only then can the ways in which the different individuals contribute, in the service of the communal effort, be called out and celebrated.

BUILD A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Team leaders make it clear that each member is an integral part of something larger than themselves. They help keep the team's common purpose top of mind and ensure members support one another in achieving it.

VALUE DIFFERENCES

Team leaders encourage team members to view cultural differences as strengths and as resources that can contribute to innovation and problem-solving. To help team members better grasp this, they can create a cultural exchange workshop, inclusive of self-assessment tools and introspective exercises that encourage team members to reflect on their own cultural values, communication styles, and work preferences.

BALANCE STAKEHOLDERS AND MANAGE CONFLICT

There will be times when teams hit a stalemate due to interpersonal conflict or not enough consensus roiling the waters. This is one of the key reasons why a designated team leader is needed: to help resolve conflicts and keep the team cohesive and on track when members are at odds.

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