

# Working Better Together

Outline of  
our *Working  
Better  
Together*  
Process:  
Elements &  
Options...



Culture, Cohesion & Communication



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# Working Better Together

## Process Outline

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### Elements & Options

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## 1. Thinking Team Building?



Office, factory, workshop or school, behind every innovation or initiative, is a team. In fact it's hard to avoid being part of a team – they're the main way we organise work.

Team-working skills are vital for everyone. Any time a group of people come together to work on a common task, whether it's an intact work team or an occasional committee, team-working comes into play.

**Teams are everywhere these days** and the ability to get teams working better together is a major mission for most leaders.

- We need to know how to form teams – then facilitate them to work collaboratively.
- We need to maintain and improve teams – to help them continuously rethink how they can work better together.
- We also need to build commitment to common goals and challenges, as well as manage team relationships and performance. *It's a tall order...*

**While most workplaces say they work in teams, fewer know how to really make teams work.** *We naturally form teams to achieve things together we couldn't do alone. Yet working well together doesn't come so naturally. We have to learn how to do this.*

**That's where team-building comes in.** It has a proven track record as a tool to enhance team performance and relationships. But the term itself sometimes seems a bit nebulous. People know they need it, but often aren't sure what it is. We need answers to questions like:

- ? What is team-building? Does it really make a difference?
- ? What makes one team work better than another? Why do some succeed while others fail?
- ? What steps can I follow to build a good cohesive team that works well together?
- ? What are the traps to avoid and what do I can I do to design a good team-building process?

There's a daunting number of team-building alternatives out there and as many different methods and approaches as there are providers. None are right for every occasion. *Team-building doesn't come in a one-size-fits-all packages, no matter what anyone says.*

**Working Better Together** is the general label we use for our team-building approach.

If you're a leader looking to revitalise or reform your teams, or take them to the next level for a stand-out performance, this outline *explains some of the elements and options that make up our approach.* We hope it gives you some ideas about questions like:

- ? What do we really want to achieve through team-building – what's do we want to achieve?

- ? What steps, strategies and approaches might best accomplish our outcomes?
- ? What will best fit our context, culture and the personalities that make up our team?
- ? What obstacles and challenges do we expect and what might be our success factors?

We don't have all the answers or pretend to be the best choice for you. In fact, we encourage you to think carefully about what you need and what strategies may be the best for your team.

We hope this outline explains some of the options we can assist you with and facilitates you making some informed decisions around what you plan to do to with your teams.

As you're reading it right now, regard this outline as preliminary - a prelude to any conversation we might have about what's going in your team and what you'd like to. As we plan a *Working Better Process* together, thinking changes, new alternatives emerge and I always fine-tune with you and your teams, to *get focus and content right*.

**Context:** Your teams work in a particular context and culture. It's important to take that into account in thinking about what's going on with your team and what you want to accomplish. Some of the questions we think are worth exploring together include:

- ? How well are your teams working together right now? What's working for them and what seems to be getting in the way?
- ? What challenges do your team face right now or in the future that might stretch them?
- ? How would you characterise the culture and climate the team works in?
- ? What patterns and behaviours do you notice in your teams – good and not-so-good?
- ? What strategies or interventions have you already tried with your teams?
- ? What changes to their environment have your teams undergone in the last three years?
- ? How well would you say your teams are performing right now on a scale of 1 to 10?
- ? Has anything happened to unsettle or disrupt team routines or work approaches?
- ? How would you describe the stress and resilience levels of your teams?
- ? How well do your teams embrace change – are they accepting, resisting or fatigued?

## 2. What's Working Better Together?



Over the last 20 years or so I've run many different kinds of team-building activities in lots of different work contexts under our *Working Better Together* banner.

It's one of 5 Learning Pathways around which we organise our extensive range of leadership, team, change and culture revitalisation, conversational mastery, emotional intelligence and well-being programs.



For starters, team-building isn't a single thing – and it doesn't come as 'one-size-fits-all'.

But all team-building has an overarching aim: to find ways to work better together *which is why we use this label for our range of team-building clinics and.*

### We think that Working Better Together involves:

- Making the most of your team's talents by finding ways to work together more collectively, collaboratively and constructively.
- Dealing with issues, concerns and processes underlying all teams - patterns of behaviour, interaction, communication, roles and relationships that affect how well they work together.
- Working on both *Social and Emotional Team Intelligence* that creates self-awareness and connectivity, and the *conversational* level that always has a positive team-building effect.
- Equipping people with the emotional, conversational and relational skills they need to be better team-players – to build vibrant, healthy and connective work cultures, and tune-up their team to put in a superior performance.

Many 'failure-factors' in teams can lead to frustration and conflict. Like everything else, teams do break down or don't work as well as they could. They need maintenance now and again.



We've noticed that teams naturally focus most of their effort on technical skills and the operational side of the work. *There's nothing wrong with that.*

But you can focus so much on plans, schedules, quality, service-delivery, safety or resourcing, that you overlook the equally important part team-working skills and good relationships play.

It's a fact. *Many teams fail at this social level, not at the technical level.* That's where *Working Better Together* comes in.

Teams can be great to share the load and get stacks done. But working in with others isn't always that easy. Teams have their challenges as well as rewards. It can be hard blending together different personalities, emotional styles, priorities and personal needs – not to mention getting along with your supervisor or manager.

**While *Working Better Together* integrates many different team improvement concepts like collaboration, cohesiveness, dynamics, behaviours and culture, we think it boils down to 5 really key foundations...**

Without paying attention to these 5 team foundations, people tend to bumble along, making the same old avoidable errors that get teams in a tangle. For many teams these 5 foundations tend to be invisible unless they get guided through them.

**We've put them in a tick-table, so you can think about where your team is in relation to each and what they might need...**

### 1. Team Visions and Values

- ☐ Defining the purpose of this team – why we're here and how we make a difference
- ☐ Identifying common challenges we can all get behind that energises and focuses
- ☐ Agreeing shared vision and directions , so we're all on the same page
- ☐ Deciding on a 'best-fit' team structure – a *team design that supports our vision*

### 2. Talking in Teams

- ☐ Learning how to talk together and have constructive dialogues rather than debate
- ☐ Making conversations open and constructive rather than closed and combative
- ☐ Clarifying workroles and responsibilities – *understanding contributions we each make*

### 3. Emotional Intelligence

- ☐ How emotionally intelligent our team is – tuning into and using emotions positively
- ☐ Building better team relations – learning to get along well with each other
- ☐ Creating positive team cultures and emotional work climates – making it safe to belong

### 4. Dealing with Difficulties

- ☐ How we handle conflict and deal with difficult discussions – *these arise in all teams*
- ☐ Being able to give each other feedback - *and bring issues out into the open*
- ☐ Lowering defensiveness and *learning how to have constructive confrontations*

### 5. Connecting and Respecting

- ☐ Increasing trust, respect and openness – *about what's really going on in this team*
- ☐ Being more aware of how we come across – *the impact we have on others*
- ☐ Connecting better with each other – to increase mutual understanding and tolerance

### Effective Teams: 5 Foundations



**Working Better Together isn't just a one-off, singular workshop.** We customise the content to the needs of various teams and cultural contexts, drawing on a suite of different team-learning modules we've developed over the years ranging from shared vision to emotional intelligence, talking in teams, connecting, respecting, team cohesion, resilience-building and team well-being.

## 3. Aims and Outcomes

*What do our teams need to work on?* That's probably your first question.

We often find that people feel a need for team-building but the specific outcomes or areas they want to focus on elude them – they remain vague and insubstantial.



- The clearer you are on what you want to get out of team-building, the more effective it is.
- If you want team-building to work, you need to identify what to work on first – and it may not be the most obvious thing.
- You also have to demonstrate to the team that it relates directly to real work results they care about and on top of that, it benefits them.

**Every team has its own unique needs and challenges, so aims and outcomes vary from team to team.** But as we've said, most find they need to work on conversational, behavioural and relationship-building aspects, which we've summed up in these **crucial team questions**:

- ? **Direction:** *Where have we been? Where are we going? Are we all heading the same way?*
- ? **Contribution:** *How can we better appreciate the contributions we each make?*
- ? **Group Interaction:** *How well do we interact? Are we aware of the impact we each have?*
- ? **Connection:** *Who do I connect or relate to in this team? Who don't I? Why is that?*
- ? **Rapport:** *Do we give each other enough positive self-regard, respect and support?*
- ? **Belongingness:** *To what degree do I feel I identify with, and feel like I belong in this team?*
- ? **Leadership:** *Do I like my leader or agree with how leadership is handled in this team?*
- ? **Decisions:** *How do we make decisions in this team? How can we improve on this?*
- ? **Team Spirit:** *How can we instil team spirit, trust, identity and make people feel valued?*
- ? **Team Improvement:** *How can we do the work better or work better together on it?*
- ? **Co-operation:** *How can we increase collaboration, co-operation and work more as a team?*
- ? **Differences:** *How can we deal better with conflict and resolve differences more amicably?*
- ? **Responsibility:** *How well do we all take responsibility and hold each other to account?*
- ? **Climate:** *Do we have a positive work culture and a safe and supportive emotional climate?*
- ? **Communication:** *Do we have open, constructive conversation where people share ideas?*



**Working Better Together** clinics can incorporate so many different things – and naturally, we all have different ideas about what it means and how to go about it. Teamworking outcomes many seem to be looking for include:

- ❑ **Impacts and direction** - open discussion on where we've been and where we're going
- ❑ **Shared visions and directions** – where most teambuilding needs to start!
- ❑ **Looking at how we interact** – being more aware of our own behaviour and how it impacts
- ❑ **Emotional self-management** – learning strategies to better cope with toxicity from others

- ❑ **Forming and designing teams** – getting the architecture and processes right.
- ❑ **Talking better together in teams** – attending to our conversations and communication.
- ❑ **Learning better together** – tapping into opportunities for sharing learning and good ideas
- ❑ **Increasing team cohesiveness** – finding ways to stick together and then stay together
- ❑ **Enhancing team relationships** – respect, trust, openness, collaborative team behaviour
- ❑ **Social and emotional intelligence** – taking the emotional temperature of the team
- ❑ **Clearing up leadership** – for self-responsibility, empowerment and better co-ordination
- ❑ **Clarifying roles** – the expectations and assumptions we make about each other
- ❑ **Dealing with dysfunctions** – tackling team norms and habits that become obstacles
- ❑ **Difficult-moments management** – learning to tackle tricky issues and troublesome topics
- ❑ **Climate & culture** – creating conditions to encourage caring, connectivity and positivity
- ❑ **Team improvements** – finding ways we can work better and more constructively together

Each of these things can contribute to building a positive, team-working culture and supportive emotional climate where people can find ways to discuss team and task issues constructively, work through conflict without falling into the argument trap, resorting to acrimony, and identify ways to work better together in future.



## 4. Finding the Right Focus

Teambuilding can take a multitude of different paths. A good team-building session firstly has a clear focus. It's not enough to just get your team together to run a bunch of icebreakers.

Our *Working Better Together* clinics aren't all the same. We customise them to the specific contexts, topics or themes your team most needs to cover, using a menu of team-building clinics you can mix and match.

Choosing the right focus for your team-building session can be a bit confusing, and many organisations like to have an idea of the possibilities up-front first. So to make it easier, we've developed a menu of *self-contained sessions* you can select from, to suit your needs. **Our most popular sessions are:**



<b>CLINIC 1: TEAMWORKING AND TEAMBUILDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Teambuilding: the art of working better together</li> <li>❑ The 5 Foundations for effective teams</li> <li>❑ True or token teams – what's the difference?</li> <li>❑ Team failure and success factors</li> <li>❑ Diagnostics: Team issues and perspectives</li> <li>❑ 7 Questions for forming great teams</li> <li>❑ Exploring team leadership and followership</li> <li>❑ Expectations of me, others, and this team</li> <li>❑ Team groundrules and operating principles</li> <li>❑ Action planning: ways to work better together</li> </ul>	<b>CLINIC 2: SHAPING TEAM VISIONS AND VALUES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Future-Directions: team change challenges</li> <li>❑ Developing team visions, goals and targets</li> <li>❑ Identify key themes for visions and values</li> <li>❑ A 4-step process for shaping shared visions</li> <li>❑ Values exploration: what do we stand for?</li> <li>❑ Mapping visions, values and behaviours</li> <li>❑ What new thinking/behaviours do we need?</li> <li>❑ Brainstorm: team goals, actions and strategies</li> <li>❑ Aligning personal/team values – values wall</li> <li>❑ Identifying priority actions and directions</li> </ul>
<b>CLINIC 3: CONVERSATIONS - TALKING IN TEAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 7 Principles for Constructive Conversations</li> <li>❑ Debate to Dialogue: different kinds of talk s</li> <li>❑ <i>Diagnostic</i>: what happens in our discussions?</li> <li>❑ Levels of listening and tips for listening 'up'</li> <li>❑ Traps of conversational assumption-making</li> <li>❑ What conversational roles do you play?</li> <li>❑ Balancing your say with hearing their say</li> <li>❑ Skillful listening and skillful discussion pracs</li> <li>❑ Speaking from different perspectives</li> <li>❑ Asking questions and giving good feedback</li> <li>❑ The 5-P Model for more Skillful Discussion</li> </ul>	<b>CLINIC 4: THINKING &amp; DECIDING IN TEAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Sharing ideas and information in teams</li> <li>❑ Ladder of inference and problem analysis</li> <li>❑ Group problem-solving simulation</li> <li>❑ How do we handle solving group problems?</li> <li>❑ Systems Thinking Maps and situation analysis</li> <li>❑ Patterns: How do we make decisions now?</li> <li>❑ Sharing Decisions – what kind and how much?</li> <li>❑ Decision-making – coercion versus commitment</li> <li>❑ Decision tracking – current and future decisions</li> <li>❑ Choices: consult, consensus or concordance</li> <li>❑ Action planning for better decision-making</li> </ul>
<b>CLINIC 5: EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT TEAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Emotional Intelligence – the team connection</li> <li>❑ What is EI – why it matters for good teamwork</li> <li>❑ Impact of toxic emotions on team climate</li> <li>❑ Emotional hijacks and the EI triangle</li> <li>❑ Dealing with disruptive emotions</li> <li>❑ Finding and expressing your feelings well</li> <li>❑ Managing moods – yours and other's</li> <li>❑ Empathy – creating connective relationships</li> <li>❑ Diagnostic: common elements of EI teams</li> <li>❑ EI Quiz – how emotionally intelligent are we?</li> <li>❑ Actions for creating more EI teamwork cultures</li> </ul>	<b>CLINIC 6: DEALING WITH DIFFICULT MOMENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Dynamics behind difficult discussions</li> <li>❑ Starting difficult discussions well</li> <li>❑ The '3-in-1' nature of difficult discussions</li> <li>❑ 3 blockers: intentions, blame, assumptions</li> <li>❑ Stages in dealing with difficult discussions</li> <li>❑ Dissecting differences and comparing stories</li> <li>❑ Replacing blame with contribution</li> <li>❑ Facing feelings – core of difficult discussions</li> <li>❑ Defusing difficult people and difficult moments</li> <li>❑ Asserting yourself positively, cleanly and clearly</li> <li>❑ Complete, follow-up and follow through</li> </ul>
<b>CLINIC 7: DESIGNING YOUR TEAM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ What is Teamwork-Based Design?</li> <li>❑ Different Types of Team Structures</li> <li>❑ 7 Team Design Dimensions</li> <li>❑ Steps in Teamwork-Based Design</li> <li>❑ Work Analysis and Process Mapping</li> </ul>	<b>CLINIC 8: RESPECT-BUILDING IN TEAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Dissecting respect – what is it really?</li> <li>❑ Diagnostic: signals of disrespect</li> <li>❑ 7 practices or respect – what's our team like?</li> <li>❑ Watching your language – minding your stories</li> <li>❑ Giving feedback &amp; challenging – respectfully</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Problems of current work organisation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developing Team Design Specifications</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Design Steps – Ideas, Options &amp; Action</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developing new workroles for team design</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developing New Operating Principles</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identifying Collective Work Opportunities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Team Blueprints &amp; Implementation Action Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Respect and the lost art of listening</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practising respect in difficult situations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with difficult people – respectfully</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emotional hijacks and disrespect</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-Respect – key to respecting others</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Negativity and its effect on your respect-o-meter</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identifying respect-building actions – some tips</li> </ul>
<b>CLINIC 9: ENTRUSTING TEAMS TO LEAD</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and co-ordination choices in teams</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Styles – how is leadership handled now?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Distributed leadership: spectre of power-sharing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Empowering yourself – key to self-managing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Entrusting teams and trusting leaders</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shared leadership and co-ordination strategies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-managing behaviour for leaders and teams</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Disempowering systems and structures audit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Expanding our co-ordination workroles</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Team accountability and self-responsibility</li> </ul>	<b>CLINIC 10: CREATING COHESIVE TEAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cohesion: sticking together and pulling together</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identity: how much this team matters to me?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Diagnostic: the group cohesiveness index</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cohesion: collective working and collaboration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coming unstuck: anti-cohesive factors &amp; actions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contribution – what do we each offer this team</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What help and support do I want from others?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Patterns of affiliation/support – strong or weak?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-interest versus communal commitment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Action plans to increase team identity/cohesion</li> </ul>
<b>CLINIC 11: CREATING CONSTRUCTIVE CULTURES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Why culture matters to you and your team</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cultural componentry: what makes it up?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Constructive and dislocated cultures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dissecting the different layers of culture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 6 CLEVER Dimensions that make up culture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identifying Core Beliefs that drive behaviour</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What's our team culture like now?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What kind of culture do we want?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What we want to keep or change in the culture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developing a culture action plan for our team</li> </ul>	<b>CLINIC 12: BUILDING MORE RESILIENT TEAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is resilience – more than bouncing back</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introducing 5 Resilience-Builders and Drainers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Positive outlook's a plus: negativity's not so hot</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The ruin of rumination – negative team self-talk</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Thinking traps &amp; self-defeating team behaviours</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with disruptive &amp; toxic team emotions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reducing and resisting team Stress</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trauma at-risk factors – the top 10 signs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> De-Stressors &amp; Wake-Up Calls</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minding connectivity and team focus</li> </ul>



**When you're identifying team themes or topics, there can be a tendency to try to cram in too many in too short a period of time – to squeeze in as much in as you can.**

■ This is usually a fatal mistake. It not only detracts from going into sufficient depth around a topic to make a difference, participants can also feel overwhelmed and pulled in too many directions.

■ I think it's essential to NOT try to cover too many topics or themes. I generally suggest weaving team improvement processes around 2 or 3 central themes that bring people together, rather than spread coverage over many topics too thinly.

We all know teams don't change for the better just by filling in a personality survey, doing some training or reading a 'how-to' manual. The real work of building a better team starts when we're:

- Able to feel a part of it, want to be in it and take responsibility to make it work
- Willing to put our strengths and talents to work and commit to the success of the team
- Forget the past and make a fresh commitment to new ways of working better together.

## 5. Steps and Stages

The main purpose of this document is to outline a few of the different steps, stages and options available to you so you can create your own tailored *Working Better Together* process.

Depending on the scope of what you plan to do and your budget, *this can range from a single 1-day Working Better Together Workshop to a more multi-staged approach.*



Each optional element is listed separately below, so you can piece them together in different ways.

But each fits inside a broad process framework that has 3 main phases, as in this chart:

**1. Diagnose: is finding out what's going on in your team, via a short email opinionnaire or with a Team Functionality Survey** (see Option 2 below).

■ This can also include a **2–3-hour Start-up Workshop** (see Option 3) where we bring everyone together for an initial hour or so to explain the WBT process and identify issues or...

- **Small Group or individual interviews** - 30–40-minute talks with small group cross-sections or individuals can often yield more accurate readings of what's going on (see Option 4).

**2. Deliver: one or more 1-day Team Skills Toolkit Training sessions based on mixing and matching from our menu of 12 WBT Team Clinics (see above) and informed by any needs analysis done** (see Option 2).

- If you choose a series of say 3-5 modules delivered over a period of time, session 1 often starts with a brief report-back on issues identified. We'd unpack each of these, prioritise them and agree what issues we need to tackle first.
- I'd also interlace some basic learning about functional and effective team behaviour patterns and touch on a few team improvement topics and skills.

**3. Follow-up is based on what comes out of the team tool-kit sessions.** It may involve external support – *often perhaps an optional Team Action Planning session* (see Option 5).

- The team identify actions and agree operating principles and strategies to move forward
- Cultural shifts and new behaviour patterns are consolidated to moderate
- They may work collectively to develop a more formal team charter (not always necessary)
- Periodic team check-up sessions can be included to check-in with how the process is going and monitor changes and performance before starting another learning phase

The next section expands on some of these options in a bit more detail.

## 6. Outline of Options

**Let's start with Option 1** even though it may not be first if other options such as a team survey are selected. For many workplaces, the most obvious thing want is to give their team a skills-boost by running one or more 1-day (or 2xhalf-days in lieu) team-toolkit training sessions on themes of their choice...



You may have used the *Team Functionality Survey* (see Option 2) to help identify what issues, topic or training themes you want to run with your team.

Or you may have arrived at this by talking to people, observing what's been happening in your team, and asking for opinions on issues and challenges the team faces.

Either way, once team issues have been identified, a learning path for the team (and in some cases individuals) can be planned. This might incorporate a combination of whole team full-day workshops; shorter learning sessions for either the whole team or smaller groups; a series of individual coaching sessions for all or some team members; or even attendance at one of our relevant public learning programs.

- We recommend getting the team together for at least 3x1-day *Working Better Together* workshops – maybe interspersed with individual or small group coaching sessions
- Focus and content depends on what issues/teams needs come to light beforehand or sometimes emerge during the workshop(s) if you run a series (see Part 4 for list of clinics)
- If whole-team availability is an issue, workshops can be delivered as a longer series of shorter half-day sessions focusing on more targeted issues at each session
- *And of course, if you're restricted by time or budget to just a single-day workshop, while there are limits to how much progress you can make, we have often still unpacked issues, practised team tools and new behaviours and made some moves forward in a short space.*

**Option 2:** includes the addition of our **WBT Team Functionality Survey**. People complete this and get a feedback-brief prior to running any Team Training Toolkit sessions (Option 1).

- This helps identify what to work on in your team and also tailors content to team-issues people name for themselves, providing some ownership and workplace relevance.
- It's a pretty simple survey that uses some rating scales on 10 dimensions essential for good teamworking (see the sample below)



- As this only has numerical 'marker' questions. I always add a few additional open questions to collect specifically targeted information such as:

- ? In what ways do we work in well together with each other? In what ways don't we?
- ? What gets in the way of us working in well with each other around here?
- ? Tell me a bit about how you get along with others on this team
- ? What needs to happen to improve the way we work together?

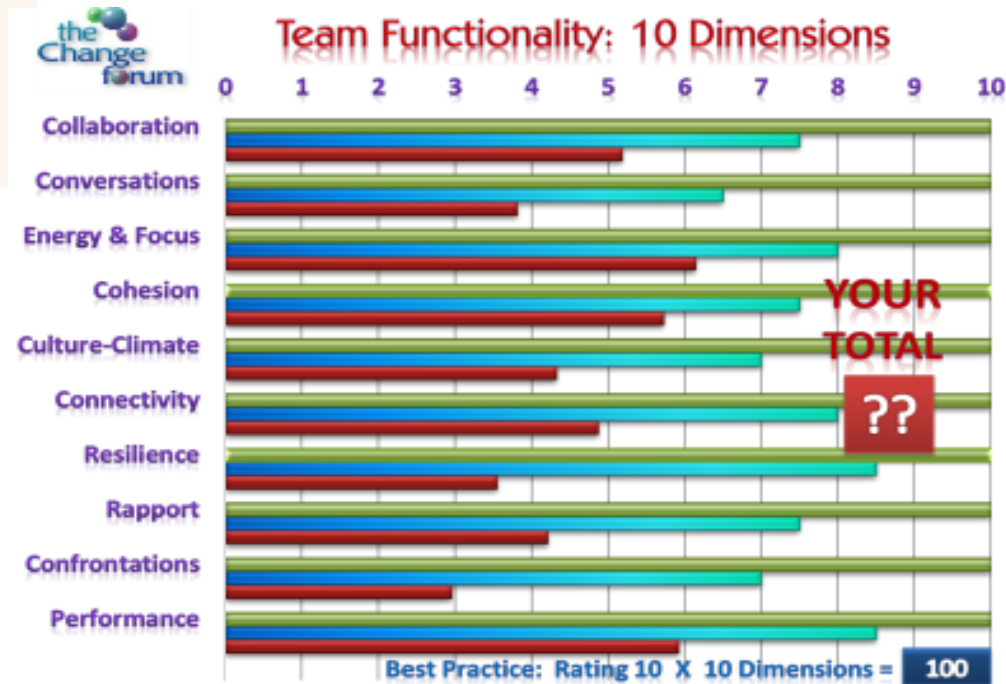


- Here is a brief copy of our ratings sheet on the 10 Dimensions for Team Functionality. We use this prior to team-building workshops to help identify current team performance levels and areas the team/ most needs to work on...

For each Team Development Dimension, mark a number between 1 and 10 to indicate where you think your team is at right NOW.		
INEFFECTIVE OR DYSFUNCTIONAL		EFFECTIVE AND FUNCTIONAL
Focus on own job, compete, guard own territory/expertise, don't help out	<b>Collaboration</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Focus on whole team, work in together, help each other out, share the load
Argument, positionalism, lack of safety, defensiveness, a few dominate	<b>Conversations</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Open, frank, dialogues. All contribute equally, everyone is heard, safe
Low energy levels, pessimism, that'll do mentality drain focus/determination	<b>Energy &amp; Focus</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	High levels of energy, positivity, a can-do mentality boost focus/perseverance
Weak team identity, conflicting goals/priorities, low support/commitment	<b>Cohesion</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Strong identity, committed to same goals/priorities, mutual support
Negative, dislocated, destructive, unsupportive, oppressive, divisive	<b>Culture – Climate</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Positive, unified, constructive, supportive, inspiring, collegial
Distancing, detachment, intolerance, indifference lead to poor relationships	<b>Connectivity</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	High levels of empathy/tolerance and likingness build resonant relationships
Demoralised, defeated and negatively stressed setbacks and failures	<b>Resilience</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Bounce back, handle stress positively, not immobilised by failure/setbacks
Much disrespect, suspicion, mistrust – people hold each other in low esteem	<b>Rapport</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	High levels of respect, trust and bonding – people held in positive regard
Tension/differences ignored or lead to argument and lingering resentments	<b>Confrontations</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Tension, differences and disagreement resolved and relationships preserved
Low performance, people not held accountable, no interest in measures	<b>Performance</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Promote high performance, measure it and hold each other accountable
Mostly negative emotions, feelings denied, dismissed or inflammatory	<b>Climate</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Mostly positive emotions, feelings expressed, acknowledged, moderated

- ? **Your Impressions:** Please take time to note any impressions you have in relation to these dimensions

**Ideally, the Team Functionality Survey can run in two stages:** firstly face-to-face interviews and secondly completion of the survey itself (on-line or in word-format) With groups who may be challenged by this, I can complete the survey with them (or someone in the organisation they trust not part of the immediate workgroup).



**Team-Brief:** I then prepare a brief summary of results (a formal report is usually not necessary and takes more time and expense) and **do an initial team-brief** with everyone to talk over team-building concepts, collect team ideas, feedback themes and ideas I collect and decide on what improvement areas we want to address as a team. **See a sample of results scale above**

**Simple E-Survey:** If time or budget doesn't allow this, I usually substitute at least either a phone conversation with people or an email team opinionnaire with the 4 basic questions above.



**Option 3:** is a 2-3 hour Start-Up Orientation Workshop which aims to warm people up to the process, brief them, introduce some basic teamworking concepts, and if applicable, brief them about the upcoming survey (see 2 above). We:

- Take a bit of time to explain the process and explore what Working Better Together really is
- Spend most of the time getting your team's views on team issues and improvement ideas
- Finish up by explaining the Team Functionality Survey, what it's for and how to fill it in.

**Note:** sometimes it's possible to use this start-up workshop to rapidly collect data on team issues and challenges in lieu of the survey

**Option 4: Individual Interviews with team members can be a powerful, engaging and personalised way to kick-off a Working Better Together process.**

- It provides opportunity for each individual to privately say what's on their mind and often raises unexpected issues and reveals personal perspectives that are valuable for filling in gaps and understanding issues
- Ideally, we bring everyone together for the start of the interview day to talk over what's going on. This can help put people at ease and prepare for the one-on-one sessions
- This is a structured interview with set questions, usually 40-45 mins per individual which enables around 10-12 interviews per day.
- Numbers involved can be cost-prohibitive so we can also identify a diagonal cross-section of individuals to interview.



**Option 5: Team Follow-Up and Action Planning may involve further workshops and limited external support. At least a half-day recall is recommended after initial team toolkit training sessions to review, discuss improvements achieved and identify areas still needing work or actionable next steps to maintain momentum or embed progress.**

- **Follow-Up** identifying strategies and team actions may involve external support - but I usually encourage that it mainly be run through self-directed team meetings to:
- Determine rules of engagement for the team and conflict-resolution protocols

- Building more trust and looking at rules, role, responsibilities and relationships.
- Progressively log Team Improvement Actions to manage dysfunctional behaviours,
- Clarify roles, responsibilities and new Team Operating Principles

Ideally follow-up may also include a workshop on developing shared visions, values and new team operating principles and perhaps documenting these into a **Team Action Plan (TAP)** to support the team into the future.

**Option 6: is a mini-workshop with your management team to get their perspectives and input first-up in the process, and establish some understandings and commitments to their role in supporting the process.**

- **Duration:** is minimally around 4 hours usually 2-3 weeks prior to running team start-up or toolkit training sessions.
- **Outcome:** consolidate management views, possible strategies and get their input on focus issues as well as explore their role as team relationship-builders in support of the process





- **Parallel Leader Training:** an extension of this is to consider as it emerges, parallel leader skills training especially in areas where leaders may need knowledge and tools to back in behind team training. For example, teams may get training in EI in Teams and leaders may benefit from EI Leader Skills.

**Option 7: Individual or small group coaching support.** Some workplaces opt for one or more 1-1.5 hr individual or small group coaching sessions with team members as an adjunct to **team-toolkit training sessions** to help people work through specific issues relevant to their particular development needs.

- Sessions can be scheduled consecutively to cover several team members in 1-day or to fit in around other activities, as time allows.
- Coaching sessions can also be rung for team managers and leaders since they're often connected to what's going on in teams. We usually recommend a series of 3 x 2-hr face-to-face coaching sessions which can be an essential change element in this process.

**And three other things I think are important from the start-up of any team improvement process like Working Better Together:**

**1. Ownership:** The team has to have a say in what areas they want to look at in terms of team-building. Imposing an agenda on them they haven't had a say in just doesn't work because there's no ownership or commitment.

**2. Agreement:** The team have to be behind giving team-building a go. You can't force a horse to drink and you can't force a team to build. There has to be some agreement. This often means helping people see real benefits in investing time in the process. This means making what we do real and relevant to them.

**3. Management Support:** Leadership need to be seen to be actively interested in the process especially since often, what happens in teams also harks back to the actions and behaviour of various leaders, either constructive or unconstructive, and of course their impact on the culture



## 7. Our Team-Building Track-Record

In addition to our scheduled series of public programs, other change management and leadership development work, we receive regular requests to run tailored team-building and team design workshops under the banner of *Working Better Together* for work teams wanting to build a more positive team culture, harness commitment to a shared vision, handle conflict constructively and build more emotionally positive team climates.



## Previous clients we've worked with on team development and culture-building include...

- Executive Teams Department of Housing
- DES North Operations Group Townsville
- ACT for KIDS - Brisbane/Sunshine Coast
- Roadtek Townsville, Mackay, Brisbane
- Fraser Coast Regional Health Service
- Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forests
- Tablelands Regional Council
- Disability Services Queensland
- Various TAFE colleges in Queensland
- Queensland Department of Communities
- Harvey Bay City Council
- Metropolitan Rail Authority – Sydney
- Carlton United Brewery
- Wet Tropics Management Authority
- NSW Office of State Revenue
- Logan Child Safety Service Centre
- Qld Department of Justice
- Dept Primary Industry Qld Bio-Protection
- Defence Community Organisation - team improvement and culture-building
- Latrobe University Building Better Teams for Sports Managers
- DET Northern Region - Sunshine Coast
- Team Toolkit and Coaching for leaders staff Schools of Distance of Education
- State Development Townsville & Bundaberg
- Townsville Mental Health Institute
- Brisbane Royal Children's Hospital
- Wide Bay Water Corporation
- Queensland Health & various Hospitals
- The Benevolent Society Queensland
- Australian Federal Police
- Melbourne City Council
- West Moreton Health Service District
- Bega Shire Council
- Rockhampton Girls Grammar School
- Queensland Dept of State Development
- Centacare – Toowoomba Region
- Work as One Team clinics for Housing Department



### What people say about our WBT Clinics...

*"I felt the day flowed really well. It was more beneficial than any other team building day I have ever attended. Even though operating with an emergent agenda, we started the process of addressing key issues. You did a fantastic job. It is not an easy thing to come into a group of people, read the vibe and work through issues as they are raised."* Terri Reynolds The Benevolent Society

*"I just wanted to express how blown away I was with the whole experience. I've attended many planning and team-building days in the past, which involved very light activities like "picking your favourite colour" and "determining your Myers-Briggs personalities" but this was a very positively overwhelming experience. I felt like I had spent the day reading a book that I couldn't put down! I just had to express my appreciation for your work. Thanks again for the unforgettable experience and I will be discussing your work with many people for a long time to come."* Reina Veivers – Department of Communities

*"Totally worth the time and delivered well. I felt we all benefited from this very effective and well-communicated workshop. I felt included, engaged and safe to contribute and felt I also got more from the communication within the group. Bill showed us lots of positive and useful strategies and has a great understanding of his subject. It was good to see how well the group bonded and we achieved a lot of positives on the day I plan to continue with. I'd definitely recommend this workshop to others"* **Lance N – Queensland Parks and Wildlife**

*"The workshop was excellent. Well-presented and our team put in too. A great course that gave you great insight into why individuals do what they do and the skills and strategies to modify that behaviour. It opened communications channels, gave individuals a glimpse of some new skills and I had some personal insights around my communication style and the emotional side of our team, which I've tended to steer away from."* **John Dumaresq - Latrobe University Melbourne**

*"I found this team-building day to be useful, both professionally and personally, and would recommend it to others. Session structure and content was suitable to our team's needs, and our members were open to addressing the issues as we can all see the opportunity we have to learn from our mistakes and make a positive impact in future. I believe each of us are now making a more conscious effort to 'get along' and work effectively together and that the day helped to clear the air as we could all see how we had contributed to our team's issues."* **Mel Cummerford – Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forests**

*"Very interesting subject matter. I'd recommend this clinic to others. Bill is an excellent presenter. All the information was easily digested, the guide is very good, and course activities were all participated in with enthusiasm. Keep up the great work!"* **Stephen W – RoadTEK Cairns**

*"Everyone should do this workshop. It helped make people understand that other's needs and goals are not always the same as their own. It gave us much more understanding and reminded us to consider the impact our actions on other people at work and in your personal life. I found the whole workshop very interesting. It kept my attention and everyone else's. Good topics were discussed. It was excellent and I hope to be a better person and team member because of it."* **Peggy McMillan – Queensland Health**

*"My senior team all got a lot out of this very valuable toolkit-style workshop Bill tailored for us. Structure, delivery and content good. I found it very engaging, informative, well balanced and well-managed. We all went away with a better understanding of the principles behind building and maintaining high performing teams – and the extensive take-away toolkit enables ongoing re-engagement with key team performance topics. I think we benefited greatly as a team and I'd strongly recommend doing one of Bill's building better teams sessions."* **Matt Brien – Manager, Northern Wildlife Operations Cairns**

*"Good stuff – well-presented, well-structured series of team development sessions identifying issues and addressing skills our group could benefit from resulting in a better appreciation of each other's roles and finding common ground and shared purpose."* **Kalan Shuttlewood – RoadTek Mackay**

*"I just want to personally thank you. It was invaluable. The best and most relevant training session I have ever been to! It actually made me more self-aware. Content was really interesting and I took away some great tools I've already used. You are a very engaging speaker and educator who showed a thorough understanding and knew how to explain things well to people who didn't have much prior knowledge of the concepts. You got the whole team involved, working together and made it a comfortable learning environment where everyone felt relaxed. Also, you kept it interesting, Thanks again! I really enjoyed the day"* **Natasha Ryan – Wildlife Officer Cairns**

*"My folks have been telling everyone else how good Working Better Together was – so now they all want to go! I think what you tell your peers is probably even more honest than filling in a form for the boss or the facilitator. From my point of view it was perfect for this stage of our development. Thanks"* **Joanne Collins, Wide Bay Water Corporation**

## 8. Bill Cropper – A Brief Profile



**The Change Forum specialises in delivering creative change solutions to help strengthen organisational leadership capability, deepen learning capacity at organisational, team and individual level and assist managers and leaders build vibrant work cultures and high-performing teams.**

**Background:** With more than 25 years as an independent consultant, Bill has a wealth of experience designing, facilitating and implementing innovative workplace learning and improvement processes on both small and large-scale projects. He has an impressive track record undertaking strategic change in different organisation settings, and his successes as a consultant largely reside with the great people he works with in organisations.

He likes to work in collaborative and constructive learning partnerships with senior executives, managers and work teams to help them find the best way to navigate their way through change, whether it's personal, team or whole of organisation and has contributed to the learning, leadership and change management capacities of a wide range of Federal and State Government Departments, large instrumentalities and local government throughout Australia.

**Current Focus:** With a strong background in work process design, self-directed teams and strategic change management, his work now centres on building the emotional, social, conversational, relational and change skills to create more connective and capable leaders, more productive teams and more constructive work cultures.

Bill believes that learning is at the heart of successful change – that what sets successful organisations apart from the rest is how well they learn to lead and manage change. We capitalise on the close connection between leadership and learning to help people engage with change and constructively navigate their way through it.

He helps organisations design dynamic, down-to-earth change processes and leadership learning programs people can understand, shape shared visions they can sign onto, build momentum, mobilise commitment and get people into action. And he works individually with leaders at all levels providing coaching and mentoring support around on issues like leading/implementing major organisation change, making transitions to more demanding senior roles, conversational coaching, relationship-building and leading with emotional intelligence

**Capabilities:** Bill has highly developed process consulting, training, change facilitation and organisation development skills and proven capabilities for both project managing "the big picture", facilitating "at the workplace" and dealing with the practicalities to "make it happen".

**Areas of professional competence** reflected in leadership learning and change-work cover:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ■ Culture change and Change management                     | ■ Organisational leadership and learning                                   |
| ■ Working better together in teams                         | ■ Developing facilitators and change leaders                               |
| ■ Corporate and strategic planning                         | ■ Conversational coaching  |
| ■ Emotional intelligence and well-being                    | ■ Personal mastery and self-awareness                                      |
| ■ Work-based action learning & workplace skill development | ■ Design of leadership development, coaching programs and change processes |
| ■ Organisation, work process, job redesign                 | ■ Creation of learning resources and guides                                |

As well as offering direct facilitation and coaching support around strategic change, culture revitalisation, leader-development and teamworking, Bill's a resourceful and clever designer of processes and frameworks with extensive experience creating practical, user-friendly change manuals, self-coaching guides, toolkits and workbooks to support .

**Approach:** Bill has a down-to-earth, out-going and open style; personal mastery of a wide range of facilitation tools, techniques and processes and customarily works comfortably with people at all organisation levels – senior executives, operational managers, frontline staff and other consultants. He's an advocate of participative, team-based work, learning-centred leadership, dialogue and connectivity as keys to sustain change and create successful business futures.



Some of the hallmarks of Bill's consulting work include participative, open and inclusive processes, concept-driven, robust tools and frameworks and consistently embracing joint ownership, planning and skills transfer as a fundamental strategy to strengthen internal capacity of organisations to be self-reliant and manage their own destinies.

**Passions:** As well as his ongoing passion for learning-centred leadership and team-based approaches to 'living-at-work' work, Bill is keenly interested in the benefits of conversational coaching, dialogue and social and emotional intelligence to promote more productive, open interchanges and facilitate personal growth and change mastery.

He runs a widely popular public series of clinics on an ever-increasing range of topics including *Conversational Leadership*, *Difficult Discussions*, *Performance Conversations* and *Leading with Emotional Intelligence* as well as leadership forums on *Leading Culture Change*, *Leading through Teams*, *Leading Change Management*, *Learning to be a Coaching Leader* and more recent additions to his learning suite *Social Intelligence in Teams*, *Mindful Leadership in Action*, *Building Resilience at Work* and *Trauma First-Aid, Self-Help & Support*.

## Contact:

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**Attachment:** A brief summary table of our current range of around 20 public programs can follow. Courses can be viewed in more detail in our on-line [Course Directory](#).



## The Change Forum Coaching Clinics & Learning Programs

### A Concise Summary

Conversational Leadership Programs	<b>Constructive Conversations at Work:</b> mastering the art and practices of conversational leadership
	<b>Dealing with Difficult Discussions:</b> a 7-stage model to navigate your way methodically through troublesome topics and resolve differences
	<b>Positive Performance Conversations:</b> carefully-crafted frameworks and formulas to make difficult performance conversations easier
	<b>Persuasive Conversations –</b> speaking with confidence and influence
Emotional Intelligence Programs	<b>Mindful Leadership in Action:</b> brain-training approaches to develop attention, focus, clarity and presence
	<b>Personal Mastery–Leading with Emotional Intelligence:</b> 7 essential EI practices to lift your leadership level
	<b>Social Intelligence in Teams:</b> creating cohesive, positive, resilient teams
	<b>Emotional Intelligence at Work:</b> 5 EI-smart work practices for staff
	<b>Building Resilience at Work:</b> 5 Resilience-Building strategies to combat stress, stay focused and more emotionally balanced, mindful and positive
	<b>Resilience-Based Trauma Training:</b> trauma first-aid, self-help & peer support
Change & Culture Programs	<b>Preparing People for Change:</b> pave the path to smoother change take-ups and transitions
	<b>Preparing Yourself for Change:</b> how to personally engage and cope with change
	<b>Leading Change Management:</b> tools for designing people-centred change processes
	<b>Leading Constructive Cultures:</b> revitalising culture improves team performance
Building Better Teams Programs	<b>Building Better Teams:</b> team-building clinics to form, reform and transform teams
	<b>Working Better Together: Tailored to</b> tackle team challenges in-house
	<b>Leading Teams through Change:</b> making team change more trouble-free
	<b>Tools for Taking Team Action:</b> a tailored process to tackle issues of concern
	<b>TOP Team: Executive team-building:</b> create more coherent, cohesive, connective executive & senior management teams
Leadership, Facilitation & Coaching Programs	<b>Learning to Lead Development Series:</b> flexible series of learning modules to help your people handle the responsibilities of leading with more mastery, mindfulness and maturity
	<b>Launching Future Leaders:</b> crucial lessons for developing aspiring leaders
	<b>Facilitating Effective Teams:</b> tools to help teams function more effectively
	<b>The Coaching Leaders Clinic:</b> taking a coaching approach to leadership
	<b>Masterful Mentoring:</b> Tools to take a mentoring approach to leadership
	<b>Personalised Leadership Coaching:</b> Individualised coaching to heighten self-awareness, overcome challenges or uncover your full potential