



Smart Strategies for Talent Development
**Aligning and Energizing
Your Senior Leadership Team**

Presented by Kate Ebner, CEO



Welcome!



Izzy Martens
Webinar Host

Senior Manager,
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How to participate in today's webinar

1. Participate in the poll

- At one point during this webinar, you'll be invited to participate in a group poll. Please do so!

2. Type in your questions

- Kate will save time at the end for answering questions. You will use the Q&A function to type in your questions and we will read them aloud.
- If you have a question at any time during the webinar, please feel free to write-in your question using the 'Q&A' or 'chat' function in your Zoom window.

Troubleshooting

- If you need help troubleshooting at any time during the webinar, please send me a direct email at imartens@nebocompany.com



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Aligning and Energizing Your Senior Leadership Team

“What makes it so challenging to hire, develop and align a group of willing executives?”

“What must leaders grasp about being part of the senior-most team in the organization?”

“What can a cohesive, well-functioning leadership team accomplish?”

“What can be done to address negative patterns and attitudes?”

Katzenbach and Smith define a team as...

...a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

*Katzenbach, J. and Smith, D., "The Discipline of Teams,"
Harvard Business Review, March-April 1993.*

Common Maladies of Senior Leadership Teams

"Siloed" thinking and participation

Overcompensating for the leader's style

Lack of focus on critical outcomes

Competition and reactivity between senior leadership team members

No clear, unifying vision

Poor "meeting discipline"

A modern conference room with a long, dark wooden table and several white office chairs. The room has large windows on the right side, offering a view of a landscape. The ceiling is white with recessed lighting and a projector. The floor is covered in a dark, textured carpet.

Group Poll: Which of these senior leadership team maladies do you see most often in your organization?

What is the effect of a low-performing leadership team?

Loss of trust

Poor communication and transparency of decision-making

Confusion about priorities and direction

Competitive rather than collaborative culture

Reduction in organizational results and reputation

97% of executives believe increased effectiveness of the SLT would have a positive impact on their organizations.

Only 18% of organizations say their leaders are “very effective” at meeting business goals

Only 18% of CEOs rated their executive team as ‘very effective’

Senior Leadership Team: Case Study

- 8-member senior leadership team
- Meets weekly for two hours
- CEO has strong, action-oriented style and grows impatient with group discussion; often is the default decision-maker
- Intense dynamics and “history” among team members inhibit robust discussion of issues/goals
- Discussions devolve from the agenda item and run past the allotted time
- Meetings “outside the meeting” are the real way that things are decided and accomplished
- Meeting minutes are detailed and capture agreed upon actions, but people rarely refer back to them; no return to previous decisions to report on progress or issues
- Most meeting agendas focus on “Urgent/Important” vs. more strategic topics

Strategies of Successful Senior Leadership Teams



Strategy #1: Compelling vision and strategy

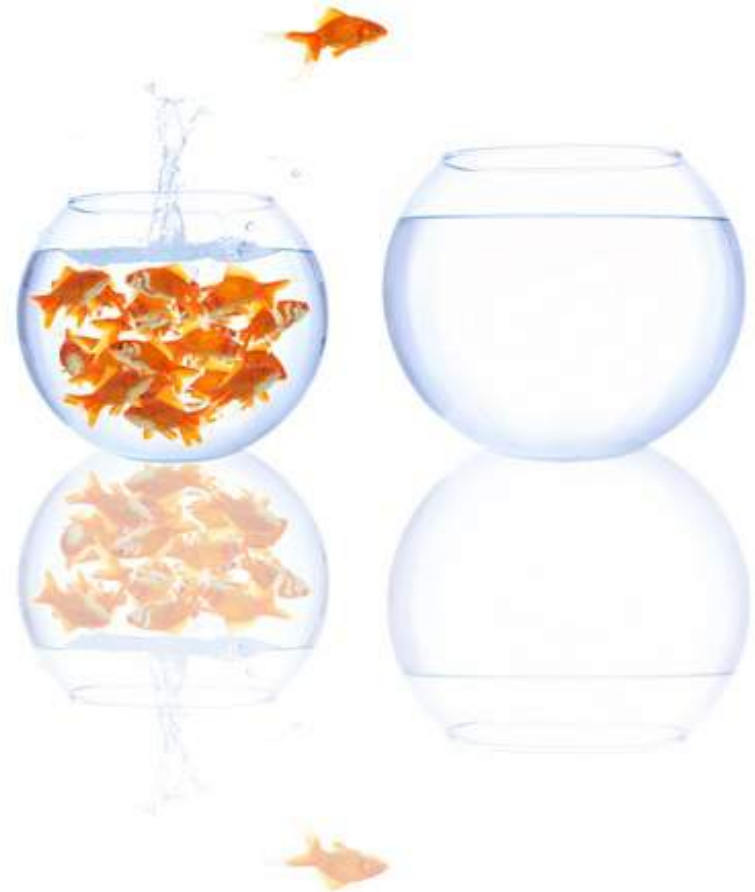


Through vision, leaders...

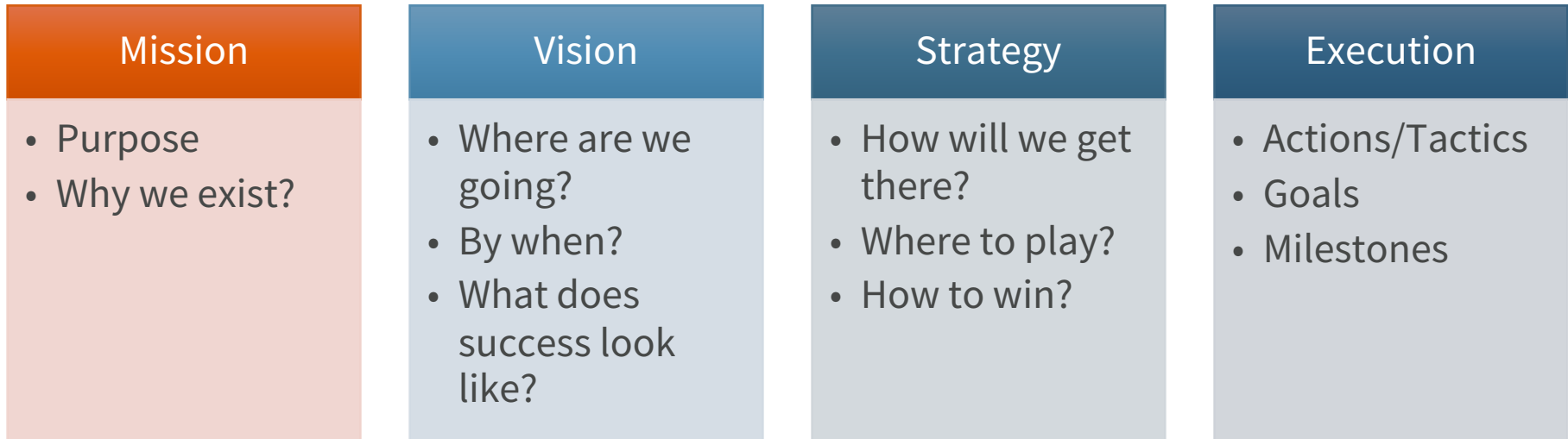


Visionary leadership inspires through authentic, forward looking communication

- A visionary leader articulates:
 - **WHERE** we are going
 - For the sake of **WHAT**
 - By **WHEN** shall we get there
 - **HOW** we will get there from here



Senior leadership teams not only establish priorities and direction, but also create the conditions at work



Set and communicate direction. Develop strategy. Translate into aligned action to achieve important goals. Create culture. Hire, develop and retain people who lead results.

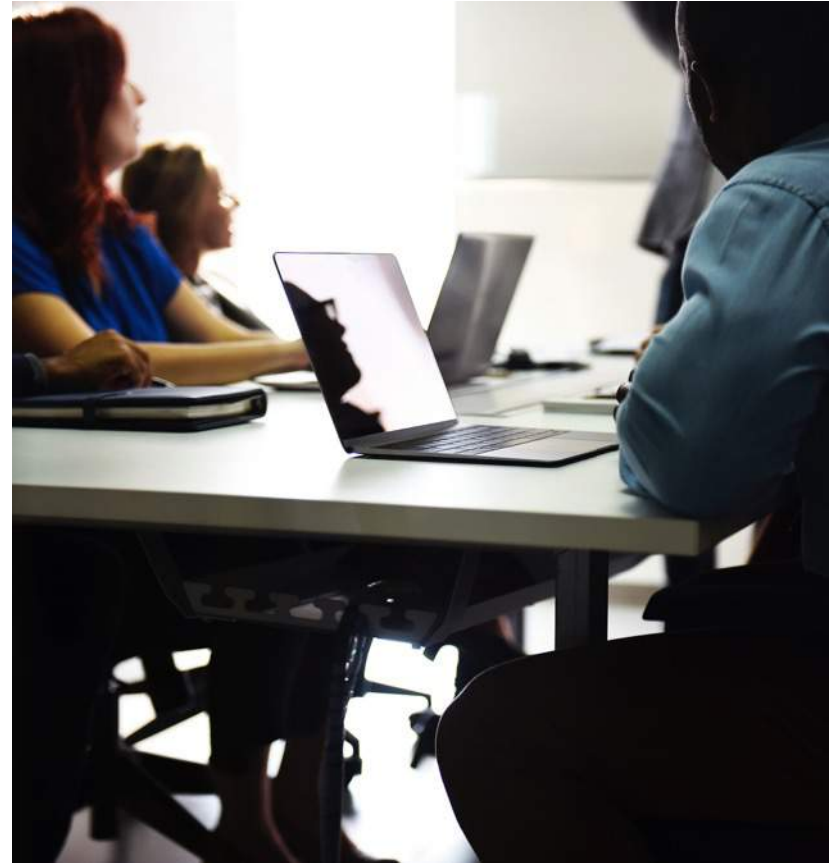
Senior Leadership Teams must pay attention not only to getting things done, but also *how* they do so



As individuals and as a team

Questions for Senior Leadership Teams

1. Can you articulate the vision of our company, including the organizational vision?
2. Can you describe how the function or area you oversee connects and contributes to the achievement of the vision?
3. What kind of leadership is needed from you and from the SLT in order to achieve that vision?



Strategy #2: Clear Team Purpose



What is the purpose of a senior leadership team?

Executive teams play two critical roles in an organization:

- *Provide strategic and operational leadership to the company. Set goals, develop strategy, and ensure the strategy is executed effectively.*
- *Provide the organizational and cultural DNA for the company. How well the executive team functions as a collective leadership body and how its members interact serves as the model that teams throughout the company will follow.*

From Center for Creative Leadership

Does your SLT have a clear team purpose?

- *“The purpose of the Senior Leadership Team is to provide strategic direction and leadership to the organization. We are responsible for aligning priorities and efforts across the company towards the end of achieving our vision and goals.”*
- *“We set direction, grapple with tough questions and make sure that everyone is rowing in the same direction.”*
- *“Our Executive Team must lead results for the business. To do this, we must align with the vision and strategy. We have to line up our teams to ensure that this is happening throughout the organization.”*
- *“We exist to make sure that our organization delivers on our mission. We are accountable for the long-term, medium-term and near-term results. We have to be in synch with each other to get this done.”*

Ask yourselves as a group, who are we to others in the organization?



Questions for Senior Leadership Teams:

Defining Teamwork

- What is the “mission” of this team?
- What are our critical objectives for the team?
- How does this team accomplish our work together?
- What is the right frequency, duration and format of meetings?
- What is working? What isn't?
- What would make this a “don't miss” meeting for you?
- What issues/topics should be addressed by us?
- What do you see as the benefits of coming together as a team?
- What do you need or want to request from each other in order to gain most from the teamwork?

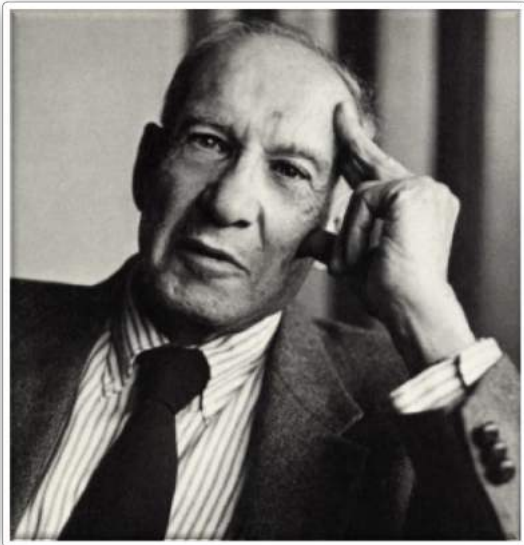
Strategy #3: Executive mindset: taking an enterprise view



What does it mean to “be more executive?”

Group Poll: Please take a moment and send us your answers to this question via the chat feature on your screen.

The most common definition expressed in Nebo 360 reviews and stakeholder feedback is that being “more executive” means thinking, speaking, acting for the good of the entire organization rather than focusing on the interests of your team, function or constituency.



“The leaders who work most effectively... never say “I.” And that is not because they have trained themselves not to say “I.” They do not think “I.” They think “we;” they think “team.” They understand their job to be to make the team function. They accept responsibility and do not sidestep it, but “we” gets the credit.”

- Peter Drucker

What makes an effective executive?

- *They asked, “What needs to be done?”*
- *They asked, “What is right for the enterprise?”*
- *They developed action plans.*
- *They took responsibility for decisions.*
- *They took responsibility for communicating.*
- *They were focused on opportunities rather than problems.*
- *They ran productive meetings.*
- *They thought and said “we” rather than “I.”*

The Effective Executive, Pete F. Drucker

Strategy #4: Prioritize Relationships



Research shows that teams develop in a consistent way

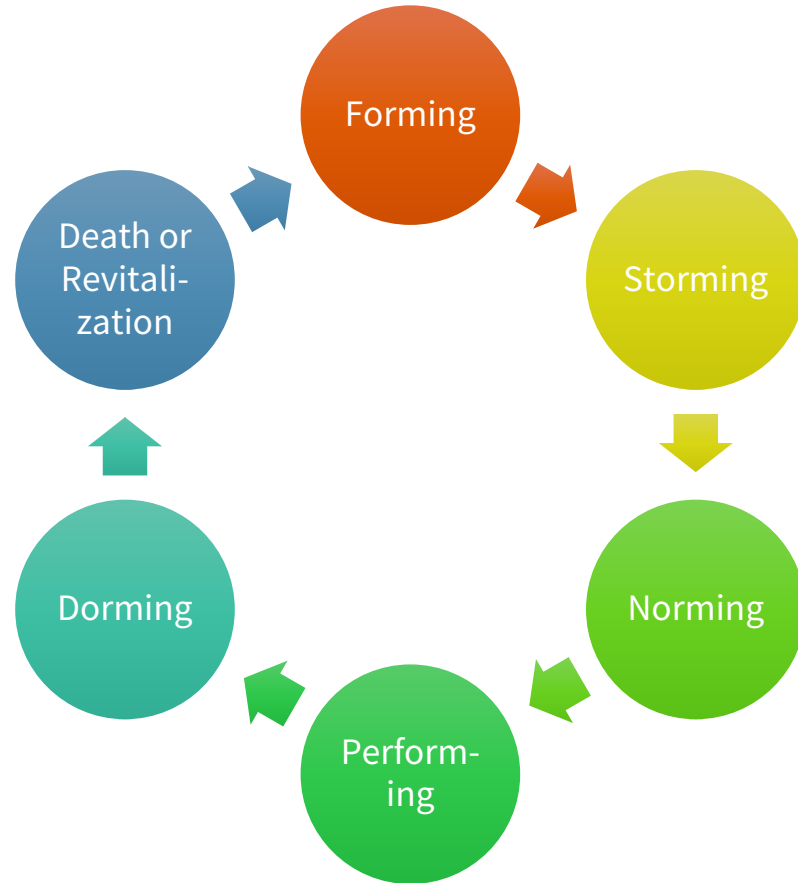


Tuckman's Stages of Group Development

Team Life Cycle Model (adapted from Performance Plus International)

Lencioni's 5 Dysfunctions of a Team

Teams move through predictable stages of development



When a new member joins a senior team, the group must re-form, storm and norm before achieving performance.

Yet little attention is given to executive peer transitions and team building.

Tuckman's Stages of Group Development

Teams that are functioning well attend to five commitments

Results

Accountability

Commitment

Conflict

Trust

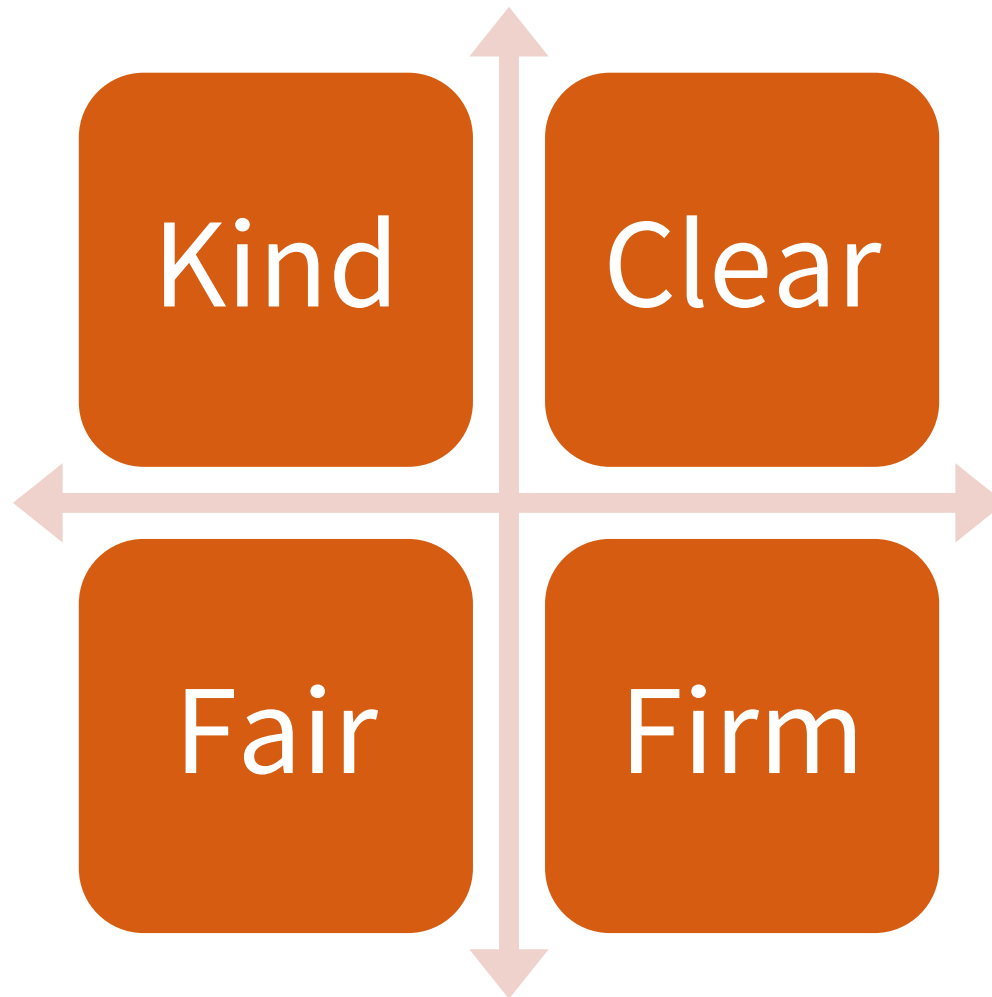
Did you notice??

- Results are only one element of high functioning teams.
- Trust is the foundation of strong teams.
- 4 of 5 categories are about commitments that related to relationships.

Lencioni, Patrick.

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team.

How to “Play”



One Team's Insights: Lessons from Past Experiences

Relationships matter.

Accept what you cannot change.

When trust is given, trust is received.

With trust comes great responsibility. You never want to let the leader down.

Be honest about what you can do and can't do.

Ask for help when you need it.

Competition is the killer of collaboration.

Admit your mistakes. There is great power in being vulnerable.

Shared experiences outside of work create strong connections inside a team.

When you entrust them with a big responsibility, they will do the best work of their lives.

Create safe spaces to disagree and host conversations about the real, tough issues. Agree/Disagree and then, either way, commit as a team.

Listen.

Question for Senior Leadership Teams: How do we show up for each other?



Strategy #5: Use of meeting "disciplines" for accountability, alignment and support



Best Practices for Meetings

Collaborate on the agenda

Set an intention for participation

Start and end on time

Celebrate your wins

Summarize decisions, by when, who, next steps -- in writing

Tips that make a difference

No interrupting.

Set aside technologies unrelated to the meeting.

Come prepared. Do the pre-work.

Listen well.

“All in” once a decision is made.

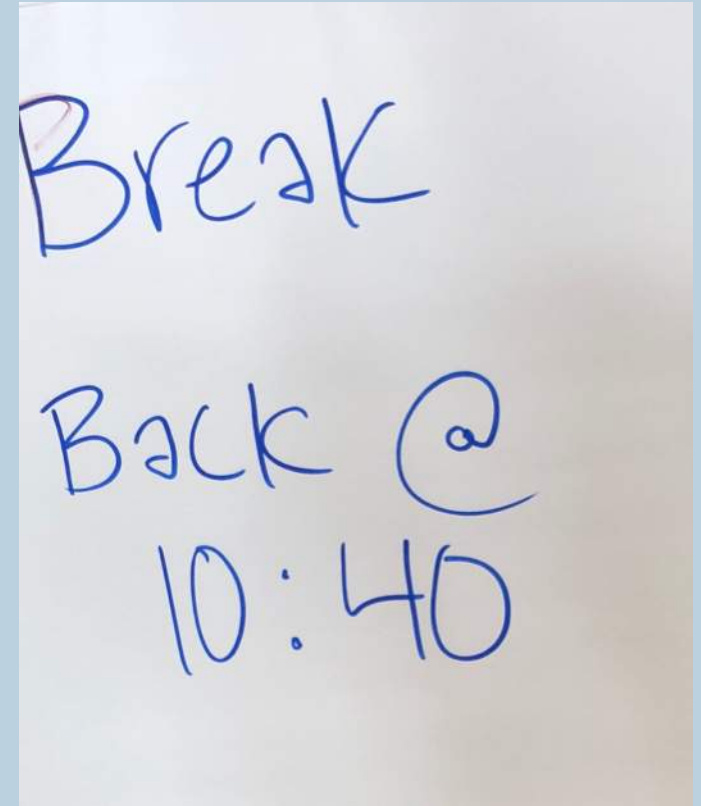
Use structure to frame issues and facilitate debate.

Take real breaks every 75-90 minutes

Meet in the morning, not afternoon

Use mindfulness practices to center, focus and refresh

Provide refreshments for meetings of more than 90 minutes



Strategies of Successful Senior Leadership Teams



Discussion



*Join us for our next webinar: 6/12/19 at 12 pm EST
Proven Strategies for Engaging and Retaining a Diverse Workforce*



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