

Skillbook

Team Building

Team Management
Skills



Mindtools

Team Building

Skillbook

This Skillbook is published by Mind Tools Ltd.
21 Young Street, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH2 4HU.

Copyright © Mind Tools Ltd, 2025.
All rights reserved.

Version 5.0.

This Skillbook is protected by international copyright law. You may use it only if you are a Mindtools member or have received it under corporate license.

If you have any queries, please contact us at
mtecustomerservices@mindtools.com.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Charting the Course	2
3.	Team Charter Template	9
4.	Key Points	16

1. Introduction

What comes to mind when you hear the words “team building”? Many of us imagine fun activities that encourage people to work together as a team, but that can bear little relation to our day-to-day work.

These types of team-building exercises can be useful for group introductions, and for “get to know you better” sessions. However, they aren’t always effective, especially in the longer term.

For example, some people perform very poorly in these sorts of exercises – some aren’t good at physical activities; others feel uncomfortable allowing people into their personal space; and many don’t want to waste time on things that aren’t related to their job.

A better option for building an effective team in the long term is to put together a charter that defines the team’s purpose. You can then use this as a basis for all of your team-building efforts.

In this **Skillbook**, we’ll look at how you can create an effective team charter. We’ll explore how to:

- Define your team’s context, and establish its mission and objectives.
- Combine people’s talents for maximum effectiveness.
- Plan for resource and support needs.
- Outline operational expectations.

Once you’ve completed this session, you can work with your team members to agree a final team charter that everyone can commit to.

2. Charting the Course

A team's charter is its navigational equipment. It sets the team's direction, and it serves as the guide that keeps your people on track when the winds of circumstance blow them off course.

Because you'll use the charter as a primary navigational tool, it's important to spend sufficient time determining your final destination. A voyage that starts without a clear endpoint is bound to take a long and circuitous route.

Context

A team charter starts with a description of the team's purpose. Your goal is to explain clearly why the team exists. Here, it's helpful to adopt the perspective of a person who is completely unfamiliar with the team and its objectives.

To form your summary, think about the following:

- What problem does the team solve? What is its function?
- How do its projects contribute to the organization's objectives?
- Where does the team fit within the overall organization?
- Who are the high-level customers? Who will use the team's results?

Action:



Think about a team you lead, or a team you participate in – we'll develop an example team charter for this.

Prepare a broad summary statement that defines your team's purpose, and write this in the team charter template on [page 9](#). (You'll develop your specific mission and objectives later.)

Mission

Next, you need to establish the team's mission. You reaffirm your purpose when you do this, and you think about how this is linked to your organization's mission as a whole.

To write your team's mission, consider the following:

- Does your organization have a mission statement? How does your team contribute to this?
- What are the key measures of your team's success?
- How will you know when you have accomplished what you set out to do?
- What does the destination look like?
- How does the organization look once your team has fulfilled its mission?

Action:

Write a concise mission statement for your team in the team charter

Goals and Objectives

Now you're ready to identify your team's goals and objectives. This is where you'll break down your mission into manageable parts. Some teams' goals will be very similar to their missions. However, when the mission has a long-term focus, the goals you set will need to reflect the short-term objectives that you intend to meet along the way.

It is critical that this section provides specific and measurable targets. Your charter needs to help you to stay on course, and your goals and objectives will help you to do this. Remember to set SMART goals (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, **T**ime-Bound), and to link everything back to your team's mission, as well as to the goals of your organization as a whole.

When you set your goals, ask yourself the following questions:

- What steps will the team take to accomplish its mission?
- What specific actions or changes does it need to carry out?
- What milestones does it need to reach to progress further?
- Does it need to follow a specific timeline?
- How will we measure and report progress?

Action:

Record your team's goals and objectives on page 10. Remember to use the SMART principle.

Team Roles

You've identified your team's context, mission and goals. Next, you'll need to think about the people who make up your team, and you need to ensure that they have the skills that they need to achieve their goals.

Sometimes you're told who your team members are, but other times you can assemble a team yourself. Either way, you have to make sure that the people match the roles required.

To do this, create a "composition statement," which summarizes the skills and the roles that the team requires.

As you do this, ask yourself the following questions:

- What skills do people need to meet the team's objectives?
- What functions or roles do we need in the team?
- What departments, stakeholder groups, or special interests also need to be represented?

Action:



If you're creating a charter before the team has been formed, carry out the following steps:

- In the table on the next page, list the skills and functional experience required in the team, and any specific stakeholder groups that you need to have represented.
- Next, identify potential candidates for these roles.
- Then, finalize your choices to ensure that you have representation in each of the areas that you identified. Try to limit your team to no more than seven people. (Teams much bigger than seven people can suffer all sorts of problems with team dynamics.)

If you've already formed your team, you need to analyze the skill set that you have, and then bring in additional resources to address any gaps. Work through these steps to determine whether your team is complete.

- In the first column of the table on the next page, list the skills, functions and stakeholders that are required in your team.
- For each one, identify which of your team members or stakeholders satisfy the requirement. List all that apply for each skill.
- Examine your list for over- and under-representation, and decide what you need to do to ensure that the team is well balanced and well skilled. Note any changes you'll make in the third column.

Note:



If your team needs more than seven to 10 members, you may have to split it into sub-teams for it to function effectively. You'll need people with appropriate skills to lead each of the sub-teams.

Functions/Skills/ Stakeholders Required	Potential Team Members/ Stakeholders	Final List



Action:

When you've finished your analysis, record the names of the final team members on pages 11 and 12 of the team charter template.

Team Roles

When you're satisfied that your team has the necessary skills and experience, and the right balance of people, identify specific roles for each person. This encourages people to stay focused on their objectives, and it helps to clarify their responsibilities.

You also need to define each team member's decision-making authority. This outlines further what's expected from each person.



Action:

Identify each team member's roles and responsibilities, and how much decision-making authority that they have. Write this down on pages 11 and 12 of the team charter template.

Remember to keep things quite general – you can go into detail when you form people's job descriptions. Issues to consider include:

- Who is responsible for what?
- Who is the team leader?
- Who liaises with whom?
- Who reports to whom?
- How are decisions made?

Resources and Support

Now that you have the right people in your team, identify any other resource and support that people may need, and decide who'll be responsible for getting them.

There are four categories of resources and support to consider.

- Money – what is the budget and how is it allocated?
- Facilities – where will the team meet, who will supply or arrange this?
- Training – what training and coaching is needed, where will it take place, and where and how will it be secured?
- Other – what other support needs can you foresee?



Action:

Think about the additional resources that your team needs. Where are there gaps currently, and how will extra resources fill them? Also, who is responsible for securing them? Write this in the team charter template on page 13.

Operations

In the final section of your team charter, you'll outline how the team will conduct its day-to-day business. This will include a description of the systems and processes that you will use to achieve your goals.

To create a high-performing team, you need to establish ground rules and expectations. This provides a clear and structured framework that you can use to deal with any disagreements.



Action:

Consider the categories below – and any others that are relevant to achieving your goals – and think about the processes that your team will follow to enable it to operate smoothly and efficiently.

Document these on page 14 of the team charter template.

Logistics

- Where will the team be located?
- When will you meet, and for how long?

Decision Making

- How will the team make decisions?
- What tools, methods and principles will you use?

Conflict Resolution

- How will you deal with conflict, both within the team and with people outside it?

Leadership Transition

- If your team is experiencing a change of leadership, what can you do to help it adjust to its new situation?
- How will your team members get to know you better?
- What will you do to help your people to get onboard with how you plan to do things?

Communication

- How will the team interact and communicate with its own members, with other people within the organization, and with external groups?
- How will progress be reported to leaders outside the team?
- How will the team ensure that its communications with interested parties are timely and appropriate?

Performance Evaluation

This is the other operational category in your team charter. As a team, you need to measure your performance so that you can fix problems as you go, and improve the way that you do things in the future.

To do this, identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for your team. These are quantifiable metrics that show how successfully you are achieving your goals.



Action:

Identify the most important metrics that you will use to evaluate your team's performance, and write these in the team charter template on [page 15](#). Use the following questions to guide you.

- How will you know that your team is accomplishing what it should?
- How can you measure this?
- What specific metrics will you use?
- How often will you measure them?
- How will the results be reported and used?
- What methods will you put in place to ensure that your performance is continually evaluated?
- How will suggestions for improvement be managed and implemented?

Committing to Your Team Charter

When everyone is happy with the team charter, consider asking them to sign it. This shows that they are dedicated to the team, and committed to building a highly productive and satisfying work environment.

3. Team Charter Template

Team Charter
Team Name:
Summary Statement Explaining Team's Purpose:
Mission Statement:

Goals and Objectives:

Remember, your objectives should be SMART:

- **S**pecific.
- **M**easurable.
- **A**chievable.
- **R**elevant.
- **T**ime-Bound.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Team Composition:	
Team Roles	
Name:	Responsibilities and Authority:

Team Roles	
Name:	Responsibilities and Authority:

Resources and Support
Financial Requirements:
Facility Requirements:
Training Requirements:
Other Requirements:

Operations
Logistics:
Decision Making:
Conflict Resolution:
Leadership Transition:
Communication:
Other:

Performance Evaluation:
Agreements:
Signature
Signature
Signature
Signature
Signature
Signature
Signature

4. Key Points

Team building is a daily activity – not just a one-off event. And, a great way to provide the framework for building an effective team is to establish a team charter.

With it, you describe how the team will function, and you highlight its objectives and measures of success. You also identify people's roles and responsibilities, and you demonstrate how the individual parts of the team will come together to make a whole.

One-off team-building events aren't necessarily a bad thing but, when you make the effort to prepare a team charter, you can be confident that you can build a great team in the longer term.

