DEFINING HIGH PERFORMANCE

As a leader, it's critical that you are clear on what high performance would look like for your team. Work through this exercise with your team to define what level of performance your team has currently and what their goal is as a team.

Prepare a flipchart

On a flipchart, draw a horizontal line. At the left-hand side write the number 0 and on the right-hand side write the number 10. Make sure you have marker pens and postit notes to hand. At the top of the flipchart write: "How would you rate the performance of this team right now?"

Explain Definitions

Explain what the exercise is and why you are doing it as a team. Define the word "performance" and explain that this is about the results that the team is accountable for delivering (e.g. KPIs, objectives, etc) as well as how it feels to be a part of this team – the dynamics within it. Both are needed for high performance. Also explain, for avoidance of any doubt, that by "this team" we mean the people in the room today not the teams that those people might lead.

Get the team members to score the team's performance out of 10

Ask each person to write with a marker on a postit the score they would give the performance of this team right now. They should not discuss it beforehand, just write directly onto a postit. When they are done they should stick their postit onto the flipchart in the position relevant to that number.

Discuss

Facilitate a discussion with the team about the scores. Ask them what they notice. Discuss things like the range of responses, the highest frequency number, any outliers. Do so with curiosity rather than judgement. For example, you could ask the person who wrote the lowest score something like "I notice that you've scored the team a 3, could you give us some insights into your experience that drove that score?"

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Calculate the current score

Get someone in the team to calculate the average score by adding up all the scores on the postit notes and dividing it by the number of people taking part in the exercise. Write it up on the flipchart as the current score.

Agree a target score

Facilitate a discussion with the team to agree a target score. Make sure you also agree a timeline for that target – e.g. 7.5 in 6 months time. Check in with the team that that is achievable.

See, say, feel

Break the group into 3 smaller groups and ask each group to discuss one of the following questions:
*   What will the team see when we are high performing?
*   What will the team say when we are high performing?
*   What will the team feel when we are high performing?
Give the groups 10-15 minutes to discuss and write up their ideas on a flipchart / whiteboard. Each group should then present back their thoughts to the whole group. Discuss.

Review

Keep a record of the scores and see, say, feel thoughts and review it at regular intervals (e.g. every 3 months) so track progress.