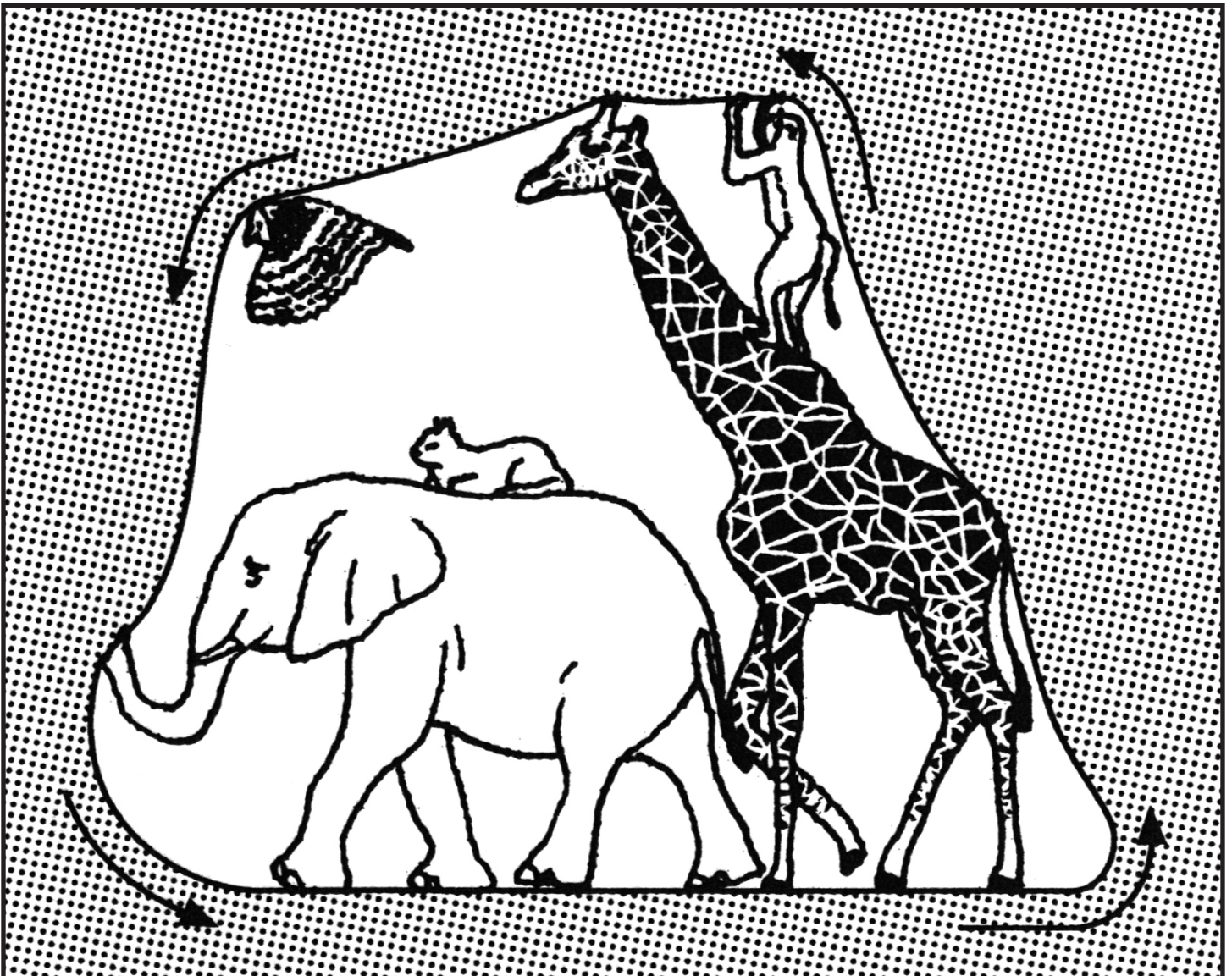


Team Values Toolkit

Activities for exploring values
and building team alliances



About Culture Kits

The Team Values Toolkit along with all of our Culture Kits are free, adaptable, and made for anyone who wants to make work better. We're sharing our tools to empower and equip you to shape your own work culture. What will you explore with this Culture Kit? Visit dropbox.design for more.

Contributors

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Team Values Toolkit

Activities for exploring values and building team alliances

Introduction

Co-creating a team contract is a way to align with your team on how you want to work together, communicate, make decisions, share information, and work better together.

Work habits and collaborative norms form organically, often without intentional design. Norms that are formed by most people on a team may not always account for or include everyone on a team. How might we approach this process in an inclusive way? How might we take personal ownership of defining and co-creating partnerships? How might we work to make these norms shared and explicit?

What would happen if we viewed these team contracts as products designed around our needs as a group—engaging in the same discovery, prototyping, testing, and iteration processes that are used to create any product or service?

This two-part toolkit invites your group to talk about working together, define ideal conditions for teamwork, and document shared values in the form of a social contract.

Learn more at dropbox.design

Kit Contents

Activity One: Identifying Personal Values

- Overview
- Instructions for the Storyteller
- Instructions for the Listener
- Animal cards

Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values and Documenting Our Alliance

- Overview
- Instructions for the Team
- Question cards
- Alliance worksheet

Suggested Use

- Before starting a new project with your team
- Checking in midway through a project
- As you begin to work with new collaborators

Suggested Time

2–3 hour workshop with follow-up conversations as needed

Printing Instructions & Assembly

To print this toolkit, you will need a printer, paper, and scissors. When you're ready to print, make sure that you select these settings on your printer:

- Print at actual size (US Letter 8.5 x 11 inches)
- Double-sided, for cards only (optional)

For pagination, you can reference the Kit Contents section.

Activity One

Identifying Individual Values

Exceptional groups voice and
take ownership of their values

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of their values

Overview

Values—our deeply held and non-negotiable understandings and preferences—are a central element of both the formation and transformation of conflict. The act of voicing one’s values can be as important as having them. In conflict and collaboration, people want to use their voice to be heard by others and to reinforce a sense of who they are. Collaboration can be complicated because of the “invisible lines” that make up personal or group boundaries.

Sharing values makes the invisible visible, giving the speaker self-determination, authority, and ownership. For the listener, it opens channels of communication and creates a sense of empathy and understanding. Together, the process of voicing one’s values and listening to another’s can aid in developing relationships, changing norms and behaviors, and legitimizing both similarities and differences.

The purpose of this two-part activity is to reflect and identify your own values in action, listen to and learn about your partner in new ways, and discover where your core values align or diverge.

Duration

30-46 minutes

Format

Conversation in pairs

Materials

- Animal cards
- Timer (optional)

Activity One: Identifying Individual Values

This two-part activity starts a conversation about what matters most to us when working with others

Instructions

Start by dividing into pairs. Each pair chooses someone to be the Storyteller for Part 1. The Storyteller will follow the instructions in Part 1 and share a personal story with the Listener. Then, swap roles so that each person gets a turn as the Storyteller. Move on to Part 2, again making sure each person has a chance to be the Storyteller and the Listener.

There are instructions for both the Storyteller and the Listener. Review these together before you begin.

Suggested Modifications

5-minute value exploration:

In this quick version, the Storyteller picks a card and tells their partner, the Listener, a story for Part 1. The Listener's role is to actively listen and ask questions. Set the timer for 5 minutes and explore!

Morning value meditation:

This version splits up Part 1 and Part 2 into two sessions. Begin the day by dividing your team into pairs and doing Part 1 of the activity. The next day, your morning begins by picking up where you left off, meeting in the same pairs and doing Part 2. Leave 15–20 minutes for each part; you may find it helpful to use a timer.

Activity Reflection

After you've had an opportunity to share, it can be helpful to reflect on where your values or working styles align and where they diverge. If you're doing this work with a larger team, we suggest coming back together at the start of Activity Two to identify a set of shared group values.

Instructions for the Storyteller

Part 1:

Bring to mind a project or a job where you were working with others to get something done, and the experience felt positive, fulfilling, and full of ease, even if the work itself was challenging.

Select an animal card from the deck that represents something about this experience—the way you felt about it or the way you felt while in it—and tell your partner a story describing how the animal or image connects to this experience.

Part 2:

Bring to mind an experience with a project or a job that felt frustrating, where working with others felt hard, even if the tasks were not that difficult.

Like you did before, select an animal card from the deck that represents something about this experience, and tell your partner a story about how the animal or image connects to this experience.

When telling your story, try to use specific examples and include details about the experience and its impact on you.

If the Listener repeats back what they heard you say, make sure to confirm, clarify, or correct where appropriate.

Make sure to tell the Listener about any values you hold that may not have been conveyed in your story, or anything else you want them to know before moving on.

Activity One: Identifying Individual Values

This two-part activity starts a conversation about what matters most to us when working with others

Instructions

Start by dividing into pairs. Each pair chooses someone to be the Storyteller for Part 1 (see: For the Storyteller). The Storyteller will follow the instructions in Part 1 and share a personal story with the Listener. Then, swap roles so that each person gets a turn as the Storyteller. Move on to Part 2, again making sure each person has a chance to be the Storyteller and the Listener.

There are instructions for both the Storyteller and the Listener. Review these together before you begin.

Suggested Modifications

5-minute value exploration:

In this quick version, the Storyteller picks a card and tells their partner, the Listener, a story for Part 1. The Listener's role is to actively listen and ask questions. Set the timer for 5 minutes and explore!

Morning value meditation:

This version splits up Part 1 and Part 2 into two sessions. Begin the day by dividing your team into pairs and doing Part 1 of the activity. The next day, your morning begins by picking up where you left off, meeting in the same pairs and doing Part 2. Leave 15–20 minutes for each part; you may find it helpful to use a timer.

Activity Reflection

After you've had an opportunity to share, it can be helpful to reflect on where your values or working styles align and where they diverge. If you're doing this work with a larger team, we suggest coming back together at the start of Activity Two to identify a set of shared group values.

Instructions for the Listener

Listen intently, keep the conversation focused on the Storyteller, and ask open-ended questions to draw out their story.

Can you give me an example?

Why was that important to you?

How was it different from your expectations?

Tell me more about X.

Pay attention to the words, phrases, and metaphors the Storyteller uses—listen for the values that surface throughout their story. What does this person value in a working relationship? Using their words, paraphrase and share back what matters to them—ask for confirmation, clarification, or correction where appropriate.

What I hear you saying is X. Is there anything I missed?

It sounds like you value X. Is that right?

Activity Two

Exploring Shared Values

Exceptional groups work together to
make goals and expectations clear

Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values

Exceptional groups work together to make goals and expectations clear

Overview

The co-creation of goals, narratives, and agreements is a bedrock of interpersonal and intergroup cooperation. The positive impact of forming alliances is recognized by conflict resolution theories and techniques.

Establishing a shared social contract is a task that groups can only achieve by working together. It requires the knowledge and input of all members and inspires a sense of group belonging and cohesion. Negotiating alliances gives group members a sense of ownership, kickstarts important conversations, and reinforces collaborative thinking and behaviors.

The purpose of this two-part activity is to align with your group on how you want to work together, communicate, make decisions, share information, and support each other.

Duration

1-2 hours

Format

Group discussion

Materials

- Question cards
- Alliance worksheet
- Pen
- Timer (optional)

Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values

This two-part activity starts a discussion about how we want to work together and then guides us as we create a group contract reflecting our shared values

Instructions

To begin, we suggest coming back together as a whole group to identify a set of shared values you'd like to adopt. In the group, identify and write down the values you identified in Activity One and place them on a wall or table. From here, have each person in the group cast a few votes using a marker or sticky dots to align on 3–5 values that you'd like to take forward.

With these shared values in mind, use the Question cards to prompt a conversation with the whole group or host smaller breakout groups to explore individual questions. The goal for the conversations is to explore and ultimately align with your group on how you want to work together, communicate, make decisions, share information, and support each other.

We encourage you to document these agreements using the enclosed Alliance worksheet and/or by placing them in a shared team space like an office or digital workspace.

Suggestions for Productive Discussion

- Give examples whenever possible.
- Try to keep responses concise, especially in large groups.
- Try to make sure everyone's voice is represented.

Suggested Modifications

5-minute collaboration exploration:

Have a group member pick a question card and read it aloud. Set a timer for 5 minutes and make sure everyone has a chance to share their answers before the timer runs out.

Teamwork power hour:

Skip Part 2 (Alliance worksheet). Do an hour-long version of Part 1 (Question cards) by giving your team 10 minutes to discuss the questions on each question card (use a timer).

Candid contract:

Skip Part 1 and start with Part 2. Give your team 30 minutes (or an hour, or 20 minutes) to answer the questions on the contract worksheet and draw up an alliance they can all agree on.

Take a break:

Lead your group through Part 1, then wait a week (or as long as you want) before picking up Part 2.

Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values

Exceptional groups work together to make goals and expectations clear

Contributors

Metaphors

Is there an image that describes how we are when we're at our best?

Working Styles

How will we create a supportive working environment?

Communication Styles

How will we communicate and share information?

Decision-making and Alignment

How will we make decisions?

Confronting Conflict

How will we respond to and manage conflict?

Accountability

How and when will we review our alliance?

Additional Commitments
