

# Expanded Table of Contents

---

## CHAPTER 1

### We Need Better Team Habits Now More Than Ever

*No matter your role in the company, you have the power to change your team's habits.*

How broken printers are a symbol and symptom of root-cause team dynamics • Sometimes it isn't an actual printer • Workways are how we work with each other, including policies, tech, and org structure • Team habits are a subset of workways • Why we start with teams instead of with individual people • How teams work well or poorly is not the people in the team, but how they work together • Teams are where we experience belonging • How we spend 80 percent of our work time with the same four to eight people • How 3 percent shifts the culture • How changing our habits can change our organizational culture • How to navigate VUCA environments • You're either participating in broken team habits or working to change them • How to read this book • Who this book is for

## CHAPTER 2

### We Live And Breathe Team Habits

*Team habits are how a team or organization breathes. The breathing is happening whether you notice it or not.*

Team habits are how a team breathes • We build team habits the same way we build individual habits • Why the work of changing team habits includes the why, not just the how • Why small changes stick better than big changes • Why to focus on small things you can change more quickly • Why a month is an ideal timeline for a team habit sprint • How small changes get buy-in more easily • The eight categories of team habits, and where to start changing • The problem you start with is rarely the root problem, and that's great • Why to start with belonging • Some guideposts for choosing • The team habit assessment

## CHAPTER 3

# Belonging

*Groups flail while teams sail. And belonging is the key ingredient.*

Crisco watermelons • Belonging is what turns a group into a team • Belonging creates shared context • Teams with high belonging tend to have higher readiness • High-belonging teams stay together • High-belonging teams communicate better • Why you should put your values on the floor, not on the wall • Belonging is built through our ties to each other, both strong and weak • Build belonging with coffee breaks, meeting highlights, celebrations, and more • Why you should be intentional about inclusion and exclusion • Why acknowledging bumps makes them less personal

## CHAPTER 4

# Decision-Making

*When teams take the time to build good habits around decision-making, they see the benefits reverberate through everything else they do.*

Decisions aren't just social; they're also emotional • Why teams should learn to make decisions, and what happens when they don't • How and why to remove decision-making bottlenecks • The three levels of decision-making • How to democratize decision-making • Intent-based decision-making • Who's closest to the work? • Who owns the question? • Who's got the monkey? • How to make better decisions as a team • Keeping a decision log • Build time for complex decisions • How to address the stakes in decisions • How to address "maybe" decisions • Known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns

## CHAPTER 5

# Goal-Setting and Prioritization

*Most teams know how ready they are, even if they don't have space or language to express it.*

How ready is your team to win? • Dunkirk spirit, and what it really means • Why improving team habits is one of the fastest ways to increase readiness level • Human goals are based on a number of non-rational factors • Why we should emphasize pull goals over push goals, and how to convert them • Why and how to turn goals into priorities • The TEAM of project costs: time, energy, attention, money • Why and how to leave room for failure

## CHAPTER 6

# Planning

*Planning is everyone's job.*

A great plan is something the team runs with, not into • Why you should teach every team member how to plan • the 5Ps: Poor Planning Produces Poor Performance • A plan is made up of four things: goal, timeline, people, and commitment • A plan isn't just to help us align at the beginning, but keep us on track as we go • What makes a good timeline, and how to make better ones • How to avoid strategic-routine-urgent logjams • Commit:Complete Ratio • The One-Third-Two-Thirds Rule • The 3x Rule for strategic work • The 5 Projects Rule • The Voice of No and why it's so critical to team planning • Plans are made to be changed and how to create more flexible plans

## CHAPTER 7

# Communication

*Most teams fall into a few broad patterns when it comes to how they communicate. Too much in one direction, and you create a bunch of unnecessary noise. Too little, and it's a recipe for confusion.*

How to tune the dials on your communication: frequency, detail, focus, courage • How to specify what needs to be communicated now vs. later • Define your communication cadences • Clear communication is proactive, preemptive, and brief • Use shortcodes to increase communication speed and clarity • How to be intentional and consistent with communication mediums

## CHAPTER 8

# Collaboration

*The goal is to eliminate any confusion about who's in charge of which parts of the workflow so that all roles and responsibilities are extremely clear.*

Our natural default answers to “Who’s on First?” • Assessing team composition and how it affects collaboration • The Doer-Reviewer-Coordinator Triad • The TIMWOOD model for assessing waste in an organization • Knowing which expert (Mr. Wolf) to call to solve a particular problem • How to open the Black Box to get clear on how work happens • Where does work occur? • How do check-ins happen? • How is work assigned? • How are tasks assigned? • Determining your team’s project pace • Creating the habit of forming ad hoc project teams, how to stand one up, and why you should

## CHAPTER 9

# Meetings

*Meetings can be either a powerful force multiplier or a powerful force diminisher.*

Meetings display all our bad team habits in the span of an hour • Calculating the true costs of your meetings • How and why to eliminate crutch meetings, and what to do instead • How to calculate your Meeting Promoter Score: Would you recommend this meeting to a coworker? • Performing a meeting audit • How to build better meetings • The six meeting blocks: decision-making, planning, brainstorming, bonding, review, update • Setting clear agendas with clear facilitators • Building meeting templates for common meeting types • Default to not inviting someone to a meeting • Using the last five to ten minutes to capture and assign next steps

## CHAPTER 10

# Core Team Habits

*As individuals working together, we need to practice a few core skills in order to collaborate, communicate, and show up to do our best work for our team.*

The importance of all team members practicing a few important core skills • Show your work: share your early drafts, your status as you go, and an artifact of your efforts • How to use focus blocks to get real about your capacity and help you prioritize • Why focus blocks are a great tool for project estimation • How to free up focus blocks for your most high-value work • The benefits of coworking focus blocks • How to schedule focus blocks according to your chronotype • Using “Shoot! Move! Communicate!” to fix problems and stay connected to your team • Identifying and sharing your Achilles Heel and hidden superpowers with an Achilles Heel Map • How to support teammates when they fall behind • How to give (and receive) direct feedback • How performing well creates a foundation for belonging

## CHAPTER 11

# Team Habits Are Political – So Play the Game

*Team habit change is about alignment, not power.*

How to align your team around team habit change • Identifying the champion for the team habit change project, and why it's better if they're not a team leader or manager • Identifying who stands to lose when you start changing things (because they'll resist the change) • Why you should sell the problem instead of selling the solution • How to enroll your teammates in a shared vision (particularly the disengaged)

## CHAPTER 12

# Create Your Team Habits Roadmap

*With every change, you'll also be training your team in the metahabit of team habit change, creating that positive feedback loop.*

If you're unsure where to start, beginning with a pain point can give you a tangible win right away • Identify which habits will have the most impact • Why it's better to start small and ratchet up • Change is a marathon, but work in sprints • Decide on a monthlong or quarterlong project horizon • Determine how you'll track and report on progress • Be prepared for setbacks (and also positive surprises) • How to deal with failures and navigate the stall: hold 'em, fold 'em, walk away • How to know when you are really done and ready to move on to the next habit change project

## Glossary: Helpful Definitions By Chapter

---

### Chapter 1: We Need Better Team Habits Now More Than Ever

**Broken Printer:** small and fixable breaks in the way team members work with each other

**VUCA Environment:** An environment that is volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous.

**Workways:** how we work with each other, determined by a mix of our team habits, organizational policies, technology, regulatory compliance, and org structure.

### Chapter 2: We Live And Breathe Team Habits

**IKEA Effect:** The cognitive bias where people tend to place a high value on outcomes, products, and experiences they have partially created.

### Chapter 3: Belonging

**Crisco Watermelons:** The missed handoffs and dropped balls that occur when teams collaborate on projects.

### Chapter 4: Decision-Making

**DRIP:** Shortcode for “decision, recommendation, intention, or plan,” used to indicate the user’s intention for next steps.

**The Three Levels of Decisions:** L1 = make the decision; L2 = make the decision and inform management; L3 = defer decision to management

### Chapter 5: Goal-Setting and Prioritization

**Dunkirk Spirit:** The pattern in which, despite terrible planning and decision-making, a team rallies and accomplishes a daunting goal through valiant efforts, long hours, and sheer tenacity.

**Green Hat:** The person with the green hat currently owns the main effort for pushing a project forward and should be given priority to focus on that work until they’ve finished it.

## Chapter 6: Planning

**Ghost Plan:** A plan that was made by a few members of the team but not communicated to the rest of the team.

**One-Third–Two-Thirds Rule:** Only one-third of the time allocated to execute a plan should be spent creating the plan, and two-thirds should be left to complete the project.

**Strategic-Routine-Urgent Logjam:** When accomplishing urgent and routine work regularly becomes the biggest priority, and strategic work falls by the wayside.

## Chapter 7: Communication

**Shortcodes:** The acronyms and unique phrases your team uses to communicate rich information in only a few letters or words.

## Chapter 8: Collaboration

**Doer-Reviewer-Coordinator Triad:** Three roles make up the atomic elements of the team:

*Doers:* the people rolling up their sleeves to make the work happen.

*Reviewers:* the people who keep an eye on the quality of the output so the doers can stay focused on production.

*Coordinators:* coordinates not only the doer and reviewer but also with elements outside the team.

**TIMWOOD:** A framework to help identify the common sources of waste in your team or organization: transportation, inventory, motion, wait time, overproduction, overprocessing, and defects.

**Wolf:** The person (whether an internal or external expert) who you call to handle a particular problem whenever it arises.

## Chapter 9: Meetings

**Crutch Meeting:** Meetings that act as stand-ins for poor team habits. Crutch meetings often address things that should have been taken care of outside the meeting.

**Meeting Math:** A calculation of the true cost of meetings in terms of actual hours and salary spent.



## Chapter 10: Core Team Habits

**Focus Block:** Those ninety-minute to two-hour blocks of time in which we can do deep work and stay focused enough on a project to move it forward or complete it.

**Chronotype:** Your personal natural rhythm (morning larks, afternoon emus, and night owls).

## Chapter 11: Team Habits are Political—So Play the Game

**Change Champion:** Acts as the political face of the change project. The champion's job is to create and enhance partnerships with allies and speak their language when things get out of whack.

**Change Manager:** Manages the change project, focusing on the operational work to make things happen.