Ten Best Practices
For Successful Global Teams

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Global Teams Definition – Benefits - Problem

**Definition:** “Global Teams is a group of geographically dispersed individuals who work across time, space, and organizational boundaries with links strengthened by webs of communication technology. They have complementary skills and are committed to a common purpose …” (1)

**Benefits of Global Teams:** Collaboration, gathered expertise, productivity, responsiveness to priorities

**Problem:** Teams can spin out of control, exceed budget, underperform
Group Discussion on Types of Teams

Question: Have you ever been a member of a team?

- Who was on the team?
- What was the type of team?
- What did you work on?
- What was the outcome?
Global Team Success Starts with Team Formation

Key indicator of success for global team performance depends on how well you form the team

The essential first stage
Forming the Global Team

Input Equals Output
Ten Best Practices For Successful Global Teams

• Sponsorship
• Team Leader
• Team Selection
• Team Characteristic
• Objectives

• Process (Technology)
• Communication
• Trust
• Project Management
• Best Practice Sharing
#1 Best Practice  Supportive Sponsors

The more critical the team...

The higher level of leadership is needed
#1 Best Practice  Supportive Sponsors

• Validate team objective is aligned with organization strategy

• Understand impact of outcome on customer or end user

• Display public and private support of the team

• Be active in tracking team objectives

• Ensure team has resources to complete team objective
#2 Best Practice  Competent Team Leader

Team Leader Most Critical Position

Trusted key leader within project scope

Create or manifest vision and objective

Main point of contact for outcome

Realign team when necessary
#2 Best Practice  Competent Team Leader

Hourglass Team Strategy℠

Strategy, Objective, and Resources +

Sponsor

Leader

Members

= Results and Team Outcome
#3 Best Practice  Team Member Selection

Selection Criteria
- Team objective
- Resources

Assessment before selection
- Skills and capabilities
- Emotional characteristics

How Many
- Number of members [smallest possible]
- Reduced size may increase team’s output
#3 Best Practice  Team Member Selection

- Select Project Manager – milestones are critical
- Encourage members to support success and development
- Increase teambuilding (members know who was chosen/why)
- Foster team synergy through relationship building
- Diversify team--gender, location, time in position, background
#3 Best Practice  Team Member Selection

Empowerment –
Members with a vested interest in team objective and support from direct supervisor or leader align quickly and add value

What is your True North?
#4 Best Practice  Team Member Traits

Performance

Ownership

Flexibility
Adaptability
Resourcefulness
Open-minded
Change “quotient”
Leadership Skills
#4 Best Practice  Team Member Traits

• Schedule team building activity early in formation

• Encourage personal and professional relationship building

• Face-to-face enhances team trust (photo for virtual)
Group Discussion – Team Member Traits

Think back to a team that you were on --

• What did a team member do that was helpful?
• What did a team member do that hurt the team’s work?
• What are some of the skills or traits that you bring to a team?
#5 Best Practice  Team Objectives

Lack of Clear Objective Kills Team Performance

- Clear, concise objectives
- Agreement on objectives
- Ability to verbalize objective
- Objectives support end user
- Conflicting objectives
#5 Best Practice  Team Objectives

- Establish team objective as filter for decision-making
- Ensure team objectives are written down
- Check for agreement and understanding of objective
- Pulse check agreement throughout the team cycle
#6 Best Practice  Process and Technology

• Different team processes are used successfully

• Best suited to support team objectives

• Leader perform technology assessment

• Open to new ways of doing things and flexible
#6 Best Practice  Process and Technology

Technology is a bridge for
global process and communication challenges
Swift trust is needed when a diverse group of experts if brought together in a temporary organization such as a virtual team created for an urgent project.
#7 Best Practice  Team Trust

Team Members . . .

• use different primary languages
• have different cultures, time zones, customs
• work in all types of organizations
• live in far-away countries

However, they come together for one purpose
#7 Best Practice  Team Trust

- Create cultural awareness – celebrate it
- Encourage personal & professional relationships with members
- Create a work protocol – discipline enhances trust
- Take periodic pulse regarding team collaboration
- Establish team norms (reduces disruption in later stages)
#8 Best Practice Communication

- Leader and member both have communication responsibility

- Communicate method of decision-making (early)

- Eliminate or reduce conflicting goals

- Establish communication protocol
#9 Best Practice  Project Management

What is Project Management (PM)?

• Manages the team’s objectives
• Determines the critical path to the outcome
• Communicates to key team sponsors and supervisors
• Provides timely reporting to the team
• Measures progress
#9 Best Practice  Project Management

Why is Project Management important for teams?

• Global teams are often in different locations
• Team members may have conflicting responsibilities
• PM can reduce risk, cut costs, and improve success rates
• Since the 2008-9 recession more organizations use PM
• Less option for failed projects
#10 Best Practice  Share Best Practices

Best Teams Share Best Practices

Team leaders make similar mistakes

Existing leaders support new leaders

• Share best practices with Sponsor and Global Team Leaders

• Set up a process to integrate best practices – saves time and money
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- Best Practice Sharing
Group Discussion – Best Practices

Of the ten best practices discussed for successful global teams, which best practice do you think is most important and why?
WorldWideTeams Consulting

...specializes in business expansion and global team performance to increase sales and profits, solve problems, and capture opportunities

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