SHIP
Safety & Health Improvement Program

Follow-up Guide

Enhancing Team Effectiveness, Safety, and Quality of Work-Life

WfD CONSULTING
Global Work-Life and Diversity Solutions

OHWC
OREGON HEALTHY WORKFORCE CENTER
NIOSH TOTAL WORKER HEALTH®
CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Portland State UNIVERSITY

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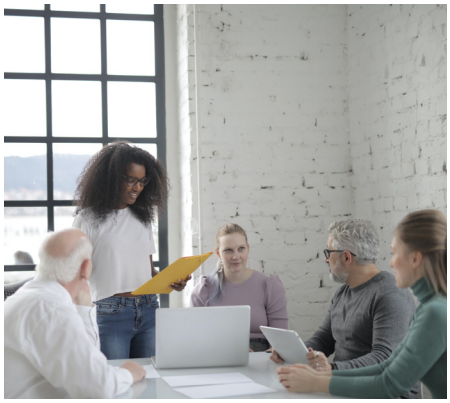
Welcome to SHIP Follow-up

The SHIP Follow-up was created for the Safety, Health and Improvement Program (SHIP) toolkit **as a facilitation guide for structured group discussions** focused on working together to increase team effectiveness, commitment to safety, and quality of work-life.

Focus groups and team discussions can be very effective in reducing workload pressures, stress, and work-life conflicts for employees while also increasing team performance. This facilitation guide was developed by WFD Consulting in collaboration with the Oregon Healthy Workforce Center.

This Follow-up Guide includes important strategies that managers and supervisors can use to effectively address some of the negative impacts of heavy workload while increasing effectiveness and well-being of employees. These follow-up sessions involve structured group discussions focused on working together to increase team effectiveness, commitment to safety and quality of work-life. They can be very effective in reducing workload pressures, stress and work-life conflicts for employees and increasing team performance.



The Follow-up Guide is designed to help you:

- Identify and discuss causes of work inefficiencies, stress, and work-life conflict.
- Think through root causes and develop solutions that are within the team's control.
- Agree on and implement team work practices to improve teamwork, morale, communication and effectiveness in day-to-day work.

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Why are Follow-up Sessions Important?

As a manager/supervisor, you play a critical role in creating a supportive, safe work environment and leading a highly effective team that delivers results for the organization.

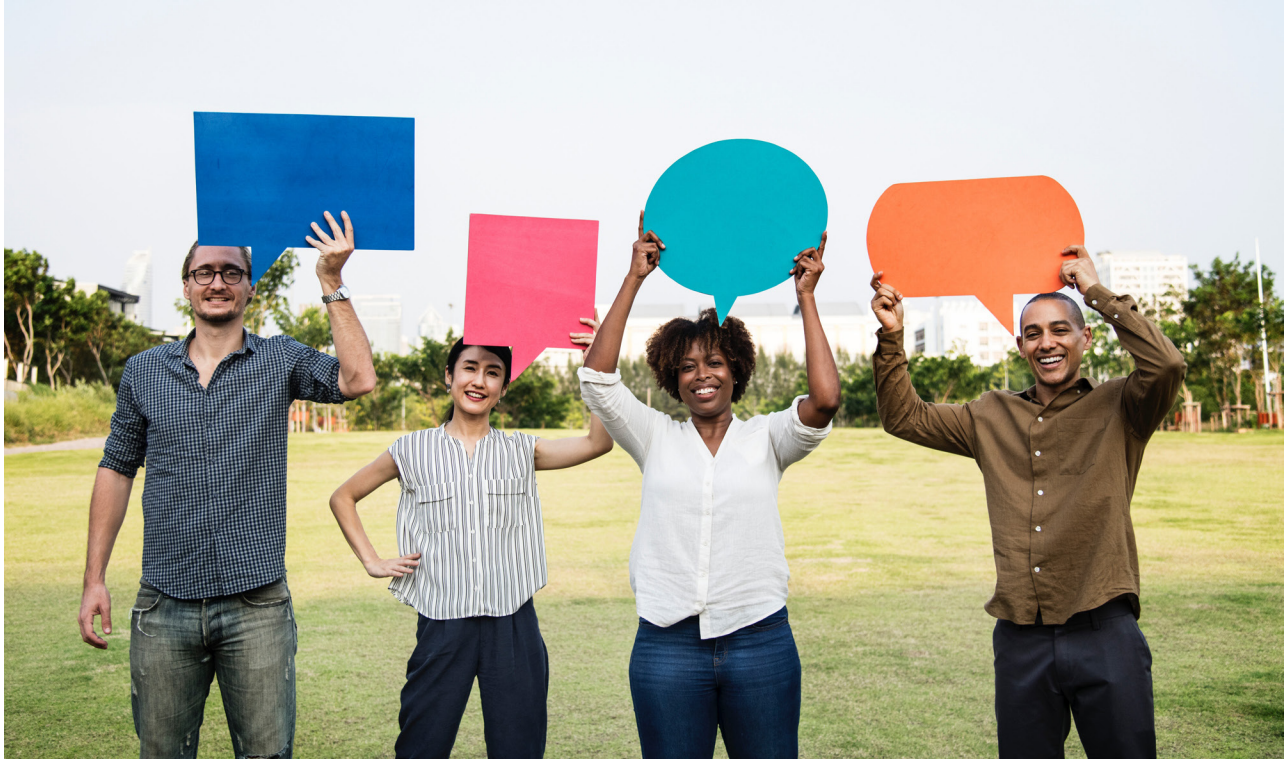
In studies across many organizations, these common themes have been shown to reduce employee engagement, resilience, and performance:

- **Time wasters**. Employees around the world consistently report spending about 20 percent of their time, essentially one day per week, on work that is redundant, is not a priority for the business, and that feels like a waste of time.
- **Information overload.** This can include too much email and internal communication.
- **Ineffective business processes and systems.** This may include bureaucratic processes that slow down decision-making and action.
- **Last minute and urgent requests from clients, customers, and coworkers.** These requests may all seem urgent and contribute to the confusion and stress of conflicting priorities, distracting employees from focusing on what is really important for the business.
- **Lack of adequate planning to avoid crises and emergencies.** Not taking the time (individually and with others involved) to plan a project or work process often leads to inefficiencies that impact performance and results.
- **Too many unproductive meetings.** Spending too much time in meetings that are inefficiently run and irrelevant hinders us from focusing on priorities and contributes to work overload.

Organizational Success Factors

In order for follow-up to be effective in improving individual, team and business performance, the following success factors must be considered when implementing the process on a functional or organizational level.

- **The commitment of senior leadership** to the success of Follow-up Sessions and to address critical systemic issues and organizational barriers that are identified
- **The accountability of senior leadership** for tracking issues, trends, actions, best practices and business results and addressing organizational issues that are out of control of individual work groups
- **Communication and feedback** across the organization about the issues and best practices identified by teams
- **The collaboration of HR management and organizational leadership** to ensure success



Overview: SHIP Champion

The role of the Champion in the Follow-up Sessions is to provide guidance and support managers and supervisors within teams and work groups throughout the process. Here are some areas the Champion could support this process:

- **Assess interest, support and accountability of organizational leaders** for implementing Follow-up Sessions widely. Agree to provide them with key issues, actions, results and best practices that come out of the process.
- **Identify managers/supervisors** interested in utilizing Follow-Up materials and tools.
- **Promote and train team and line managers/supervisors** using this guide. Print, distribute, and provide guidance and training on how each supervisor, manager or team lead will help facilitate and run Follow-up Sessions. Brief managers/supervisors on the purpose and benefits of using Follow-up Sessions with their team/work group.
- **Conduct meetings or prep calls with managers/supervisors** to ensure that they understand the purpose of Follow-up; the Follow-up Guide and tools; the roles and expectations of HR and managers/supervisors; and to establish desired outcomes for the team. This can be done through monthly or bi-monthly meetings of the employee teams with supervisor input and agreement.
- **Check in on team meetings to answer questions** after first meeting (Kick-off), and once per month, for the next 6 months.
- **Remind manager/supervisor to conduct follow-up meetings** and discussions with the team by utilizing the Follow-Up Discussion Guide.
- **Loop back to organizational leadership** once Follow-up Sessions have been completed, share and report employee experience, lessons learned, common themes and issues, potential solutions, action plans and best practices.
- **Distribute incentives to participants** (if offered) and collect feedback through surveys and focus groups (if applicable)

CHAMPION

- **Lead the Follow-up process with leadership.** Ensuring buy-in and commitment of senior leadership is critical to the success and to address systemic issues and organizational barriers.
- **Work with supervisors and managers to set up Follow-up Sessions with their teams.** Determine which option works best and the time commitments required. Ensure teams know the process before beginning.

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Overview for Managers and Supervisors

The role of the manager/supervisor is to review the Follow-up Guide materials (found in the following pages) and facilitate up to three sessions with your team. During these meetings, you will work with your employees to identify inefficient work practices and build new action plans to improve the team's effectiveness. Specifically, you will review and discuss the biggest time wasters, inefficiencies, and causes of work-life conflict for the team using the Follow-up Session delivery options, tools, and supplemental resources.

The concept of Follow-up Operating Principles, a roadmap to team success:

- Operating Principles are agreements and ground rules between team members regarding how they will work together to enhance team effectiveness, morale, communication, safety and work-life support.
- They should be broad behavioral statements that will serve as a reminder of what the team is striving for and provide guidance on how to reach their desired work environment.
- The Follow-up Operating Principles Template identifies potential categories to consider: Trust and Respect; Support for Personal Goals and Life Priorities; Communication and Collaboration; Safety to Your Employees.

Follow-up Discussion Guide

Continue to conduct follow-up discussions monthly or bi-monthly basis with your team as part of team/workgroup meetings to reinforce Follow-up Operating Principles, discuss progress on the action plan, and address any new issues or inefficiencies. The goal is to embed effective ways of working into the team's day-to-day work practices. Refer to the Follow-Up Discussion Guide.

- Communicate Follow-up results, success stories and best practices to organizational leadership and other team managers/supervisors to encourage their future participation in follow-ups.

Follow-up Sessions: Three Ways to Deliver

Option A – 3 hours

Recommended option to maximize time, effectiveness and ensure continuity. A 30-minute Kick-Off Meeting followed by one 60-minute Session and a second 90-minute Session.

Kickoff Meeting - 30 mins

Session I - 60 mins

Session II, III - 90 mins (combine two sessions)

Total Time - 3 hours

Option B – 3 hours

Recommended option for teams that can't take more than one hour per session. A 30-minute Kick-Off Meeting followed by two 60-minute Sessions and a final 30-minute Session.

Kickoff Meeting - 30 mins

Session I - 60 mins

Session II - 60 mins

Session III - 30 mins

Total Time - 3 hours

Option C – 2.5 hours

Recommended option for teams that have less time available and want to conduct one longer session or between two meetings. A 30-minute Kick-Off Meeting followed by a 120-minute/2-hours Session.

Kickoff Meeting - 30 mins

Session I, II, III - 120 mins (combine all sessions into 2 hours)

Total Time - 2.5 hours

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Follow-up Tools Overview: Refer to the tools during your Sessions

SESSION I
Use Tool #1: Operating Principles and Action Plan Template

- Use this tool to help your team generate the operating principles for your team discussions and to record top priority issues/time wasters and solutions/action items developed by the team as part of the process

SESSION II
Use Tool #2: Develop Solutions: Examine Your Team's Workload and Causes of Inefficiencies and Develop Solutions with Your Team

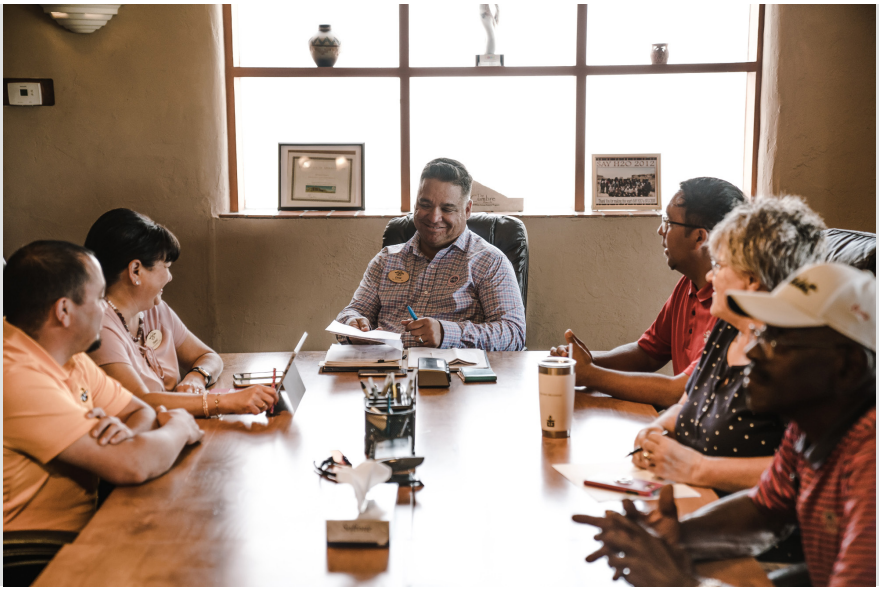
- Use this tool for Ideas on discussions and solutions for team discussions

SESSION III
Use Tool #3: Guide Employees in Maximizing High-Value Work

- Use this tool to start a discussion to help employees maximize high-value work and minimize time wasters

Follow-up Guide: Check-ins are an essential part of SHIP

- Continue to check in on your supportive supervisory behaviors
- Continue to conduct follow-up monthly discussion with team/workgroups



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Plan and Prepare: Follow-up Sessions

Schedule time for the Follow-up Sessions, no more than 1 week apart, depending on the implementation option that works best for your work teams.

- **Option A** – A 30-minute Kick-Off Meeting, followed by one 60-minute Session and second 90-minute Session
- **Option B** – A 30-minute Kick-Off Meeting followed by two 1-hour Sessions and a final 30-minute session
- **Option C** – A 30-minute Kick-Off Meeting followed by one 2-hour session

Arrange for an appropriate meeting room that is conducive to open, confidential, safe discussion with a large group as well as small group breakouts.

Confirm equipment needed:

- Two flipcharts, markers, and masking tape or pins
- LCD projector and laptop
- If implementing virtually, use screen share option and break-out rooms

Invite your team members to attend the 30 minute Kick-Off Meeting via email or team meeting. Describe the purpose of Follow-up SHIP meetings, the process (Kick-Off meeting, Assessment, sessions) and provide the date, time and location of the meeting.

- You may choose to conduct the Kick-Off Meeting as part of a regularly scheduled staff/team meeting.

Conduct Kick-Off Meeting with your team and agree upon the schedule for completing the Follow-up sessions.

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KICK-OFF SESSION (Options A, B, C) - 30 MINUTES

Welcome team members to the meeting. Review the purpose and desired outcomes and provide an overview and schedule of Follow-up sessions.

- Identify and discuss causes of work inefficiencies, stress and work-life conflict.
- Think through root causes and develop practical solutions that are within the team's control.
- Agree on and implement team work practices to improve teamwork, morale, communication and effectiveness in day-to-day work.
- Foster a work environment of safety, wellbeing, collaboration and support for work-life integration.

Describe the SHIP Components and the purpose of Follow-up as a process designed for managers/supervisors to use to conduct structured discussions with their team/workgroup

Explain that a work environment that promotes employee health, safety, work-life integration and team effectiveness results in positive outcomes for individuals, teams and the organization. Reducing low-value, inefficient work practices and increasing team effectiveness, are key factors in reducing stress and work-life conflicts for employees and for increasing individual and team performance.

- **Explain** that these Sessions were successfully piloted in industries with different types of jobs. It has been piloted and implemented at the City of Portland, Oregon Bureau of Transportation and Portland Water Bureau.
- **Describe** in your own words why you think it is important for your team to engage in this process.

Ask team members to actively participate in the discussion, honestly share their ideas about how they can work more effectively together to enhance the quality of day-to-day work and life. Their active involvement and input is critical to success!

Provide an overview of each step and the Session schedule for your team in this process.

- **Kick Off Session,** which we are having today to discuss the purpose and overview of Follow-up Sessions and establish our team's desired outcomes and "vision of success".

KICK-OFF SESSION (Options A, B, C) - 30 MINS CONTINUED

Participate in Sessions. Describe the Session options (A, B or C) that you have selected for your team.

In the session(s) we will:

- Establish Operating Principles.
- Identify the biggest time wasters, inefficiencies and causes of work-life conflicts for the team, focusing on things we can influence or control.
- Explore the root causes for the key issues and develop potential solutions the team has some control over.
- Establish an action plan and "quick wins".
- Agree on a follow-up plan to discuss and evaluate progress.

Discuss the team's "vision of success" – characteristics of their desired work environment and what they hope to achieve.

- Reiterate the overall purpose of Follow-up and desired outcomes – increased work efficiencies, teamwork, collaboration, commitment to safety and quality of work-life, our desired state.

Facilitate a discussion with team about the characteristics of their desired work environment.

- If you could create an ideal team work environment what would it be like, feel like?
- If this process is successful, how would things be better?
- If this process works well for us and we came back together in a few months, how would we be working together as a team?
- For example: Better communication and coordination between team members; Respecting team members and treating each other as we want to be treated; More focus on safety practices; Support and understanding from team members and manager for meeting personal responsibilities as well as business requirements.

Record characteristics of desired team work environment generated by participants on a flipchart. (Save these flipcharts to post and refer to in future sessions).

Summarize the discussion and how it relates to the sessions that follow.

- To achieve success through this process and reach our vision of success, we need to take a look at our current work environment, build on our strengths and identify areas for improvement – especially those things we can influence or control.
- We will determine what actions we can take as a team to enhance effectiveness and quality of work and life for each of us.

Confirm the dates, times and location for the Follow-up Sessions.

Thank team members for their participation and close the meeting.

SESSION 1 - 60 MINUTES

Use this Session I guide for Options A, B, and as the first half of C.

Review the purpose of Follow-up and the team's vision of success – characteristics of a desired work environment. (5 minutes)

- **Reiterate** the purpose and desired outcome as described in the Kick-Off Session: increased work efficiencies, teamwork, collaboration, commitment to safety and quality of work-life.
- **Review** the characteristics of the team's desired work environment that they identified, referring to what was recorded on a flipchart during the Kick-Off Meeting. (Post flipcharts for reference)

List Major Time Wasters on a Flipchart (20 minutes)

On a flipchart, list team practices that are strengths or areas for improvement that will help foster an environment of good morale, communication, teamwork, safety and work-life effectiveness.

- Briefly review and acknowledge the practices the team is already using that are strengths and best practices to continue and build upon.
- Ask the team if there are additional practices that the team may be doing to foster an environment of safety, well-being, teamwork and work-life effectiveness.
- Briefly review the practices that are areas for improvement. These are issues the team will want to address when establishing Operating Principles.

Review and discuss the biggest time wasters, inefficiencies and causes of work-life conflict for the team.

SESSION 1 - 60 MINUTES CONTINUED

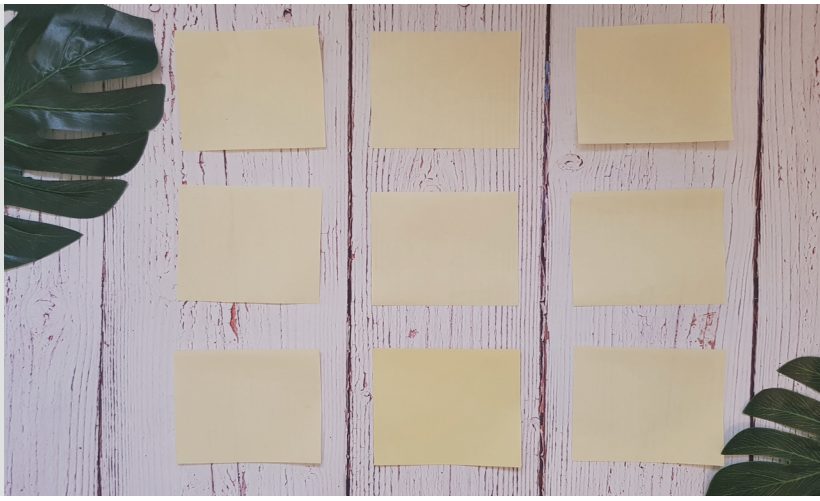
Quickly gain consensus from the team on the top two to four issues – biggest time wasters, inefficiencies and causes of work-life conflict that the team has some control over or can influence. **[Briefing Slides #6 - Biggest Time Wasters for our Team]**

Note: The number of issues that the team works on will depend on the amount of time you have for Follow-up Session and the number of employees in your team. If you have fewer than 8, select two issues and plan to problem solve in one large group. If you have more than 15 people, plan to select four issues and divide into 4 small groups for problem solving. Leave extra time for the small groups to report out. If you have less time, select fewer issues and plan to problem solve in one large group.

- The group may decide to combine or eliminate issues while agreeing upon the ones they will work on in this meeting.
- The priority issues selected should be things the team can control or influence, and that solutions can be developed and implemented fairly quickly and have an impact.
- The discussion should be brief – clarifying issues/getting examples. Don't move to a detailed discussion of an issue at this point – this will be addressed in the next session/section on root cause analysis.

Ask individual team members to vote by a show of hands on the two issues that they think the group should work on, i.e., "If you had to pick two issues for us to work on today, which issues would you choose?"

Record the top two to four issues that have emerged on a flipchart. These are the priority issues for action in the next Follow-up Session.



Tool 1: Establish Operating Principles

Safety, Work-Life, and Team Effectiveness Operating Principles

Introduce the concept of Operating Principles. The Operating Principles are agreements and ground rules between team members regarding how they will work together to achieve their desired work environment, including enhancing teamwork, communication, and commitment to safety and work-life effectiveness. They should be broad behavioral statements that will serve as a reminder of what the team is striving for and a roadmap for success. The operating principles should be revisited by the team throughout the year.

NOTE: If time is short, provide instructions for establishing Operating Principles for the team and give as homework: Ask each team member to write down a potential operating principle in each category using the Operating Principles Template and bring to the next Session.

Establish Operating Principles.

- Refer to the flipchart list of Characteristics of the Desired Work Environment that the team identified at the beginning of this session to determine areas to address.
- On a new sheet on the flipchart, put up the 5 categories (see next page) to consider: Trust and Respect; Support for Personal Goals and Life Priorities; Communication and Collaboration; Safety.
- Discuss briefly and define the two to three categories the team should focus on to develop operating principles and ground rules for improving group teamwork, morale, communication, safety and support for work-life effectiveness
- Suggest making statements/principles that begin with “We will…”

Tool 1: Establish Operating Principles Continued

Use this tool to develop team agreements and ground rules between team members regarding how they will work together to increase team effectiveness. (30 minutes)

- Choose 2-3 categories from the 5 categories listed in the table below that will most help the team improve group teamwork, morale, communication, safety, and support for work-life effectiveness.
- Create statements/principles that begin with "We will…"

Operating principles might include commitments such as the following:

- We will listen to and respect each other's ideas and concerns.
- We will each take responsibility to ensure safety procedures are followed at all times.
- We will support each other in meeting personal goals and priorities by covering work and backing each other up when necessary.

Trust and Respect	
Support for Personal Goals and Life Priorities	
Communication and Collaboration	
Safety	
Other	

Tool 1: Establish Operating Principles Continued

Examples:

- **Category: Trust and Respect** - *We will listen to and respect each other's ideas and concerns without interruption or judgment*
- **Category: Communication and Collaboration** - *We will clearly communicate project timelines and deliverables to the team at the beginning of a project.*
- **Category: Safety** - *We will each take responsibility to ensure safety procedures are followed at all times and be willing to call out infractions if they occur.*
- **Category: Support for Personal Goals and Life Priorities** - *We will support each other in meeting personal goals and priorities by stepping up to help cover work and backing each other up when necessary.*

Next, lead a large group discussion or divide into smaller groups assigning each group a category to develop some preliminary Operating Principles around.

For a small group discussion:

- Divide team into two to three small groups and assign each group one topic to discuss; begin developing potential operating principles. Ask each group to record ideas on flipchart. After 10-15 minutes, ask each group to report out their ideas to the large group.
- Have groups report out on their ideas and facilitate large group discussion asking other participants to comment on the proposed Operating Principles encourage them to add their ideas.

For large group discussion:

- Lead large group discussion about ideas for Operating Principles in selected categories and capture on a flipchart.
- Explain that the issues addressed by the Operating Principles may overlap with the action planning items that will be identified in the last part of the meeting.
- A subgroup will be assigned to refine these operating principles as part of the action plan, and the team will build on these in subsequent meetings.

Tool 1: Establish Operating Principles Continued

Action Plan Template

Use this template at the end of Session 1 to record the top priority issues/time wasters and solutions/action items developed by the team as part of the process.

This template is also provided in the **Follow-up Impacts Guide** so you can document the progress that has been made on the action items your group identified.

	TOP ISSUES/TIME WASTERS	SOLUTIONS/ACTIONS
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Close the session and confirm the time and location of the next meeting. The next Follow-up session should be conducted within a week to maintain momentum. (5 minutes)

SESSION II - 60 to 90 MINUTES

Use the Session II guide for Options A – 90 minutes, B – 60 minutes, or the second part of C – 60 minutes.

Review the purpose of Follow-up Sessions, the team's vision of success and what was accomplished in previous session. (10 minutes)

- **Reiterate** the purpose and desired outcomes as described in the Kick-Off Session: increased work efficiencies, teamwork, collaboration, commitment to safety and quality of work-life.
- **Review** the characteristics of the team's desired work environment that they identified, referring to what was recorded on a flipchart during the Kick-Off Meeting. (post the flipcharts for reference)
- **Refer** to the Operating Principles that were generated in the last meeting (post the flip charts for reference). Explain that you will address these as part of the action planning process at the end of this session.
- **Review the top two to four issues on your Action Plan Template** that the team identified as the biggest time wasters or inefficiencies that the team can influence or control. (Write them on a flip chart for reference)

SESSION II - 60 to 90 MINUTES

Determine root causes for and potential solutions to the biggest time wasters and inefficiencies for the team. (40 minutes)

Divide the team into two to four small groups and assign each group one issue to work on. They will quickly brainstorm root causes, record these on a flipchart, and report out to larger group, inviting additions to the list.

Note: If the group is small (under 6 people) and/or time is short, you may develop root causes and potential solutions for each issue as a large group discussion. If the group is larger than 15, consider dividing into 4 groups so that everyone has a chance to contribute. With more small groups, you may need to build in additional time for the groups to report out.

- **Explain** that effective problem-solving requires that we first spend some time thinking about the underlying causes of the problem in order to develop good, viable solutions. Often the time wasters and inefficiencies are symptoms of underlying issues that need to be addressed.
- **Ask** the following questions to stimulate thinking:

  Why does this happen? What causes the problem? Why is it a problem? What are some examples?
- **Provide** some examples of root causes taken from other teams who have gone through this process, to stimulate ideas.

ISSUES	ROOT CAUSES
Poor communication practicies	Lack of reguarlar meetings or discussions as a team to plan work priorities and responsbilities Information passes down from management through email - not everyone has access to email during the day

SESSION II - 60 to 90 MINUTES CONTINUED

Provide each group with a flipchart or if your sessions are virtual, split into virtual breakout groups and ask them to write their assigned issue on the top of the page.

Ask the small groups to discuss their ideas about root causes and record them on the flipcharts or a word document if done virtually.

- **Encourage groups to stay focused on root causes** and avoid moving on to solutions – they will have the opportunity to develop solutions shortly. After about 10 minutes, ask each group to share the root causes they have identified. Invite other team members to add to the list.
- **Lead discussion of root causes**. Do not try to evaluate or discuss each idea. There does not need to be full agreement on the root causes, only enough discussion that the group can understand the issue more thoroughly. Remember these key facilitation tips:
    - Ask clarifying questions
    - Respect everyone's ideas
    - Refrain from making comments that would minimize a team member's input

Develop potential solutions to assigned issue based on root causes. (20 minutes)

- **Divide the team back into their small groups** and ask team members to consider the root causes identified for their assigned issue on the flip charts or virtual break out rooms and quickly discuss and identify some potential solutions.
- **Ask team members to record potential solutions** on the flip charts as they are identified.
- **Provide the team with examples of potential solutions**. Refer to the examples in the "Issues, Root Causes and Solutions" chart below.

ISSUES	ROOT CAUSES	SOLUTIONS
Poor communication practicies, breakdowns in communication	Lack of reguarlar meetings or discussions as a team to plan work priorities and responsbilities Information passes down from management through email - not everyone has access to email during the day	Meet briefly at beginning of each day to discuss work priorities and clarify team responsibilities Make sure team members are encouraged to give input Management needs to reach out personally to communicate important information

SESSION II - 60 to 90 MINUTES CONTINUED

- **Check in with groups** periodically to make sure they are making progress and provide time checks to ensure maximum use of the allotted time.
- **Ask one person from each group** to report out on their group's ideas for possible solution and ask if there are other additional recommendations from the rest of the team.

Determine the most viable solutions to develop actions around. (10 minutes)

- **Place solution flipcharts** side by side on the wall. If implementing virtually, have one person desiganted on team to gather solutions to put into one flipchart to screen share.
- **Quickly review** the recommended solutions that have been identified, combining or clustering similar issues.
    - **Indicate the ideas/solutions** that would be appropriate to address as part of the Operating Principles by noting "OP".
    - **Indicate the ideas/solutions** that can be dealt with easily and quickly as a Quick Win – "QW"
- **Select the top three (could be two to four)** recommended solutions for the team to address and take action on.
- Ask the team to vote on their top three preferred solutions by a show of hands. Remind them that the solutions should be actions that can be implemented quickly and have a big impact.
- Indicate the number of votes next to each recommended solution.
- Count the votes and determine the top three (could be two to four) solutions to take action on.

Note: If conducting a 90-minute session (**Option A)** or a two-hour session (**Option C**), take a 5-minute **BREAK** here to allow the facilitator time to write the top solutions identified on a new flip chart page to use for developing the action plan.

If conducting a final 30-minute session (**Option B**). Close this session and agree on a time to come back together for Session III to develop an Action Plan within a week.

Tool 2: Identify Causes of Inefficiencies and Develop Solutions with Your Team

Having guided conversations and planning discussions as a team can be very effective in helping to reduce workload pressures and stress and in enhancing work-life integration. This is a real opportunity to focus on reducing time-wasters that are within your workgroup's control.

Managers and supervisors who invest time in having these types of discussions with their employees find that it increases engagement and empowerment, morale and overall team effectiveness, and reduces wasted time.

Use this tool to refer to the following topics you might discuss at different times as part of these guided conversations and planning discussions as well as part of informal regular team meetings:

- **Identify the characteristics of team members' desired work environment**. This is an opportunity for the team to create their vision of success. What would a work environment that enables better work-life integration and team effectiveness look like? For example, less time spent in meetings; ability to take vacations and paid time off; ability to go home at night and on weekends without worrying about work; feeling appreciated, valued and supported; having the ability to say "no" without fearing retribution. Utilize the Operating Principles Template.

- **Establish work priorities and focus on the critical few.** When priorities are unclear, people waste a lot of time spinning their wheels working and reworking things that are not of high value. As a manager/supervisor it is up to you to clarify work priorities for your team, be available to help employees manage multiple priorities and recalibrate as needed.

- **Identify key causes of workload, busy work, or time wasters.** Ask team members to think about some of the inefficient work practices or work processes that the team has control over or can impact. For example: too many meetings, lack of planning, unclear roles and responsibilities, too many requests for status reports, etc.

Tool 2: Identify Causes of Inefficiencies and Develop Solutions with Your Team

- **Brainstorm possible solutions and develop an action plan to address them**. Identify simple actions your team can take quickly and easily to increase effectiveness. These actions might include eliminating some meetings and developing meeting guidelines to ensure effectiveness; streamlining paperwork; establishing email protocol; redesigning work processes; and improving communication between departments.

- **Develop a plan for handling unexpected last minute requests and emergencies.** Plan for the unexpected so that you are not caught off guard. Agree upon how to work together to cover last minute requests that might require the effort of many or all team members.

- **Discuss what work-life integration means to team members.** There will likely be a wide variety of life situations and individual priorities within the team, and having an opportunity to share those things with each other brings the team closer together.

- **Encourage a sense of ownership and control.** Even though there are many business and organizational realities that will not change, help people focus on things they can control and change, and encourage them to take ownership of those things.

- **Discuss how to build consideration of personal priorities and responsibilities into team and project planning.** When planning a project, ask team members to identify days they are not available due to personal or other commitments. Take into consideration flexible work options and make sure team members are aware of each other's schedules and availability.

- **Agree about how to avoid interruptions of personal time.** Discuss and agree upon how everyone can be reached, and agree to respect people's time off. For example, some teams agree that it is not necessary to respond to an email after a certain time in the evening or on the weekend unless it is extremely urgent.

- **Remember to offer flexible solutions in an equitable way.** Avoid the perception that you have favorites or that only some reasons are acceptable to offer flexibility.

SESSION III - 30 MINUTES

Use the Session III guide for the last 30 minutes of Option A and Option C and the last session of Option B. Establish an Action Plan that includes addressing the top priority issues and recommended solutions. (25 minutes)

- **Develop an action plan** for addressing each of the three (could be two to four) top issues/ recommended solutions as well as the Operating Principles. Draw an action plan on a flipchart using the following template

Solution	Activities/Tasks	Timeline	Responsibility

* Review the solutions that were voted to be priorities.
* Determine activities, responsibility and timeline. If time allows, consider assigning responsibility and timelines for "quick wins" (things that could be implemented quickly and have an impact) that may not be in the top solutions. For solutions that need more thought and discussion, assign someone to take responsibility for exploring them further and agree on a timeline.

Refer back to the team's Operating Principles and any ideas/solutions to major time wasters that were labeled "OP". Are the Operating Principles complete? If not, assign responsibility for refining and finalizing.

Summarize action plan and agree upon a follow up process and next check in meeting. (5 minutes)

* **Agree on a process** to monitor progress and results, including assessing progress on the action plan, providing opportunities to address any new issues or inefficiencies, and discussing Operating Principles on a regular basis as part of team/staff meetings.
* **Thank the team** for their contributions to this process and confirm your commitment to sharing success stories and best practices with leadership and other team leaders/ supervisors.

Tool 3: Guide Employees in Maximizing High-Value Work and Minimizing/Eliminating Time Wasters

Use these questions to identify opportunities for streamlining a process.

- Can we streamline the process?
- Can we change the sequence of the process?
- How do we actually complete the process?
- Is it possible to do it better?
- Can we use a different method or process?
- Is there better material, equipment or additional information that we could use to improve the process?
- Can we improve the task by changing who completes it?
- Do we need to complete the process according to specific rules?
- Is there training available in all steps of the process?
- Are some employees better than others at the process?
- What skills and knowledge are required?
- Are there other employees that currently do the same process that could share information with you on it?

Use these questions to help you identify critical tasks.

- Why do we do this task? Is it necessary?
- Can we accomplish the same result without this task?

AFTER THE FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS

Conduct follow-up check ins monthly or on a regular basis with your team as part of team/workgroup meetings to reinforce the Operating Principles, discuss progress on the action plan and address any new issues or inefficiencies. The goal is to embed and sustain effective ways of working into the team's day-to-day work practices. Refer to the **Check in Discussion Guide** for instructions to facilitate continuous follow-up discussions.

Communicate results, success stories, and best practices to organizational leadership and other team managers/supervisors and encourage their future participation in discussions

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Purpose of Check-Ins

Congratulations you have completed the SHIP training!

As part of the training you have learned the essential behaviors needed to help ease the stress of work and non-work life conflict among employees and strategies for improving safety. You have set goals based on the training topics and tracked your learned behaviors over the course of two weeks. You have completed the SHIP Follow-up and created action plans to improve teamwork, morale, and communication within your team.

Check ins are an essential part of SHIP and help ensure that all you have learned becomes embedded into your everyday work practices.

Continue to check in on your supportive supervisory behaviors

- Is the team meeting or exceeding your goals?
- Until the supportive behaviors become routine and a part of your everyday practices we recommend a minimum goal of providing one supportive behavior in each area per direct report, per week.
  - Use the **Supportive Supervisor Behaviors Quick Reference Guide** (at the end of this section) that follows as a reminder of the supports you can provide your employees.

Conduct regular discussions 30, 60 and 90 days after sessions take place. Ongoing check in discussions with your team are critical for effectiveness

- Schedule the first Check in Discussion with your team or workgroup about 30 days after your initial Follow-up Session.
- Conduct Check in Discussions monthly or on a regular basis as part of team/workgroup meetings (30, 60 and 90 days after) to embed effective ways of working into the team's day-to-day work practices.
  - Use the **Check In Guide** to assist you in planning and leading check in discussions with your employees and evaluating success of the process.

Check In Discussion Guide

- Conduct Check in discussions monthly or on a regular basis as part of team/workgroup meetings to reinforce Operating Principles, discuss progress on the action plan, and to address any new issues or inefficiencies. Ensuring the implementation of work solutions and action plans generated by the team/workgroup and the effective ways of working are embedded into the team's day-to-day work practices.
- Record the top priority issues/time wasters identified by the team and solutions/actions in the Action Plan Follow-up Template and add progress to date based on your team's discussion as documentation for future reference in Check in discussions.
- Record improvement in team practices using the Follow-up Impacts Template.

- Refer to **Tool #2 from Session II: Team Practices – Identify Causes of Inefficiencies and Develop Solutions with Your Team** (page 23 to 24) for additional ideas of important topics for follow-up.

- Prior to the meeting, please review:
  - Operating Principles from Session 1
  - Action Plan from Session 1

Use the following outline as a guide for discussion in the Check in Sessions.

1. **Refer to and revisit the Operating Principles**
   - Discuss if and how the team is utilizing these operating principles to achieve the desired work environment.
   - Solicit positive examples and identify areas for improvement. Expand upon the operating principles as needed.
     - Note: If the team did not have time to develop operating principles in the Follow-up sessions, devote time in the first follow-up discussion to develop Operating Principles using the Session 1 & Tool 1 in Operating Principles as a guide.

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Check In Discussion Guide

2. Review the team's action plan

- Discuss activities that are underway or completed and progress to date.
- Add other activities to improve team effectiveness that emerge from the discussion.
- Record issues, actions, and progress to date on the **Action Plan Follow-up Template** (on page 31) as documentation to refer to in subsequent follow-up discussions with your team.

3. Get thoughts and input from the team about impacts of Follow-up and if there has been improvement in team practices to reach the team's desired work environment. This information will be important for you to share with your manager or leadership to demonstrate the positive impacts within your team.

- Lead a discussion about the areas listed on the **Follow-Up Impacts Template** (on page 68) to get the team's input on potential improvements. You might want to list the areas of potential improvement on a flip chart and gain some consensus of improvement levels.
- Identify success stories and examples of best practices.
- Update the template in subsequent check in discussions.

4. Agree on time for the next check in iscussion. Consider making check in discussions part of team/work group meetings monthly or bi-monthly for 30, 60 and 90 days, as well as 6 months after the initial follow-up sessions to maintain momentum and improvements in team effectiveness.

NOTE: In the first check-in discussion, teams may not have made much progress on Action Plans; that is to be expected. The first check in discussion is important as a time to discuss team member's experience of the process, to complete Operating Principles, and to keep momentum on the action plan and modify if necessary.

If you can only devote 15 to 30 minutes to check in within your staff meeting, plan:

- Meeting #1 – Discuss Operating Principles and progress on Action Plan
- Meeting #2 – Discuss continued progress on action plan and impacts of follow-up

Action Plan Template

Use this template to record the top priority issues/time wasters and solutions/action items developed by the team as part of the process. What progress has been made to date on the action items your group identified?

	TOP ISSUES/TIME WASTERS	SOLUTIONS/ACTIONS
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

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Follow-up Impacts Template

Use this template to record the top priority issues/time wasters and solutions/action items developed by the team as part of the process. What progress has been made to date on the action items your group identified?

	NO IMPROVEMENT	SOME IMPROVEMENT	GREAT IMPROVEMENT
Improved morale and work climate			
More efficient use of time and resources			
Increased support for family and personal life			
Increased focus on safety practices within the team			
Enhanced communication within the team			
Other			

What are the success stories that have resulted from the process thus far?

As a result of this process, what "best practices" has your team/workgroup adopted from which other teams/workgroups in your organization could benefit?

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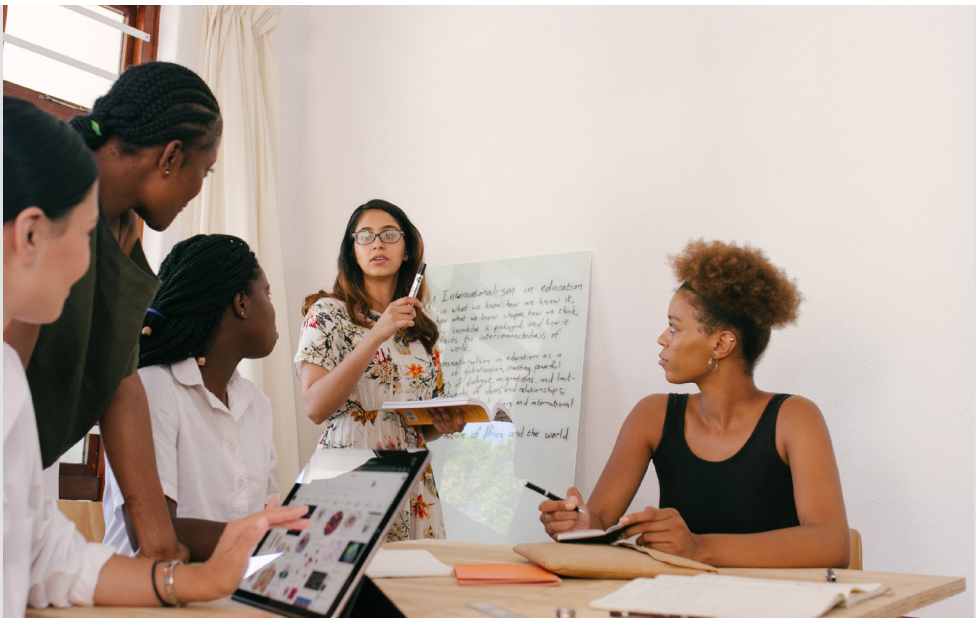
QUICK TOOLS

Additional tools and strategies for managers/supervisors to refer to during their time engaging with their employees/work teams throughout SHIP.

- **Supplemental Tool 1:** Examining Your Team's Workload
- **Supplemental Tool 2:** Establish Clear Expectations and Work Priorities
- **Supplemental Tool 3:** Develop Team Email and Meeting Guidelines
- **Supplemental Tool 4:** Meeting Management Guidelines
- **Supplemental Tool 5:** Encourage Flexible Ways of Working to Meet Organizational/Business and Personal Priorities



Supplemental Tool 1: Examining Your Team's Workload

In today's work environment, unrelenting workload is a reality that organizations must manage effectively. Utilize this questionnaire, along with the other manager/supervisor assessments included here, to increase team effectiveness and sustain employee engagement. Refer to Team Effectiveness Tools for further information on how to conduct this assessment of your team's work practices.

Consider these questions as you examine your team's workload to determine challenges and opportunities for improvement:

- **Is staffing adequate?** Before requesting additional headcount, focus on streamlining processes and reducing workload where possible, and ensure that your team understands and focuses on priorities. If after evaluating your team's productivity, you still feel the need to request additional headcount, evaluate the work the new headcount will do to ensure it is value-added and that you are not trying to use headcount to solve a deeper problem (e.g. lack of cooperation or teamwork).

- **Are employees thoroughly trained?** Thoroughly trained employees are best equipped to accomplish tasks quickly and efficiently, contributing to better overall workflow and productivity.

- **Are employees cross-trained to back each other up?** Train employees in the key areas of their colleagues' jobs to ensure coverage and business continuity, as well as to expand the knowledge and skills of employees.

- **Are people required to do a lot of "busy work" or "time wasters"?** Objectively evaluate your employees' workload and encourage an open dialogue to evaluate requests and tasks that do not seem like priorities. Determine if the work is truly necessary and assigned to the appropriate person, and then decide how to handle and delegate such tasks.

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Supplemental Tool 1: Examining Your Team's Workload Cont.

- **Are employees encouraged to suggest different practices and solutions to eliminate inefficient work processes that might be driving excessive workload?** Encourage your employees to offer suggestions for more effective work practices. Acknowledge good ideas and be open and receptive to employees' thoughts and suggestions. Insight and solutions to improve performance come from every level of the organization.

- **Is planning adequate so that problems and last minute crises can be avoided?** Planning, but still adapting as we go, is critical in today's work environment. Mistakes may be made. However, they are a means to finding better solutions. Lead by example by planning, being decisive, taking risks, and then recalibrating to keep moving forward.

- **Do team members clearly communicate work priorities and expectations?** Establishing clear priorities and expectations for results contributes to our business success and enables employees to focus on what is most important – a win/win for the organization/business, customers and our employees.

- **Is there optimal collaboration among different groups and departments?** Collaboration and relationship building with peers cross-departmentally ensures that we are working together to accomplish our departmental, functional and organizational objectives.

- **Are communication practices efficient and effective?** Having open, honest and candid dialogue with a free exchange of information helps to achieve success for the organization, employees and customers and clients.

- **Do you have email and meeting guidelines to enhance effectiveness?** Teams that discuss and agree on guidelines and protocols for accessibility, responsiveness and practices to ensure effective email and meeting management not only increase team effectiveness and engagement but also reduce time spent on ineffective work practices that contribute to heavy workload and stress.

Supplemental Tool 2:
Establish Clear Expectation and Work Priorities

Ensure that your employees know what you expect of them and the key priorities to focus on to achieve organizational/business objectives. Use the Importance/Urgency Matrix (below) to determine your organizational/business priorities as a manager/supervisor.

You may use this tool in 3 ways: 1) as a manager focusing on your own workload, 2) as a leader of a workgroup focusing on your team's workload and/or 3) as a team tool that team members can use to examine and prioritize work as team/workgroup.

In this model, tasks are divided into those that are urgent and those that are not, and into those that are important and those that are not. For example:

The Importance/Urgency Matrix

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
Important	I ▪ Project planning ▪ Responding to pressing business issues ▪ Deadline driven deliverables	II ▪ Some emails and meetings ▪ Non-essential tasks such as progress reports ▪ Requests that are lower priority for organization as a whole
Not Important	III ▪ Interruptions ▪ Some phone calls, emails and meetings ▪ Some reports	IV ▪ Non-essential requests ▪ "Busy work" ▪ Some emails and phone calls

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Supplemental Tool 2:
Establish Clear Expectation and Work Priorities Continued

Because we react to urgency, most of us spend our time in quadrants I and III. We deal with urgent matters reflexively, without considering how important they really are. Real accomplishment, however, comes from spending time on the important tasks in quadrants I and II.

How do we get the time to deal with important goals and long-range plans that are not urgent?

STEP 1: Look critically at the urgent tasks facing you. They may seem urgent, but are they really important? What would happen if we put them off until tomorrow or even next week? What would happen if we never got to them at all?

STEP 2: Once you have thought about what is important, refine your list of choices to a prioritized list – a 'to-do list' that focuses on the most important tasks.

STEP 3: To improve your chances for successfully accomplishing important tasks, reduce time wasters that can keep you from reaching your goals. Avoid distraction by interruptions and requests that are not urgent priorities.

NOTE: If you are using this with your team, have your team share what they put in quadrants I, II, III, IV and discuss how to address them as a team.

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Supplemental Tool 3:
Develop Team Email and Meeting Guidlines

Email Guidelines:

Information overload and keeping up with email is a common source of frustration and overwork. The following tips for managing email more effectively should help, especially if agreed to and followed by a workgroup, department or entire organization.

- Send emails to only those necessary or who need to know.
- Use the email subject line to accurately describe the content of an email.
  — Create single subject messages whenever possible. This allows team members to file, retrieve and forward each message separately by its subject line and prevents potentially missing issues in a response.
  — Use a clear subject line that identifies the message content.
- Be aware that many email recipients will be opening the email on their smartphone or tablet and reading it on a very small screen. Therefore, keep the message as short as possible and realize they may not be able to open attachment(s).
- Limit the use of "cc," "reply to all" and "respond with history."
- Indicate urgency. For example:
  — URG – Urgent – need a reply ASAP
  — RR – Reply requested – need your input or feedback but not urgently
  — FYI – For your information – read when you have time, no reply required
  — NRE – no reply expected
- When attaching documents, indicate in the text of the message what the attachment is, so the recipient knows what he/she is opening.
- Limit the number of fonts used. Too many fonts make messages confusing.
- Always be aware that others may share your emails broadly.
- Keep the list of recipients to the absolute minimum.
- Always read what you have just typed before clicking the send button. Avoid "flaming" – expressing extreme emotion or opinions in an email message. It is best to communicate emotions in person or at least on the phone.
- Do not write in all capital letters. It's the equivalent of yelling at someone.

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Supplemental Tool 4: Meeting Management Guidelines

Use this tool as a quick reminder for how to plan and lead an effective meeting to ensure that it meets your objective and is a valuable use of time for everyone involved.

PREPARE	CONDUCT	FOLLOW UP
▪ Be clear about the purpose of the meeting ▪ Identify desired outcomes. When the meeting is over, what will be completed? ▪ Utilize virtual meeting technology to engage virtual participants ▪ Create an agenda that will achieve the desired outcomes with each agreement or item that needs action - who will take the lead on it, and how long they will have ▪ Send desired outcomes and meeting agenda to meeting participants prior to the meeting ▪ If there are employees who will be participating virtually, arrange for teleconference number, send any handouts prior to the meeting, and consider using virtual meeting technology. ▪ Be clear about who will make decisions. Consensus? Vote? Leader decides? ▪ Determine roles – facilitator, note taker/documenter	▪ Establish ground rules for members to follow during the meeting ▪ Confirm purpose, desired outcomes, agenda, decision-making method, roles, and ground rules at the start of the meeting ▪ Ensure that team leader and members practice facilitative behaviors like active listening, reserving judgment, respecting others views and asking open-ended questions. Be sure to include virtual team members in discussion and seek their input ▪ Make agreements by asking if there is anyone who cannot support it ▪ Identify action items, including what the action is, who has responsibility, and when it will be completed ▪ Confirm agreements and action items ▪ Evaluate the meeting. What improved? ▪ Make sure meetings you chair start and finish on time, allowing people to plan the rest of their day effectively	▪ Respond to the meeting evaluation and feedback if necessary ▪ Distribute documentation, including minutes and agreed upon action items with the responsible individual and due date ▪ Consider if meeting minutes are required for every meeting, perhaps just action items are more appropriate

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Supplemental Tool 5: Encourage Flexible Ways of Working to Meeting Organizational/ Business and Personal Priorities

As a manager/supervisor, you play a central role in creating and sustaining a supportive, effective, and flexible work environment while meeting the goals and objectives of the business. In today's demanding work environment, you are most likely managing people who are working in different locations and on different schedules. Excellent performance management, communication, and team building skills are essential to ensuring success. While there may be some challenges, the potential benefits of a culture supportive of life-work integration and flexible ways of working are increased productivity, innovation, engagement, retention, and job satisfaction.

The following strategies for success are based on best practices and success factors from organizations that are effectively utilizing flexibility as a management and business tool.

Providing employees with some control over where, when, and how they work is very critical to helping employees manage their work requirements and personal priorities.

- **Offer informal day-to-day flexibility on an as-needed basis to allow an employee to address personal needs while meeting job requirements.**

- **Utilize flexibility as a tool to achieve organizational/business results, rather than "one off" personal accommodation, entitlement or "perk."**

  — Utilize more formal and ongoing flexible work options such as flextime or telework if the job and business requirements allow.

  — Keep an open mind and proactively collaborate with employees to find flexible and innovative ways of working to achieve business goals. Employee commitment, engagement, and effectiveness will likely rise as a result.

  — Make decisions about requests for ongoing formal flexible work options based on how business needs and job requirements can be met rather than on personal reasons.

  — Break jobs down into components/tasks to determine whether flexibility is feasible and consider combining different kinds of flexible work options to ensure coverage and meeting work requirements.

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Supplemental Tool 5: Encourage Flexible Ways of Working to Meeting Organizational/Business and Personal Priorities Continued

- **Ensure consistency and fairness when utilizing flexible work arrangements.**
  — Make sure everyone is clear about the work requirements, expectations and flexible work policies, procedures and guidelines.
  — Emphasize that successful flexibility a shared responsibility and requires mutual flexibility and reciprocity.
  — If previously approved flexible work arrangement is not working, it will need to be revisited.
- **Build flexibility into staffing models to respond to changing business needs, maintain productivity and avoid costs of unscheduled absences.**
  — Analyze the work flow, coverage needs, peaks and valleys of business requirements.
  — Cross-train staff to serve as "floaters" and fill gaps and provide coverage for employees who are working flexible schedules or have requested time off.
- **Engage employees in developing team-based flexibility solutions that meet business and personal needs.**
  — Enlist the experience and thinking of employees as you try to find flexible work strategies.
  — Solicit team ideas, build consensus and support and gain commitment to meeting business goals and ownership of the flexible work solutions.
- **Build a climate of trust, empowerment and accountability.**
  — Encourage and expect employees to develop viable work solutions to meet business requirements, resolve issues and draw on managers as resources and for final approval.
  — Provide employees with clear expectations and the information and tools to do their job, then empower and trust employees to deliver the required results.

Supplemental Tool 5: Encourage Flexible Ways of Working to Meeting Organizational/Business and Personal Priorities Continued

- **Measure performance by results rather the presence in the office, and hold employees accountable for meeting job and business requirements.**

  — Set mutually agreed upon concrete performance objectives with all your employees, whether or not they use some type of flexibility.

- **Utilize effective communication skills and methods to foster performance.**

  — Post weekly and daily schedules, coverage requirements, team goals and deadlines using on-line tools or in strategic locations to ensure all staff is informed about expectations and staff availability.

  — Ask employees to keep one another and the supervisor/manager informed through available and appropriate methods including e-mail, instant messaging and phone messages to convey updates on deadlines, resolve customer issues, etc.

- **Schedule meetings and trainings at times when everyone can attend and plan for effectiveness.**

  — Consider the establishment of core working hours during which all team members are accessible for meetings and designated days where no meetings take place.

  — When convening meetings whether scheduled or last-minute, be mindful of including by telephone those employees who are working off-site and consider:

  - Does this meeting really need to take place immediately or could it wait until tomorrow/some other day?

  — What am I hoping to accomplish? Is there another way to achieve the goal (individual conversations, cascading communications, email, etc.)?

  - Are all the employees I'm inviting to attend really required?
  - Is the agenda well planned with clear desired outcomes?
  - Have I disseminated all the required materials?

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Supplemental Tool 5: Encourage Flexible Ways of Working to Meeting Organizational/Business and Personal Priorities Continued

- **Assess the need for your team members to routinely check voicemail and e-mail during work hours and times that they are not scheduled to work, if appropriate.**

  — Establish team guidelines for what's appropriate and how to connect if an emergency arises.

  — Set ground rules for maintaining coverage, accessibility, responsiveness and connections established with the team.

  — Develop a team backup plan for unexpected requests, assuring coverage during normal business hours.

- **Manage flexibility in ways that provide developmental opportunities so careers continue to advance.**

  — When considering employees for assignments and developmental opportunities, remember those people on flexible work arrangements—out of sight should not mean out of mind.

  — Interact with employees at key decision points in the employment cycle and as part of performance discussions to explore how flexible work options can help employees achieve their long-term career and personal goals.