Thriving Teams

"If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together"

the **thrive**

the**thrive**

Thriving Teams

Welcome to the VUCA* world, where the speed of change and uncertainty is just increasing. Sometimes the uncertainty and intensity peaks, as is currently the case with the corona crisis.

Traditional institutions that provided meaning and connectedness have disappeared or have been marginalized. Someone recently said: "organizations are the churches of today". We see that when crisis hits hard, people join forces, and give meaning to what is happening. They then put their heart and soul into making a difference in the world around them.

'Thriving team'; A team is always as strong as the quality of its collaboration, the level of shared focus, and the personal ownership of its members.

1.0

The human adaptability is impressive, once change is embraced. In times of doubt and insecurity, togetherness emerges through which people stand up and organize themselves in clever new ways. And this creates an unprecedented speed of change.

Yet, we also see the opposite happening in many organizations. It seems as if collaboration stops (inertia) and everyone retreats and looks at management or the government to resolve things. It creates a collective irresponsibility. Do you recognize this in your own surroundings?

What would happen if your organization would consist of teams that organize themselves with heart and soul, and do what is needed? Thriving teams that make a valuable contribution by organizing their focus, collaboration and ownership. Teams of people who make a difference together in the organization, with passion and agility.

When we look closely at the teams we facilitate, at our clients' best practices and at scientific insights, we see a distinct pattern in what makes some teams more effective than others. We like to share what makes teams thrive. Curious? Please take advantage of it!

*VUCA = Volatile, Uncertain, Complex & Ambiguous

the **thrive**

1.0 Looking for new ways of organizing

1.1 The growing importance of the ability to change

Have you seen the video from 1998 in which people were asked questions about the sense and nonsense of a mobile phone? The reactions are hilarious, with today's knowledge. "If they want to reach me, they need to write me a letter" and "I don't like being available all the time." By the way, many of us recognize the last remark as a problem of today indeed.

In 2018, there was an update of this clip. Unfortunately, it is no longer available because of a copyright check. The interviewees in this second video had a laugh with the answers people gave 20 years ago. But at the same time, some didn't know what a drone was, whereas delivering products by means of drones seems to be just a matter of time.

The reaction of an older taxi driver was maybe even more striking. He had never considered the impact of self-driving cars on his industry. Even though the impact of digitization has already been quite disruptive with Uber and many other services.

We live in an ever-faster changing world. Previously we encountered a few percent of change in a year, whereas now the pace of change is exponential. A linear change approach to cope with this ever-increasing pace is not enough anymore. In order to deal with it, we need to up our game.
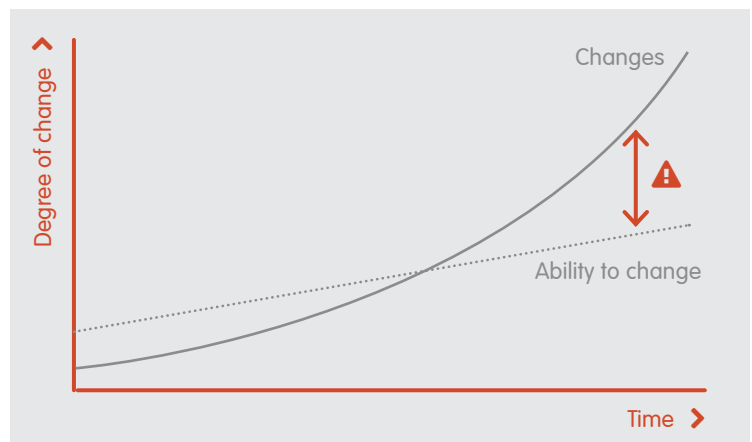
Why it seems difficult to transcend the ability to cope only with the old, linear, change can be explained by looking at the history of organizing and management. After all, important thoughts about how to organize and about leadership date back to the time when we went from the countryside to the factory to mass produce. (Ford producing the T-Ford was a good example of that). The machinery bureaucracy, when it was introduced, was a paradigm shift. This approach is well suited for mass production and functioned well at a time when the speed of change was relatively low. It assumes linear predictable developments and a relatively stable long-term perspective. Global competition wasn't an issue at the time.

Fortunately, many organizations already started working on their adaptability some time ago to be able to cope with the increasing pace of change. In many industries, especially the knowledge-intensive ones, we are in the transition from a 'divisional structure' to an 'adhocracy' (Mintzberg).

It explains the wave of agile working going through the world over the last decade. Spotify, for example, has introduced a new way of organizing innovation which many companies have copied since. Key aspects of their more adaptable way of working are 'Alignment & Autonomy'. In both the business world and not-for-profits, we hear more and more people talk about 'end-to-end' responsibility. This can be seen in the increasing number of matrices, tilted organizations and self-organizing teams.

An actual example of agility in action helps us understand why this is essential in today's world. Recently in Wuhan, China, crucial in "the war" against the coronavirus, the impossible was made possible. Within just 10 days, the Chinese joined forces to build an enormous and fully functioning hospital. And closer to home for us, in the Netherlands in March 2020, hospitals were able to scale up the number of IC beds and resource them. Or another example, virtual teaching: In the Netherlands, this was arranged within a week after the schools had to close down. Both the efforts and results deserve our respect. All beautiful examples of agility in action. And who makes that possible? Closely collaborating teams of people who step up, show leadership and take ownership together to make the necessary change happen.

However, we also still see far too many examples of organizations and leaders react differently to the uncertainty coming with the increasing pace of change. They fear losing grip and decide to organize more and more control based on negative beliefs about people's intrinsic motivation. Employees feel alienated as a result. The focus of managers in a crisis can default to the negatives and what should be improved. With the vastly increasing number of stress-related illnesses and burn-outs as a result.

1.2 Beyond the reflex towards an effective response

Gary Hamel explains in his story about the future of management (already in 2007): "If we want organizations to be fit for the future, we need to make them fit for people. To be and remain successful today, creativity and innovation are essential".

Therefore, the exponentially increasing pace of change requires a radically different way of working and a fundamentally different way of being 'in control'. One where you activate what people are capable of, instead of blocking and frustrating it. Organizational development should always combine two elements: The engagement of people and the agility of the organization. An approach based on a combination of both social, and system innovation. These should go hand in hand on the road to what we call 'Inspired Agility'.

the thrive

We will share our approach to increase inspired agility at team level in this paper. Our approach on an organizational level is explained in our whitepaper: People-driven Transformation.

"If we want organizations to be fit for the future,
we need to make these organizations fit for people"
(G. Hamel)

1.3   The road to inspired agility in teams

A different structure, new ways of working and a change in management style can increase the inspired agility of an organization. But in the end, people in their teams get things done. That's why strengthening the engagement and agility at team level is paramount. This is where the creative and innovative collaboration takes place and meaningful value is created. Effective teamwork is crucial in creating a more inspired and agile organization. How can working well in a team create more inspired agility? And vice-versa?

Team engagement

If you look at Maslow's pyramid of needs, you see the importance of working with others underlined. At its core, 'standing strong together' provides more security, a sense of involvement and 'belonging'. Working together is also a vehicle for seeing each other, exchanging appreciation and learning from others. Humans are in essence social animals. Values such as involvement, loyalty, camaraderie and connection are what we hear a lot when people describe what is important to them.

Connection with those who share the same goal is seen as one of the crucial factors when it comes to engagement. Being part of a connected and high-performance team is what helps many of us meet these personal needs.

the **thrive**

Agility in and through teams

An ever-faster changing world creates more complex challenges. As complexity increases, so does the need for expertise of professionals. Increasingly, this complexity means that a single professional cannot provide a sustainable solution on his or her own. So, more and more collaboration with fellow professionals is needed (collective intelligence), in order to understand the complexity and determine the right way forward. ('Sense & Respond')

Changes and challenges emerge at a high speed. This requires quick and holistic coordination in alignment with the market, customers, chain partners and other teams. However, this alignment often takes so much time that teams are effectively managing the past. In a more proactive mind-set teams are shaping the future together. This requires that teams think and act differently; more execution power and innovation capability will determine the teams' success. In the literature on innovation, experts talk about ambidexterity: the balanced combination of exploitation (to be effective today) and exploration (in order to remain relevant in the future).

"When people are thriving together, they feel progress and momentum, marked both by a sense of learning and a sense of vitality"
(Spreitzer, 2005)

Supporting teams inspired agility has a profound impact on the transformation of the organization as a whole. We see organizations in transformation work on either leadership development or team development. In our view, working simultaneously on both yield the best and sustainable results. We've seen this in our cooperation with Achmea, Randstad and other corporates, but also in, healthcare, municipalities and other not-for-profit organizations. We will share with you what our work on team level entails.

the thrive

2.0 Thriving teams

2.1 How do we recognize thriving teams?

We have looked at the literature eclectically and combined the insights with what we have learned in our own practice, where we helped teams to thrive over the last eight years. Thriving teams, that have a high level of inspired agility, distinguish themselves through showing three characteristics: direction, growth and performance. They have created, and maintain, these by working on (in order) their focus, collaboration and ownership. Let's first look at the three characteristics:

Direction

Ownership · Focus

Collaboration

Performance · Growth
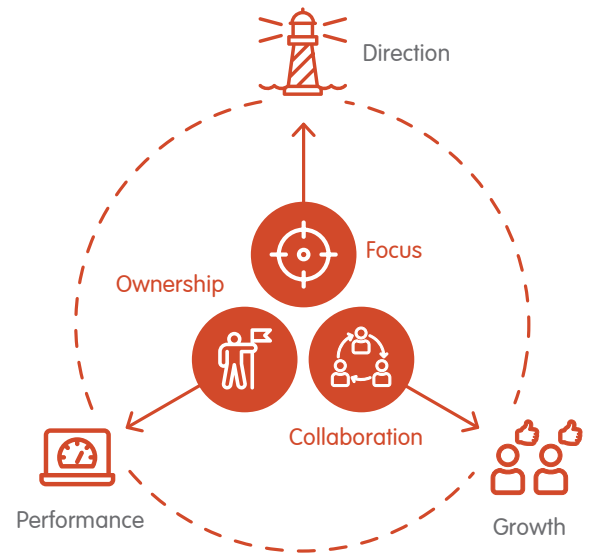
I. Direction

"What is our course?" "Where do we want to go?" "What do we want to improve?" "Why is this a meaningful direction for us?" Teams that can give a clear answer to these questions, can focus and refocus to adjust to a changing world. These teams outperform teams that don't have a clear and meaningful compass. With too little or unclear direction, crosswinds will make teams deviate from their course and headwinds could lead to giving up.

For a direction to be viable, it must be both supported and meaningful. It should also be clearly translated into effects, goals, priorities and activities. In addition, the coordination with the outside world must be well-organized. Thriving teams combine outside-to-inside with inside-to-outside thinking: "How do we constantly adapt our focus on the basis of a changing outside world, without losing sight of our core qualities as a team?" And also: "How do we influence and inspire others to take co-ownership?"

"When your ambition fuels your desire to succeed, you're virtually unstoppable"

II. Growth

Een team, dat continu werkt aan vertrouwen, raakt steeds beter op elkaar ingespeeld en groeit. Vertrouwen ontstaat vanuit connection, onderlinge waardering en oplossingsgerichte communicatie. Teams die in staat zijn om de innerlijke staat van het team te monitoren en hierop te acteren, verhogen het welzijn van teamleden, de (collectieve) flow, en daarmee de prestaties van het team. Hiervoor is het essentieel dat teamleden in staat zijn de aanwezige kwaliteiten en valkuilen te zien en bespreken, samen psychologische veiligheid te cultiveren en daarmee een lerende cultuur te bevorderen. De grondhouding om het succes van de ander en het team boven het eigenbelang te stellen, is cruciaal.

III. Performance

A team that constantly works on their trusted relationships becomes stronger. Trust arises from connection, mutual appreciation and vulnerable, yet solution-oriented communication. Teams that are able to monitor and act on the inner state of the team increase the flow, well-being and thus the performance of the team. It is essential that team members are able to see and discuss the qualities and pitfalls together to cultivate psychological safety and promote a learning culture. The basic attitude that serves this purpose is to put the success of others and the team above self-interest.

the thrive

2.2 What inhibits teams from structurally investing in themselves?

We often encounter managers who know perfectly well what is needed to take a team to the next level. However, knowledge in itself is insufficient to drive change. We often encounter managers who do not act on what they actually know to be true.

Even when managers do decide to work on team development, it is often done incidentally, rather than structurally ("Why not do a short team session!"). Many team development efforts start without having a complete and shared diagnosis. The extroverts and change-minded people often take the initiative. They start to work on team development with high energy, which feels good at first. A first workshop takes place and ends with great intentions, but with little or no follow up in the workplace. We understand that the daily turmoil does not help, other things are urgent and therefore seem more important. Other teams run into the subjects that were not fully explored in the first workshop, or not even spotted in the diagnosis. That can be very frustrating and demotivating.

The flywheel of team development does not get enough momentum, the energy dissipates, and the general opinion may become: "What is the point of investing in our team anyway?" So, the key to effective team development work is not only an answer to "How do you give the flywheel the first spin?", but also to "How do you keep the flywheel moving?"

2.3 The three-stage rocket to thriving teams

It's time, therefore, for an integral and structured perspective on team development. Let's explain our iterative team development process. How do you become a team that, with inspired agility, makes a difference for the organization? Three simple steps:

1. **Take a good look in the mirror together**
to make sure you align on how you are really doing. What's going well, and what can be improved?

2. **Act on the insights by starting team development**
Consciously lock into place what works and tackle first what will bring the team the most.

3. **Keep this alive continuously**
Plan regular time for repetition, reflection, deepening and moving ahead. Relevant, because the context will continue to change.

the **thrive**

Below we will give an explanation per step:

Step 1: Take a good look in the mirror together

How do you look into the mirror as a team? If we take the three dimensions (direction, growth and performance) as a starting point, we can distinguish six archetypical teams, in which one or two of the dimensions work well, but one or two need development for the team to thrive.

Hover over the images or click on the figures to read more relevant information.

Passion   Concreteness

Situational awareness

2   Focus   3

Persuasiveness

1   4

5   Self-awareness

Congruence   12

Thriving Teams

6   Growth mindset

Decision-making   11

Ownership   Collaboration

Coordination   10   7   Safety

Role clarity   9   8   Commonality

Which of these six images best resembles your team's current situation?

Step 2: Act on the insights by starting team development

Over the next six pages, we zoom in on three of these archetypes. These three archetypes describe a situation where you have two dimensions in good shape and want to strengthen one dimension to propel the team to the next level.

I. Improving Direction by working on Focus

Do you recognize this team?

"My team works incredibly hard, everyone takes their responsibility. I fully trust our individual expertise we are professionals. Fortunately, there is no '9 to 5' mentality, I hate that! We regularly have pizza delivered when we have to work towards a deadline. We are sometimes overloaded, we are actually too busy, priorities keep being added. It is unclear to us where management wants to go, and it seems to be changing all the time."

What do we see?

Clearly the will and drive to take personal ownership are present, which shows in terms of **Performance**: The team comes together to align on next steps and team members hold each other accountable. The **Growth** is also in good shape here: The team members go the extra mile to help each other and they have fun together.

What is lacking, however, is a clear aligned **Direction** that helps (re)determine the course. This will also have an impact on the collaboration in the long term, particularly with other departments.

The Thriving Team scan shows a clear picture of the team on the characteristic 'Direction'. To improve in this area, we suggest to work on 'Focus'. We distinguish four levers to do so:

the **thrive**

1. Situational awareness

'Sometimes in the waves of change, we find our true direction'. It is important to be open to signals from outside the team. Routines need to be established to pick up, share and weigh these external developments for their relevance.

⚠ When should you act on this?

The team reacts too late to developments and in the long run misses opportunities and possibly relevance.

👍 What would it create?

The team proactively looks at opportunities and risks together. They change just-in-time and remain relevant to all stakeholders.

📢 What could you do?

✔ Be curious and outward-focused, get inspired and share it in the team.
✔ Think about relevant developments in a structured way, weigh them for the short and long term, so you are working on what is relevant for today and tomorrow.
✔ Use others and each other to explore the past and the future using different perspectives.

2. Passion

"Acting in the spirit of the organization". There's a difference between being involved, committed and being passionate. Teams should constantly work on a collective team spirit, which fuels the team's energy to making a difference together. This increases autonomy, the freedom to do what is needed and it helps to stop leaders from micro-management.

⚠ When should you act on this?

The team feels curtailed in their freedom, everything is prescribed while they don't really understand why they should do what they do.

👍 What would it create?

The team has personally embodied the strategy and works with passion. If resistance is met, extra energy is released to continue with resilience on the way to meaningful value creation.

📢 What could you do?

✔ Make the strategy personal, embody the team plan together.
✔ Ask people for explicit commitment and take on board what they need to say "yes" to.
✔ Make sure everyone knows why we have made choices. This helps to stay focused and remain agile.

the thrive

3. Concreteness

Ambitions need to be clear and well-articulated, tested, communicated with the shared ambition in mind. Concrete goals are a better guide than less concrete intentions or actions. Clear goals help to understand each other really well and allows team members to prioritize activities separately.

⚠ **When should you act on this?**	👍 **What would it create?**
The team is busy but not always effective. They don't get the appreciation for their hard work and that is not motivating over time.	The team is result-focused, they know their must-win battles, they deliver as promised, they are proud of that and get the recognition they deserve.

📢 **What could you do?**
- ✔ Have the difficult conversation first, about what is most important. Make choices as a result.
- ✔ Make your ambition concrete (1 A4) with explicit effects, goals and priorities to which you can weigh your activities and measure progress.
- ✔ Make sure your goals are aligned with other departments and senior management.

4. Persuasiveness

"Informing can be done in writing, motivating people is be done more effectively face-to-face". Thriving teams can move forward faster, if they move together and that's why they proactively invest in motivating stakeholders in a targeted way.

⚠ **When should you act on this?**	👍 **What would it create?**
The team starts moving but doesn't explicitly take others, inside and outside the team, along. Others may be waiting for a starting signal and need to be brought along afterwards. Team members just focus on doing their part in an isolated way.	Sharing is multiplying. The team moves with infectious energy and takes others along with their enthusiasm. They can indicate what they concretely bring and need from others to be successful together.

📢 **What could you do?**
- ✔ Create your shared and compelling story, so you can understand and communicate your vision and decisions.
- ✔ Practice that story to be able to inspire others, while keeping their perspectives in mind.
- ✔ Proactively tell the story to all stakeholders. That's how you explicitly bring them on board.
.

II. Improving Growth by working on Collaboration

Do you recognize this team?

"My team is a 'lean & mean machine'. Everyone does their job by themselves on the road to our shared ambition. Doing the right things right, is what makes us happy. This independence does not work for everyone. Recently people have dropped out. We don't need the 'soft stuff'. Yes, of course there are conflicts, and not everything is talked about, but that's just part of the game. Isn't it?"

What do we see?

This team can be proud of the level of strength-based ownership and the decisiveness that comes with it. There is disciplined and targeted action. People make progress all the time and enjoy purposeful **'performance'**. This team has a clear focus and is able to recalibrate their **'direction'** when needed. However, there is insufficient **'growth'**, because there is a lack of attention for the connections and collaboration in the team. Comradery is an important for individual and collective learning in thriving teams.

Using the Thriving Team scan, we can paint the 'Growth' picture your team members have. We suggest working on 'Collaboration' to improve on this. Let's elaborate on its four levers:

the thrive

5. Self-awareness

"Trust starts with positive self-awareness". It's key to have constructive and appreciative conversations about the team members' talents, pitfalls and preferences. The team can then take into account the different preferences in their communication and collaboration.

⚠ **When should you act on this?**

Team members are unconsciously incompetent, it's hard to play together when individuals don't know their unique contributions and what really drives them.

👍 **What would it create?**

The team members' positive self-awareness helps to look at differences with compassion. With this knowledge, collaboration can be set up to create synergy (1+1=3).

📢 **What could you do?**
- ✔ Spend time together expressing personal strengths, values and drivers.
- ✔ Make sure the team knows the person behind the professional, understands and appreciates the differences and consciously reinforce each other.
- ✔ Help the team consciously communicate differently with different people.
- ✔ Reflect on the effectiveness of our communication and behavior and ask for feedback.

6. Growth mindset

"It's not the strongest that survive, but the ones most adaptable to change" That's why effective teams are open to new insights and consciously step out of their comfort zone to take calculated risks. They believe in failing forward, so they learn faster than others.

⚠ **When should you act on this?**

The team tends to focus on what's not working, why that is, and who to blame. Therefore, they don't learn (quickly) enough.

👍 **What would it create?**

The team members ask (open-ended) questions to get a view on the perspectives of others. They learn about other perspectives and what could work. The team consciously chooses to experiment, to fail quickly, learn and grow as a team.

📢 **What could you do?**
- ✔ Make sure team members care for their energy balance and have an eye for others. With a relaxed '80%-attitude' they perform sustainably better.
- ✔ Learn to ask questions and listen to understand, before wanting to be understood. Say: 'yes and', build explicitly on the intent of others and co-create.
- ✔ Cultivate 'learning by doing', followed by conscious reflection.

the **thrive**

7. Safety

"The strength of a team is determined by the conversations it does not have" Psychological safety is crucial for effective teams in complex and highly dependent environments. Everything should be out in the open with the team, in a way that everyone dares to speak out and people listen respectfully to one another.

⚠ When should you act on this?	👍 What would it create?
Defensive/aggressive behavior is fueled because people do not feel safe and connected and start over-compensating. They become quiet or blow their horns without using the collective intelligence to create progress.	The team feels safe and connected. They respect and appreciate each other. They are more productive and collectively smarter because they share vulnerably and learn together.

📢 What could you do?
- ✔ Create a context where people show their vulnerability by putting their feelings and requests for help on the table.
- ✔ Make sure the team members pick up different perspectives and respond respectfully to them, because they can learn from them.
- ✔ Together address differences constructively in order to stay out of a destructive spiral.

8. Commonality

"Nobody is bigger than the team". Thriving teams have embodied agreements on how they relate to each other, an explicit code (set of principles) that they live by. They address it with each other if it is not complied with.

⚠ When should you act on this?	👍 What would it create?
There is a lack of trust and support. Egos play a role, resulting in friction between people. That hinders great team performance.	The team has a set of basic principles that guide their collaboration and form the basis for a healthy feedback culture.

📢 What could you do?
- ✔ Talk about the explicit decision to be a team rather than a working group. Only agree when you believe in a positive return.
- ✔ Build principles/agreements that help you to be effective and or become more effective with respect for the different preferences/needs/drivers.
- ✔ Agree on how to keep the commonality alive and up to date.

III. Improving Performance by working on Ownership

Do you recognize this team?
"My team knows where it wants to go. We have pleasantly co-created the goals. They're looking forward to it! There is a good atmosphere, which I think is really important, we invested in that together. We go out together, there's laughter, people get along very well and use each other's competencies. However, we miss execution power because we lack personal ownership and decisiveness."

What do we see?
What this team has in order is a shared and concrete **direction**, and the team proudly expresses this. In addition, the team **grows** and has (self)confidence and trust. People know and help each other to improve solutions. However, the team lacks **performance** because there is not enough personal **ownership** that ensures decisiveness on results. They mis reflection on their progress.

Using the Thriving Team scan, we can paint a clear picture of the image your team members have of the current situation on the dimension 'Performance'. On the next page we elaborate on the four levers we use to build Ownership in order to increase Performance.

9. Role clarity

"If we all feel responsible, no one really is". A clear division of roles and responsibilities should be agreed upon, which should be based on personal competencies and preferences. This helps spark intrinsic motivation and provides clarity.

⚠️ When should you act on this?	👍 What would it create?
The team lacks decisiveness, people take on everything, but things often don't go well at once. Things often happen twice or don't happen at all. They miss deadlines and or budgets.	The team are passionate about working with a specific focus area, they trust each other and in parallel processes they make progress faster, without losing sight of the interdependencies. They deliver decisively, together, reliably and often well at once.

📢 What could you do?
- ✔ Make sure the team have a complete activity overview (planning) and know what their main priorities are.
- ✔ Together divide the activities and roles based on intrinsic motivation and have a view on the interdependencies, even outside the team.
- ✔ Make sure the team has concrete preview agreements on what you can expect from each other in the coming quarter.

10. Coordination

"A team that can't self-correct, cannot thrive". Thriving teams make it easier to perform optimally through an appropriate alignment structure (constructive reflection). They proactively share relevant context information so that others in the chain can move upon insights.

⚠️ When should you act on this?	👍 What would it create?
Team members are individually busy, but they are not working on the right things to create the biggest impact.	The team think ahead and consciously use their resources to better understand causes behind the symptoms. They work with up-to-date information, well aligned and adjust when necessary.

📢 What could you do?
- ✔ Cultivate a check-before-you-act where you clarify the intention before accepting and/or giving an assignment.
- ✔ Together make agreements to stay aligned along the way (voice both appreciation for progress made and learnings from mistakes).
- ✔ Use your time in meetings in a way that energizes, leads to new insights and encourages concrete follow-up action.
.

11. Decision-making

"Better a decision than no decision" Rapid and supported team decisions are crucial for adaptability. Thriving teams frame what they are going to decide on and how. Each meeting leads to a shared image of who will do what, and when.

⚠ When should you act on this?	👍 What would it create?
The team have difficulty making decisions, make decision-making too complicated. This slows the team down and they often lag behind.	The team uses its collective intelligence to make better and faster decisions. Quality x Acceptance = Success. It leads to better follow-up.

📢 What could you do?

✔ Make sure the team are aware of the decisions they are responsible for.

✔ 'Frame' subjects as small and clear as possible and distinguish three phases in the decision-making process; intelligence, design, and choice.

✔ Align on an effective and efficient way of getting to concrete decisions and actions.

12. Congruence

"A chain is as strong as its weakest link". Thriving teams make effective progress. They consciously reflect on how they fit in in the overall organization. They check whether they still work together optimally in the value chain and change course if necessary.

⚠ When should you act on this?	👍 What would it create?
Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Sub-optimization, stagnation and loss of motivation.	Systemic optimization (team/chain/organization), through which the team consciously keeps momentum going and improvements are followed up structurally and sustainably. The team is agile and remains relevant.

📢 What could you do?

✔ Consciously reflect together on collaborating in the value chain. Discuss with other departments and management what goes well and why, and what can be done better and how.

✔ Systemically adapt priorities and actions in the team based on what you've learned. And explicitly put the things that transcend the team on the strategic agenda of management. It is the job of the management to follow through, preferably with the team.

✔ Organize looking backwards and forwards and taking what you learn to validate or adapt the chosen strategy.

2.3 What other questions we often encounter beyond the archetypes

The past three pages gave you a view of what you could do if you recognize your team in one of the three archetypes. Of course, that doesn't cover all team situations. What are other questions do we encounter more often in our practice?

> We want to increase the level of self-directness; based on output & outcomes.
> My team has an important new challenge; We need everyone on board to realize a breakthrough.
> We are a new team; our team needs to build a strong foundation to be successful.
> We are a virtual team or need to virtually work together more; Help us to become and stay effective in the virtual world.
> Our team has a dormant conflict; It's a burden for our team, rather than a lever for success.
> We are a top team and it is time for reflection; we believe in conscious, regular moments of development.

If you have question resembling one of the above, then a more customized approach inspired by our model is a proven effective approach. We are happy to help you reflect on your team's performance and development using the scan.

What's best to focus on if you don't have much time?
Of course, much is dependent on what you encounter in the team scan. We don't believe in quick fixes, but sometimes you can't afford to spend time on an in-depth analysis, yet still want to move forward. In our experience, two of the twelve levers are the best bang for the buck; Positive self-awareness and psychological safety.

We see that these levers always show room for improvement and investing time in them creates a running start, allowing you to better tackle other levers later. Especially in a setting where complexity, innovation and creativity are relevant, it is essential that everyone contributes with all they have got to make optimal use of the collective intelligence. This requires of the collective (psychological safety) and also of the individual (self-awareness).

Looking for evidence? Google research Aristotle in NY times.

If you want to read on about how you can work as an individual on positive self-awareness, make sure to read our white papers Leadership Choice and Thrivabillity.

the**thrive**

Step 3: Structurally keep it alive

When you are a top team, you distinguish yourself by taking time out to invest in the team especially when you are doing well. We believe in conscious and regular developmental moments.

Investing in team development is of structural importance:

> If you don't approach issues proactively, they tend to get bigger and it takes more time and energy to solve them. So "fix the roof when the sun still shines."

> Development is important but not urgent. If you don't plan team development, urgent and often minor things will win the battle for attention from the important, but less urgent ones. "That which is important, but not urgent, you have to plan."

> The context and regularly also the team players change. This requires continuous recalibration. "It's not the strongest who survive, it's the ones who adapt."

> Reflection is crucial in learning. Positive confirmation helps to continue to motivate you to put energy in team-development. "Practice makes perfect."

All changes start with a first step. The following questions will help as a starting point for individual and team reflection:

	Personal check	Team check
Focus	Am I in flow? Do I feel energized?	Is there energy in the team? And is that increasing?
Collaboration	Do I know my colleagues? Can I communicate in a style flexible way?	Are we empowering each other? Do we learn and grow as a team?
Ownership	Do I contribute to making a difference? Do I do what I want/have to do?	Does each take his share? Is our decisiveness increasing?

U•bun•tu
(ooboontoo)

~

'I am, because we are'

Become a thriving team!

Do you want to do the team scan with your team, or do you have questions about how to best approach some of the suggestions mentioned?
Please feel free to contact us.

✉ Pim Houben
✉ Bob Vrijaldenhoven

the **thrive**