

# Team Ground Rules



We each enter a new team with different assumptions about what makes for ideal interactions. To build a strong team, be clear from the beginning how members work with one another. At the earliest stages of team formation, members define specific attitudes and actions that are their standards for interacting.

- Create team ground rules to guide the team members in how to operate effectively as a team and achieve its purpose.
- When all ground rules are identified, ask everyone present if they are willing to abide by these simple ground rules in meetings and interactions. Gain agreement from everyone, and you are likely to have successful teamwork.
- It helps to have the team agree to post the ground rules in their offices and regular meeting rooms, as well as to use them at their monthly review meeting.

## Creating Team Ground Rules:

**Step 1:** Ask yourself, “What behaviors (that we have done or seen in our experiences with teams in the past) are not productive in human interactions?” On the Team Ground Rules template on the next page, in the left column, capture specific behaviors that **don’t work well** for teams. *E.g. – Interrupting while another other person is talking; asking for a speedy turn-around on an assignment without prior notice.*

**Step 2:** When you’ve brainstormed as many as possible, place a star next to the 3-5 behaviors from this list that you would imagine can cause the biggest problems for your team.

**Step 3:** For each of the starred items, write a ground rule, using the middle column, that establishes a guideline that would eliminate the problem and allow your team to function well in that area.

**Step 4:** The whole team is responsible for ensuring that the ground rules are enforced. For each ground rule written, identify specific actions, in the right column, that the team will take if the ground rule is broken.

## Team Ground Rules

Unproductive Behavior	*	Ground Rule to Prevent That Unproductive Behavior	How to Enforce the Ground Rule
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			
5)			
6)			
7)			
8)			
9)			
10)			