

# Building Team Clarity & Performance Rhythms

---

Role clarity · Expectation setting ·  
Meeting rhythms



*By the end of this session...*

You will be able to name the one clarity or rhythm gap creating the most friction on your team and leave with a draft tool to address it before school begins.

One draft tool to bring to your team

The Team Clarity Audit for future use

One specific, dated commitment



# Arrive Together

*The first 5% shapes the rest. — Saheem Ali*

*Think of a team where you always knew what was expected and meetings felt worthwhile. What made it work?*

## **Facilitator goes first**

Model vulnerability. Share briefly, then invite the room.

## **Don't force connection**

Remove blockages. Let people arrive at their own pace.

## **Name the pattern**

Listen for themes.



**Most team friction  
isn't a people problem.  
It's a design problem.**

---

## Three levers that make teams work:

### **01** Role Clarity

Who owns what decisions, not just who holds what title.

### **02** Expectation Clarity

Making the unspoken standards visible and shared.

### **03** Meeting Rhythms

Predictable cadences that replace ad hoc interruptions.

# Role Clarity

*Most org charts show titles. They don't show decisions.*

## *Purpose*

A clear, durable, inspiring reason for assembling this team.

## *Mission*

The specific outcome you're trying to accomplish in the next 90 days.

## *Roles*

Defined and assigned based on who is best equipped — not job titles.

## *Decision Rights*

Who makes the final call on what, even when others disagree.



# Expectation Clarity

*Most mid-level leaders assume shared standards that were never actually named.*

## The 3 Knowns

1

### What my team needs to know from me

Decisions I've made. Direction I'm setting. What I'm holding that they shouldn't have to carry.

2

### What I need to know from them

Progress signals. Where they're stuck. What's shifting on the ground I can't see.

3

### What we need to decide together

Standards that require alignment. Situations where assumption alone will cause friction.

# Meeting Rhythms

Consistent, predictable cadences let teams navigate uncertainty with confidence and reclaim time.

*Ask yourself: Is the outcome a decision, a strategy, or alignment? If it's only information, a running updates doc does the job better.*

## Check-in

Quick pulse. What's on track, what's blocked. 15–20 min max.

Weekly

## Calibration

Alignment on direction, priorities, and team health.

Monthly

## Retrospective

What's working? Where are we stuck?  
What do we change?

Monthly

## Planning loop

Bigger picture. Direction, roles, priorities for next 90 days.

Quarterly

# Why is this important?

## Mirror neurons

Your emotional state is contagious. In any hierarchy, the leader's state has the strongest pull. Enter grounded.

## Oxytocin

Connection is a biochemical requirement for risk-taking and collaboration. 5 min of authentic sharing shifts everything.

## Threat response

The brain can't distinguish between physical threat and a threat to identity. Psychological safety keeps people in their thinking brain.

## Cognitive energy

The brain conserves energy. Every unnecessary task, unclear prompt, or purposeless activity burns fuel you can't get back.



# Diagnose Your Team

**Complete the Team Clarity Audit (one-page tool, 9 items across 3 levers, rated 1–4)**

*1 = murky · 2 = fuzzy · 3 = fairly clear · 4 = crystal clear*

**5 min**

## **Silent audit**

Work alone. Rate your team on each item. Write, sketch or annotate. Choose your mode.

**4 min**

## **Triad conversation**

"Where did you score lowest? What's the downstream effect on your team — and on you?"

**3 min**

## **Whole-group pulse**

Show of hands by lever. Facilitator names the pattern. Note where the group clusters.

*UDL principle: flexible means, firm goal, offer silent journaling, sketching, or conversation. Honor both introverts and extroverts.*

# Design Your Tool

*Choose the track that matches your audit gap. Build something real before you leave.*

## Track A

### Role Clarity Canvas

- Maps decisions I own, inform, and defer
- Surfaces assumptions you've been making
- Based on Team Charter decision model

## Track B

### Expectation Agreement

- Names the 3 Knowns for one recurring situation
- Half-page format your team can actually use
- Turn to it when conflict or confusion arises

## Track C

### Meeting Rhythm Planner

- Designs weekly / monthly cadence
- Uses the 1-1-1 structure: 1 moment, 1 team, 1 month
- Includes a built-in Retro loop and meetings to eliminate

# Commit & Close

1

## Written commitment

"Before [date], I will \_\_\_\_\_ with/for my team." Named. Dated. Specific. You keep it.

2

## Accountability partner

Share your commitment with one person at your table. Exchange contact info if useful.

3

## 3–4 volunteers share

*Structure isn't the opposite of trust. It's what makes trust possible. Clarity is a form of care. "Clear is kind." Brene Brown*



# Yes / And

*Yes - your team has real constraints and pressures.*

**And — you can choose, right now, what kind of leader you will be in response to them.**

*Yes - you can care deeply.*

**And — you can stay rooted in yourself.**

*Yes - someone else may be in turmoil.*

**And — you can remain steady.**

— Elena Aguilar



# Building Team Clarity & Performance Rhythms

---

Role clarity · Expectation setting ·  
Meeting rhythms

