



Ground Rules

How High Performance Teams Work Well Together

Question: What's the difference between a group and a team?

Answer: A **Group** is a collection of people.

A **Team** is a group with a shared mission, mutual accountability for accomplishing specific tasks and projects, and a set of agreements (Ground Rules) for how they will work together, make decisions, and resolve conflicts.

Teams that want to improve their performance devote their first meeting to defining their mission (Contact us for the specifics on how to create a powerful and compelling mission for high-performing teams).

The next step high-performing teams focus on is their Ground Rules, the agreements that will streamline the work of the team:

- **Logistics:** How often meetings happen, who will attend, who will set up the room, who distributes the agenda, and who brings the tools and food.
- **Decision-Making Process:** Who is a voting member, whether decisions are consensus or majority vote; who will record all decisions, and which type of issues will be delegated, and to who.
- **Conflict Resolution Method:** Which conflict model the team will use, and how conflict will be added to the agenda.



Success Formula: Invest two hours to collaborate on how the team members will operate together. High-performing teams have agreements and ground rules and developing ground rules by consensus creates member buy-in.

Marilyn Laverty, President
Teams on Target, Inc.

P.S. Want help building your shared ground rules or have access to our team's agreements?

'Just Vent' Case in How Great Ground Rules are Developed by Teams

The weekly product development team meeting for Techie Tooling, Inc. was in full swing. **A not-so-unique culture of complaining had started at meeting one and by now, was really out of hand.** "We don't have enough people on this project." "You've been hogging all the most competent programmers." "I don't have time for this meeting." "Where are the bagels?"

The following week, the project secretary came to the meeting, carrying a floor vent from her house reconstruction AND a proposal. "Let's make a new ground rule so we spend less time complaining in meetings and more time actually planning and taking action. Here's what I propose: If you want or need to complain, pick up the 'vent' and tell us what you need to say. Go ahead and get it off your chests, we will listen."

There was laughter around the room, and the team started having more productive meetings after

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mlaverty@TeamsOnTarget.com

they adopted these new ground rules:

1. Before you start complaining, pick up the floor vent.
2. The team will designate a timer to track the one-minute vent.
3. When someone else is "venting", just listen and don't try to fix the problem.

The team got the message:

- Choose your moments to vent intentionally, and
- Every complaint is not a call to action.

The results are spectacular for the New Ground Rules: ***The team now has more enjoyable meetings with less wasted time.***

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Call today for Ground Rules consultation.

"Creating our own Ground Rules was invaluable for our conversion team that includes operations, IT, and accounting. Now we all clearly understand how decisions will be made and I am much more engaged knowing my vote counts and that no decisions will be made outside the meeting and then handed down to us."

Controller & Team
Lead

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Centennial, Colorado

303-290-8989

877-252-6306