better
science

Workshop

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" in a socially sustainable society, people are not subject to structural obstacles to: (1) health, (2) influence, (3) competence, (4) impartiality and (5) meaning-making

– Merlina Missimer et al., 2017

Research culture encompasses the behaviours, values, expectations, attitudes, and the norms of research communities.

– *Royal Society, 2017*

Better Science Initiative

→ Calls for a more diverse and sustainable research culture offering equal opportunities

→ Combines bottom-up and top-down approaches for fostering a healthy research and teaching environment

→ 10 calls to action as starting point for individual action

→ Good practices for the implementation of a diverse research culture at the team, institute, faculty, and university level

What do you think are the benefits of team work?
18 Responses

competition

learn from esch other

better work atmosphere

more stable decision

better ideas

ego

idea creation

fun

diverse ideas

different perspectives

avoid mistakes

balance

diversity

compromise

different work habits

needs arguments

constructive feedback

6

Working with people who are different from you may challenge your brain to overcome its stale ways of thinking and sharpen its performance.

– David Rock, Heidi Grant, 2016

What are negative experiences that you had while working in a team?
15 Responses

takes longer

not being heard

unbalanced workload

discussions

confrontation

inefficiency

arguments

frustration

competition

lack of trust

ego

piggyback riding

disagreements

lack of responsiveness

dominant person

6

80% of researchers who manage people say they have the knowledge and skills to manage a diverse team, but only 48% have received training.

– Wellcome Trust, "What researchers think about the culture they work in", 2020

Workshop goals

→ reflect team culture

→ envision ideal team culture

→ discuss ideas to achieve change

Workshop rules

→ Thinking together

→ There is no right or wrong

→ Active listening & mutual respect

→ "Yes... and" instead of "yes... but"

What does ideal team work include?

E.g. a space for honest and constructive feedback without having to fear repercussions

Ideal team work

different roles
be better

open-minded
be better

a good error/mistake Culture
be better

it's ok to stop someone
be better

DIVERSITY
be better

define a common process
be better

define design rules
be better

Shared goal
be better

Common ground
be better

BALANCE OF HIERACHY
be better

Commitment to tasks
be better

Constructive feedback.
be better

TEAM EVALUATION
be better

RESPONSIBILITY
be better

involvement
be better

autonomy. "good power" meaningful task
be better

RESPECT FOR DIFFERENT OPINIONS
be better

value contribution to team (vs. individual)
be better

safe space for ideas sharing
be better

What are barriers to having ideal team work?

E.g. an error culture which is focussed on avoiding mistakes rather than learning from them.

What are strategies to achieve better team work?

E.g. foster trust in team members and make room for mistakes.

This is a full-page photograph of a flip-chart brainstorming board with many sticky notes. The notes contain the following text:

- personal events kick-off
- Team building activities
- Distance
- taking sides & alliances
- Personnalities mismatch
- micro management
- subgroups by dominant
- differences in ambitions
- PERSONAL GOALS
- BIO & MANAGEMENT
- Sensibilisation to bias
- time pressure
- Setting goals + milestones
- bias
- motivation / purpose
- meaningless task
- pessimism
- bad / wrong / disfunctional environment
- not being results-driven
- emotions (if extreme)
- rewards recognition
- define rules and process
- EGO
- ...cation
- communication
- exacerbated competition
- INEFFICIENCY
- CLEAR TASKS SCHEDULES
- acceptance of individual needs
- need for personal space
- transparency
- "I know what I want to say I don't ..."
- performance indicators (wrong KPI)
- Introductions include strengths & weaknesses
- training
- incompetence
- LANGUAGE / KNOWLEDGE BARRIERS
- violence
- LANGUAGE / COMMUNICATION
- Inclusive language
- TRAINING
- technical language
- cheat sheet
- disciplinary cultures
- CODEX
- Non violent com training

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→ Vision and goals

→ Leadership and organisation

→ Psychological safety and error culture

→ Appreciation and fairness

→ Feedback and support

→ Communication & empathy

Tomorrow, I will...

Tomorrow, I will...

Role model
be better

Communicate
intermediate
stages not just
end product
be better

enjoy the
work
be better

SAY YES AND
NOT
YES BUT
be better

Tomorrow I will
prioritise and
transparently
assign tasks **be better**

Tell my
colleagues
how much
I enjoy our
team working **be better**

Share my
long-term
schedule w
colleagues **be better**

yes...and
be better

Balance in person
and zoom meeting
be better

10 calls to action

→ team culture, assessment, leadership

→ for all members of academia

→ rethinking excellence in your everyday work practice

→ Better Science: changing the way *how* academic work is performed

Highlight extra-academic work

Make all tasks and achievements in- and outside academia visible in your CV. Show, what you actually accomplish, besides research, teaching, administrative work, in public and social areas as well as in care work.

Take your time to think

Already as a young researcher, take time to think, to read, to write. Some time of leisure without performance of academic duties benefits your concentration and creativity. Such a retreat gives your work a boost!

Put quality before quantity

In research as well as in teaching, always choose quality over quantity. Expect everyone, including yourself, to do his or her best, but do not expect perfection. This is excellence.

Prioritise thoughtfully

Know your resources and priorities: Think about the tasks for which you can and want to take responsibility and strive for an optimal distribution of your work between research, teaching, and administration.

Careful communication

Communicate carefully. Write thoughtful emails and influence the culture of communication positively. Demonstrate that there is more to life than work. Allow yourself and others the liberty to not answer emails in the evening and on weekends.

Enable a healthy academic culture

Enable a healthy academic culture for everyone: Allow criticism and show appreciation. Take time to supervise your students, doctoral candidates and postdocs, and encourage and support young scientists.

Evaluate comprehensively

When evaluating academic work, do so according to the DORA Declaration: Evaluate and reward work or research proposals that place quality over quantity. Evaluate and reward teaching, administration, public relations, data collection, committee work, and other commitments.

Appreciate the team

As a leader, work consciously in a team and show appreciation for the work done by your team members in all areas of work. Create a pleasant working atmosphere with a constructive error culture. Pay attention to what is good for you and the team.

Distribute tasks fairly

As a leader, create the space for co-workers to say "no" and make sure that tasks are distributed fairly within the team.

Be a role model

Do not underestimate your influence on the students and your staff. Recognise your responsibility, be a role model, and create space for better science.

Feedback

The workshop achieved its goals — 4.4

The instructors were responsive to me — 4.6

The workshop was interesting — 4.2

Strongly disagree ← → Strongly agree