

FLOW SYSTEM

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Team Science

Workbook: Multiteam Systems



getflowtrained.com/playbook/multiteam-systems/

Multiteam Systems

Multiteam systems are defined as two or more teams that interact independently and interdependently to achieve collective goals.

Goal structures include the team's goals (proximal goals) and the multiteam system's goals (distal goals).

Each team's proximal goals must be aligned with the multiteam system's distal goals.



Some of the factors required of MTS to function effectively include

- The size of each team
- Cross-team communication
- Team psychological safety
- Clear distal goals
- Sharing across teams
- Interactions between teams
- Outcomes related to distal goals
- MTS attributes:
 - ◇ Compositional
 - ◇ Linkage
 - ◇ Developmental

Functional leadership manages leader-to-team interactions.

The boundary spanner acts as the functional leader for MTS.

Boundary spanners operate in the boundaries between teams and between teams and the MTS.

The following exercise will guide leaders and managers who are implementing MTS in their organization. The questions listed in the following table identify essential items that need to be considered for all MTS. These questions are categorized in four areas: MTS structure, MTS goal structure, team member identity, and MTS leadership (boundary spanner). These questions act as a starting point and should evolve to be more specific to the MTS as it develops and matures over time.

MTS STRUCTURE	
How many teams make up the MTS? (Two to five can be managed well. More than five teams can become problematic)	
How many team members for each team? Explain why these team sizes are necessary.	
Do the teams have adequate teamwork skills training?	
Have the teams been trained how to function as an MTS?	

MTS GOAL STRUCTURE	
List the MTS goal(s). MTS Goals	
List each team's proximal goals: TEAM #1: Proximal Goals	
TEAM #2: Proximal Goals	
TEAM #3: Proximal Goals	

MTS GOAL STRUCTURE (cont.)

Map the alignment of the MTS and each team's proximal goals.

On a separate sheet of paper or using a concept map or virtual whiteboard, map out the overall MTS goal(s)—the distal goal. Then map out each of the team's proximal goals. Link the team's proximal goals with the MTS goals to show how they are related. Identify if there are any gaps or duplication of effort. This exercise will help to assure that the team's proximal goals are aligned with the distal goal.

Are the teams aligned with the MTS?

List any changes that are required to align the team's proximal goal with the distal goal.

TEAM MEMBER IDENTITY

Do team members identify with their team?

Do team members identify with the MTS?

Do team members identify with both their team and the MTS?

Team members who only identify with their team will accomplish their team goals over the MTS goals.

Team members who only identify with the MTS will accomplish the MTS goals over their team's goals.

It is essential that team members identify with their team's goals and the MTS goals equally.

TEAM MEMBER IDENTITY (cont.)

If team members do not identify with both their team's goals and the MTS goals, explain how this can be corrected.

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MTS LEADERSHIP (BOUNDARY SPANNER)

WHO DETERMINES THE BOUNDARY OF AN MTS?

Does the boundary spanner have teamwork skills and boundary spanning training?

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Does the boundary spanner have support from the executive level and support from the teams?

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Does the boundary spanner have the following requisite skills or capacities? If not, list how the boundary spanner can gain these skills.

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Cross-sectional relationship building

Facilitation skills

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Problem-solving skills

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Resources acquisition capabilities

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MTS LEADERSHIP (BOUNDARY SPANNER) (cont.)

Change management skills

Coordination of activities within teams

Coordination of activities between teams

Facilitate interactions across group boundaries

Facilitate knowledge transfer

Information gathering and processing skills (e.g., synthesizing information, sensemaking)

Interpersonal skills

Effective communication and listening skills

Conflict management skills

Connect the Three Helixes:

Flow can only be achieved when the three helixes are interconnected. To identify how this could occur, the next exercise requires the reader to identify examples of different methods from each of the other two helixes (complexity thinking, distributed leadership) that will support multiteam systems. Knowledge of all three helixes will be required to make these connections.



CONNECT THE HELIXES

Select a scenario or problem that would benefit from multiteam systems.

Identify three methods from complexity thinking that could work with multiteam systems. Give a brief description about how they complement one another.

CT Method 1:

CT Method 2:

CT Method 3:

Identify three methods from the distributed leadership helix that could work with or support multiteam systems. Give a brief description about how they complement one another.

DL Method 1:

DL Method 2:

DL Method 3:

Provide a description explaining which methods from each of the three helixes (with multiteam systems being the TS method) work best for the scenario/problem identified earlier.