Team Sync Charter

Work united

Free workplace guides

Where expectations meet collaboration.

This tool has been developed to help organisations understand the current state of team dynamics by measuring psychological safety. This guide is intended for use by internal facilitators, external coaches, and HR professionals who are responsible for administering the tool, interpreting the results, and guiding teams through development initiatives. It provides a practical framework for understanding team culture and creating conditions that support open, honest, and effective collaboration.

If you require any help in facilitating this tool in your workplace, please reach out at the email below.
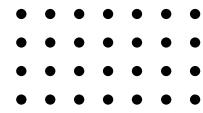
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Why produce a charter?

In today's dynamic work environment, teams often face challenges that go beyond traditional office boundaries. Temporal differences—such as varying time zones and flexible working hours—and geographical dispersion can create communication gaps and misunderstandings. Add to this the complexity of balancing professional responsibilities with personal commitments, and it's easy for expectations to become unclear, leading to frustration, missed deadlines, or disengagement. The Team Sync Charter addresses these challenges head-on by providing a clear, shared framework for how teams communicate, collaborate, and support one another. By explicitly defining tools, response times, work patterns, and commitments, it helps bridge distances and schedules, ensuring every team member feels heard, respected, and empowered to contribute their best — no matter where or when they work.

Categories for discussion

Team Purpose & Shared Values
What are we here to achieve, and how do we want to work together while we do it?
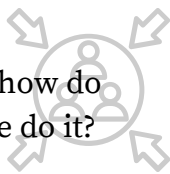
Ways of Working
Let's set clear expectations around tools, timings, and trust.

Working Patterns & Individual Needs
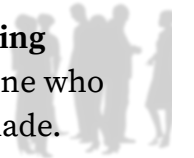We all work differently — let's make space for flexibility.

Feedback & Psychological Safety
We all have a voice. This is how we use it, and how we listen."

Roles, Ownership & Decision-Making
Clarity builds confidence. Let's define who does what and how decisions are made.

Leader & Team Commitments
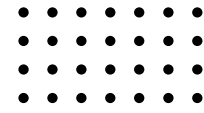High-quality exchange means we both show up.

Charter Review & Maintenance
Teams evolve — our agreement should too.

The discussion

The discussion should ideally be conducted face to face to an informal setting so people feel comfortable to share ideas. Psychological safety will be key to understanding the team dynamic. For more information on psychological safety, look for the Vox Animae Safe to Speak tool on our website. The structure of the discussion is straight forward and can be delivered using this guide. this process can be time consuming but getting the Charter right will save time and effort in the long term.

Structure with examples

Team Purpose & Shared Values

Start by exploring why your team exists — beyond tasks and deliverables.

- What impact do you want to have?
- What is expected from the team from other stakeholders?
- What values should shape how you work together, especially under pressure or conflict?

Purpose (example):

To deliver high-impact digital communications that support organisational change, engage stakeholders, and reflect our core values of transparency, creativity, and empathy.

Shared Values:

- Speak openly, even when it's hard
- Deliver what we promise
- Respect every person's time and voice
- Own the outcome, not just the task

Performance & Productivity

- Google's Project Aristotle found that psychological safety was the #1 factor in high-performing teams, above dependability, structure, meaning, and impact.

- Teams with high psychological safety are 12% more productive.

Engagement & Retention

- Employees who feel safe to speak up are **3.5 times more likely to be engaged**.

- Psychologically safe environments lead to a **76% increase in employee retention**, especially in diverse teams.

The discussion
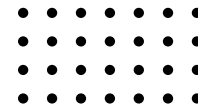
Ways of Working

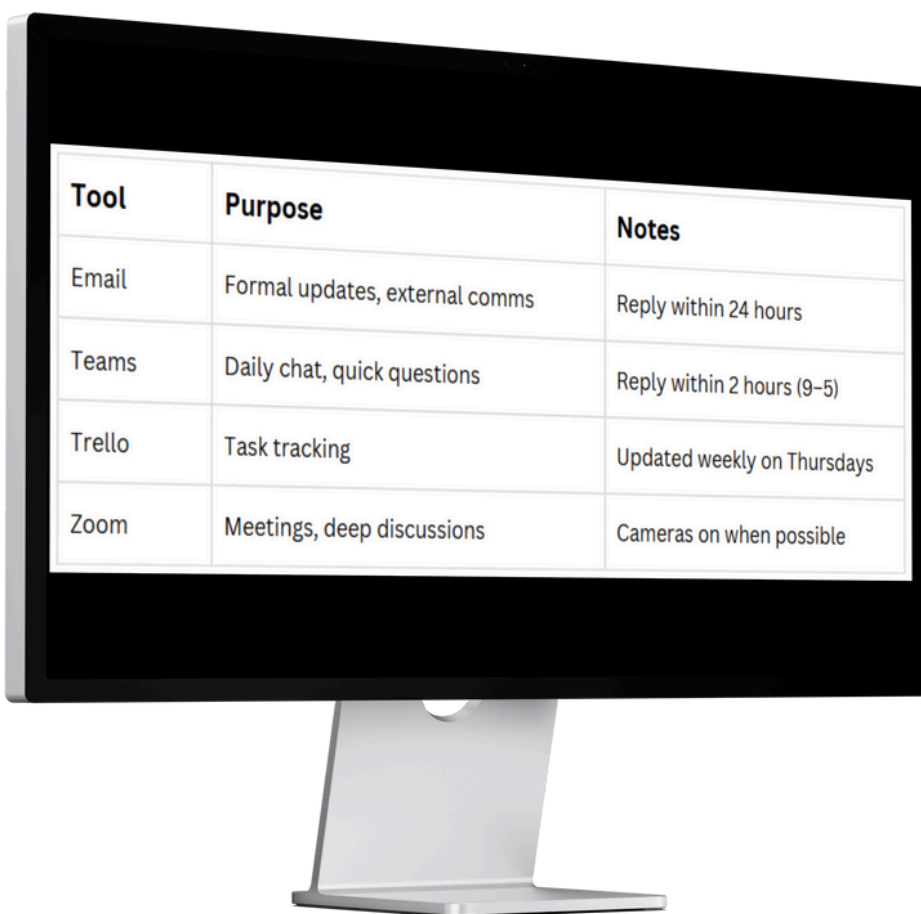Agree how you'll communicate and collaborate. What tools work best for different types of messages? What's a fair expectation for response times? This is especially important if you're hybrid or asynchronous.

Preferred Tools & Use

Tool	Purpose	Notes
Email	Formal updates, external comms	Reply within 24 hours
Teams	Daily chat, quick questions	Reply within 2 hours (9–5)
Trello	Task tracking	Updated weekly on Thursdays
Zoom	Meetings, deep discussions	Cameras on when possible

Considerations

If you are working across a number of sites, there may be tools that not all team members will have access to.

Consider shared workspaces as a means to monitor and acknowledge achievements as well as monitoring output.

Consider mechanisms for identifying or reporting mistakes so they can be learned from.

Agreed Communication Principles:

- "Quick check-ins" encouraged to avoid silence
- No pressure to reply outside core hours
- Mark urgent comms clearly in subject/title
- Cameras optional in all meetings
- Meeting requests to have clear objectives, decisions required and background information available
- Any problems or mistakes can be reported without fear of negative repercussions

The discussion
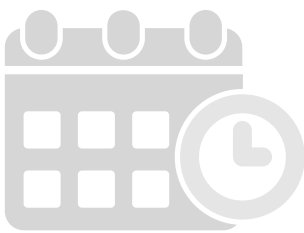
Working Patterns & Individual Needs

Everyone's life outside work is different — and so are their rhythms. Use this section to identify availability, work-from-home needs, and deep work time. These considerations will be dependant on the organisation's needs however, expectation management will be key to ensuring there are agreements in place.

Every team member brings unique strengths, circumstances, and needs. This section is designed to help teams discuss and document personal work preferences that support psychological safety, productivity, and wellbeing. This includes not only location and hours, but also neurodivergent needs, caregiving responsibilities, and energy or focus rhythms. Open conversations here can foster greater empathy, reduce unnecessary friction, and promote sustainable performance.

Suggested considerations:

🌍 **Location:** Office-based, hybrid, remote, field-based, or travelling roles
⏰ **Preferred working hours:** Core hours, flexible start/finish, non-linear schedules
👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 **Life commitments:** Childcare, elder care, school runs, or personal health routines
🧠 **Neurodivergent needs:** Preferences around communication style (written vs verbal), sensory considerations (lighting, noise, video calls), need for structure vs flexibility

Example

Team Member	Core Hours	Remote/Hybrid	Notes
Sam (Lead)	9am–4pm	Hybrid (M/W in office)	Needs mornings for strategic work
Leah	10am–6pm	Fully remote	Picks up kids at 3pm, offline 3–4pm
Mo	8am–3pm	Remote	Early start – prefers async work
Jake	9:30am–5:30pm	Office (full)	Available for in-person walkthroughs

Overlap Time: 10am–2pm (Mon–Fri)
Deep Work Windows: M/W/F 9am–11am – no meetings unless urgent
Flexible Hours: Fully respected — communicate changes via shared calendar

The discussion

Feedback & Psychological Safety

Feedback and safety go hand in hand. Talk about how you prefer to give and receive feedback, and how the team can challenge ideas without creating fear. What does psychological safety feel like here?

Giving Feedback:

- Ask first: "Can I offer feedback?"
- Be specific, timely, and curious
- Assume positive intent
- Recognise effort as well as achievement

Raising Concerns:

- Raise in 1:1s, retros, or via "confidential chat"
- All concerns acknowledged within 24 hrs by team lead
- Safety Commitments:
- No one penalised for speaking up
- It's OK to say "I'm not sure" or "I'm struggling"
- Ideas are challenged, not people

Inclusion Safety - "I feel accepted."
This is the foundational level. People feel safe to be themselves and are accepted for who they are without fear of being excluded or marginalised.

Learner Safety - "I feel safe to grow."
Individuals feel comfortable asking questions, experimenting, and making mistakes without fear of embarrassment or punishment. Curiosity is encouraged.

Contributor Safety "I feel safe to add value."
People are empowered to contribute their skills, ideas, and effort. They are trusted to make a meaningful impact and take initiative.

Challenger Safety "I feel safe to challenge the status quo."
The highest level. Team members feel confident to question practices, suggest improvements, and challenge leadership constructively without fear of retribution.

The Stages of Psychological Safety

Inclusion Safety — Learner Safety — Contributor Safety — Challenger Safety

The discussion

Roles, Ownership & Decision-Making

This section is designed to give clarity around who does what — and how decisions are made — prevents confusion and duplication. Use this to map ownership using a simple RACI model, and define how decisions are agreed.

What is a RACI?

RACI is a responsibility assignment matrix used to clarify roles and responsibilities in a project or process. It helps teams avoid confusion by defining who is doing what — and who needs to be kept in the loop.
RACI stands for:

R – Responsible: The person (or people) doing the work. They are responsible for completing the task or making progress.

A – Accountable: The one person ultimately answerable for the outcome. They delegate the work and sign off on decisions.

C – Consulted: People who provide input or expertise. They are engaged before decisions or actions are taken.

I – Informed: Those who need to be kept in the loop. They are updated on progress or outcomes but don't actively contribute.

Why use a RACI?

In fast-moving or cross-functional teams, it's easy to assume roles or duplicate effort. The RACI matrix helps avoid that by bringing clarity to team expectations. It's especially helpful when:

- Responsibilities are shared across teams or departments
- There's ambiguity about decision-making authority
- A project involves lots of stakeholders
- Accountability needs to be clearly documented

The discussion

Leader & Team Commitments

Leader and Member Exchange (LMX) theory teaches us that trust flows both ways. Use this section to articulate what you each need — and what you're each willing to give — to build a healthy working relationship.

Example: During the discussion;

Team Lead (Sam) committed to:
- Weekly 1:1s focused on support, not scrutiny
- Transparent decisions and rationale
- Being available for challenges and new ideas
- Protecting deep work and flexible hours

Team Members committed to:
- Clear communication on progress and blockers
- Supporting each other without blame
- Owning the team culture together
- Flagging risks early, not when they've escalated

The Importance of Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-Member Exchange theory focuses on the quality of the relationship between a leader and each individual team member. Unlike traditional leadership models that treat all subordinates the same, LMX highlights how leaders naturally develop different levels of trust, support, and mutual respect with different individuals — and that these varying relationships impact performance, engagement, and psychological safety.

Low-quality LMX relationships often feature:
- Minimal interaction
- Misunderstandings or assumptions
- A lack of trust or psychological safety
- Reduced engagement and motivation
- In teams where some members experience high LMX and others don't, a sense of unfairness or exclusion can emerge, leading to fractures in team cohesion and performance.

High-quality LMX relationships are marked by:
- Open communication
- Mutual trust and respect
- Recognition of individual needs
- Shared understanding of goals and challenges

The discussion

Charter Review & Maintenance

Team dynamics, individual circumstances, leadership styles, and organisational priorities are rarely static. Without regular review, even the most thoughtfully crafted agreements risk becoming outdated or misaligned. Moreover, when a charter is seen as "set and forget," it can lose relevance and authority.

Regular reviews ensure that:
- Commitments remain mutually relevant and achievable.
- New team members are integrated inclusively.
- Changing work conditions (e.g., hybrid patterns, tech tools, personal needs) are reflected accurately.
- Trust is sustained through ongoing communication and collaboration.

Trigger points:
- Onboarding of a new team member
- Change in leadership or reporting lines
- Shift to hybrid/remote/in-office work
- Notable conflict or misunderstanding
- Organizational changes in policy or priorities
- Agreed frequency: Quarterly or biannually is recommended, but adapt based on team tempo and turnover

Feedback loops:
- Provide anonymous ways for team members to flag concerns or suggest improvements before the review.
- Consider a short pre-review pulse survey or structured check-in.

We wish you all the best with your team!

Please reach out at support@voxanimae.co.uk should you need any further assistance

Vox Strategy

Continuing our work...

We are extremely proud of our products and we will be working to update and refine them to ensure the most accurate tools for your organisation.

Development of the **VOX Organisational Culture Assessment** helps organisations explore, measure, and align their workplace culture through a practical, research-backed approach. Built on the respected Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 1999), the tool goes beyond surface-level values to uncover how culture is actually experienced across your organisation — and where it may need attention.

Something else..?

Tailor made for your organisation

Is there something we can design for you? Get in touch and Vox Animae will create a bespoke measurement tool, tailored to your needs. Our team will provide testing and demonstrations to ensure its accuracy as well as facilitator guides.

Peace of mind

1-2-1 Support
Artificial Intelligence is a modern and useful tool, but we believe that human problems require a human mind. Our online support line ensures that someone is on hand to provide support and guidance throughout the process.

Periodic Tests
Culture takes time to take effect; however, the Vox Development Pathway includes a 6 month follow up and retest of the Safe to Speak tool to ensure the solutions are working. Additional follow-up sessions are available if required.

Confidentiality is Paramount
No results are stored and surveys are anonymous and deleted once the data is collected. While the reports will be filed for reference, these will only be available to the originating organisation lead and Vox Animae. For further details, please see our terms and conditions .

Other Services

The Vox Development Pathway

he **Vox Development Pathway** is our flagship product that combines quantitative and qualitative information to create bespoke initiatives and performance monitoring guidance.

Consisting of 3 parts, it is designed to be as streamlined as possible to avoid taking up your valuable time, delivered by our professional and knowledgeable facilitators.

Part 1 - Quantitative data capture - We will work with you to design and deliver the Safe to Speak diagnostic tool, focusing on the individual, leader and organisation context with discretion and confidentiality to determine the areas of focus.
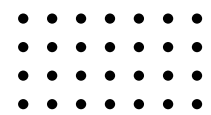
Part 2 - Qualitative data capture - The Vox Workshop provides a information on individual perception, leadership relationships and organisational support with targeted questions to provide further information on points found in part 1.

Part 3 - Initiative and Performance Monitoring - Now we can discuss what has been found and recommend academically researched initiatives to mitigate or capitalise on findings as well as methods to monitor and measure their effectiveness - with a 6-month follow up.

Thank you!

Ready to take the first step towards cultural clarity? Book in for a free consultation today.

Should you need assistance, please reach out on the email below - We are looking forward to meeting you!

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