

## **7 Habits of Growth Teams**

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As a leader, the performance of your teams directly impacts your organization's success. High-performing teams not only drive results but also create a positive, inclusive, and psychologically safe environment where innovation and collaboration thrive. Here are seven essential team habits that ensure your teams operate at their highest potential:

1. **Clarity of goals and success** - High-performing teams have a crystal-clear understanding of their goals and how success is measured. This requires well-established systems and processes that are codified and communicated across the team. Each member should know exactly what the team is aiming to achieve and how their specific contributions add value to the end goal. By defining roles and expectations with precision, you empower your team to work cohesively towards shared objectives, minimizing ambiguity and maximizing efficiency.

*Leader's Questions: What systems and processes are in place, codified, and understood by all team members of the goal the team is aiming to achieve and how will success be measured? What is each team member's specific contribution and value to this end goal?*

2. **Mutual Accountability** - In a high-performing team, accountability is a shared responsibility. Team members must hold each other accountable for their contributions, ensuring that everyone is actively participating and delivering on their commitments. Equally important is the reciprocal accountability between the team and its leader. As a CEO, fostering a culture where the team feels comfortable holding leadership accountable—while also being held to account—creates a balanced dynamic where trust and respect flourish. This mutual accountability is the backbone of team reliability and sustained success.

*Leader's Questions: How do team members hold each other accountable in contributing to the team and its success? How does the team hold the team leader accountable and the team leader the contributors?*

3. **Conflict Management** - Conflict is inevitable in any team, but how it's managed determines whether it becomes a barrier or a catalyst for growth. High-performing teams have clear protocols for resolving conflicts, enabling them to anticipate, address, and learn from disagreements. By establishing a safe environment where challenging conversations can occur, teams can resolve issues constructively and use these experiences to strengthen their

collaboration and understanding. Effective conflict management is essential for maintaining team cohesion and advancing collective goals

*Leader's Questions: What is the protocol for resolving conflict? Understanding how to anticipate and resolve interpersonal conflicts for individuals and between team members enables the team to engage in safety, challenging conversations and ultimately grow from areas of disagreement.*

4. **Decision Making** - Effective decision-making is critical for team success. High-performing teams have clear processes for making the right decisions at the right time. This includes defining the level of authority and flexibility individual members have, as well as establishing when and how consultation is necessary. By streamlining decision-making protocols, you empower your team to act decisively and confidently, reducing bottlenecks and ensuring that critical decisions are made efficiently and inclusively.

*Leader's Questions: How does the team make the right decisions at the right time on a collective level? How much authority and flexibility do members have without consultation? If consultation is needed, how and where does this happen?*

5. **Resource Allocation** - Resource allocation is a strategic process that must be transparent and equitable. High-performing teams understand how resources are prioritized and allocated to achieve their goals. When team members have a shared understanding of how and where resource-related decisions are made, it fosters a sense of fairness and trust. As a CEO, ensuring that your teams are involved in the resource allocation process and that their input is valued can significantly enhance their commitment and effectiveness.

*Leader's Questions: How does the team prioritize and allocate resources to accomplish its goals? Common understanding and clarity on how and where decisions are made for allocating limited resources, and the team's role in making these decisions, is essential for members to feel decisions about resources are made in a fair and equitable manner.*

6. **Adaptability** - Adaptability is a hallmark of high-performing teams. In today's dynamic business environment, the ability to quickly adjust to new situations, opportunities, and threats is vital. High-performing teams embrace change and are agile in their approach, ready to pivot when necessary. They are open to innovation and willing to modify plans when it's in the organization's best interest. Cultivating this adaptability within your teams ensures that they remain resilient and competitive, regardless of external challenges.

*Leader's Questions: How agile and adaptable to new situations, opportunities, and threats is your organization? How quickly do team's embrace innovation, and are open to adjusting plans if agreed and appropriate.*

7. **Continuous Learning** - Continuous learning is essential for sustaining high performance. High-performing teams are committed to ongoing evaluation and learning, fostering a collective growth mindset. This involves regularly reviewing progress, reflecting on experiences, and integrating new knowledge into their practices. As a CEO, promoting a culture of continuous learning within your teams not only enhances their skills and capabilities but also ensures that your organization stays ahead of the curve in an ever-evolving market.

*Leader's Question: How do teams continuously learn and evaluate their progress?*

Great teams take the time to focus on continuous learning. Learning processes create a collective growth mindset for teams and are a critical part of knowledge management in the organization. By embedding these habits into your organizational culture, you can build teams that not only perform at their peak but also contribute to a vibrant, inclusive, and innovative **workplace**.

**About the author:****John C. Reynolds, PhD**

*Chief Executive Officer – Leading2Grow*  
[leading2grow.com](http://leading2grow.com)

John currently (soon to be retired) provides leadership as President/CEO of Los Angeles Pacific University, a private online university located in Southern California. Reynolds earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees in computer science and information systems in South Africa, and later a PhD at Azusa Pacific University. In addition to his over 20 years of experience in higher education, which includes the founding of Los Angeles Pacific University and Pacific Educational Resources LLC, Reynolds has worked as a strategy executive in the mining industry and as global Chief Information Officer (CIO) for World Vision International, a large private international relief organization. Reynolds is the author of several books/chapters and is a regular writer of posts and blogs on social media focusing particularly in the areas of leadership and strategy. He speaks frequently at national and international conferences and is a sought-after strategic thought partner to CEOs. Reynolds serves on several governance boards, including BDI Inc. (USA), LCC International University (Lithuania), API Educational Foundation (South Africa), and Tabor Institute of Higher Education (Australia). Further professional information available at <http://linkedin.com/in/jcreynolds-usa>