

Competing in the New World of Work

Tags: [#team-leadership](#)

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Dialogue

The story of Tilly Smith

Team behaviors that are the most reliable diagnostic indicators of team resilience:

Performance

Candor

Most leaders espouse this -- how do you know if a team actually has it?

Resourcefulness

How teams face challenges and problems. Resourceful teams tend to develop solutions at a higher velocity. What would I see?

Compassion and Empathy

Co-elevation -- what's different about a team that has it?

Humility and Vulnerability

Do people ask for help...

Productive Perseverance

Can you team change it's heading but maintain it's goal? Tell us about this.

Grati-osity

There's an element here of reflection.

Positive intent

This tends not be the default in human nature. What's true when you see it?

Starting point?

What have you changed your mind on?

<https://hbr.org/2021/01/7-strategies-to-build-a-more-resilient-team>

Reserve

- One of the first things they look for: how much time is consumed by report-outs
- Go to the breakout rooms
- Candor breaks
- Lead Biweekly Sprints toward Measurable Outcomes

GFTW = Go Forward to Work Institute

“It’s a good time to be in HR, actually,” one HR leader told us in our research. “Finally, our leadership is realizing that our people and their energy matter, and that we in HR are finally being turned to for help in critical business issues.”

You act your way to a new way of thinking.

Quotes

Highlight [3]: Adaptation happens to be the one thing that human beings do better than any other animal on the planet. We’re not the biggest, we’re not the fastest, and we don’t have the sharpest teeth or the strongest claws, yet we are the dominant species on earth, thanks to our extreme and relentless adaptability to change.

Highlight [10]: 1. Collaborate through inclusion. Embrace the possibility of richer diversity of virtual, remote, and hybrid teamwork to drive innovation exponentially forward. 2. Lead through enterprise agile. Extend and expand the cultural ethos of short-term sprints that kept us on our trajectory during the crisis, and find an operating system that allows us to thrive sustainably amid continued volatility. 3. Promote team resilience. Bounce forward in the face of setbacks and recognize that good leaders strive to maintain the emotional and physical energies of the team. 4. Develop active foresight. Learn to see around corners to avoid unsuspected risk and to systematically explore new possibilities. The final three chapters present an operating model for your radically adaptable team to build a radically adaptable organization by deploying the radical adaptable team skills of collaboration, agility, resilience, and foresight to three enterprise-wide applications:

Highlight [11]: Radical Adaptability 11 5. Future-proof your business model. Develop an ongoing process of experimentation to create and realize your company’s future vision

of itself. 6. Build a Lego block workforce. Redesign your workforce to support a flexible, nimble, cost-effective, and creative future. 7. Supercharge your purpose. Build a movement for radical adaptability by discovering and communicating your organization's long-term purpose.

Highlight [13]: New ways of thinking don't come easy. Sometimes it takes immersion in a new, strange world to recognize that the familiar world has not been serving you very well.

Highlight [17]: Courage, not knowledge, is what made Tilly Smith a hero. Her knowledge was essential, but without the courage of her convictions without expressing her righteous anger to her mother in that crucial moment—her knowledge about tsunamis would have died with her that day, along with her parents and everyone else on the beach.

Highlight [21]: High-Return Practices for Competing in the New World of Work 1. Practice cocreation through co-elevation. 2. Break through silos by teaming out. 3. Hybridize teamwork for inclusion and crowdsourcing. 4. Deepen external partnerships. 5. Expand your personal coaches in a remote world.

Highlight [22]: During the pandemic year of 2020 and afterward, we studied dozens of companies that had been suddenly immersed into the new world of virtual and remote work. When we introduced our high-return practices to these teams and then compared performance results to their pre-pandemic benchmarks, we documented sizable shifts in team efficacy across all the markers of high-performing teams. These markers included candor, accountability, and development. We also studied virtual teams that were not using our high-return practices and found that their performance had dropped. Virtual and remote teamwork works, but only if you do it right.

Highlight [28]: Physical distance is not the main roadblock to co-elevation involving remote workers. The chief problems to be overcome involve strategic distance (a lack of team alignment) operational distance (a lack of well-oiled team process to operationalize the work), and affinity distance (the lack of team members' commitment to one another). Studies show that of these three measures of distance, affinity distance has the greatest effect on innovation, trust, learning, and team outcomes. 2Close the gaps in affinity distance (commitment for each other's success) among your team members, and most of the issues involving the other two dimensions— strategic distance and operational distance—will organically become much more manageable. And in no instance does physical distance register if a team has recontracted for co-elevation.

Highlight [30]: Virtual environments require frequent use of breakout rooms as acceleration pods of deeper collaboration. Avoid seeing yourself as the center of your team. Your job is to ask the smart questions and to break the team into smaller groups of two or three people. During each breakout, have everyone take notes in a shared document and then come back to the larger meeting with reports from their group. Even if you do not have time for formal report-outs from each group, the owner of the

question will have the benefit later by having access to everyone's written input. Our research shows that teams that operate in this way solve problems faster and get bolder contributions from many diverse voices. That's because people who are conflict-averse are reluctant to share openly in a big room and feel more psychologically safe in breakout rooms of two or three people.

Highlight [31]: All these tools are critical to executing on collaborative problem-solving (CPS), one of most powerful virtual meeting frameworks we know. Developed through many years of coaching Fortune 500 executive teams, CPS focuses on a single business-critical question or several of them in a sixty- to ninety-minute meeting. For at least half of the session, the team breaks into small groups of three or four people to discuss the question or questions and report back. The questions could involve how to achieve a specific upside goal or mitigate a specific downside risk. Craft the question carefully so that it's easy to have up-or-down answers. What innovations could we bring to the retail experience? What's most likely to derail us in the next six months? From there, everyone preps by drawing in data and insights from their wider teams. Everyone is also clear on who will make the final decision: who owns the question. The question owner gives instant feedback, for example, either a clear "Yes, we will do this," or a "No, and here is why not," or a "Maybe we will look at this and do more research." The aim is not consensus; it is robust dialogue and an action-oriented conclusion. The most powerful element of CPS is the small-group breakout process, because it encourages candor and diminishes conflict

Highlight [32]: 32 COMPETING IN THE NEW WORLD OF WORK avoidance. When meetings consist mainly of time-wasting report-outs, that's often a symptom of a team struggling with candor and failing to collaborate effectively. CPS can break the logjam and open up the possibility of fewer meetings and more asynchronous collaboration. As later chapters will show, CPS is an essential meeting framework that can be used to accelerate results through every application of radical adaptability.

Highlight [34]: Take candor breaks Team members who truly care about each other will offer candid criticism to express sincere concern for the good of the team—the essence of co-elevation. But if you ever get the sense that everyone's avoiding the elephant in the room, calling a candor break is the best way to discover what is being held back. Pause the meeting when the time feels right, and ask the team, "What's not being said?" Ask for a candor break, then go into breakout rooms, where everyone addresses that same question. Take notes in each breakout room, then share them with the whole group.

Highlight [51]: High-Return Practices for Competing in the New World of Work 1. Always put customer value first. 2. Drive team autonomy downward. 3. Lead biweekly sprints toward measurable outcomes. 4. Bulletproof the work through team feedback. 5. Scale to sustain innovation.

Highlight [59]: You ask more questions and give fewer directions. What are we going to achieve this week? In the next two weeks? How do we move? Where do we pivot? Can

we measure the outcome? If not, why not? Asking these questions through bold and fast iteration helps keep agile teams on track.

Highlight [61]: Designing agile work requires breaking down big tasks into smaller tasks that each agile team can take on simultaneously. The art of agile work design, said David, is to make sure that every team assignment is small enough to be quickly achievable, but still big enough to be meaningful.

Highlight [64]: When Ferrazzi Greenlight begins work with an organization, one of the first things we notice during initial audits of team meetings is how much time is consumed by report-outs, in which one person after another gives a long-winded account of what they're working on. So many wasted opportunities for true collaboration and problem-solving! That's particularly true with teams where the members are committed to holding one another accountable. With bulletproofing, the report out becomes a focused presentation. An individual spends fifteen minutes talking about the big projects he or she is tackling, the risks and challenges, and—crucially—what the team can do to help. The team then breaks into small groups of three to constructively discuss the presentation. These breakouts can be as short as ten minutes, but the size of the small group is nonnegotiable. It must be three. If there are more than three people in the breakout, candor goes out the window. During the breakout, the small groups discuss the following: • What challenge or risk should we bring to the larger group's attention? • What innovation or new ideas might be beneficial? • What help or resources can we offer? After the breakouts, everyone reconvenes and offers insight. The beauty of bulletproofing is that you've done more than provide the presenter with feedback. You've helped mitigate risk by surfacing all the potential issues that the presenter alone couldn't have foreseen. You get fresh ideas. And above all, you highlight the interdependencies of the group.

Highlight [69]: Psychologists who have studied resilience define it typically as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy [and threats].” Each individual's capacity for personal resilience is highly dependent on the person's mental and emotional makeup. The science of team resilience, however, is not so well established. What we have found at Go Forward to Work (GFTW) Institute is that teams' adaptability under adverse conditions has much more to do with

Highlight [70]: 70 COMPETING IN THE NEW WORLD OF WORK healthy team behavioral norms and strong working relationships within those teams. How well a team learns and grows from change under normal conditions is a massive predictor of how resilient that team will be when exposed to extreme and sustained levels of pressure and adversity.

Highlight [70]: The volatile environment of 2020 pushed employee resilience onto the CEO's agenda, elevating what had been a traditional issue for HR. “It's a good time to be in HR, actually,” one HR leader told us in our research. “Finally, our leadership is realizing that our people and their energy matter, and that we in HR are finally being turned to for help in critical business issues.”